

The Guide's Forecast - volume 10 issue number 9

**Northwest Oregon and Washington's most complete and accurate fishing forecast**

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 31<sup>st</sup> – November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro** - Fish passage at Willamette Falls is primarily coho although the crossings had averaged only 30 to 40 per day recently. Sturgeon fishing is improving with legal-sized fish taken over the last retention period.

With October caddis and large stoneflies actively hatching, the upper McKenzie is a beautiful and productive place to chase native rainbows and cutthroat.

The high waters at the North Santiam are producing a few steelhead but conditions are challenging. The stretch from Stout Creek to Packsaddle Parks holds the greater number of fish.

While there are still decent numbers of fish available, coho hookups on the Sandy have slowed.

Anglers hope that rain will bring fresh fish into the Clackamas. Many of the coho present are past their pull date.

Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake are scheduled to be planted with legal and larger trout.

**Southwest** – Rain this week will tell the story on fall Chinook fishing this season. It will either bring in good numbers of fresh, bright fish or confirm that 2008 was a bust at many formerly productive locations.

Precipitation will heat up the wild coho fishery at Siltcoos and Tahkenitch lakes, although it has been quietly productive already. While normally a troll fishery, a couple have been taken recently off the dock at Siltcoos.

While the lower Umpqua picked up a little last week, it has slowed again for coho and the few Chinook which seem to be available this year. The better fishing is at Sawyers Rapids now. Steelheading has been decent on the North Umpqua but water temperatures are dropping.

Rogue Bay, which fishes early for fall Chinook, is just about done for the season with only the occasional coho being taken. A few Chinook have been taken near the mouth of Indian Creek.

When boats have been able to cross into the ocean from Brookings Harbor, bottomfishing has been producing limits of bottom fish. Ling cod results have been slow.

Coinciding with the opening of the Chetco River for Chinook on November 1st is a record low flow. There are plenty of Chinook in the river so anglers can only hope that rain this week will be sufficient to increase flows sufficiently to give this fishery a boost. Police will be out in force to discourage snaggers in low water conditions.

The last day to try for an easy limit of fat, healthy trout at Diamond Lake is Friday, October 31st. It reopens in April next year.

**Eastern** – Summer steelhead are getting attention on the Deschutes, particularly on weekends

although catches have been on one day, off the next. With the caddis hatch winding down, few are trying for trout now. Anglers are reminded the Deschutes along Warm Springs will be closed as of November 1st.

Shallow jigging has been producing good catches of kokanee at Lake Billy Chinook. The fish are in good condition despite the time of year.

**Southwest Washington:** Hatchery **coho** salmon are providing most of the action on the lower Columbia River, although bank anglers fishing for **sturgeon** immediately below Bonneville Dam also continue to find fish.

The best bet for hatchery **coho** has been the Cowlitz River, where anglers have been reeling in lots of bright fish weighing up to 20 pounds, said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. Recent survey crews have counted up to 300 anglers fishing just below the barrier dam, which remains the hotspot on the river.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Sturgeon fishing continues to hold the most interest in the Columbia as the salmon season tapers out. This time of year is considered the peak of sturgeon season although catches slowed with no legal fish taken last week by the three boats trying. Bank anglers are taking a few keepers in this stretch but a creel check last week indicated that nearly 90 rods took only two legal fish.

About half the anglers trying are catching Chinook in the Columbia above Bonneville which is considerably better than the few still trying below the dam.

Action has started to pick up for steelhead above McNary with fish running over 10 pound and a few in the mid-teens.

The John Day Pool is improving for steelhead as these fish work their way upriver.

A few Chinook and coho are being taken at Drano Lake and the pressure has been light. This should improve. Wind River is closed as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of November.

Crabbing has been very good out of Hammond following a brief slowdown during the Humboldt squid kill which had the Dungeness stuffed.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The most productive areas for sturgeon have been in the Columbia River gorge below Bonneville Dam and at the mouth of the Willamette River. Keepers have also come from deep water off the mouth of the Lewis on the Washington side. Fish sand shrimp or smelt for best results.

Above McNary Dam, pull plugs or fish sand Shrimp under a bobber. Those holding a Washington State angling license may fish at night here and that's frequently most productive.

An optional and often overlooked fishery is that for smallmouth on the Columbia. While some are struggling, bassers who know the quarry's habitat and throw a good pattern are doing very well with the smallies on their fall feeding binge. At a tournament out of Hood River over the past weekend, many boats weighed in with limits of large, healthy fish.

While there are no guarantees, crabbing out of Hammond is as close as you'll ever get. Reports are all of limits and many coming with only an hour's effort. Figure \$7 or \$8 a pound at the grocers, this is one activity worth paying the price of gas.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Fish movement over Willamette Falls is slowing to a near standstill with daily coho numbers barely breaking into low double digits most days. Sturgeon fishing has been challenging. The most successful baits have been squid and sand shrimp although herring has also accounted for some hookups.

The boat ramp at Paradise Day Use Area on the McKenzie will be closed through November 14th as improvements to the facility are being made.

Rain this week will cause the already high waters of the North Santiam to further rise, making the pursuit of steelhead even more challenging. Not to worry, though; it wasn't that good at its best this season.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Kelly Point and St. Johns will be productive for sturgeon numbers but it's still tough to find a keeper. Try the lower Willamette for a chance at big smallmouth bass as they are feeding heavily in preparation for winter. Soft plastics in 18 to 22 feet of water around rocky cover are producing well now.

Fish the McKenzie around Leaburg Dam for summer steelhead. It's getting late so get out there before it's over.

The time has come to write off the North Santiam until the arrival of winter steelhead arrive, all of which will be natives, hence, the fishery here will be catch and release. With anadromous runs down anyway, why bother? We'll report for those who want to participate.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Coho fishing has been slow and will soon become irrelevant as the last day of the season is Halloween. Salmon are spawning on the Clackamas up near McIver so use caution to avoid disturbing them or the redds.

The Sandy is also closed to coho as of November 1<sup>st</sup>.

The good news is that winter steelhead are only a few weeks out. Hopefully.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Mussel harvesting is closed coast-wide at this time due to elevated levels of the naturally-occurring neurotoxin PSP (paralytic shellfish poisoning). The Oregon Department of Agriculture advises that while the abductor muscle of scallops should be safe to eat it is recommending that they be avoided. For the latest updates, contact the ODA shellfish hotline at 1-800-448-2474.

Crabbing has been fair to good in Oregon bays and estuaries, but the coming rains may shut it down as Dungeness and fresh water don't mix. This weekend may be the last chance for a while.

Getting out for rockfish and lings probably won't be possible in the coming week as a series of storm fronts is predicted to make land starting Friday and 15 to 20 foot seas predicted for the weekend.

Chinook fishing is about to go under a change thanks to Mother Nature and upcoming rainfall which is predicted to start on Thursday and continue off and on into the foreseeable future. Or for the next 10 days, anyway.

Bobber fishers are not hoping for rain while 'most everyone is anxious for it to start. Precipitation will take Chinook upriver out of tidewater. Often, the first push of fish will be dark or darkening, so it's the 'second wave' that anglers are looking forward to intercepting in fresh water. While there are a few expert bobber fishers on the river, most results have been spotty but everyone is hoping there are fish hanging offshore waiting for the fall rains to start. Let's just hope it's not a gullywasher which, as has occurred in years passed. will blow out the rivers while the Chinook run the entire distance unscathed. When that occurs, the season is over with out really getting started.

Although Chinook fishing has been slow to fair at the Nehalem, there have been some very large fish hooked over the past week. The jaws have been sporadically productive but a tricky and potentially dangerous area to fish. Be careful. Crabbing has been fair with much sorting of undersized and females required.

The last series of minus tides produced a fairly hot spinner bite on the upper bay. Not so on the coming weekend. Soft tides with high early afternoon highs this weekend will have anglers fishing the Ghost Hole, Coast Guard Station and the jetties. If, that is, it's not too stormy to fish T-Bay.

Chinook are being caught in Nestucca tidewater in very modest number with a few coming as high as Farmers Creek but for the most part, it has been very slow. Afternoons have been the better time to be on the water. Rain is needed here to improve prospects. A reminder: New access Passes are required for the Cloverdale Boat Ramp now as the old red passes expired in mid-October.

Tillamook Bay has been spotty for Chinook with periodic action taking place on the upper bay. Ghost Hole trollers are mostly taking boat rides with three to five hookups per day recently. Crabbing has been worthwhile for hard-shelled Dungeness in Tillamook Bay while Chinook fishing has remained hit or miss. Mid-week, Chinook were taken at the Pickett Fence and Sheeps Corral in a flurry of activity. Most anglers are returning to the dock with empty fish boxes.

While a few Chinook have been hooked on the Wilson River, all reported have been dark. It's really too early to consider the Wilson until after the rains have fallen for a while. This river comes into its own in November and will usually produce bright Chinook well in to December.

Trask tidewater has been slow for most although a few bobber fishers have cracked the code for limits.

Anglers on the Siletz, Alsea and Siuslaw are finding their angling experiences an exercise in frustration, often without touching or even seeing a Chinook.

**The Guide's Forecast** – While Chinook fishing is slow in Nehalem Bay, coho catches have been decent at times, so try a spinner if the larger salmon aren't cooperating.

Try trolling spinners from Pacific City to Woods on the lower Nestucca, starting mid morning and through the early afternoon high slack tide. Bobber fishing will be effective in upper tidewater until rain raises the river. Lower your expectations to avoid disappointment.

Tides this week aren't conducive for productive spinner fishing on T-Bay, but since that's where most of the action has been taking place, use a number 7 'thumper' in either red and white or green with a chartreuse dot on a five-foot leader and a 30-inch dropper. Troll just fast enough to get the blade to thump. For those fishing the lower bay, try the Coast Guard Tower or along the jetties but only do so if wind waves aren't blowing into the bay.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – While the wild coho fishery at Siltcoos and Tahkenich lakes has been improving over the last week or two, fall rains will serve to heat up the action. Most anglers are trolling spinners to catch these fish. With the sea-run cutthroat fishery winding down soon, anglers who would like to take advantage of this fishery should take action soon. These fish will eagerly take flies and lures in tidewater and upstream where they will frequently stage below spawning salmon to gobble loose eggs.

Although the season draws little interest, a few nearshore halibut anglers know some hotspots inside the 40-fathom line and have taken some fish. The season will close as of November 1st. All-depth fishing for up to six rockfish per day will remain open. Ling cod angling should only get better without a depth restriction.

Boats launching out of Depoe Bay on October 28th made decent catches of rockfish and ling cod with the bonus that they did so just outside of port. Soft plastics on jig heads got the job done on the bottom-dwellers.

The ocean was cooperative for boaters launching out of Newport on Tuesday and Wednesday this week and anglers made good catches of large black and yellowtail rockfish. Limits of ling cod were also taken and while not large, they were plentiful and cooperative.

Tuna fishing is over for the year, but it was great while it lasted.

Adopt a steelhead? Now you can. The ODFW is seeking sponsors to support a winter steelhead radio-tracking program on the Coquille River. An individual or group can 'adopt' one wild or hatchery steelhead, complete with the aforementioned electronics, for \$212. Cal 541-888-5515 for information.

Incidentally, radio-equipped steelhead must be released by Oregon law so 'your' fish will remain safe from anglers.

Precipitation should jump-start the sturgeon fishery in the lower Umpqua, which has been poor to slow.

Crabbing in Winchester bay has been fair to good, but better try it before the rain turns it off. The Chinook fishery is winding down and has been producing few fish recently. Smallmouth bass action on the mainstem has cooled along with the water temperature. A bright spot is coho fishing which has been good on spinners and plugs in the Elkton stretch. Coho are thick right now. Anglers in the flies only section of the North Umpqua have continued to enjoy good results for summer steelhead.

Chinook fishing is winding down on the Coquille. While the occasional large fish is being landed, it's just about wrapped for the season.

Coos Bay crabbers have been making good catches but the coming of the fall rains is likely to shut it down for a while. When offshore fishing has been possible, rockfish limits have been the rule while lings have been hot or cold. When the ling cod bite is on, some large fish have been caught.

Here it comes. Rain will fire up the Chinook action at the popular Elk and Sixes Chinook fishery and if steady but moderate precipitation falls, will sustain it. Chinook and jacks have been

entering and a few have been caught. Some Chinook have actually managed to travel to the hatchery. With the run timing a little later here, we can only hope that this is a bright spot in what has otherwise been a lackluster Chinook season.

Trollers in Rogue tidewater are taking a very few Chinook and most of the coho hooked are not of hatchery origin, requiring release. On the lower river, the best bet for a hookup with a Chinook has been at the mouth of Indian Creel where they stack waiting for a freshet to take them up to the hatchery facility there. The fall rains will come this weekend and are forecast to continue, so this fishery is about over. Fishing for adult steelhead in the Grants Pass stretch has been fair to good, although challenging for larger fish as light leaders have been required in clear water. Regulation changes will take effect on much of the Rogue on November 1st, including the use of bait from the Hatchery Hole down to Shady Cove Boat Ramp. On that same date, the flies-only restriction will be lifted, allowing the use of lures as well but not bait. With the water on the upper Rogue in the low 40s, plugs will be less effective and scented lures would be a good choice.

An emergency, temporary closure of a portion of the Chetco River has been implemented by the ODFW.

Scheduled to open November 1st, the Chetco River upstream of the Harbor water intake tower at river mile 3 will remain closed to Chinook angling through Nov. 30 to protect Chinook kegged at the top of tidewater. Trollers can fish the lower three miles of the Chetco only. A test netting indicated a mix of bright, dark and jack Chinook but based on the outstanding catches at the bubble fishery this year, the November 1st opener should yield great catches even with the upriver closure. Snagging has been a problem under these circumstances in the past. The Winchuck River will also remain closed through November.

Boats launching out of the Port of Brookings have been limiting for rockfish but ling cod catches are only fair. Storms forecast for the coming week will keep anglers inshore, however.

While trout fishing has continued to deliver limits of some of the best-quality rainbow trout in Oregon, Halloween day will be the last opportunity to fish for them. It will remain closed until April next year. With the average trout 16 inches, one can only imagine what size these fish will be on the opener.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Fly anglers are throwing October caddis patterns on the lower Deschutes with good results for reddsides averaging 15 inches. Trout fishing will close at the end of the month from Pelton Dam to the North Warm Springs border on Friday this week. Anglers are putting in their time to find willing steelhead but persistence does pay off here. Spinners have nailed some very large steelhead here.

Fishing has been slow for steelhead at the John Day arm but it's still early for this fishery.

Lake trout fishing is good at Crescent Lake with big fish coming out of depths of 120 feet or more.

Obviously, downriggers are required to troll large plugs effectively in water that deep.

**Northwest Trout** - Although the water level is very low, Hagg Lake is fishing well and producing limits of trout on PowerBait. Evenings have been most productive.

Limits of trout averaging 10 to 12 inches are being taken at Detroit Reservoir by both boat and

bank anglers. Pressure is light at this time of year.

Most Oregon Rivers and streams close on November 1st while a few remain open year 'round.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

#### **From the WDF&W Weekender Report October 29 - November 11, 2008**

##### North Puget Sound

Anglers are finding a mix of **chum** and **coho** in the region's rivers and streams. Meanwhile, anglers out on Puget Sound are reeling in some **blackmouth** and will soon have the option of also dropping a pot, as the **crab** fishery re-opens in select areas in November.

Starting Nov. 1 at sunrise, marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) and 12 (Hood Canal) will reopen for **sport crabbing** seven days a week through Jan. 2. Crab fishing will also remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), and 13 (south Puget Sound), where the fishery has continued uninterrupted since June 18.

Sport crabbing will not reopen this year in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) and 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island), where the summer catch reached the annual quota, said Rich Childers, WDFW shellfish policy coordinator.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6 1/4 inches. In addition, fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

Puget Sound's **blackmouth** - resident chinook - fishery is under way but fishing has been poor, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "Marine Area 10 has been slow, but hopefully fishing will improve in the coming weeks," he said.

Anglers fishing Marine Area 10 can keep one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit. Beginning Nov. 1, anglers in Marine Area 9 will have a two-salmon daily limit and can keep up to two hatchery chinook per day. Wild chinook salmon, which have an intact adipose fin, cannot be brought aboard the boat in Marine Area 9.

Anglers are reminded that Marine Area 7 and the open areas of marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 close to salmon fishing Nov. 1.

Thiesfeld said anglers should be aware that there are a number of shakers out there. "Anglers should use larger spoons and plugs in order to minimize their catch of those juvenile chinook," he said. "It's tough to catch legal-size fish if you are always reeling in your line to release shakers."

In the freshwater, anglers are hooking **chum salmon** and are still finding some **coho**, especially in the Skykomish and Skagit rivers.

For a change of pace, anglers might want to consider casting for **trout** at Beaver Lake. The lake near Issaquah will be stocked the week of Nov. 3 with about 1,800 hatchery rainbows weighing

between 3 to 5 pounds each. The lake, which is open to fishing year-round, is best fished by small boat, although anglers also can be successful fishing from shore, said Chad Jackson, inland fish biologist for WDFW. Internal combustion boat engines are prohibited on the lake. All anglers 15 years of age and older are required to have a valid fishing license. The daily bag limit is five fish, and bait anglers must keep the first five trout they catch.

Before heading out to the lakes, rivers, or Puget Sound, anglers should check the rules and regulations for fisheries in WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

### **South Sound/Olympic Peninsula**

As anglers target **chum** and **coho** in Puget Sound and area streams, they can look forward to dropping a crab pot when the late-season Dungeness crab fishery gets under way in select areas in November.

Starting Nov. 1 at sunrise, recreational **crab** fishing will reopen in four marine areas of Puget Sound, including marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) and 12 (Hood Canal). Crab fishing in those areas will be open seven days a week through Jan. 2.

Crab fishing will also remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), and 13 (south Puget Sound), where the fishery has continued uninterrupted since June 18.

Sport crabbing will not reopen this year in Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 east of Whidbey Island and Marine Area 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island), where the summer catch reached annual quotas.

Those fishing for crab in Puget Sound this fall and winter are required to fill out a winter catch card to record their catch. These winter cards are valid until Jan. 2 and due to WDFW by Jan. 15, 2009. Crabbers can mail in their cards or report their catch on the WDFW website, which will be available Jan. 2, 2009.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6 1/4 inches. In addition, fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

Meanwhile, with 486,990 chum salmon expected to return to southern Puget Sound this year, anglers trolling the waters in Hammersley and Totten inlets near Shelton (Marine Area 13) are starting to reel in fish destined for Kennedy, Skookum, Mill and Johns creeks, said Larry Phillips, WDFW fish biologist.

"We're at the front end of the chum migration and the fishing's picking up," Phillips said. "However, some much-needed rain would help move more fish from the estuaries into the streams and spawning areas." So far, chum anglers are finding success using a herring placed just underneath the bobber, Phillips said.

Phillips reminds anglers that starting Nov. 1, wild coho may be retained in Marine Area 13, but only one chinook may be retained as part of the two-fish daily limit. A portion of Kennedy Creek,

which flows into Totten Inlet, is open to salmon fishing through Nov. 30 (from the mouth to the northbound Hwy. 101 Bridge). Up to two adults may be retained as part of the six-fish daily limit, but all wild coho must be released and barbless hooks are required.

Anglers will have more opportunity to target chum when the Dosewallips and Duckabush rivers in Jefferson County, and Minter Creek in Pierce/Kitsap counties open for fishing Nov. 1.

Rain is also a factor for anglers hoping to catch **hatchery coho** in Grays Harbor rivers, said Scott Barbour, WDFW fish biologist. "There are fish in the rivers, but they're pretty dark and most people are catching wild coho, which must be released," Barbour said. "We need some rain to move the brighter fish into the rivers." Barbour reminds anglers that only hatchery coho salmon with a clipped adipose fin may be retained on the Chehalis, Elk, Satsop, Humptulips, Wishkah and Wynoochee rivers. All other salmon must be released.

Anglers are advised to check WDFW's 2008/2009 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for regulations on specific rivers.

Anglers fishing in the Quillayute system — which includes the Bogachiel, Sol Duc, Calawah and Dickey rivers, can keep chinook as part of their limit of three adult fish. The total daily limit is six fish; all wild adult coho must be released until Nov. 1.

Along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the salmon season ends Oct. 31 in Marine Area 6 (Port Angeles), but a new **blackmouth** fishery starts Nov. 1 in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), where the daily limit is two salmon (combined) and one chinook may be retained. The one-chinook retention rule also applies in Marine Area 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island) starting Nov. 1.

Meanwhile, anglers looking for some late-season **trout** fishing, should head to Black Lake in Thurston County, where 3,500 one-half pound rainbows are being planted in preparation for the Nov. 1 weekend.

On the coast, many of the 13,500 **razor clam** diggers who participated in the Oct. 16-18 season opener on four ocean beaches took home their 15-clam limit. The next dig is tentatively scheduled Nov. 13-16, subject to the results of marine toxin tests.

### **Southwest Washington:**

Hatchery **coho** salmon are providing most of the action on the lower Columbia River, although bank anglers fishing for **sturgeon** immediately below Bonneville Dam also continue to find fish.

The best bet for hatchery **coho** has been the Cowlitz River, where anglers have been reeling in lots of bright fish weighing up to 20 pounds, said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. Recent survey crews have counted up to 300 anglers fishing just below the barrier dam, which remains the hotspot on the river.

"Sometimes coho arrive with lockjaw, but these fish are biting on everything from lures to nightcrawlers," Hymer said. "Local tackle shops report selling loads of nightcrawlers."

The daily limit on most of the Cowlitz River is six adult salmon, only one of which may be a **chinook** (clipped or unclipped). However, all adult chinook must be released from Blue Creek to Mill Creek and unmarked jacks must be released throughout the river. The night closure rule and non-buoyant lure restriction from Mill Creek to the barrier dam has been extended through November.

Hymer noted that other rivers are also giving up some nice fish. Bank anglers fishing the Lewis River have been catching nearly one hatchery coho for every two rods, while those fishing the Kalama have been averaging one for three. "If we get some rain, we should see more coho moving into the Elochoman, Washougal and Klickitat rivers, too," he said.

On the mainstem Columbia River, anglers have been averaging about one coho salmon per boat in the Camas/Washougal area below Bonneville Dam. Of the 84 boats counted during a recent aerial survey, 38 were fishing in that area. Salmon fishing closes Nov. 1 from Beacon Rock upstream to the dam.

Boat anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool have been averaging about one salmon for every two rods, with most of the action concentrated around the mouth of Klickitat River. About 90 percent of the catch has been made up of bright, late-stock hatchery coho.

Fishing effort has been light on Drano Lake, although anglers are catching some chinook and coho. The last day to fish for salmon on the Wind River is Oct. 31, but Drano Lake reopens to fishing seven days per week the next day. On the Klickitat River, all chinook salmon must be released starting Nov. 1 upstream from the Fisher Hill Bridge, about three miles above the mouth.

The bank fishery for **sturgeon** just below Bonneville Dam continues to draw plenty of anglers, who averaged one legal-size fish for every seven rods during the week ending Oct. 26. Boat anglers averaged a sturgeon for every six rods, with most of the fishing concentrated in the gorge. That fishery is starting to cool down - along with water temperatures in the Columbia River - as more fish move into the warmer waters of the Willamette River, Hymer said.

Despite good coho fishing, an increasing number of Cowlitz River anglers are turning their attention to the **cutthroat trout** crowding into the river. "The river is black with them right now just below the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery," Hymer said. That's a prime location for anglers who permanently use a wheelchair, because there is a fishing site developed specially for them by Tacoma Power at the hatchery outfall. "Anglers who use wheelchairs have limited options to go fishing, so this run of cutthroat is a great opportunity to catch some fish," said Wolf Dammers, another WDFW fish biologist.

The daily trout limit is five fish per day, with a minimum length of 12 inches. "Most of the cutthroat we're seeing average about 14 inches long," Dammers said. Although anglers are required to release any wild, unmarked cuts they catch, the vast majority of those caught below the trout hatchery are marked with a clipped adipose fin, he said.

Trout fishing has also been good at Swift Reservoir, which will remain open through November. Lots of 12-14 inch **rainbow trout** are being caught at the upper end of the reservoir. Anglers should also be aware that WDFW is again stocking Kress Lake near Kalama with hatchery **summer-run steelhead**. Ten fish were released there Oct. 20 and more steelhead - and possibly coho - are expected to follow.

Planning for the winter fishery? The first winter-run steelhead arrived at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery in recent days.

### **Eastern Washington:**

The most recent Snake River **steelhead** fishing creel checks show the best catch rates have been measured in the stretch from Lower Monumental to Little Goose dams. Steelheaders there have averaged about 17 hours of effort per fish caught. Just slightly slower catch rates have

been measured near the mouth of the Grand Ronde River to the Oregon state line. For all of the latest southeast Washington steelhead creel results, see the eastern region webpage at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/snake/index.htm>.

Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, has recently been a **rainbow trout** fishing hot spot. Hatchery trout stocked in the year-round fishing lake last spring have grown tremendously and are now at least 16 inches, average about 1½ pounds apiece. Cooler water and air temperatures seem to have put these fat fish on the bite, said WDFW district fish biologist Chris Donley, who recently watched anglers catch their five-trout daily limits in less than an hour. Word of good fishing has evidently spread, as both public and private access sites on Sprague have been crowded. Donley reminds anglers to follow the rules and pick up after themselves.

These are the last days of trout fishing at most of the region's managed lakes, which close Oct. 31. WDFW northeast district fish biologist Bill Baker reminds anglers that neither Lake Ellen in Ferry County nor Frater Lake in Pend Oreille County have any fish left, since both were recently treated to remove infestations of non-trout species. WDFW southeast district fish biologist Glen Mendel said anglers have been catching hatchery-stocked rainbows in the Tucannon River impoundments in Columbia County - Beaver, Big Four, Blue, Deer, Rainbow, Spring and Watson lakes.

Donley reminds anglers that southwest Spokane County's Amber Lake remains open for catch-and-release-only fishing through November.

#### **North Central Washington:**

Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist from Omak, reported that **steelhead** fishing within the mainstem Columbia River above Wells Dam, the Okanogan River, and the Methow River has been good in recent weeks. Mainstem Columbia and Okanogan river anglers are averaging a fish for every 10 hours of fishing time, while the catch rate in the Methow River is 15 hours per fish.

Jateff encourages anglers to retain adipose-clipped steelhead in all fishery areas to allow a higher percentage of natural-origin fish on the spawning grounds. Selective gear rules are in effect for the steelhead season, except that bait can be used within the mainstem Columbia River from Wells Dam upstream to 400 feet below Chief Joseph Dam. All steelhead with an anchor (floy) tag attached must be released.

Through Nov 12, Douglas County Public Utilities District (PUD) will lower the water level up to 10 feet in the reservoir behind Wells Dam on the Columbia River to make dam repairs and improvements to boat launching facilities. Anglers fishing the mainstem are advised that some areas for both shore and boat access may be difficult to use during this time.

Jateff also reported Rufus Woods reservoir continues to provide good fishing for **triploid rainbow trout**. Boats can be launched at Bridgeport State Park or at the Army Corps of Engineer's site just above Chief Joseph Dam. Shore anglers can fish just above the dam or drive up to Brandt's Landing. Jateff reminds anglers that when using bait, the first two fish caught are part of the two-fish daily limit, whether kept or released.

"Okanogan County also has a couple of smaller lakes with very good fishing for rainbow trout at this time of the year," Jateff said. "Both Rat Lake near Brewster and the Green Lakes near Omak are under selective gear rules until Dec. 1, but they can provide very good catch-and-release fishing for 11 to 13-inch fish. We have boat launching facilities at each of these lakes."

Art Viola, WDFW Chelan district fish biologist, said there are still insufficient numbers of wild **steelhead** entering the Wenatchee River to allow a fall/winter fishery. "We're monitoring the run closely, and a fishing season will open if or when we are sure adequate numbers of wild fish are returning," Viola said. "We must comply with a NOAA fisheries permit that requires a return of at least 600 wild fish before any season can be opened."

#### **South Central Washington:**

The Ringold area of the Columbia River opens for **hatchery steelhead** Nov. 1 with a daily limit of two hatchery steelhead, identifiable by a clipped adipose fin. The area will be open to steelhead fishing through March 31 from the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco/Kennewick upstream to the wooden powerline towers at the old Hanford town site.

The Yakima fall **salmon** fishery closed Oct. 22 after an estimated catch of 502 adult fall chinook, 64 chinook jacks, 35 adult coho and 47 coho jacks harvested, said WDFW fish biologist Paul Hoffarth of Pasco. Hoffarth says a final report detailing the results of the sport fishery and stream surveys for the lower Yakima River will be prepared and available in Spring 2009.

WDFW fish biologist Eric Anderson of Yakima reminds **rainbow trout** anglers that many year-round lakes in Yakima and Kittitas counties are well stocked with catchable-size trout in the fall. "Although these fish are smaller than the trout planted in spring, they still provide good angling opportunity in our year-round lakes," Anderson said. Some of these fish carry over through the winter and get bigger in the lake without tying up rearing space in the hatchery."

#### **Reader Email –**

Subscriber Rick G. writes, "I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoy your weekly updates. It is always nice to see your name in my emails. I am going to send you a couple pictures of my friend Kelly Logan, she is from the Portland area, and we are best of friends. Last Sunday she came down and we went on her very first steelhead fishing trip. We were floating from Clearwater boat ramp to Island Park on the Middle Fork of the Willamette. We were fishing sand shrimp with a diver and we also were fishing whole night crawlers under a bobber.

"Kelly caught two late summer run steelhead, it was a great day, and we did not see another boat on the water. Once again thank you for the great information. Tight lines."

Here's a photo of Kelly with one of her fish.



Got a question, story to tell or information to share? Shoot us an Email!

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: [brees@pacifier.com](mailto:brees@pacifier.com)

Doug Rees: [doug@TheGuidesForecast.com](mailto:doug@TheGuidesForecast.com)

Michael Teague: [Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com](mailto:Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com)

### **Random Links**

Fall Fishing Jamboree at Oregon State Fair/Expo Center November 1 2008:

**<http://www.oregonbassfederation.org/bluebassflyer.pdf>**

Bad day for sea lion:

**<http://video.msn.com/video.aspx?mkt=en-US&vid=7bfe8046-c4b1-4110-b58e-01d6e529a294>**

**Weekly Quote** – "Angling is, or should be, essentially a philosophic and reflective engagement, rewarding the practitioner not only with trout, but with a gentler and more matured comprehension of life itself." - Ernest G. Schwiebert, Jr.

**GOOD LUCK!**