

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 12th – June 18th, 2009**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Fishery managers met on Wednesday to discuss the opening of the mainstem Columbia for summer chinook and steelhead. The steelhead fishery will open on June 12th, as officials decided an earlier opener would not compromise sensitive impacts to listed Snake River Chinook. This is just a few additional days, prior to the previously proposed June 16th date, when spring chinook counts end and summer chinook counts begin. With steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam now consistently over 200 fish per day, action should pick up during the next minus tide series starting the weekend of June 20th. The summer Chinook fishery will get underway beginning June 22nd – July 5th.

Meanwhile, shad anglers near Bonneville are catching lots of shad to be used for oversized sturgeon bait or crab bait or just great sport for catch and release anglers. The run will continue strong for several more weeks.

Oversized sturgeon fishing in the gorge remains productive but will likely taper as an ample shad supply inundates the gorge area for staging broodstock. A few keepers are still available.

Sturgeon fishing is fair in the lower Willamette. The run of spring chinook (and passage at the Falls) is about at its peak now. Shad fishing is fair to good at Oregon City, poor at Coon Island. Anchor fishers are catching some spring chinook and steelhead on spinners above Willamette Falls but gear must be checked constantly as moss builds up quickly in the warming waters of the Willamette Valley. Anglers are taking steelhead below Dexter Dam in crowded conditions.

For spring chinook on the McKenzie, go now. Numbers will start dwindling soon. Green Drakes, Golden Stones and Green McKenzie Caddis are all on the hatch.

The North Santiam water level has dropped with spinners producing spring chinook. Fish here soon as they're starting to color up.

Steelhead action on the Clackamas has improved with the most consistent catches coming from the River Mill Dam area. The Dam Hole at McIver Park will produce a dozen one day and only a jack or two the next. Evenings have been most productive.

Spinners are taking the occasional steelhead at Dodge and Oxbow parks on the Sandy River but glacial silt is making for challenging conditions.

Northwest – Estuary sturgeon anglers are still witnessing sporadic catches from both above and below the Astoria/Megler Bridge with one of the better checks of the season coming from the Tongue Point area on Monday at a rate of one keeper per boat. Sand shrimp has produced the best above Tongue Point and anchovies below.

Crabbing is fair in the lower Columbia but a large portion of the catch is made up of soft-shelled adults making for poor tablefare.

Jetty anglers and commercial trollers are reporting large numbers of jumping coho at the Columbia River mouth. The season north of Cape Falcon (Manzanita) opens on June 28th while to the south of

Cape Falcon opens on June 20th.

The ODF&W Commission adopted coastal fall chinook regulations last week but district biologists enacted emergency regulations on the Nehalem River closing the watershed to all chinook fishing beginning June 15th. Although chinook numbers are at critically low levels this year, a limited fall coho season will be enacted as those stocks have rebounded.

Friendly seas are in the forecast for this weekend enabling offshore bottomfishers to take advantage of ample rockfish stocks. The nearshore halibut fishery may also be a good option but watch for afternoon north winds making a return to northern ports a bumpy ride.

Southwest – All-depth halibut catches have been good off the central Oregon coast and, despite the erroneous statement to the contrary in the Oregonian, remains open with adequate tonnage remaining in the quota. While halibut fishing is open seven days a week inside 40 fathoms, fish tend to run smaller. The summer all-depth fishery starts on August 7th for a quota of 15,735 pounds. Launching this weekend for bottomfish will be a cinch with mild seas and moderate winds out of the west/northwest.

Ocean salmon fishing opens on June 20th for coho only; no chinook may be taken. Two per day may be retained.

Spring chinook fishing has slowed to a crawl on the lower Rogue and it's slow to fair on the Grants Pass stretch. That makes the area around Gold Rey Dam the place to fish this weekend. While the run is down this year, passage at the dam is decent now as are catches in this stretch. The lower Rogue opens for early fall chinook on July 10th with a good return expected this season.

Boats launching out of Port Orford are enjoying fine bottomfishing as well as good crabbing. Limits of lingcod are being caught with one fish over the past weekend scaling in at 41 pounds.

Another fine weekend for launching offshore to take advantage of the outstanding bottom fishing out of the Port of Brookings. Use caution during the morning outgoing tide, however. Salmon and steelhead fishing will resume on the Chetco with fall rains with special regulations in place for this season. Until then, it will be a cutthroat trout fishery.

Fish Lake and the Rogue above Lost Creek are scheduled to be planted with trout.

Eastern – The Deschutes is on the drop following a week of rain. Numbers of stone flies and salmon flies are dwindling on the Deschutes although trout will remain keyed on them for several more weeks.

Trillium Lake has been producing limits of rainbows even following Free Fishing Weekend.

SW Washington – The Cowlitz remains the best bet for summer steelhead but the Lewis and Kalama Rivers should also start to see improving catches in the coming weeks.

Anglers working the Klickitat River should begin to see improved catches of salmon and steelhead. The daily bag limit is 6 chinook per day but no more than 2 may be adults. Jacks may make up a significant portion of the sport catch in the coming weeks. There is already some glacial coloration taking place.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Beginning with the gorge fishery, anglers are mostly fishing for shad to use as oversized sturgeon bait or crab bait. It's the action that is drawing the anglers to this shad fishery and it should continue for the next several weeks. With the Marker 85 deadline in place, anglers are forced to fish downstream of some traditionally productive water. With the higher flows we've been seeing this year, there are plenty of fish present for anglers to tangle with. Keeper sturgeon in this area are still available and are more susceptible to smelt for bait than shad strips or shrimp.

Anglers in the middle river (Portland to Longview stretch) don't have much to report. This section of river will be overrun with bank anglers targeting steelhead in the coming months.

The estuary sturgeon fishery is well underway although action remains sporadic despite the fact we're in peak season right now. Action both upstream and downstream of the bridge is likely but crab and sculpin remain a major issue in the downstream waters. There was a good bite, albeit brief, on the green line below the bridge on Wednesday with some quality keepers taken in a short amount of time. Anglers accustomed to fishing these waters have come up disappointed recently however as consistency has not been commonplace this season. Anchovies have been best in the deeper water and with the extreme tides we've been having this week, the most productive times to fish have been when flows subside close to low slack and the first part of the incoming tide.

For anglers fishing upstream of Tongue Point, action is also sporadic with one of the best days for the fleet coming on Monday when the boat ramp check at John Day was slightly better than a keeper per boat. By mid-week, most boats that put in a full day, were getting between 2 and 3 keepers for 5 or 6 rods (guide boats). Sand shrimp rules the roost in these waters and I have been targeting water between 4 and 10 foot with good success for shakers and the occasional keeper. On Wednesday, we landed nearly 25 shakers with only 2 keepers. It seems that it takes about 10 shakers to find a keeper on most days. The most productive time of the tide here is also the last few hours of outgoing tide and the first few hours of incoming tide. With the tides getting later each day however, the first part of outgoing tide should begin to produce favorable results early in the morning. The greatest amount of effort has been taking place near Marker 3 to Tongue Point. Buoy 50 has not been producing well and neither has Miller Island.

The fish seem to be present in the area but not so willing to bite. The water temperature is running great at nearly 61 degrees but we're still searching for a scapegoat for the slower than anticipated action we're witnessing down here in the estuary. We're looking to the high flows still coming down from the upriver hydropower projects (and incidentally bringing with it a lot of debris in the deeper water) putting the fish off the bite. I guess it's a good thing however that not every fish that swims under your boat is going to bite however.

I (Michael) went fishing on Monday, June 6th, and was only able to do so as She Who Must Be Obeyed willingly covered at the office for me.

While I've made the trip to the Columbia estuary several times and have fished shallow water every trip, this is the moment I longed for ... a sturgeon jumping at the end of my line. We fished in three to six feet of water most of the day. My good friend Rich Green (who's a real photographer dude), took his time setting up this photo, making sure the horizon was just right and all, but he didn't realize he'd capture the sturgeon launching until he got home and reviewed the pictures he'd taken. The fish was over four feet long.



Here is a shot at the boat limit our party caught that day. The fish on the right is just over five feet long (old measurement) and jumped clear of the water.



And now for the silvery fishes of the Columbia. Managers decided on Wednesday to allow retention of steelhead and jack Chinook salmon beginning 4 days earlier than the previously proposed June 16th opener. Remember, adult Chinook must be released unharmed if you happen to intercept one. Although numbers of steelhead at the dam are beginning to improve, action isn't likely to be off the charts until July when the bulk of the run begins to come in. Steelhead counts at Bonneville are tracking slightly ahead of last years run and even above the 10-year average.

The summer Chinook season is slated to go from June 22nd through July 5th. With a run forecast of just over 70,000 fish, it's likely to be good action. The last 5 to 7 days of the season is likely to be the best with the exception of the first day it's open.

The Guide's Forecast – Oversized sturgeon action in the gorge is likely to remain stable or decrease slightly from last week. As the river continues to fill up with shad, anglers will have to compete with tens of thousands of live shad in the river, which should certainly have an impact on success rates. Shad fishing should remain excellent with Dick Nite Spoons producing the best results. We're on track for a larger run than last year. Keepers will become increasingly more rare as the summer months come.

Anglers fishing the estuary should see improving conditions as flows stabilize and larger numbers of fish theoretically enter the system. Effort is likely to increase so anglers will have to pay attention to the patterns that are likely to form with the highly mobile fish. If you are fishing below the bridge, bring lots of anchovies and be prepared to move a lot if you find yourself amongst the bullheads and crab. If those two species are present, it's likely that the sturgeon are not. Focus your greatest effort around the softer parts of the tide; first part of outgoing, low slack and the first part of incoming, in that order as this will be the scenario in the estuary this weekend.

If you choose to fish upriver of Tongue Point, stick to the south side of the river. The fish seem to be on the Marker 3 side of the river although once the river warms a bit more and flows stabilize, action should pick up riverwide. We are entering peak season. Sand shrimp on the shallow flats will produce the best although anglers fishing in the deeper water have also found consistent success when the tide subsides.

Steelheaders will finally get the opportunity to get their season underway beginning on the 12th but tides won't be so favorable for good action. By the weekend of the 20th, strong outgoing tides will offer up the first real opportunity for bank anglers to take advantage of shore hugging summer runs. Spin-n-Glos in reds, pinks and oranges will produce the best results. This is a great fishery to introduce kids to.

River crabbing is fair along Social Security Beach but over half of the catch are softshells. This likely won't change for several more weeks but crabbing may remain good for the time being.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – TGF would like to congratulate **Buzz Ramsey** on joining 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. Yakima Bait Company, located in Granger, WA, is the maker of Worden's Rooster Tails, FlatFish, Lil' Corkies, Spin-N-Glos, Triple Teasers, Lee Sisson, Poe's, Hildebrandt and other lures.

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.

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.

About half of the projected 37,500 spring Chinook for this year have crossed at Willamette Falls as the flow continues to drop and the water temperature holds steady at 60 degrees. The daily counts

are a decent improvement over last year. Springers will continue crossing in good number until mid-June, then taper off until counts are discontinued in mid-August. A couple of hundred summer steelhead are crossing daily as the year-to-date count tops a modest 7,000. The latest count data available is as of June 6th.

The North Santiam has dropped several feet recently and fishing has improved. Fresh Chinook and steelhead are entering the system daily.

The Guide's Forecast – Many shakers and the occasional keeper sturgeon is coming from the lower Willamette with Oregon City and near the St. Johns Bridge. Crowds of shad anglers are getting thick as catches improve although Multnomah Channel has yet to start producing. Steelhead are available on the Town Run of the Middle Fork Willamette. Trout fishing has been quite good here as well.

Summer steelhead are being caught below Leaburg Dam on the McKenzie but get there early to claim a spot. Trout fishing is good with catches coming from all locations. Hatches of various bugs are in progress now: brown & green caddis, Golden Stones, Green Drakes, all the usual suspects.

Fishing is actually productive on the North Santiam with spring Chinook taking corkies and bait in the Mehama to Packsaddle stretch but the bite is on and off. Summer steelhead are also being landed here on spinners and jigs.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Fishing has been slow on the Clackamas River for both spring Chinook and Summer steelhead. The best results have come at first light.

As of the morning of June 10th, the Sandy had gone from glacial gray-green to opaque brown. Fishing will only be possible after it clears but predicting when that occurs would be challenging.

North Coast Fishing Report – Spring Chinook remain a viable option for boat anglers in Tillamook Bay. Recent reports indicate action is still fair along the jetty when the tides permit. Some quality hatchery fish are still coming on herring with several fish running over 20 pounds. There are also fair numbers of fish present in tidewater of the Trask River. Bobber tossers and spinner casters are catching fish as the tide nears low slack.

Upper bay trollers are not finding consistent success but some fish are caught in the upper bay almost daily. Herring or spinners are producing but we are entering the last portion of the peak season. Wild fish may begin to make up a larger portion of the catch.

Rivers on the north coast will remain stagnant with no rain in sight. Chinook will be pooled up in the deeper slots and may fall to bobber and bait fishers. Spinner casters may take fish at first light. The Nestucca, Wilson and Trask Rivers offer the best chance at a freshwater spring Chinook. Three Rivers on the Nestucca system is also an option.

The Guide's Forecast – We're coming into a softer tide series this weekend giving herring trollers a last ditch effort to take Tillamook Bay spring Chinook for a ride along the jetty. Although the rivers are pretty well seeded with salmon, there should be one more fair push of fish coming into these coastal systems before it turns to primarily a freshwater show. Troll herring the last few hours of outgoing tide and at high slack along the north jetty, keeping your baits fishing near the bottom of the bay. There may be a higher incidence of wild fish at this time to handle them with care.

With a favorable ocean forecast, bottomfishing and nearshore halibut fishing should be a fair option this weekend. The forecast is as follows:

FRI N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BECOMING NW 10 TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT...BUILDING TO 2 FT IN THE AFTERNOON. SW SWELL 3 FT.

FRI NIGHT NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 4 FT.

SAT N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO NW WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 4 FT.

SAT NIGHT NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BECOMING N 5 TO 10 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 4 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SUN NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 5 FT.

MON NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

Ocean crabbing is also an option but like the lower Columbia, many of the adults are molting now and not in prime eating condition.

For Chinook anglers looking forward to the summer Chinook season on the Nehalem River, an emergency closure to take place on June 15th will effectively keep Chinook from being targeted for the entire rest of the year. Hopefully, these sensitive stocks of fish will rebound in the coming years as most anglers know that we've seen a drastic downturn in the Nehalem adults in recent years.

Central & South Coast Reports – Crabbing is poor in the bay out of Waldport.

While tides are fairly soft for the coming weekend, early morning minus tides begin again starting June 20th.

As warm water works its way north from California, albacore fever is escalating among offshore anglers.

New of the 2009 fall Chinook was released this week with the following decisions in place:

The Winchuck rivers and the Chetco terminal area will be closed to the harvest of Chinook salmon. Allowing one a day and two a season are the Siletz, Yaquina, Yachats, Alsea, Floras, Sixes, Hunter Creek, and Chetco rivers while the Coos and Rogue rivers will allow two per day and 10 during the season.

Owing to good ocean conditions and strong conservation efforts, anglers will be allowed to retain adult wild coho caught in the tidewaters of the Yaquina, Coos and Coquille rivers starting September 1st. Anglers may retain one wild adult coho and one jack coho (coho smaller than 16 inches) per day, with a maximum of five adults and five jacks for the season. The season runs through Nov.30 or until a harvest quota of 4,000 fish is achieved.

Siuslaw, Umpqua, Coquille, Elk River and Elk ocean terminal area

Spring Chinook catches are fair to good in the lower mainstem of the Umpqua River. Shad Fishing has been good at Sawyers Rapids and Yellow Creek while the South Umpqua is producing good

catches of smallmouth bass. Sturgeon fishing is fair in Winchester Bay for anglers soaking mud shrimp on the flats during the outgoing tide.

Perch fishing remains good in Coos Bay at the Highway 101 Bridge although crabbing is still slow. While shad are being caught in the South Fork Coos, only a few have shown up at the Coquille River.

While fishing has been slow in the lower Rogue, There has been some improvement this week but many anglers are looking forward to the opening of the bay on July 10th for early fall Chinook. The run this season is forecast to be the best in years and both hatchery and wild fall Chinook may be retained. Ironically, due to a 60% decline in the native spring Chinook run this year, no wild fish may be kept. Springer fishing has been poor in the Grants Pass stretch and fair but spotty on the upper Rogue. Early morning at the Hatchery Hole has provided the better catches. Work began Monday this week on the removal of Savage Rapids Dam.

Worthwhile cutthroat trout fishing is available at the Elk and Sixes with both hardware and fly anglers taking fish.

Even though the fishing at Diamond Lake has slowed slightly, it remains a good fishery for trout averaging 14 inches. The eco-system here is so vibrant that trout grow a remarkable two inches per month an a 12-incher will weigh a pound or better.

Boats launching gout of the Port of Brookings will face no problems this weekend as they'll be greeted with friendly conditions. It's a short trip to connect with rockfish offshore and limits have been the rule rather than the exception here. Ling cod catches have also been good and interestingly, a few jig fishers have hooked coho, an indication of the good fishing to come when the season opens. While ocean crabbing has been worthwhile, even those trying off the crabbing dock near the Coast Guard Station are doing pretty well as Dungeness recover from the most and more hardshells turn up in catches.

Limits of large surf perch continue to be taken off area beaches with some tipping the scales at three pounds or better. The Chetco has been fishing well for sea-run cutthroat trout.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Fishing has been good for fly anglers on the Deschutes. Stonefly imitations have been taking good numbers of redsides from Maupin upstream although trout are still responding to Golden Stones and Salmonflies. The coming weekend will be a great time to be on the river.

Big Lava Lake is producing some very large rainbows when the wind isn't blowing. Early morning has been most productive.

The first spring Chinook were released in the Powder River arm of Brownlee Reservoir on June 4th as the ODFW attempts to create a unique fishery here. These surplus fish from Hells Canyon Dam trap will be stocked just below Mason Dam again this week and next for a total this year of 200. Springers may be kept through September 1st from Hughes Lane Bridge to Mason Dam.

Trillium Lake is producing well for anglers trolling for them, but it's a bit of a workout as no outboards (including electrics) are allowed.

Snow is all but gone at Trillium Lake and both jig fishers and trollers are taking limits of kokanee.

Limits have been the rule at Odell with bait taking larger kokanee than trolling with jigging yielding fewer fish than either of the other techniques.

Jigs and trolled lures are equally effective at Crescent where kokanee fishing is very good.

Steelheading is slow to fair in the Hood River but some very bright fish are available

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report June 10-23, 2009

North Puget Sound

As summer approaches, anglers have their pick of several fishing opportunities. On Puget Sound, portions of two marine areas recently opened for salmon fishing and a few days remain to hook lingcod in the region. In the rivers, the trout season is open and, on a few streams, fisheries are under way for hatchery chinook salmon.

Portions of the Skagit, Cascade and Skykomish rivers are open for hatchery **chinook salmon** fishing, said Brett Barkdull, WDFW fish biologist. "Anglers on the Skagit and Cascade rivers did decent on the opener, but since then fishing has really slowed," Barkdull said.

The Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River. On the Cascade, anglers can 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 is 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.

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, including 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, there have been recent reports of anglers hooking some bright hatchery chinook. The Skykomish is open from the Lewis Street Bridge in Monroe to the Wallace River through July 31. Anglers fishing there have a daily limit of two hatchery chinook salmon.

Meanwhile, **trout** fishing also is open on several of the region's rivers and streams. 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, fishing has been slow at the **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery**, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "The bubble always seems to get off to a slow start," Thiesfeld said. "But fishing tends to improve later in June and in early July, and that could be the case again this year."

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 have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. Chinook must measure 22 inches in length to retain.

Elsewhere, the northern portion of Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) is open to catch-and-release fishing for **salmon**. Thiesfeld said anglers aren't finding many returning adult chinook

salmon, but they have hooked some blackmouth - resident chinook. Anglers in Marine Area 10 can fish north of a line from Point Monroe to Meadow Point.

Fishing for **lingcod** is still an option. The fishery runs through June 15 in the region's marine areas, where anglers have a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 40 inches.

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

Crab fishing is just around the corner. The fishery opens July 1 in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), and 10. Fisheries in those areas will be open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

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>.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Fishing: Opportunities for catching halibut and lingcod are winding down, but the summer fishing seasons for crab and salmon are coming up fast. Meanwhile, anglers have been finding some chinook in southern Puget Sound.

Recreational **halibut** fishing is now closed in most areas, but anglers can still fish Thursdays through Mondays in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), where a creel check conducted during the June 6-7 weekend showed 80 anglers catching 50 halibut. That may provide an incentive to sign up for the 14th annual Sekiu Halibut Derby, scheduled for June 13 and 14. Entry fee is \$15. Call Olson's Resort for more information at (360) 963-2311.

Anglers should note that the **lingcod** fishery closes June 15 throughout Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, but remains open through mid-October on the coast. The fishery for spot shrimp remains open daily in marine areas 4, 5 and 6, while fishing for non-spot shrimp (coonstripe and pink) is under way in southern Puget Sound (marine areas 11 and 13). All spot shrimp caught in those two areas must be released

Coming up, the popular recreational crab season opens June 18 in three marine areas, with more to follow. Here's the summer line-up:

- **June 18:** Marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south Puget Sound) will be open seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2010.
- **July 1:** Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1 (Deception Pass to East Point), 8-2 (East Point to Possession Point), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) and 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 7 for a catch assessment. These areas will reopen in the fall if recreational harvest quotas have not been met.
- **July 15:** Marine Area 7 East (Bellingham and Samish bays) and 7 South (San Juan Islands) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 30.

- **July 29:** Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. The fishery will remain open through Jan. 2, 2010.
- **Aug. 12:** Marine Area 7 North (Lummi Island/Blaine) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 30.

Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/> or <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

Another much-anticipated summer fishery begins June 27 when waters off Neah Bay and La Push (marine areas 3 and 4) open for **salmon** fishing. Waters off Ilwaco and Westport (marine areas 1 and 2) open June 28, while the Sekiu/Pillar Point, eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca and Hood Canal (marine areas 5, 6, and 12) salmon fisheries open July 1. Anglers are advised to check the fishing rules for each area in the Fishing in Washington pamphlet before heading out (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Salmon anglers had a fair opening-day outing June 1 in Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island/Tacoma), with an average of one fish caught for every four rods. More recent creel checks show the catch rate dropping off, but that is typical, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "Folks did pretty well opening day because they were able to catch the salmon already in the area," Thiesfeld said. "Now there's a wait for the new fish to move in. The main run usually comes in about mid-July, but fish will be trickling in every day."

The fishery runs seven days a week, with a limit of two salmon a day. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches, but there is no minimum for other species. All wild chinook must be released. Beginning July 1, the pink salmon bonus limit takes effect when anglers may retain two additional pink salmon as part of their daily limit. Commencement Bay is closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 1.

Thiesfeld also suggests anglers try fishing in south Puget Sound (Marine Area 13), where salmon fishing has been open since May 1.

On the Olympic Peninsula, fishing for **chinook salmon** has been slow, said David Low, WDFW fish biologist. "With poor visibility on the Hoh River and the Sol Duc running low and clear, fishing has been spotty," Low said. "Some rain would help, but it looks unlikely, at least for the short term."

Trout and **steelhead** fishing got under way June 6 in area rivers, including the Skokomish, South Fork Skokomish and Dungeness rivers. Anglers should note that selective gear rules are in effect on those rivers to protect wild summer steelhead.

Details on rules and limits are available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

Southwest Washington

After a delay of nearly a month, the sport fishery for hatchery-reared steelhead on the lower Columbia River will open Friday, June 12 under an agreement reached Wednesday by fishery managers in Washington and Oregon. That will give anglers four days of steelhead fishing between Rocky Point and the Interstate 5 bridge before summer seasons begin June 16.

During those four days, anglers can catch and retain hatchery steelhead - as well as sockeye salmon and hatchery jack chinook salmon - in those waters. Starting June 16, anglers may retain any jack chinook - marked or unmarked - but must release any adult chinook salmon they catch

until June 22, when the Columbia River opens for summer chinook fishing below Bonneville Dam. Chinook retention below the dam will be allowed through July 6.

Chinook retention above Bonneville Dam begins July 1.

"Anglers can look forward to a slew of great fishing opportunities on the mainstem Columbia River in the next couple of months," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "On any given cast, you might reel in a summer chinook, a sockeye, a steelhead or a shad."

Hymer recommends that anglers check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for combined daily bag limits for salmon and steelhead in all these fisheries.

Hymer noted that fishery managers are forecasting a return of 70,700 summer chinook this season, up from 55,400 fish last year. They also anticipate a return of 183,200 sockeye, most ranging from 3.5 to 4 pounds apiece. Last year, fishery managers predicted that 75,600 sockeye would return to the Columbia River, but the actual run came in at about 214,500 fish, he said. Sockeye numbers are already ramping up at Bonneville Dam with nearly a thousand fish tallied on June 9 alone. So far counts are tracking slightly ahead of last year.

Approximately 330,000 upriver summer steelhead are also expected this year, following on the tailfins of early-run fish already moving into several lower Columbia River tributaries. Hymer said fishing for hatchery summer-run steelhead should continue to improve in the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, Washougal and Klickitat rivers in the weeks ahead.

Anglers are also still picking up some hatchery **spring chinook salmon** on the Cowlitz, upper Wind, and lower Klickitat rivers. "Some of the best fishing of the season was reported on the Klickitat River during the first week of June," said Hymer, noting that the catch was a mixture of adult and jack springers along with some summer steelies. "About half of the chinook were chrome bright."

Meanwhile, the number of boat anglers fishing for **white sturgeon** has continued to build in the lower Columbia River. Below the Wauna powerlines, one out of every two charter boat anglers took home a keeper during the first week of June, as did one in every six private boat anglers. Bank anglers between Knappton and Chinook are also reeling in some legals.

From the powerlines upstream to Marker 85, boat anglers out of Vancouver and Longview have also been catching some legal-size fish. The Bonneville Pool is now closed for retention of sturgeon through the end of the year, but **bass** anglers fishing those waters have been averaging five fish per rod.

Riffe Lake has been good for **landlocked coho**, Swofford Pond for **rainbows, bluegill and perch**, and Mayfield Lake for rainbows. Five thousand catchable size rainbows will be released every other week at Mayfield Lake through the summer.

In Clark County, WDFW planted 6,024 legal-size trout in Battleground Lake and 3,000 in Kline Line Pond during the first week of June. In Klickitat County, the department stocked Bird Creek (1,107 fish), Horsethief Lake (6,002 fish), Outlet Creek (900 fish), Rowland Lake (6,040 fish), Spearfish Lake (6,034 fish) and Spring Creek (2,019 fish). Skate Creek and the Tilton River each will receive plants of 2,000 to 4,000 catchable-size rainbows every other week through the summer.

The **shad** run continues to build with nearly 823,000 fish crossing Bonneville Dam through June 9. The riprap just below the dam and the docks in the Camas/Washougal areas are good spots for bank anglers to intercept these fish, Hymer said.

Eastern Washington

Bill Baker, WDFW northeast district fish biologist, said river and stream water levels are finally dropping, making them more fishable. Anglers have been doing well at Curlew Lake, northeast of Republic in Ferry County, fishing for net-pen-reared **rainbow trout**, **tiger muskies** and **largemouth bass**. Stevens County's Loon Lake has been good for **kokanee** that are already 12 inches, although night fishing has been inconsistent. Mackinaw or **lake trout** are available at nearby Deer Lake.

Three Pend Oreille County lakes just received extra plants of big **triploid rainbow trout**, courtesy of Seattle City Light. Big Meadow Lake, west of Ione, received 600 triploids, Crescent Lake, north of Metaline Falls, received 600, and Nile Lake, southwest of Ione, received 800. The Four Bay area of the Pend Oreille River near Seattle City Light's Boundary dam project will also receive 2,000 triploids when the river settles out.

Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist, said most everything fishable is producing well now. "Even the Spokane River is finally down to a level that you can fish," he said. "Just remember to follow the rules so we can protect the wild redband rainbows."

Spokane County's Williams and Badger Lake, along with Lincoln County's Fishtrap Lake, continue to be the best for **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout**. Sprague Lake is still putting out nice rainbows. Bonnie Lake, off Rock Creek near the Spokane-Whitman county line, is good for **yellow perch**, **crappie**, and **largemouth bass**. Anglers also have been doing well at Downs Lake, in the southwest corner of Spokane County, and north Spokane County's Eloika Lake.

"Bass and other warmwater species are close to spawning now, so they're up near shorelines where you can see and target them," Donley said.

The Spokane River arm of Lake Roosevelt is usually at the peak of **walleye** fishing now, although no WDFW checks have been made recently. When the reservoir water levels stabilize by mid-June, kokanee fishing at Seven Bays and other spots should pick up.

Fishing for **smallmouth bass** and **channel catfish** in the backwaters and sloughs of the Snake River in the southeast part of the region continues to be productive.

Over 1,500 nearly one-third-pound **rainbow trout** were just stocked in Union Flat Creek, a Palouse River tributary between Colton and Uniontown in Whitman County.

Northcentral Washington

In Okanogan County, the Methow River and two tributaries - Twisp and Chewuch - are now open for catch-and-release **trout** fishing, but WDFW District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff said the water is still too high from runoff for effective fishing. Jateff reminds anglers to check the sport fishing pamphlet closely because the fishery is only open in certain areas of the river.

Jateff also reported that the two fly-fishing-only lakes in Okanogan County have been producing good catches of **rainbow trout** in recent weeks. Chopaka Lake, north of Loomis, was rehabilitated in 2007 and is now producing rainbows 14-18 inches. Aeneas Lake, southwest of Tonasket, has slightly smaller rainbows ranging from 12-16 inches.

Jateff said there are lots of Okanogan County "production waters" with facilities that make for good weekend outings. Conconully Reservoir, Conconully Lake, Pearrygin, Alta, Wannacut, and

Spectacle lakes all continue to provide good fishing for rainbows, ranging from 10-12 inches with carryovers up to 15 inches. Boat launching facilities, campgrounds, and resorts are located at all of these lakes. Selective gear anglers have been doing well at Big Twin in the Winthrop area and at Blue Lake in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area. Gravel boat launching sites and campgrounds are available at each lake, and there is a resort on Big Twin.

"Spiny ray anglers can try either Patterson Lake near Winthrop for **yellow perch** or Leader Lake near Omak for **crappie** and **bluegill**," Jateff said.

Art Viola, WDFW Chelan district fish biologist, said fishing for **bass, crappie, blue gill** and **trout** is currently very good in many lakes throughout the district. The exception is Roses Lake north of Manson, where fishing for trout is poor due to warm water temperatures.

"**Kokanee** fishing has been excellent in Lake Chelan, however catch rates have dropped recently," Viola said. "We believe the kokanee have spread out and are moving up lake from the southernmost shore into Mill Bay. Hopefully kokanee catch rates will increase in Mill Bay soon."

Viola also said that the Icicle River **spring chinook** fishery is "good one day, then poor for three days, then good again - typical of this fishery." Viola reminds anglers that more salmon fishing opportunities are coming soon, with the Upper Columbia River summer chinook fishery beginning July 1.

Anglers who frequent the WDFW-managed waterways on the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge in Adams and Grant counties may want to attend a June 16 public open house about the refuge's comprehensive conservation plan. The session, which will run from 5:30-8 p.m. in the City of Othello's Municipal Building (City Hall), 500 East Main St., will include review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service environmental assessment of the plan and citizen comments about plan alternatives. Those who can't make the open house can learn more about the plan and submit comments through July 13 by contacting the refuge at (509) 488-2668 or at mcriver@fws.gov.

Southcentral Washington

Flows in the Yakima River are finally settling down and looking good for **spring chinook salmon** anglers, said WDFW Fish Biologist Jim Cummins.

"I expect to see a significant increase in fishing effort and success the rest of the season, especially in the next couple weeks," Cummins said. "About 6,500 chinook have passed Prosser. About 45 percent of them are fin-clipped hatchery fish and about 26 percent of those fish are jacks. More than 900 chinook have passed Roza, which means that there are plenty of fish moving through the area that's open to fishing."

During the first week of June, WDFW staff checked 57 anglers on the Roza Reach (500 feet below the railroad trestle at Roza Dam to I-82 at Union Gap) who harvested 11 hatchery chinook (four adult, seven jacks) and released five wild chinook (four adult, one jack). Cummins said that all of the catch was upstream from the confluence of the Naches, which was still bringing in relatively high, turbid water at that time.

Anglers can check river flows at the Bureau of Reclamation Hydromet website: <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/yakima/>.

WDFW Regional Habitat Program Manager Perry Harvester said **kokanee** fishing in all the

Yakima River reservoirs should be good now, "although the fish will be small in size this early." Harvester said that due to cold water, kokanee should be near the surface.

Jonathan Kohr, WDFW habitat biologist, said large **smallmouth bass** were recently caught in the Columbia River. "The largest bass we caught was 4.5 pounds and the smallest was around two," he said. "We used everything from tubes, grubs, crankbaits, and spinnerbaits. Top water lures didn't seem to work yet. But when they start hitting the top stuff, it's super fun."

Kohr also reported catching an occasional **pikeminnow** that can be turned in for a \$4 reward at any registration station along the Columbia. For more details see: <http://www.pikeminnow.org/>.

Alpine **trout** lakes and access trails are finally thawing and anglers willing to hike in with float tubes and fly rods may do well. Dog Lake, just east of White Pass on the north side of Hwy. 12, usually produces good catches of rainbows from the 8,000-plus fry that are stocked there annually. Nearby Leech Lake also usually provides decent catches of small brook trout and is scheduled to receive some triploids soon.

TGF Inbox

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

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Ethanol giving you fits? Comment here on the proposal to raise it to 15%:

<http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0211>

Stay two, get one night free at first-come, first-served Oregon State Parks:

<http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/PARKS/index.shtml>

Sisters area fly fishing and tips from Bill Monroe:

http://www.oregonlive.com/sports/oregonian/bill_monroe/index.ssf/2009/06/top_flyfishing_waters_and_more.html

Worthwhile Fly Fishing Lakes in Oregon:

<http://www.flyfishusa.com/about-our-waters/lakes/a-lakes-home/lakes.html>

In addition, "The Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport will offer "Breakfast with the Sharks" Father's Day weekend (June 20-21). Visitors enjoy a hearty breakfast served in front of the private viewing window of the Sharks in the Passages of the Deep exhibit while learning about these toothy predators. Cost: \$25. Reservations: (541) 867-3474 ext. 2313."

GOOD LUCK!