

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 5<sup>th</sup> – June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro** - Free fishing weekend begins on Saturday with no license or tag required for fish and shellfish over the weekend. Daily and annual bag limits must still be adhered to. Trout have been stocked in many of the districts lakes and some streams in anticipation for the popular weekend.

Interest in shad fishing on the Columbia River is peaking with tens of thousands crossing Bonneville Dam daily. Small spinners and spoons are effective on sunny days with no bag limit in effect. This is a great fishery to introduce kids to. Besides great crab bait, fresh shad is an excellent bait for oversized sturgeon that are readily biting in the Columbia River Gorge. Keepers are becoming scarce however.

With the Willamette hitting 65 degrees at the Falls, an average of 500 or more springers and about 200 summer steelhead are crossing per day. Shad and sturgeon fishing are fair.

As the McKenzie continues to drop, the water temperature has topped 50 degrees at Vida. The entire river is fishing well.

The Santiam system has produced a few summers to anglers using jigs. Spring chinook are also being taken but it's spotty.

Spinners have been most effective for steelhead on the Clackamas recently with some anglers hooking several fish in a day.

A few steelhead are hitting jigs on the Sandy but there are many natives in the system.

For Free Fishing Weekend, June 6th and 7th, Benson Lake, Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, Harriet Lake, Hartman Pond, Henry Hagg Lake, Huddleston Pond, North Fork Reservoir, Sheridan Pond, Silver Creek Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, South Yamhill River, Timothy Meadows, Trillium Lake, West Salish Pond, Alton Baker Canal, Blue River Above Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Detroit Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, Hills Creek, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Roaring River Park Pond, Salmon Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake, Sunnyside Park Pond, Walter Wirth Lake and Willamette River Middle Fork above Hills Creek Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with trout.

**Northwest** – Spring chinook anglers did well on Tuesday with the weak outgoing tides producing the best results this season on the bay. Numerous fish from 18 to 24-pounds fell to herring on the last few hours of outgoing tide along the inside of the north jetty. This fishery is peaking right now.

Low, clear water has fish weary in the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers but early morning anglers are getting a few salmon that are concentrated in the deeper holes in the lower stretches. Bait floated under bobbers is producing the best.

Calm seas are forecasted through the weekend making the next all depth halibut opener pretty attractive. The final 3-day season ends this Saturday but an extension may be granted if anglers

failed to achieve the poundage quota this spring. The nearshore fishery will remain open 7 days per week until further notice.

Ocean crabbing has slowed out of Garibaldi with about half the catch made up of softshell crabs. Molting crab carcasses along ocean beaches are giving the impression of a large die off but discarded shells are just part of this natural process.

Although sturgeon anglers in the lower Columbia River scored good results late last week, the bite below the Astoria/Megler Bridge has slowed with the weaker tides but fish continue to be caught upstream of Tongue Point. Fresh anchovies are taking some keepers in the deeper water.

Razor clam diggers should score excellent results along Clatsop Beaches this weekend, especially with the calm surf conditions.

Scheduled to be planted with trout are Alder Lake, Big Creek Reservoir 1 & 2, Buck Lake, Cape Mears Lake, Cleawox Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Dune Lake, Georgia Lake, Hebo Lake, Nedonna Pond, North Georgia Lake, Olalla Creek Reservoir, Perkins Lake, Thissel Pond and Town Lake.

**Southwest** – Boats launching out of central and southwest ports should have no problems according to long-range marine forecasts.

Morning minus tides will create clamming opportunities along beaches and in estuaries this weekend.

Spring chinook fishing has been decent on the mainstem and North Umpqua. Shad fishing is good now even though it's early in the season here.

Boats launching out of Charleston over the past weekend experienced fair to good bottomfishing for a mixed bag. Halibut fishing has been good during the all-depth retention period.

Spring chinook catches have tapered off on the lower Rogue with anglers focusing on deeper holes rather than migration lanes now. Wild chinook may no longer be retained on the Rogue up to Hog Creek Boat ramp through July 10th and below Gold Ray Dam through July 31st due to low returns this year. With Salmonflies on the hatch, trout fishing on the Holy Water stretch is very good.

Bottom fishing out of the Port of Brookings is producing good catches of lingcod, rockfish and cabezon. Predictions for the coming weekend indicate easy bar crossings. Offshore crabbing has been worthwhile and even those crabbing from docks in the bay are taking some keepers. Brookings area beaches have been producing some of the largest surf perch of the year on big tidal swings. Some of the pinkfin filling limits recently have weighed four pounds or better.

Diamond Lake has continued to reward anglers with limits of trout averaging 14 inches with the largest taken this year over six pounds.

Clearwater Fby #2, Cooper Cr. Reservoir, Galesville Reservoir, Hemlock Lake, Herbert's Pond, Lake in the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir, Loon Lake, Marie Lake, Plat I Reservoir, Eel Lake, Lower and Middle Empire Lake, Millicoma Pond, North and South Tenmile Lake, Rogue above Lost Creek, Hyatt Lake, Lost Creek Reservoir, Medco Pond, Lake Selmac and Expo Pond are scheduled to be stocked with trout.

**Eastern** – Redsidies are eating Salmonflies and their imitations in earnest on the Deschutes from above Maupin down to Trout Creek in crowded conditions. The upper Deschutes is open and fishing well with attractor flies.

Smallmouth fishing on the John Day River is slowing for big fish but good numbers of smaller fish are becoming more consistent. Dave Blackmore of Sparks, Nevada boated over 115 bass in one day - all on a spinner bait. The fish are very active and biting on 1/8 oz jigheads with Outlaw Baits 5" worms in all the colors. The river is down to 3700 and looking very good for awhile.

**SW Washington –** The Cowlitz River continues to be the bright spot for salmon anglers in the district. The Kalama and Lewis Rivers are shaping up for summer run steelhead with the peak likely to happen later this month and into mid-July. Hatchery escapement goals may not be met on some systems but jack counts are an encouraging sign for the next year.

The Drano Lake and Wind River fisheries are beginning to slow. Trollers are still taking a few jacks but this fishery will begin to fade fast until more summer steelhead begin to cross Bonneville Dam.

**Columbia River Fishing Report –** With sturgeon fishing about the only game in town, anglers are focusing their efforts on oversized sturgeon in the gorge and keepers in the estuary. Both fisheries are coming into their own right now.

With lots of fresh shad available, oversize seekers are finding consistent success for large fish near the Marker 85 deadline. It's clear however that this fishery is not drawing the attention it used to as anglers seem to only need to experience this fishery once or a few times in their lifetime. Action is good however and shad anglers are really getting all the shad they want to for sturgeon or crab bait. Counts at Bonneville are nearing 70,000 fish per day. Those are ample numbers for good action by both boat and bank anglers. There are a few keepers still being caught in the gorge but effort and success is improving downriver in the estuary.

Although action tapered early in the week, anglers had a good crack at quality sized sturgeon just prior to the previous weekend. Some large keepers were taken out of Hammond and numerous oversized fish were caught and released as well. Since then, the Tongue Point area has picked up and is producing better than the water below the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Fresh anchovies have been producing good with sand shrimp a close second in the shallower water where crab and trash fish are less likely to reside. Most of the effort is above Tongue Point but effort overall seems down a bit from previous years.

Anglers have another week to wait before managers will open the steelhead season back up. Salmon counts at Bonneville climbed a little bit on Wednesday but it's highly likely that numbers won't increase prior to the June 15<sup>th</sup> cut off date for spring chinook counts in order to justify an earlier opener. Jack counts now make up over half of the counted chinook passing Bonneville this year. It should be an incredible year in 2010. Steelhead numbers at Bonneville are encouraging but once we begin to see 200 fish per day crossing at Bonneville, action would have likely been fair at best anyway. There are some good tides starting towards the end of the month so plunkers should prepare for those.

**The Guide's Forecast –** Gorge sturgeon fishers will continue to witness good opportunities for oversized sturgeon the next few weeks. Action will often be dictated by effort and Saturdays are oddly consistently slow. Fresh shad will be the only bait to use when targeting oversized fish. Use smelt or shrimp for keeper sized fish. All sizes are available in the gorge.

Estuary anglers should begin to find more consistent results, especially out of the John Day Ramp. Sand shrimp will work well in this water but anchovies should also produce well, especially in the deeper water. Sporadic action in the deeper water below Tongue Point is also likely but you're bait

will be consumed by crab and trash fish here also. Larger keepers are likely to come from the lower river and remember the new length measurements for the estuary fishery; 41 to 54 inches on a fork-length measurement constitutes a keeper sized fish. Fish are well distributed above Tongue Point but until higher concentrations of fish show up, you may need to wait out biters if you have any degree of confidence that you're fishing in a productive area.

Prepare your spin-n-glos for the beach plunking fishery set to begin for steelhead and summer chinook in mid-June. It should be a good season. Meanwhile, shad will provide ample sport and allow novice anglers to practice on how to catch larger fish. The hot colored spin-n-glos are always the most productive. Reds, oranges and pinks will produce the most strikes on the stronger outgoing tides.

For those willing to cross the Columbia River bar, ideal conditions will exist for a good bottomfishing catch along the south jetty out of Astoria. Too bad the all-depth halibut season is already closed for this portion of the coast.

There are clearly some crabs in the lower Columbia River estuary but they are most likely undersized. Ocean crabbing should be a better option but many of the crab are likely to be soft-shelled.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Old news but worth a mention. June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> it's Free Fishing Weekend once again. Virtually all the regularly-stocked waters of the Willamette Valley have been planted for the coming weekend during which no licensees or tags are required for any species of fish or shellfish. Take a kid or your non-fishing neighbor out Friday or Saturday to get 'em hooked.

Spring Chinook counts are about 15,000 so far this season while around 5,500 summer steelhead have crossed the Falls. Approximations are all that we can offer as this data falls behind several days. Winter steelhead counts were considered complete on May 15th.

While a little higher than normal at this time of year, the McKenzie is quite fishable. Only 13 springers, all wild, and 97 summer steelhead, 90 of which were hatchery, have been counted at Leaburg Dam.

The North Santiam is still a little high but will start dropping soon. The numbers of steelhead and salmon are improving daily although fishing has been slow. Watch out for obstruction in the river, particularly from Greens Bridge to Shelburn.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The Middle Fork Willamette is fishing well for fly anglers targeting trout with nymphs in caddis and stonefly patterns. Sturgeon anglers are catching good numbers of 'shorts' and making fair catches of keeper-sized fish. Shad fishing has been only fair this week but it's still early and catches will improve into June.

McKenzie anglers are finding trout action on the entire length of the river. Recent hatches have improved fishing.

The North Santiam is kicking out very few springers and only the occasional summer steelhead.

Silverton reservoir is open following construction and is fishing very well.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Steelheading has picked up on the Clackamas River with the occasional large hatchery steelhead hooked over the past week. Spinners have been

most effective. Spring Chinook catches have dropped off. The

ODFW reports, "Bright adult spring chinook have returned to the creek. This is the first significant return of adult springers from smolt releases that were initiated in 2005 and have continued every spring since. These fish have been observed in good numbers as far up as the canyon above the middle ladder. The creek is still fishable but the recent dry spell has caused the water to drop somewhat."

Spring Chinook fishing is slow on the Sandy. There is very little pressure as summer steelheading is yielding few fish with the better fishing just below Cedar Creek. The river is starting to show a little glacial tint.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Spring chinook catches were great on Tuesday along the north jetty of Tillamook Bay. Fish to 24-pounds were reported as the tide slowed towards low slack stimulating a good bite for a few hours. The current softer tides have been producing the best results this season although some anglers have reported consistent action using herring in the upper bay in front of the Oyster House. Overall, the spinner bite in the upper bay was poor for much of last week.

The lower stretches of tidewater also produced poorly although that's likely to change if the last few days is any indicator that there are some fair numbers of fish coming in.

Rivers remain low so chinook and steelhead should be concentrated in the deeper holes (chinook) and deeper runs (steelhead) until water levels rise on the next rain freshet.

Ocean crabbing out of Garibaldi is poor. I soaked 6 pots overnight with prime crab bait only taking 9 legal males of which 5 were soft-shelled. I crabbed north of the north jetty in about 30 foot of water. The ocean remains closed to salmon fishing but nearshore halibut remains an option. The last 3-day opener for all-depth halibut closes on Saturday.

Bottomfishing for seabass should be productive this weekend with friendly seas in the forecast.

**The Guide's Forecast** – More minus tides this week should shift effort to the upper bay for spinner, herring and plug trollers. Action should be fair as it's clear fair numbers of fish passed the Tillamook Bay Bar earlier this week. Look for the best action in the mid-morning until low slack hits.

The tidewater stretches of the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers should also offer up some opportunities for bobber and bait pitchers as well as spinner casters. Light leaders will be necessary to have any expectations for success.

Summer steelhead should be available to stealthy anglers on the Wilson and Nestucca systems. Use bobbers and jigs in the deeper water but small baits in the deeper slots should produce for a few anglers. Chinook will be concentrated in fair numbers in the deeper holes.

Check ocean forecasts before heading out but bottomfishing and halibut opportunities should be excellent this weekend. You may have to start a bit later in the morning when the hard minus tide hits by Saturday.

Beach and bay clamming should also be excellent this weekend. Razors along the Clatsop Beaches should be in prime shape.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Boats launching out of Newport and Depoe Bay will be greeted with a friendly ocean this coming weekend for the Thursday through Saturday all-depth halibut fishery. Alternately, for those better equipped for bottom fishing inside the 40-fathom line, results should be good for rockfish.

With spring Chinook season winding down on many southwest rivers, anglers are looking forward to the opening of the offshore coho season June 20th. With a quota of 110,000 fish and a daily bag limit of three fish per day, it's going to be a fun season. No ocean Chinook fishing will be allowed.

Precipitation started on the southwest coast on Wednesday this week and will have the rivers on the rise.

Good catches of herring have been taken recently from Yaquina Bay. This can be a 'hot or cold' fishery, so tip the odds in your favor and time your trip to jig on the incoming tide and use Sabiki jigs available locally.

Sturgeon fishing is fair in Winchester bay for anglers soaking mud shrimp. Striped bass fishing has been improving. Spring Chinook fishing has held up in the mainstem Umpqua but it remains to be seen what effect rainfall will have on action this weekend. It will certainly have a negative effect on shad fishing which has been good and improving with the larger females showing recently. The lower South Umpqua has been kicking out decent numbers of smallmouth bass.

Crabbing remains slow in Coos Bay while jetty fishing has been good for rockfish.

The Coquille River is seeing the first of the shad run this year.

The lower Rogue has been a good place to find solitude as it has been virtually deserted since Memorial Day. Very few spring Chinook are being hooked as the water temperature approached the mid-60s and action screeched to a halt with the river rising. As the river level starts to drop, possibly this weekend but certainly early next week, Springer fishing is expected to be fair in the Grants Pass stretch and best in the upper Rogue where the numbers of Chinook have been improving despite a modest run this year.

Bottom fishing out of Port Orford has been reliably producing limits of both rockfish and ling cod.

Elk and Sixes anglers are doing well for sea-run cuts. These fish are suckers for a spinner or for any brightly-colored fly. Just remember that these trout, unlike rainbows or steelhead, won't be found in the seams; they prefer dark, boiling areas or so-called 'frog water.'

Fishing for sea-run cutthroat trout has been worthwhile on the Chetco. Just remember to use only artificial lures above tidewater but this is no handicap as cuts are anxious biters. Action has been best early and late in the day. Surf fishing for large perch should be great this coming weekends as mild ocean forecasts will provide the perfect conditions. Boats will be able to launch with ease out of the Port of Brookings to take advantage of excellent offshore bottom fishing just outside the jaws.

Limits of rockfish is the rule and catches of ling cod have been very good. While crabbing is fairly dismal in most bays and estuaries at this time of year, Brookings has been an exception lately. It's fair to good, even from the local docks as well as out in the ocean although checking for softshells is necessary.

Diamond Lake is fishing very well, producing limits of trout to most anglers with a couple hours effort. With trout coming out of here to over seven pounds and even 12-inchers weighing over a

pound, it's a great place to fish. Expect crowds during this coming Friday and Saturday, however as June 6th and 7th is Free Fishing Weekend.

South coast species and fishing info from the ODFW:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/mrp/publications/recfish/guide\\_south\\_vAug04.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/mrp/publications/recfish/guide_south_vAug04.pdf)

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – The bug bugs are here. With salmon flies actively hatching on the lower Deschutes, evening activity has been pulse-quickenning. In addition to the salmon flies, Golden Stones are out in abundance.

Activity is taking place from Warm Springs downstream but is working its way upriver. Fishing is good and getting better but the warm weather could shorten the time frame of this once a year opportunity, get out there while it's hot.

The challenging Metolius is fishing well as summer-like weather has triggered decent hatches.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

**From the WDF&W Weekender Report May 27 - June 9, 2009**

#### **North Puget Sound**

Spring fishing seasons are winding down in the region, but saltwater anglers still have their pick of halibut and lingcod fisheries. In the freshwater, anglers fishing the region's lakes will soon have an opportunity to turn their attention to the rivers, where trout and salmon fisheries are just around the corner.

Portions of the Skagit, Cascade and Skykomish rivers open for **chinook salmon** fishing June 1, said Brett Barkdull, WDFW fish biologist. The Skagit will open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River. On the Cascade, anglers will be allowed to fish from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. Both stretches are open through July 15.

The daily limit on the Skagit and Cascade rivers will be four hatchery chinook, two of which may be adults (chinook salmon at least 24 inches in length). Barkdull noted that statewide rules require anglers to stop fishing for salmon once they have kept two adults.

"Traditionally, fishing has been pretty good on the Skagit and Cascade rivers on the opener, and we're hopeful that will be the case this year," said Barkdull. "But expectations are down because the run forecast at 1,400 hatchery chinook is about 600 less fish than last year's return."

Barkdull reminds anglers that gamefish regulations have changed on the Cascade River from the mouth to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. From June 1 to July 15, anglers can retain up to two trout, which includes hatchery steelhead and bull trout. For details, anglers should check the rules and regulations pamphlet on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>

On the Skykomish River, hatchery chinook fishing will be open from the Lewis Street Bridge in Monroe to the Wallace River through July 31. Anglers fishing the Skykomish will have a daily limit of two hatchery chinook salmon.

Meanwhile, **trout** fishing will open at several of the region's rivers and streams beginning June 6. Under the statewide rule for trout, there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches in rivers and streams. However, some of the region's rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep.

Out on the saltwater, the northern portion of Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) opens June 1 to catch-and-release fishing for **salmon** . Fishing will be allowed north of a line from Point Monroe to Meadow Point.

Farther north, the Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery begins June 5. Except for a one-day closure on June 20, the fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 7. The fishery will reopen Sept. 12 on a Saturday and Sunday-only schedule through Sept. 27. Anglers fishing the bubble will have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. Chinook must measure 22 inches in length to retain.

Fishing for **lingcod** is still an option. The fishery runs through June 15 in the region, where anglers have hooked some nice lings recently. Catch counts at the Coronet Bay public ramp indicate 113 anglers hauled in seven lingcod May 23, and 84 anglers checked five lings the following day. Elsewhere, 36 anglers at the Washington Park ramp brought home five lingcod May 24. During the hook-and-line season (May 1-June 15), there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 40 inches.

Time is running out to hook a **halibut** . The season for the big flatfish is open through June 5. Until the fishery closes, anglers can fish five days a week, Thursday through Monday, with a daily limit of one halibut and no minimum size limit.

The region's **spot shrimp** fishery is closed, but shrimpers can soon fish for **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** in some marine areas beginning June 1. For details on shrimp fisheries check WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/shrimpindex.shtml> .

Before heading out, anglers should check the rules and regulations for all fisheries on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> .

Washingtonians who are interested in fishing but haven't actually given it a try have a perfect chance to do so during **Free Fishing Weekend** , scheduled June 6-7. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the 500 water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state. The rules pamphlet is also available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> .

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

**Hood Canal Bridge closure:** People heading to or from the northern Olympic Peninsula should note that the Hood Canal Bridge is scheduled for closure through mid-June. The Washington State Department of Transportation offers a number of transportation options to help drivers during this time (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR104HoodCanalBridgeEast/2009closure.htm>).

With June nearly here, anglers can soon add trout and steelhead to their list of fishing choices, or continue to take advantage of the halibut and lingcod seasons, which end in a few more weeks. In addition, a new crab season is on the horizon. Don't forget free fishing weekend June 6-7.

The recreational **halibut** fishery in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) closes Friday, May 29 at the end of the day, but anglers trying for the big flat fish still have options. Marine Area 2 (Westport) will be open at least two more Sundays, May 31 and June 7. Additional openings are possible if enough quota remains, said Heather Reed, WDFW coastal policy coordinator.

Farther north, Neah Bay and La Push (marine areas 3 and 4) will open for two more days of fishing June 4 and 6. "We will evaluate the quota after these dates to determine if there's enough quota for additional openings," Reed said. For updated information on the fishery, Reed suggests anglers check recent regulations at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regs\\_seasons.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regs_seasons.html).

Sunny weather in Port Angeles (Marine Area 6) brought out hundreds of **halibut** fishers who participated in the 9th annual Port Angeles Halibut Derby during the Memorial Day weekend. Creel checks conducted in the area showed 558 anglers pulled in 121 halibut with the winner of the derby bringing in a 77-pound trophy. This area, as well as Marine Area 11 (Tacoma-Vashon Island) closes June 5. Marine Area 5 (Seiku) will remain open through July 3. These fisheries are open five days a week, Thursday through Monday.

All areas open to halibut fishing have a one-fish daily catch limit, no minimum size. For additional information, call the Fishing Hotline at (360) 902-2500 or check the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/halibut/>.

A few weeks remain for anglers looking to catch **lingcod**, **rockfish** and **cabezon** in marine areas 5-13, where the season wraps up June 15. During the hook-and-line season for lings (May 1-June 15), all fish must measure at least 26 inches, but no more than 40 inches. The spear fishing season for lingcod runs May 21-June 15, with no size limits. The fishery is open seven days a week with a one-fish daily limit. For rockfish, there is no minimum size, but anglers must keep the first legal rockfish caught.

Meanwhile, June 1 marks opening day for **salmon** fishing in Marine Area 11, which extends from the northern tip of Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. Salmon fishing is currently open in Marine Area 13 (South Puget Sound). Both areas have a daily limit of two fish and all wild chinook must be released. Anglers should also note that Commencement Bay is closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 1. Details on rules and limits are included in the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, or online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

On the freshwater, **trout** and **steelhead** anglers should note that the statewide opening date for river fishing has changed from June 1 to the first Saturday of the month, which falls on June

6 this year. Many popular regional streams and rivers are affected by this regulation, including the Bogachiel, Chehalis, Hoh, Sol Duc, Wishkah and Wynoochee rivers.

**Free Fishing Weekend** is coming up June 6-7. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the 500 water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state. The rules pamphlet is also available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

Looking forward to crab fishing? The popular recreational fishery opens June 18 seven days a week in the western Strait of Juan de Fuca (marine areas 4 and 5) and southern Puget Sound (Marine Area 13). Most other marine areas will open July 1 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, although Hood Canal and some waters north of Anacortes will not open until later in summer.

Crab fishers are reminded that those who fail to file catch reports for 2009 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2010 crab license. Puget Sound sport crabbers are required to report their Dungeness crab catch on separate summer and fall/winter catch record cards during the course of the season. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm> or <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>

### **Southwest Washington**

Anglers are still reeling in good numbers of **spring chinook salmon** on several tributaries to the Columbia River, but other fisheries are beginning to compete for their attention. As this year's spring chinook run winds down, many anglers are making plans to fish for **summer steelhead, shad, sturgeon** and **trout**.

"This is a time of year when a lot of good fishing opportunities start opening up," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "A lot of anglers kick off the season with spring chinook, then move from one fishery to the next right through the summer months."

If that sounds like fun, prospective anglers interested in taking up the sport will have a chance to test the waters during **Free Fishing Weekend**, scheduled June 6-7. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the 500 water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as catch record cards, size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. For more information, see WDFW's

*Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet ( <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> ), available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state.

For now, anglers looking for **spring chinook** can still find them - especially on the Cowlitz, Wind, and Klickitat rivers, and at Drano Lake. On the Wind River, bank anglers fishing in the gorge averaged a hatchery chinook per rod while boat anglers averaged a fish for every three rods during the week ending May 24. Only hatchery chinook with a clipped adipose fin may be retained on the lower Wind River and other tributaries to the Columbia River.

At Drano Lake, boat anglers averaged nearly two-thirds of a salmon per rod, as did bank anglers fishing downriver from the Fisher Hill Bridge on the Klickitat River. Jack salmon made up 40 percent of the catch at Wind River, 60 percent on Drano Lake and 70 percent on the Klickitat River that week.

"We're seeing a very strong return of jacks to those and other tributaries this year, which should provide good fishing for some weeks to come," said Hymer, noting that Drano Lake is closed to fishing on Wednesdays through June 10. He noted that daily catch limits were recently increased at Drano Lake and on the Wind River to six salmon - including up to two adults - to give anglers an opportunity to catch more of those record breaking jack returns.

Starting June 1, the Klickitat fishery for hatchery salmon and steelhead will be open seven days per week downstream from Fisher Hill Bridge and 400 feet upstream from the No. 5 fishway to the boundary markers below the Klickitat Salmon Hatchery. The salmon daily limit will be six fish that same day. Only two may be adults from the Fisher Hill Bridge downstream and only jacks are allowed upstream. Again, be sure to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet for details.

Catch rates for hatchery spring chinook appears to be slowing some on the Cowlitz River but summer-run **hatchery steelhead** are moving in to take up the slack. Hymer said steelhead fishing should continue to improve in the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, Washougal and Klickitat rivers in the weeks ahead.

Sections of the South Fork Toutle River and the Green River recently opened early to fishing for hatchery steelhead, and the Grays River and a stretch of the lower Elochoman River opened early to fishing for both hatchery chinook and hatchery steelhead. For more information on those fisheries, check the Fishing Rule Updates on the WDFW website ( [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regs\\_seasons.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regs_seasons.html) ).

Anglers should also be aware that sections of the East Fork Lewis River and the Washougal River will open June 6 to fishing for hatchery steelhead with bait, as outlined in the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet.

The mainstem Columbia River, which has been closed to fishing for salmon and steelhead to conserve wild upriver spring chinook runs, will open to fishing for both species no later than June 16. Before then, the Columbia River **shad** fishery - which has been slow to take off - should also be in full swing, said Hymer, noting that 30,000 of the oversized herring passed Bonneville Dam on May 26.

Based on recent creel sampling results, lots of lower Columbia River **sturgeon** appear to be headed on their annual summer migration towards the coast. Success for legal size fish has slowed in the gorge, improved between Vancouver and Longview, and is just getting started in the estuary.

"We're reaching the end of the spring season and are about to transition into summer fisheries," Hymer said. "Anglers can look forward to a lot more options."

One of those options is catching **trout** in rivers and streams, many of which open for fishing June 6. In anticipation of that fishery, WDFW will be planting thousands of catchable-size rainbows in a number of waters, including Skate Creek, Tilton River, Bird Creek, Bowman Creek, Outlet Creek, Spring Creek, and the Little White Salmon River. Canyon Creek (Clark Co.) will not be stocked as planned this year because of road and snow conditions.

WDFW also stocked several area lakes with rainbows during the last two weeks of May, including Battleground Lake (3,053), Kidney Lake (3,000), Spearfish Lake (3,095), Maryhill Pond (510) and Horsethief Lake (3,102). For additional information about fish stocking, see the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/weekly/>

Mayfield Lake and Lake Scanewa on the Cowlitz will also get regular rainbow plants throughout the summer. Some of the 60,000 rainbows from an earlier release at Swift Reservoir as well as kokanee at Merwin and Yale reservoirs will provide plenty of action on the Lewis River impoundments.

### **Eastern Washington**

As water levels drop in the Snake River in the southeast part of the region, fishing for **smallmouth bass** and **channel catfish** in the backwaters and sloughs is heating up. Smallmouth bass fishing is also picking up farther north in the region on the lower Spokane River near Fort Spokane, the Spokane arm of Lake Roosevelt, and Lake Roosevelt itself. Bass anglers are reminded to follow the statewide rules - of the 10 smallmouth that can be kept per day, only one can be over 14 inches; bass can be caught, retained in a livewell, and released alive until a daily limit is in possession.

Anglers fishing many **rainbow trout** stocked lakes in the northeast district of the region - Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties - are doing well. Those fishing southern Stevens County's Loon and Waitts Lake are finding decent action on **largemouth bass** and **yellow perch**. Loon also produces catches of **lake trout** and **kokanee** and Waitts provides **rainbow** and **brown trout** fishing.

**Largemouth bass** and **crappie** are the catch of the day at north Spokane County's Eloika Lake. Largemouth bass fishing is also good at Down's Lake in the southwest corner of Spokane County. **Rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** fishing at Badger and Williams, just northeast of Downs, continues to be productive.

Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, also continues to produce rainbow trout catches. Sprague anglers are reminded that only two of the daily catch limit of five trout can be over 20 inches.

Anglers throughout the region are reminded that June 6-7 is the weekend to introduce friends and family to the sport. That's "**Free Fishing Weekend**" in Washington when no fishing license is required for anyone.

There's still time to sign up for the June 13 "Fishing Kids" event at Whitman County's Gilchrist Pond near Colfax. This is one of several events across the state sponsored by WDFW, the C.A.S.T. (Catch A Special Thrill) for Kids Foundation, and several local groups, designed to introduce youth five through 14 years of age to sport fishing. Sign-up forms are available at <http://www.castforkids.org> or call Whitman County 4-H at (509) 397-6290.

### **Northcentral Washington**

**Chinook salmon** fishing opened on the Icicle River in Chelan County May 22 and is scheduled to run through July 31. The open stretch is from the closure signs located 800 feet upstream of the mouth to 500 feet downstream of the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery Barrier Dam. Daily limit is two salmon, minimum size 12 inches. Release fish with one or more quarter-inch round holes punched in the tail of the fish (caudal fin). These fish are part of a study and have been anesthetized; the FDA requires a 21-day ban on consumption of these fish.

Columbia River anglers can again attempt to launch boats at WDFW's Sunland Estates access site, about eight miles west of George in Grant County. Because the ramp is in poor condition, the drop-off is now clearly marked with a buoy and there are signs to warn boaters of hazards. Anglers can also access the river at several alternative sites in the area, including WDFW's Old Vantage Highway, Buckshot and Vernita access sites, Crescent Bar Recreation Area southwest of Quincy, and Wanapum Recreation Area southwest of Vantage on the Kittitas County side of the river.

There's still time to sign up for the June "Fishing Kids" events in the region, at the Leavenworth Fish Hatchery on June 6 and at Moses Lake on June 13.

These are two of several events across the state sponsored by WDFW, the C.A.S.T. (Catch A Special Thrill) for Kids Foundation, and several local groups, designed to introduce youth five through 14 years of age to sport fishing. Sign-up forms are available at <http://www.castforkids.org> or, for the June 6 event contact Hooked on Toys In Wenatchee at (509) 663-0740, and for the June 13 event contact Moses Lake Park and Recreation Department at (509) 766-9240.

Anglers throughout the region are reminded that June 6-7 is the weekend to introduce friends and family to the sport. That's "**Free Fishing Weekend**" in Washington when no fishing license is required for anyone.

### **Southcentral Washington**

The first week of the special middle Yakima River **chinook salmon** fishing season was slow, mostly because of high river flows at Roza Dam and the confluence with the Naches River, said WDFW Fish Biologist Jim Cummins. No creel checks were made over the Memorial Day weekend because of high flows, and Cummins said if levels remain high, there will be little fishing opportunity the rest of this month.

Cummins said if flows in the Naches near the town of Naches are above 3,000 cfs and flows at Umtanum are above 4,000 cfs, or the flow at Parker is above 5,000 cfs, it's not worth fishing. "Often the water is very muddy at flows near or above these and fish are not caught," Cummins said. "High flows can also make floating the river dangerous, especially below the confluence with the Naches."

Cummins said a quick way to find river flows is to look for the "Yakima River Basin Reservoir Storage (Teacup Diagram)" at <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/yakima/>. Codes for those flows are UMTW (Umtanum), RBDW (Roza) and NACW (Naches at Naches). River flow forecasts can be found under UMTW1 and NACW1 at <http://tinyurl.com/o4sqdl>.

The lower Yakima River is also open to chinook, and Cummins suggests anglers check the Kiona flows to determine if a fishing trip is worth it at this time. Flows in the range of 4,000 to 5,000 cfs are marginal for decent fishing.

Fish counts at Prosser and Roza dams are available at <http://www.cbr.washington.edu/dart/adult.html> and <http://ykfp.org/yakindex.htm>.

Cummins reminds anglers that many rivers and streams remain closed until June 6 to protect downstream migrating salmon and steelhead smolts and spawning trout and steelhead.

High elevation lakes, like Lost and Clear lakes in Yakima County, are stocked with catchable size **rainbow trout**. All lake trout stocking can be found at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/weekly/>.

Anglers throughout the region are reminded that June 6-7 is the weekend to introduce friends and family to the sport. That's "**Free Fishing Weekend**" in Washington when no fishing license is required for anyone.

## **TGF Inbox**

TGF received a call from **subscriber Heather L.** telling us how hot the fishing was for kokanee at Odell Lake. She did four days of fishing and wanted to share that it was pretty hot, catching 15 to 20 per day as a novice. Others were limiting out.

Thanks Heather!

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife reported that: "Friday, May 22 on Odell saw phenomenal kokanee fishing. Saturday followed with very good fishing. Sunday came and the fish decided to take the day off until late morning when the bite came back strong. The summation: The fishing at Odell can be fast and furious one minute and slower than molasses the next, but if one is patient ultimately they'll catch some nice kokanee. The lake trout bite is still fair and anglers have also seen success for rainbow trout. Please note that all bull trout must be released unharmed."

## **News from Buzz Ramsey FISHING ICON BUZZ RAMSEY TO JOIN YAKIMA BAIT CO.**

Longtime sport fishing advocate, expert angler and veteran fishing industry leader Buzz Ramsey will join Yakima Bait Company on July 1 as brand manager. Ramsey, who has over 35 years in

the fishing tackle business, will help lead Yakima Bait's promotion of existing product lines and will assist in the design, production and marketing of new products.

Prior to joining Yakima Bait, Ramsey worked with Pure Fishing as a regional services manager and was a promotional and sales manager at Luhr Jensen for 30 years.

"We're extremely happy to have Buzz on board with us," said Yakima Bait Company president Mark Masterson. "He has been a leader in the sports fishing industry for years and we believe his knowledge of fishing, and of the fishing tackle business will be a huge benefit to our company."

Ramsey is a National Freshwater Hall of Fame member, inducted in 1995, who has worked tirelessly for the future of sport fishing around the country and specifically in the Northwest. His is past president and current board member of the Northwest Sports Fishing Industry Association and is a well known seminar speaker and outdoor writer.

Ramsey and his wife Maggie, live on Washington's Klickitat River with their two sons, Blake and Wade.

Yakima Bait Company, located in Granger, WA, is the maker of Worden's Rooster Tails, FlatFish, Lil' Corkies, Spin-N-Glos, Triple Teazers, Lee Sisson, Poe's, Hildebrandt and other lures.

For more information contact Buzz at 509.369.3850

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

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### **Random Links**

Free Fishing Weekend events schedule for all of Oregon:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/events/free\\_fishing/events.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/events/free_fishing/events.asp)

2009 Supplemental Regulations:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/docs/2009\\_Sport\\_Ocean\\_Regulations.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/docs/2009_Sport_Ocean_Regulations.pdf)

Good advice on bass lures and tackle:

<http://www.insideline.net/weeklynews/2009/09-0601a.html>

Free Fly Casting Clinic for women June 13:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/assets/pdf/J0135273521.PDF>

**GOOD LUCK!**