

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 32

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 6th – August 12th, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

This is the week to study up on how to most effectively fish the Buoy 10 fishery!

With nearly a million salmon forecast back to the lower Columbia this season, you'll want the best chance to get your share. Go to our web page on tech reports and order up **Tech Report #4; Columbia River Estuary Salmon Fishing**. It's the best \$7.95 you'll ever spend to increase your catch! If you don't like what we have to say, we'll refund 100% of your purchase price!

Go to: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml> for more details!



AND, if you want the real experience, pro guide Bob Rees has a few remaining open seats for his Buoy 10 season. Pick one of the options listed below and call (503) 812-9036 or email brees@pacifier.com for more details or to make a reservation.

Open dates: August 7th, 8th, 21st and 22nd. There are also numerous dates in early September as well!

Willamette Valley/Metro - Steelhead fishing remains the best option for both boat and bank anglers downstream of Bonneville Dam. Spinners remain a top producer and will likely remain so with water temperatures on the increase.

Fall Chinook on the mainstem Columbia are now on deck but catches aren't likely to improve for a few more weeks. Anglers that do intercept chinook no longer have to look for an adipose fin-clip. With such a large run in the forecast, anglers should get their wobblers in advance as they will be hard to find when the fish start biting.

Water temperature at Willamette Falls and the lower river remains in the 70-degree range, which means warmwater gamefish is the only option.

Fishing is fair to good on the upper McKenzie for hatchery and native trout.

Level and flow on the North Santiam is stable. Steelheading is fair but steady.

Fish the upper Clackamas at first light for the best chance at a steelhead. There are large numbers of steelhead holding near River Mill Dam, both upstream and down where anglers can have good access to them depending on their migration patterns. Trout fishing is fair above Estacada.

Warm weather has the low waters of the Sandy periodically turning glacial gray. Fishing is slow although flashy spinners have gotten a few strikes. Observers were witnessing fresh spring chinook still making their way upstream from the lower river but rafters typically dominate the waterways this time of year.

Northwest – Offshore catches of salmon have typically frustrated anglers seeking coho this time of year. Out of Garibaldi, limits are attainable on some days with a rare keeper the next. Hatchery coho destined for the Columbia are typically available in good numbers out of mid-coast ports this time of year.

Anglers pursuing salmon out of the mouth of the Columbia are also finding sporadic results. Catches seem to be more consistent to the north of the mouth with more chinook beginning to show in the catches. Anglers are still finding a large percentage of wild coho and undersized chinook in the catch but higher ratios of keeper salmon are just a week or two away.

The catch and keep sturgeon fishery on the lower Columbia is now closed but ended with anglers finding some of the best fishing of the season taking place. Catch and release fishing remains open and the action can be great, especially for those using anchovies for bait.

Crabbing has picked up for those soaking pots in the ocean. Fresh salmon or tuna carcasses will produce the best result but cage your baits to keep seals and sealions from stealing your baits.

The Buoy 10 fishery opened with fair catches although any flurries of activity were short-lived. Quality chinook were taken at the mouth of Young's Bay at first light and a few chinook were taken on the red buoy line on the first part of outgoing tide. The commercial fleet will fish downstream of Tongue Point 2 more nights; tonight and Sunday night. Plan your trip accordingly. Don't forget to sign up for the Buoy 10 challenge this year. With a \$1000.00 and \$500.00 big fish prize at stake, it's really something to get busy with! Go here for details:
<http://www.theguidesforecast.com/2010Buoy10Registration.pdf>

Although chinook season is now open in many coastal estuaries, the action isn't likely to pick up until early September. Early run coho may become available later in August on the Tillamook and Nehalem systems although all wild coho must be released this year.

Southwest – A series of early morning minus tides start this weekend. Clamming in estuaries

should be worthwhile early Sunday morning.

Water deeper than 120 feet (20 fathoms) will remain closed to bottom fishing for the remainder of the year.

Albacore were boated offshore over the past weekend off the central Oregon coast but warm water is still a long trip to reach.

Winchester Bay has continued to produce limits of surf perch as have area beaches. South jetty anglers are doing well although pressure is light. Chinook are entering on the incoming tides. Salmon fishing has been fair around Reedsport while ocean fishing is slow.

Chinook have started nosing into the lower Coquille with anglers taking a few recently.

Cold ocean temperatures have hampered salmon fishing out of Charleston. Coos Bay anglers are making decent catches of rockfish and greenling along the jetties.

High winds and numerous baitfish in Rogue Bay combined over the past weekend to slow Chinook fishing slightly on the lower river but large fish are slamming hooks whenever conditions allow. Best results are occurring evenings on an outgoing tide. Run forecasts indicate good numbers this season.

The 20-fathom depth restriction hasn't prevented boats launching out of Brookings Harbor from taking limits of rockfish although wind has been problematic at times. The weekend prediction is more favorable however. Offshore coho catches have been fair but Chinook takes are slow. The Chetco closed August 1st upstream of the BPA powerlines at River Mile 2.2.

No fall Chinook fishing is allowed on the Sixes River through the end of 2010.

Eastern – Steelheading has been fair near the mouth of the Deschutes although high water temps endure. Cooler releases upstream should help to alleviate the problem soon. Steelhead are also being taken from Beavertail to Mack's Canyon and passage at Sherars Falls is good for this time of year. Redsidies are responding to spent mayflies.

SW Washington – In a time when steelhead fishing should be peaking, most district streams are producing poorly for no apparent reason. The Cowlitz and Lewis Rivers are poor in the upstream areas and even the mouth of the Cowlitz is poor, even though thousands of fish per day are likely passing by. An encroaching sandbar has changed the hydro-dynamics here.

The Drano Lake fishery is producing good catches of steelhead. Nearly 80% of the anglers fishing here reported catch here last week although a significant number of the fish being caught are wild, requiring release.

The White Salmon and Klickitat Rivers are also fair options this time of year with fair numbers of returning hatchery steelhead expected back to these watersheds.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Well, it started off with a bang! Relatively speaking that is. Buoy 10 chinook seekers looked to the mouth of Young's Bay to target returning "Select Area Brights" or SAB's in technical terms. In reality, these are actually a Rogue River strain of chinook that has been propagated in the Young's Bay net pen projects for several years now. These quality fish range mostly from 15 to 20 pounds but a few larger fish are also in the mix. They are high quality and can be depicted by a left ventral clip.

There were also reports of a few chinook coming from the red buoy line as well. These fish are most likely to fall on the first part of the outgoing tide.

Most recently, preliminary reports from the Tuesday night gillnet opener were not encouraging. One boat reported only catching one chinook and his legal trip limit of 6 sturgeon. One other boat reported not catching any of either specie. Full results of the opener won't be tallied until this version goes to print but the overall sentiment was not very encouraging.

One guide stated the first 2 days of the Buoy 10 opener were much more favorable than August 3rd and likely the 4th as well. Good thing we have many more days of productive fishing ahead.

Offshore, salmon anglers have recently hit the jackpot. Reports from anglers working west of the CR Buoy in 270 to 280 foot of water found excellent results for coho and a rare chinook on Wednesday. One guide reported coho to 12 pounds and that's consistent with reports we've been hearing all season. There are some quality coho out there. Both herring and anchovies have been working well with fish coming from 5 to 20 pulls down (using divers) or 8 to 24 feet on the line counters. No matter who I talked to, they stated it was important to get there early. The bite faded by mid-morning as it often does after fish get full of bait fish and become more lethargic as the morning wears on.

Anglers fishing to the north have not found consistent results even though we have some good chinook history up there. There are still reports of excellent chinook catches coming from the commercial fleet to the north, indicating that Columbia River bound chinook are heading our way. It won't be long as numbers should begin building any day now.

Offshore crabbing seems to be improving with more quality hard-shelled males beginning to show in the catch. Crab in 40 to 80 feet of water for best results.

Although the catch and keep sturgeon fishery ended with good results, one guide reported struggling for any action on Wednesday. The fish seem to be on the move. Anchovies will remain a top bait for the few still pursuing sturgeon action.

Steelheaders continue to do best in the Bonneville area with good fishing coming from anchor anglers using spinners in the fast water. Bank anglers fared well early last week but the weakening tide series caused catch rates to drop off despite excellent numbers of fish still passing by. Bonneville numbers continue to impress anglers and managers alike and should be peaking this week. Although overall steelhead passage is tracking ahead of last year, the gap between the 2 different years is closing from where it was earlier in the passage season. The fishery at the mouth of the Cowlitz River is producing poorly and has dropped off in recent years since the hydrology of the area has changed.

Further offshore, reports of good tuna action came from the 125 x 45.58 line with hand lines and live bait working well. One boat reported a 40 to 50 fish bait stop before they lost the bite to another boat working the area. The action should stay consistent through the month and into September.

The Guide's Forecast – All eyes will be on Buoy 10 this week with chinook catches likely to begin to pick up with some regularity. Tides are pretty right through the weekend for good action with early morning low tides and high slack in the early afternoon. Anglers will want to start their day close to Buoy's 10 and 11 for the last part of the outgoing tide and then follow the tide upstream, fishing high slack close to the bridge. The morning incoming tide is not that strong however so anglers may not want to focus too much of their time near the Astoria Bridge but on

the lower Desdemona Sands tongue instead. As tide strength intensifies, fish higher in the system with the area above the bridge about as high as you need to go this early in the season.

Anglers confident in fishing the Oregon side of the river, spend some time holding into the tide on the incoming, especially about 2 hours into the tide. As the tide rolls in, head up to the mouth of Young's Bay where anglers should target Chinook near the bottom before they enter the Young's Bay terminal fishery or head upstream to destinations above Bonneville Dam and SW Washington streams.

Regardless of where you fish, you'll be targeting chinook and these early fish seem to respond better to frozen herring for bait in the river versus spinners or the smaller fresh herring or anchovies. Although there have been fish already taken on spinners, herring has out-produced hardware so far as that is how it was last year too.

It's early for coho although a few may be caught throughout the week. The better news is that the coho action will get better and the coho have been running large this year. Coho numbers should bolster by the 20th of August.

For action, given the gillnet fleet will be fishing tonight and Sunday night, it may be best to head west where ocean fishing should stay productive for coho and an occasional Chinook. Late report from Thursday morning was 10 hatchery coho, 1 Chinook, 1 mackerel, about 5 native coho and a good handful of other bites just west and SW of the CR Buoy. Herring and anchovies took equal numbers of fish on Thursday in 250 to 280 foot of water. There was some decent action near Buoy 1 as well. Anglers that went south on Wednesday didn't find much for action and ended up back near the CR Buoy. It can certainly be spotty with a lower coho run forecasted this year but limits are still quite possible.

For motivated anglers, there are large schools of bait between Buoys 12 and 10. You can bring your herring jigs and get all that is legal for bait purposes.

Crabbing in the river is picking up. One boat reported 25 keepers for 6 pots and doing just a single picking. Ocean crabbing out of the Columbia is going well also.

Tuna fishing should remain viable for the next several weeks. Some anglers reported catches as close as 22 miles from the mouth of the river. Trolled tuna clones will still take fish but live bait is becoming a hot commodity right now.

Upriver, although beach plunkers had to work hard for pay-out last week, tides are improving and so should the action. Hot colored spin-n-glos and/or plugs should take fish in the stronger tide series coming up. Jones and Dibblee Beaches should produce some of the better results until the water warms up too much to draw consistent strikes.

Boat and to a lesser degree bank anglers should continue to do good at Bonneville. Mild summer temperatures may keep the bite going somewhat strong through this week and more to come.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The water temperature at Willamette Falls and the lower river has been consistently in the lower 70-degree range. Daily counts of Chinook and steelhead are unimpressive which is typical for early August. YTD counts have not been updated since July 10th.

There has been little fluctuation in flow or water temperature on the McKenzie. The water remains in the mid to upper 50s which holds some promise for anglers.

Construction of a new fish trap at Minto is likely to close a roughly 2 1/2-mile stretch of the North Santiam when the project commences in 2013. This is expected to be a virtual non-event to boaters who rarely try the hazardous drifts from Niagara Falls to Packsaddle. There will be no recycling of hatchery fish for about two years once the construction is underway, however.

The Guide's Forecast – The stretch of the upper Willamette below Dexter Dam still holds promise for summer steelhead thanks to excellent run numbers this year.

Trout fishing has been steady with hatches occurring evenings on the McKenzie. Frequent stocking of the river above and below Leaburg Lake has created a reliable put-and-take fishery. Steelhead numbers remain good in the stretch below Leaburg Dam although results have been spotty. Persistence here will likely pay off.

North Santiam level and flow are steady although optimum water temperatures will be found on the upper stretches. While it's only fair fishing, try bobber and jig here for summer steelhead. Spring Chinook are also in the river.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas water levels have dropped to the point that navigational obstructions previously covered are now threatening those trying to drift the river.

With the water level dropping, the glacial origin of the Sandy is becoming more evident. This situation is typical in warm summer weather.

The Guide's Forecast – Angling effort is nil with catch rates low on the Clackamas as the water approaches summer level lows. With the plastic boat crowd out in full force, fish early and high on the system for a long shot at a steelhead hookup. The few springers still holed up in the low, clear water at Eagle Creek are aging past their pull date.

Whether one refers to it as gray, green glacial or milky, the Sandy water color is not conducive to fishing success. It would behoove anglers to write this one off for a while. The coho are coming ... eventually.

North Coast Fishing Report – If not for the tuna, most central coast ports would be pretty quiet right now. Ocean salmon from Garibaldi to Depoe Bay is pretty slow right now with many anglers complaining about all the cold water existing offshore. It clearly has an impact on the bite.

Only a rare limit is being taken from Garibaldi with ports to the south even slower with little exception. Ocean crabbers are at least making a trip out of it with a better grade of crab showing in recent catches.

Very few if any Chinook are showing in Tillamook Bay this fall but that will soon change. We should start to see some catches of Chinook and hatchery coho a little later this month. The Nehalem may become an option, especially for coho by late August. There is no wild fish fishery on the Nehalem this season. All wild coho must be released unharmed.

Crabbing is also picking up in north coast estuaries.

District rivers remain low and clear so steelheaders continue to be challenged. There won't be a lot of people versed enough to successfully land fish under these conditions.

The Guide's Forecast – Don't look for much to change on the north coast. Offshore coho fishing will likely remain challenging and low water will continue to limit success for steelheaders on the Nestucca and Wilson Rivers but fish are available in these systems.

Albacore are a good option out of these centrally located ports but you should still plan on going out 35 miles or so. If you have a live bait option, exercise it. Use those tuna carcasses to load up on ocean or bay crab.

Chinook and decent numbers of coho are still at least 2 weeks away on the North Oregon Coast.

Central & South Coast Reports – The ocean is putting on a little friendlier face off the central Oregon coast for boaters this coming weekend, at least according to reductions as of the morning of August 5th. Swells are forecast to be manageable, occurring at double-digit intervals but most promising are the north-northwest ocean breezes which prognosticators say will not be excessive, a pleasant change from buffeting winds which have hampered efforts in recent weeks. Be sure to factor morning minus tides into the equation and plan launches accordingly.

The run for albacore this weekend should be fewer than 40 miles with first hookups occurring around 30 miles. That's a long trip but better than it was a week ago. Warm water is moving closer to shore and with tuna running large for this time of year, the incentive is high. With summer all-depth halibut opening on Friday, August 6th, there have been discussions of combo tuna/halibut trips.

Boaters launching out of Reedsport have been experiencing an improvement in Chinook hookups offshore. Coho catches remain spotty but the fish are running larger than normal due to a good feed supply, primarily consisting of krill and sardines. The abundance of natural bait and shellfish may be contributing to spotty catches as well-fed fish will be less likely to chase anglers' offerings. A few Chinook are being taken daily inside the bay around Reedsport. Sturgeon catches have picked up in Winchester Bay and crabbing is worthwhile. Anglers casting from the South Jetty have been taking good numbers of rockfish this week. Steelheading is good on the North Umpqua and somewhat better in the flys-only stretch. Chinook fishing is closed on the North Umpqua. Smallmouth bass fishing is good in the mainstem around Elkton and in the South Umpqua.

While many bays and estuaries are home to clam populations, Coos Bay is expected to produce limits this weekend as minus tides expose beds this weekend.

Although fall Chinook have started to show on the Coquille and a few have been taken, the run is just beginning here and will improve into September.

Trollers in the Rogue estuaries have been watching Chinook cavort but have had little success in getting them to bite lately. Anchovy-spinner combos have accounted for the greater number of successful hookups. Steelheading has been slow in the lower Rogue. Chinook are passing through the middle Rogue but hookups are few in water averaging in the mid-60s. Steelhead fishing has been slightly better. The upper Rogue has been fairly consistent for summer steelhead and has continued to produce spring Chinook. Steelhead are the primary target and

haven't been too picky about taking either bait or lures. Weekly stocking of hatchery trout above Lost Creek Reservoir is producing reliable catches in the far upper river.

Wind will again hamper offshore launches on the south coast this weekend. When offshore conditions have cooperated, bottom fishers launching out of the Port of Brookings have had little trouble taking limits of rockfish despite the restriction to 20 fathoms or less. Surf perch fishing has been good when wind and waves cooperate to allow the activity.

The health advisory at Diamond Lake, advising visitors to avoid contact with the water due to toxic blue-green algae, was lifted on Tuesday this week. Recreate with abandon.

Central and Eastern Oregon – With summer steelhead entering the lower Deschutes, both wild and hatchery fish are being tallied daily at Sherars Falls. A few are being taken but it remains slow overall.

Kokanee fishing has been good at Odell for trollers. The fish are just starting to show signs of the spawn to come but will be fine for the table through August.

The Willowa River is fishing well for trout for fly anglers throwing mayfly patterns.

Fly anglers are doing well for largemouth bass at Davis Lake.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2010

August 2010

Contact: (Fish) 360-902-2700

(Wildlife) 360-902-2515

Buoy 10 Columbia salmon season highlights a great month of fishing

Anglers are reeling in chinook salmon off the coast, pulling up pots full of crab in Puget Sound, and casting for trout in alpine lakes on both sides of the Cascades. Summer fisheries are in full swing, and anglers can look forward to even more great fishing opportunities in the days ahead. A prime example is the Buoy 10 salmon fishery, which opens Aug. 1 at the mouth of the Columbia River. A big run of 664,900 fall chinook is expected to return to the big river this year, and fishery managers predict that anglers will catch approximately 12,500 of them between Buoy 10 and Rocky Point, 16 miles upriver.

"Buoy 10 is a very popular fishery, drawing tens of thousands of anglers every year," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Fishing tends to start out slow, then accelerates quickly and builds through the rest of August."

Bank anglers planning to fish at Buoy 10 should be aware that access to much of the North Jetty will be closed, due to a major project being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reinforce beaches eroded by winter storms. "The North jetty provides the only real bank access to that fishery, so things could get a little crowded," Hymer said.

The chinook fishery closes Aug. 31 at Buoy 10, but anglers can continue to keep hatchery-reared coho salmon in that area through the end of the year. Upriver from Rocky Point, fishing

opportunities for both species continue late into the year on the mainstem Columbia River and many of its tributaries.

Rather crack some crab? Fisheries for Dungeness crab are open throughout August in most areas of Puget Sound - the exception being Marine Area 7-North near the Canadian border, which opens Aug. 11. Specific regulations for each area are described in WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet and on the department's website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>).

North Puget Sound

Anglers are reeling in chinook and coho in Puget Sound, where crabbing is still an option and two additional marine areas open for salmon Aug. 1. Meanwhile, anglers are having some success at Baker Lake, which recently opened for sockeye salmon.

For the first time, anglers are fishing for **sockeye salmon** in Baker Lake, where the fish are returning in significantly higher numbers this year. Anglers fishing Baker Lake can retain up to two adult sockeye salmon that exceed 18 inches in length from Baker Dam upstream to the mouth of the Baker River. All other salmon must be released, and no fishing is allowed between the dam and the log boom at the lower end of the lake.

"The fish are biting, it's just a matter of finding them," said Brett Barkdull, fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Most anglers have done well once they get over them, and hopefully that will continue into August."

The sockeye salmon fishery at Baker Lake is open until further notice, said Barkdull, who reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>. Separate sockeye salmon fisheries on portions of the Skagit and Baker rivers run through July 31.

Elsewhere, anglers can still find some **steelhead** along the Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish River. But most freshwater anglers are gearing up for Sept. 1, when the Stllaguamish, Snohomish, Skykomish and portions of the Skagit, Snoqualmie and Green (Duwamish) rivers open for salmon fishing.

Beginning Aug. 16, **Lake Sammamish** will also be an option for freshwater salmon anglers, who will have a daily limit of four salmon, and can retain up to two **chinook**. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek.

On Puget Sound, anglers can fish for salmon in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). Those fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild coho and chum starting Aug. 1.

Anglers fishing marine areas 9 and 10 can keep hatchery chinook - marked with a clipped adipose fin - as part of a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook. Those fishing Marine Area 9 also must release chum salmon, while anglers in Marine Area 10 are required to release chum beginning Aug. 1.

The chinook selective fisheries in marine areas 9 and 10 run through Aug. 31. Beginning Sept. 1, anglers in those two marine areas will be required to release all chinook and chum. Anglers are reminded that regulations vary for inner Elliott Bay, Sinclair Inlet and public fishing piers in those marine areas.

August brings other opportunities in the region to catch and keep salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open for salmon. Anglers fishing those two areas will have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Meanwhile, the **crab** fishery is under way in Puget Sound. Dungeness and red rock crab seasons are:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) are open through Jan. 2, seven days a week.
- Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal) are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine areas 7 South and East are open through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Area 7 North will open Aug. 11 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule through Sept. 30, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Summer salmon fishing is in full swing along the coast, where anglers are hooking some bright chinook and nice-size coho. "Some days are better than others, but for the most part fishing has been good for both **chinook** and **coho** ," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "In the coming weeks, I expect fishing to get even better as more salmon show up and the weather settles down."

Anglers fishing marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) can keep up to two chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release any chinook measuring less than 24 inches and hatchery coho less than 16 inches. Wild coho must be released unharmed. All four ocean marine areas are open to salmon fishing seven days a week. Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 3 and 4, through Sept. 19 in Marine Area 2 and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1. However, salmon fisheries in those areas could close early if catch quotas are reached. Milward reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations> .

So far this year, angler effort has been lower than expected likely because of rough weather, Milward said. "Conditions should improve as we move into August, making it easier for anglers to get out on the water," he said.

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers are still having some success hooking chinook and the occasional coho in marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), while salmon fisheries in marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon), 12 (Hood Canal) and 13 (South Puget Sound) continue to be slow.

Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the *Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet* (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>) before heading out on the water.

Anglers still hoping to land a big flatfish should be aware that the late season for **halibut** opens Aug. 6 in Marine Area 1. The fishery is open three days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the quota is taken or Sept 26, whichever occurs first. A total of 4,885 pounds of halibut are available for harvest, including 854 pounds left over from the early season.

Prefer shellfish? The **Dungeness crab** fishery is going strong in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and most areas of Puget Sound. Dungeness and red rock crab seasons are:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 are open through Jan. 2, seven days a week.
- Marine areas 6, 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine areas 7 South and East are open through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Area 7 North will open Aug. 11 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule through Sept. 30, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

Meanwhile, WDFW enforcement officers will be increasing resource-protection patrols on the **Skokomish River** , where recreational salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 under several new regulations.

The daily bag limit has been increased this year from one to two salmon for anglers fishing from the mouth of the river to the Highway 101 Bridge through Sept. 30. However, a new rule in effect this year requires anglers to carefully release any wild chinook salmon they catch. As in previous years, anglers must release chum salmon through Oct. 15.

Another change this year is that recreational fishing will be closed from the Highway 106 Bridge upstream to the Highway 101 Bridge on six Mondays to avoid potential gear conflicts with treaty tribal fishers. Those closures are scheduled for Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and Sept. 13. Recreational fishing downstream of the Highway 106 Bridge will remain open seven days a week through the fishing season.

Anglers fishing the Skokomish River also will be required to release any salmon not hooked inside the mouth and retain the first two legal salmon they catch. In addition, single-point barbless hooks are required and a night closure and anti-snagging rule will be in effect.

Southwest Washington

For Columbia River anglers, this month provides a great opportunity for a triple play. Fishing seasons for fall chinook salmon and hatchery coho open Aug. 1, while summer steelhead are expected to continue providing good fishing well into September.

While the **fall chinook** season opens upriver to Priest Rapids Dam, most of this month's action takes place in the popular Buoy 10 fishery on the lower 16 miles of the river. A big run of 664,900 fall chinook is expected this year, setting the stage for some good fishing, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"The fall chinook fishery is looking very promising this year," Hymer said. "Fishing tends to start slow, then accelerates quickly and builds through the rest of August."

So will the catch. Fishery managers estimate that anglers will catch 12,500 chinook salmon by Aug. 31, when the retention fishery for chinook closes in the Buoy 10 area. They also anticipate a catch of 12,000 coho in that area and another 17,000 chinook between Rocky Point and Bonneville Dam by the time those seasons come to a close.

Bank anglers planning to fish at Buoy 10 should be aware that access to much of the North Jetty will be closed, due to a major project being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reinforce beaches eroded by winter storms. "The North jetty provides the only real bank access to that fishery, so things could get a little crowded," Hymer said.

For the Buoy 10 fishery, the daily limit is two salmon, two **hatchery steelhead**, or one of each. However, anglers may retain only one chinook salmon (minimum size, 24 inches) per day as part of their daily limit. Only those steelhead and coho marked with a missing adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained. This requirement does not, however, apply to fall chinook, which may be retained whether marked or unmarked.

For more rules on the Buoy 10 area and other waters upriver, see WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, which is posted online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>.

By mid-to-late August, the bulk of the chinook run historically begins to move upstream while increasing numbers of **coho** move into the Columbia River behind them. For anglers following the chinook upriver, Hymer recommends fishing deep, between 40 and 50 feet down. For a lure, he suggests a wobbler anchored with a heavy weight.

"Chinook go deep when water temperatures are high - as they are now - so that's a good place to find them," Hymer said. "At the same time, anglers should take care not to drop anchor in the shipping channel. That can lead to real trouble."

While 2010 is not expected to be a banner year for hatchery coho, those fish will help to round out anglers' daily limits at Buoy 10, Hymer said. WDFW currently expects about 290,000 coho to return this year, down significantly from last year's exceptionally large run of three-quarters of a million fish.

"While we will likely see fewer coho this year, those fish will still make a real contribution to the fishery," Hymer said. "They usually bite best at Buoy 10 on herring and spinners, and then later in the tributaries."

Meanwhile, plenty of **hatchery steelhead** are still available for harvest, Hymer said. In June, anglers caught more early-run summer steelhead than at any time since the 1970s, and those fish should keep biting hooks through mid-August. By then, the larger "B-run" steelhead - many weighing in the teens - should start arriving to pick up the slack. This year's return of "B-run" steelhead, most headed for hatcheries on the Clearwater and Salmon rivers, is expected to total about 100,000 fish, about double the size of last year's run.

"The combination of three species - fall chinook, coho and steelhead - makes August a great time to fish the Columbia River," Hymer said.

They'll also liven up fishing in the tributaries, where anglers have been reeling in respectable numbers of hatchery steelhead for the past few months. As on the mainstem Columbia, the fall salmon season starts Aug. 1 on a number of area tributaries, although salmon fishing doesn't really take off until September. Meanwhile, Drano Lake and the White Salmon River are good places to try for steelhead looking for cooler waters.

Like last year, anglers will again be able to retain up to six hatchery adult coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal. Also like last year, hatchery fall chinook are the only kind of salmon anglers can retain on the Grays, Elochoman and Kalama rivers.

Some new rules will also be in effect, including a requirement that anglers release all unmarked chinook (adults and jacks) on the Cowlitz, Toutle, Green, Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake. Last year, that requirement applied only to jack salmon on those rivers. As always, WDFW strongly advises anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet for new rules applicable to specific waters before leaving home.

Of course, salmon and steelhead aren't the only fish available for harvest in August. **Walleye** fishing has been good in the Columbia River near Camas, as well as in The Dalles and John Day Pools. **Bass** fishing has also been heating up from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam.

For **trout**, the high wilderness lakes around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens offer unparalleled fishing experiences for those willing to brave the mosquitoes. Riffe Lake in Lewis County is still giving up some nice landlocked coho, while Mayfield Lake, Skate Creek and the Tilton River are still receiving regular plants of rainbows. Hatchery sea-run cutthroats should also provide some opportunity on the lower Cowlitz beginning in late August.

Eastern Washington

With water temperatures rising, the month of August is usually best for warmwater-species fishing throughout the region.

Chris Donley, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist, said mixed-species waters are a good bet. **Yellow perch, largemouth** and **smallmouth bass**, and **crappie** can usually be caught at Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs and Chapman lakes in southwest Spokane County, Newman and Liberty lakes in eastern Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake and Deer and Waitts lakes in Stevens County.

Fishing at **rainbow** and **cutthroat** trout lakes near Spokane - like Amber, Badger, Clear, Fish, Williams, and West Medical lakes - is best early in the morning or at night, Donley says. The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, but river anglers need to be aware of catch limits, gear restrictions, and other rules listed in the fishing pamphlet.

Catfish and **sturgeon** fishing is usually productive in the Snake River system in the southeast part of the region in August. Catfish are often landed in the backwaters and sloughs throughout the mainstem Snake, as well as in or near the mouths of tributaries like the Tucannon River.

Sturgeon fishers are reminded of the minimum 43-inch and maximum 54-inch tail fork length and the daily catch limit of one sturgeon. The Snake and its tributaries upstream of Lower Granite Dam are catch-and-release only for sturgeon. The section of the Snake just east of the Tri-Cities, from the mouth to Ice Harbor Dam, is also catch-and-release for sturgeon starting Aug. 1.

Fishing has slowed considerably for **rainbow trout** in the small man-made lakes off the Tucannon River on WDFW's Wooten Wildlife Area in Columbia County, said area manager Kari Dingman. With or without good fishing, lots of folks like to escape city heat with a weekend camping trip to the area. Dingman said hot and dry conditions, along with a recent wildfire, have resulted in a ban on campfires.

Dingman also reminds fishers and other recreationists that a U.S. Forest Service road, bridge and culvert over the Little Tucannon River are under re-construction for the first half of August, so state campgrounds Panjab North and South, along with the Sheep Creek and Meadow Creek trailheads, will be inaccessible during the project.

In the north end of the region, **kokanee** and **walleye** fishing continues to be good at Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam. Kokanee fishing is also productive at Stevens County's Loon Lake during night time hours.

Some of the high elevation lakes on U.S. Forest Service property in the northeast district that are stocked with **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** may be good destinations for camping and fishing weekends. In Ferry County, try Davis, Ellen, Empire, Swan and Trout lakes. In Stevens County, try Gillette, Heritage, Sherry, Summit, and Thomas lakes. In Pend Oreille County, try Carl's, Cook's, Frater, Halfmoon, Leo, Mystic, Nile, No-Name, Petit, South and North Skookums, and Yokum lakes. More information on these mostly small fishing lakes can be found in WDFW's 2010 Fishing Prospects at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects/>.

Anglers are reminded to be extra careful with anything that could start wildfires in the region's hot and dry conditions. Plans should include a check on campfire restrictions on public lands. See Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fire information by county at <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. Current wildfire conditions in Washington are available at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49/>.

Northcentral Washington

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Bob Jateff of Twisp reports that **salmon** fishing in the mainstem Columbia River is picking up with the approach of August. "An increasing number of **sockeye salmon** are being caught right off the mouth of the Okanogan River," Jateff said. "**Chinook salmon** fishing has been slow, but should pick up as more fish pass Wells Dam."

Jateff reminds anglers the daily catch limit is six salmon, of which no more than three can be chinook, and only one chinook can be a wild, unmarked fish.

The action should also pick up on the Methow River and its tributaries, now that stream flows are finally dropping to fishable levels, he said, noting that those waters are catch-and-release only and that selective gear is required. He advises anglers to check the sportfishing rules pamphlet to be sure which areas are open to fishing.

"Smaller tributaries within the Methow system are good during the summer for anglers who want to catch and keep **brook trout**," Jateff said. "Eightmile, Falls, and Boulder creeks are all tributaries to the Chewuch River that hold brook trout. The daily limit on Falls and Eightmile Creeks is five fish, and on Boulder Creek it's 10 fish. There is no minimum size for brook trout in these waters."

Jateff says lake fishing throughout the Okanogan district generally slows down during the hotter months, except for waters at high elevation. "Alpine lake fishing action picks up as the trails become more accessible," he said. "Most high country lakes either have reproducing populations of trout or are sustained by periodic fish plants. **Cutthroat trout** is the main species in a lot of these waters."

Jateff noted that anglers who fish deep during the cooler parts of the day - very early or late - can catch some nice **rainbow trout** in the lower elevation waters, too. "Wannacut Lake near Oroville, for example, is a deep lake that seems to hold up well over the summer," he said.

Anglers can find specific information about fishing waters throughout the region, county by county, in WDFW's Fishing Prospects report at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects/>. Wherever of where they go, anglers are reminded to be careful with anything that could start wildfires in the region's hot and dry conditions. Outing plans should include a check on campfire restrictions on public lands. See Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fire information by county at <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. See current wildfire conditions in Washington from the National Interagency Fire Center at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49/>.

Southcentral Washington

Fishing for **kokanee** at Rimrock Reservoir - the 2500-plus-acre impoundment on the Tieton River along Hwy. 12 about 10 miles east of White Pass in western Yakima County - is about as good as it gets these days. That's the word from both Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Eric Anderson and WDFW regional habitat program manager Perry Harvester, both of Yakima.

"You can catch your daily limit of 16 fish in just a few hours of fishing," said Harvester. "Use small, white, shoepeg corn or maggots soaked in tuna or shrimp oil at about 20 feet deep on a wedding ring spinner behind a smaller gang troll, like small cowbells. Two ounces of weight are all that is needed. Troll very slowly, between one and two miles per hour. Vary your speed and make turns once you find a school. There's good action for kids to keep their attention. There's less wind to contend with at the west end of the lake but the fish are everywhere."

Anderson reports the kokanee, or "silver trout," which are actually land-locked sockeye salmon, run about nine to 10½ inches long. Rimrock anglers are hitting them hard these days. "With the hot weather continuing," Anderson said, "you may have to go deeper than the 20 feet where Perry caught them, maybe down to 30 feet."

Anderson also recommends kokanee fishing at other Yakima Basin reservoirs including Bumping, and Keechelus and Kachess in Kittitas County. "All these waters are closed to the taking of any **bull trout**," Anderson said, "so anglers need to release all inadvertently caught bull trout." Water levels in streams in the upper Yakima and Naches river systems are in pretty good condition for **wild rainbow** and **cutthroat** trout fishing, Anderson said. Anglers should check the stream regulations for details and release all **salmon**, **bull trout**, and **steelhead**.

"The mountain country has really opened up now and there are some great high lake trout fishing opportunities in the South Cascades," Anderson said. "There are lots of small lakes to hike up to that we stock with fish."

Specific information on stocking Yakima and Kittitas county alpine lakes can be found at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/regions/reg3/r3_highlakes.htm.

Rather catch **walleye**? Creel reports show that interest in walleye fishing is picking up on Lake Umatilla, the Columbia River reservoir behind McNary Dam on the Washington-Oregon border. Creel checkers were actually looking for salmon and steelhead anglers, but 102 anglers out of 129 interviewed were fishing for walleye.

"Those anglers averaged about one walleye for a little over four hours of fishing each," said WDFW fish biologist Paul Hoffarth of Pasco. "We tallied 128 walleye total, 89 kept, 29 released." There is no minimum size on Columbia River walleye, but only five fish of the 10-fish daily limit can be over 18 inches and only one over 24 inches can be retained. Anglers targeting walleye also caught **smallmouth bass**, Hoffarth reported. Four bass anglers interviewed averaged

about one fish per hour of fishing. There is no minimum size on bass, but only three fish of the five-fish daily limit can exceed 15 inches.

Sturgeon fishing is catch-and-release only Aug. 1 throughout the Columbia River. The section that has been closed to all sturgeon fishing, from the Interstate 82 bridge upstream to McNary Dam, opens for catch-and-release only Aug. 1.

Hoffarth's most recent sturgeon fishing checks showed anglers averaging one sturgeon for over six hours of fishing. Most were less than the 43-inch minimum, with a few in the slot limit of 43 to 54 inches, and a few over the 54 inch maximum.

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