

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 20th – August 26th, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Although catches remain sporadic, a few fall chinook are beginning to fall to anchor fishermen using wobblers near the bottom. Effort in this fishery will explode this week and catches should peak in early September. The earlier fish are typically larger with fish in the 30-pound range a real possibility as fishing picks up.

Summer steelhead counts remain good at Bonneville but catches and effort will drop as the focus switches to salmon. Bank anglers should continue to do well in the gorge through the end of the month.

The lower Willamette water temperature is approaching the mid-70s. Try the Eugene-Springfield stretch for steelhead.

Trout fishing is good on the McKenzie for hatchery fish, steelheading is slow to fair.

Fishing for summer steelhead has been slow to fair on the North Santiam. Most of the springers are dark.

A few steelhead are being taken high on the system in the low, clear water of the Clackamas.

Water conditions remain poor on the Sandy which is typical for mid-summer. Only a rare steelhead is being taken.

Northwest – Chinook fishing broke loose in Astoria on Sunday. Red hot fishing was experienced above the bridge on the Washington side on both the morning and evening high tides. Success tapered on Monday but picked back up again by Tuesday. Sporadic catches are common early in the season but fishing for both chinook and coho should become more consistent through the end of the month. Peak chinook catches are likely to take place this week in the Buoy 10 fishery.

Coho catches are beginning to improve on the lower Columbia with some quality fish to 12-pounds in the catch. Action was good in the ocean for much of the week although there were still experienced anglers coming back shy of their limits for what most consider peak season right now. Successful anglers were running as far as 6 to 8 miles Southwest of the CR Buoy in 285 to 310 foot of water.

Tuna anglers running 25 to 30 miles offshore are faring well for albacore to 30 pounds. Only a small amount of halibut remain on the quota in the Columbia River sub-area. An 80-pounder was brought in on Sunday.

Coho catches out of Garibaldi remained subdued but crabbing is picking up nicely in the nearshore. A recent regulation change allows for ocean crabbing until October 15th instead of the historical August 15th closure date.

Chinook should start to make a show in some north coast estuaries. Effort and catch on the Nehalem has been expectantly light but chinook destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers should begin to show this week.

Sea-run cutthroat trout should be available in most tidewater stretches of north coast rivers. Fly

anglers or trollers should find fair success this time of year.

Bay crabbing continues to improve on the Nehalem, Nestucca, Netarts and Tillamook Bays.

Southwest – While the decision came too late to appear in last week's report, the all-depth halibut fishery closed Friday, August 13th. The 2010 summer season quota, reduced 15% from last year, filled quickly with excellent catches in good ocean conditions.

Trollers are taking adult chinook, the occasional jack and a few coho in the lower Umpqua around Reedsport. Crabbing is fair in Winchester Bay.

A few chinook are being hooked on the Coquille but it has been slow.

Coos Bay has been productive for Dungeness but soft-shells are becoming more common.

The chinook bite halted on the Rogue estuary over the past week following a blowout at the Gold Ray Dam removal project which sent roiled water downstream last week. The failure of a coffer dam was blamed on a unseen beaver den. Boats launching out of Gold Beach took limits of rockfish and a few ling cod offshore with charter vessels scoring twice a day. The upper Rogue is productive for steelhead.

Boats out of Brookings Harbor have been making trips of 50 miles or so to take albacore over the past week. For those better equipped for nearshore excursions, fishing has been outstanding for a colorful variety of rockfish, which are hitting a myriad of lures. Baits of herring are preferred to tempt ling cod. Offshore swells and wind are predicted to be building into the coming weekend.

Diamond Lake is fishing well with bait anglers scoring better than trollers.

Eastern – Steelhead catches are improving on the lower Deschutes. Trout fishing has been best on nymphs.

Green Peter is producing some nice kokanee for trollers running downriggers at depths of 50 foot or greater.

Jigs have been taking limits of good-sized kokanee at Paulina.

Steelhead catches are picking up on the Grande Ronde.

SW Washington – Most anglers will focus their efforts on the mainstem in search of upriver bright chinook. The mouths of the Cowlitz and Lewis will be favorite places to anchor fish with anglers targeting depths of 33 to 45 feet. Be mindful of ship traffic as they have the right-of-way.

Steelheading remains good on the Cowlitz River with salmon soon to follow. Regulations are complicated again this year so study up before venturing out.

Good passage at Bonneville should continue to fuel the Drano Lake fishery. The Klickitat River is also an option when inland temperatures don't compromise water clarity due to glacial melt.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Well, they're here! We knew if the run was going to come to fruition, it was going to happen anytime soon. It happened on Sunday, when hoards of Chinook were caught on both the high slack of the a.m. and p.m. tides, especially above the bridge. Anglers described the morning high tide bite on the Washington side nothing short of epic. Fish

to 30-pounds were reported with an occasional fish topping the scales at over 40-pounds for the lower Columbia.

Most recently, Young's Bay fishing has been consistently good but dried up somewhat on Thursday. The closer we got to high slack, the more productive the fishing was. As is always, high slack will be the most productive time of the day. On Thursday, the green line above and below the bridge (Oregon side) produced some of the better bites of the day. The bite started almost exactly at high tide and lasted for a few hours into outgoing tide. The soft tides we're currently experiencing allows for a longer period of productive fishing after high slack.

Coho began to show in greater numbers by mid-week but Chinook were certainly still quite available for those willing to fish deep. We targeted our fish near the bottom in 28 to 32 feet of water. All of my fish have been taken on fresh herring but anchovies are certainly capable of producing fish, especially coho. Spinners have become increasingly more productive in recent days with Chinook and coho equally responsive. The standard red/white blade has been producing but so has other hot colored blades.

The Washington side above the bridge has also been producing but wasn't so productive on Thursday. There have been some consistent bites over there however with high slack and the first part of outgoing the best time of interception. As the tide has been rolling out, the 20 to 30 foot line downstream of the bridge has been producing nicely. Every day is different however.

The Desdemona Light marker has also been producing fair catches about half way into the incoming tide. It seems to get best about an hour before high slack. It's best to troll your way upstream along the 20 to 30 foot line on your way to the above bridge bite on the Washington side.

The ocean has been hit or miss most recently. Anglers fishing early in the week did excellent on Chinook from Buoy 3 to Buoy 1 but that bite slowed by mid-week. Some guides were fishing along the beach at mid-week but failed to find any good numbers of fish. We have had good history with Chinook in this area, this time of year. River fishing panned out better than ocean fishing for several guides by mid-week.

Some of the most consistent fishing remained SW of the CR Buoy about 6 to 8 miles in 285 to 310 feet of water. Good sized coho and a few Chinook were in the mix. It's a long ways to run when the NW wind is blowing, and it has been blowing since Thursday morning.

Ocean crabbing has picked up but interest is waning as the salmon bite turns to the river. River crabbing is ok for those being persistent and fishing fresh salmon carcasses. Be mindful of the soft versus strong tides as pots have been moving around on the stronger tides and reports of stolen pots are coming in.

Further offshore, the halibut quota is nearing its limit off the mouth of the Columbia River and tuna anglers are still scoring decent numbers of fish 25 to 30 miles west of the CR mouth. Live bait is responsible for the bulk of the success.

Upriver, anchor anglers are starting to get into fair numbers of fish using wobblers anchored near the channel edges. Although we're still weeks away from peak fishing, motivated anglers have been hitting fair numbers of fish in the past week. Counts at Bonneville are showing a strong early showing, enough to produce fair results for those working wobblers from the mouth of the Sandy to Longview and downstream. It will only get better from here.

Steelheading remains best in the Columbia River gorge although effort is waning with the arrival of fall Chinook. Some "B" run fish should begin to show in the catch. The waters are too warm to expect good results for bank anglers fishing lower river beaches.

The Guide's Forecast – Anglers will be facing another poor tide for early morning fishing. With low slack greeting early morning anglers over the weekend, it would behoove serious anglers to wait to target their quarry around the high tide later in the day. Start your day close to Buoy 11 or 12 on the last part of the outgoing tide and work your way upstream to fish above the bridge (Oregon or Washington side) at high slack. Most anglers will make the mistake of starting early in the morning and leaving when the bite gets best in the late afternoon. TGF readers should take advantage of this oversight.

Work lower Desdemona Sands half way through the incoming or hold in the current along the Oregon shoreline. As we get close to high slack, you'll want to be at the mouth of Young's Bay or on your way to the bridge on the Washington side. Be upstream of the bridge at high tide, either on the Washington or Oregon side.

While herring has been my stand-by this season, anchovies or spinners will also produce fair to good catches of Chinook and coho. With coho making a larger presence in the fishery, smaller baits such as anchovies or small spinner do make sense this time of year. If you do go to spinners, especially targeting coho, make sure red or pink is in the color scheme.

Anglers wishing to go to the ocean may want to re-think their strategy. Although it may be a good choice for a limit of salmon, limits in the river are quite possible and Chinook are more likely to be intercepted in the river versus in the ocean. Also to take into consideration, a north wind-chop is in the forecast, and that's no fun at all:

FRI NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT AT 10 SECONDS.

FRI NIGHT NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT AT 10 SECONDS.

SAT NW WIND 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT... EASING TO 5 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

SAT NIGHT W WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO S AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. NW SWELL 4 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SUN S WIND 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT...VEERING TO W IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS IN THE MORNING.

SUN NIGHT NW WIND 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT...VEERING TO N AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT.

MON N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

TUE N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

Strong incoming tides will make for challenging crabbing conditions. Flows will push buoys underwater and move pots around, making crabbers believe their pots have been stolen or picked and moved. Also, crabs will only be on the move for short periods of time when flows

aren't as strong. Ocean crabbing will remain open but females still seem to be quite common in the nearshore (inside of 50 feet).

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The lower Willamette is warm, low, clear and slow, even for bass and panfish. Try upriver for the better chance of a hookup but it's a challenging time of year for most areas.

McKenzie level and flow are still reasonably good as is water temperature for mid-summer.

North Santiam level and flow remain stable.

The Guide's Forecast – While action has slowed on the middle river in mid-summer fashion, there are still some decent steelhead available with trout cooperative. Try either or both early or late in the day. The Town Run has been a good stretch.

First and last light trout fishing is worthwhile on the McKenzie as fish turn on for a brief period. There are still a few steelhead available but catches have been only fair at best.

While summer steelhead numbers remain good on the North Santiam, they have been slow to respond and are biting lightly. Fishing is slow to fair here. Spring Chinook are past their prime.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – With Clackamas water low, clear and warm, the only shot at a hookup here is high on the system where steelheading has been productive at times. Early and late in the day hold the best chance for action here. Coho will be entering in September.

Glacial runoff is making for gray-green water conditions on the Sandy. This is typical for this river in August but it makes for poor fishing.

The Guide's Forecast – Not a great week to target fish on the Clackamas or Sandy but early morning anglers stand the best chance in undisturbed waters. Rafters are over-running the river in these hot summer conditions.

North Coast Fishing Report – With very few freshwater Chinook available on the north coast, anglers are still focused on salt water coho with varied results coming from Garibaldi. Coho catches did improve in the south of falcon fisheries this week with Newport and Depoe Bay reporting some fair action this week. Although it seems a bit late to me, it's an indicator that the "B" run of late season coho bound for the Columbia River may be decent as this strain of coho is what typically fuels the central coast coho fisheries this time of year.

Some Chinook are available nearshore, particularly anglers that are targeting them near the estuary entrances. Tillamook is the likely targeted estuary but the Nehalem is also producing an occasional Chinook despite restrictive seasons inside the bay. Effort is light inside.

Steelhead are still available in the Nestucca and Wilson systems but catches have been light. Sea-run cutthroat are a strong option, especially in tidewater this time of year.

The Guide's Forecast – It looks like more coho are coming up the coast which should bode well for offshore anglers this week. It's important to note however that the seas are likely to get

a wind-chop to them so turn north in the morning so you can ride the wind waves back home in the afternoon.

Chinook may start to enter north coast estuaries in bigger numbers this week with a promising tide sending some early fish to the upper estuary (in Tillamook) early this week. Herring likely will work best on the incoming tide, especially around high tide in the upper bay. On Tillamook Bay, early fish are typically destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers.

Tuna fishing and crabbing out of Garibaldi is picking up significantly and should stay good in the coming week. Crabbing will only get better into the fall months.

Central & South Coast Reports – For those unable to make the long ocean trek for albacore, they're available at seafood shops and dockside up and down the coast for right around \$2 a pound. They're easier to clean ('cark') than one might think. See **Random Links**, below, for a video tutorial and be prepared for some seriously good eats.

The 20-fathom restriction remains in place for offshore bottom fishers but this hasn't prevented boats from limiting on colorful rockfish. Ling cod catches have been reduced somewhat, however. If lings are landed, be certain they meet the 22-inch minimum to retain. Cabezon may not be kept by boats although they may be retained by bank-bound anglers.

Crabbing has been fair in coastal bays and estuaries but greater numbers of softshells are showing up in nets and traps. Dungeness, which have recently molted, will be lighter in weight with less meat within the shell and what there is will be translucent and watery.

With ocean coho catches out of Newport improving somewhat over the past week, reports indicate 70% of anglers are landing at least one fish. Catch rates are slower in ports to the south. Tuna are being caught within the 30-mile mark with boats landing albacore at 20 miles or so on some days. Ocean conditions are forecast to be marginal this coming weekend with Sunday predicted to be the best shot at an offshore foray.

Ocean crabbing has been excellent out of Depoe Bay.

Tuna fishing is fair to good about 40 miles out of Winchester Bay. Trollers are thick on the lower Umpqua but action is slow to fair for Chinook although the fish that have been landed are running large. Try the mainstem Umpqua around Elkton up into the South Umpqua for smallmouth bass. Try soft plastics, surface lures early and late in the day and smallies are a blast on fly gear. Steelheading is expected to improve when the water temperature drops a bit.

Salmon fishers on the lower Coos have been trying very hard but catching very little. Chinook are just starting to enter and a few are being taken along the South Jetty. Boats are loading up on albacore out of Charleston.

Rogue Bay remains hit-or-miss for Chinook trollers. Salmon holding in the cool waters of the ocean have not been anxious to enter the warm estuary. Trollers have experienced fair fishing with anchovy/spinner combos late in the day. Half-pounders are being caught in the lower river but few adult steelhead are present. Fishing has been fair for Chinook in the Grants Pass stretch when muddy water isn't washing downstream from the Gold Ray Dam removal site. Steelheading has been solid in the upper river, however, and these fish haven't been picky about what sort of lure is shown to them. Plugs have been taking fall Chinook below Dodge Bridge but release dark springers, which will be found occasionally in the mix. The upper Rogue will be restricted to flies only as of September 1st.

Central and Eastern Oregon – With the water temperature dropping in the lower Deschutes, steelheading is picking up. Fish are being taken daily at Sherars Falls. Pressure is on the upswing as well, particularly on weekends. Trout fishing is a little more challenging at this time of year but nymphing has been effective recently.

Catches have slowed slightly at Green Peter with kokanee showing signs of the upcoming spawning season. Until the fish start to lose scales or show color, they'll be good on the table.

Pressure is light at Wollawa Lake with only a few boats trying daily. Kokanee seem more intent on hitting the tributaries to spawn rather than hitting lures.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2010

August 2010

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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.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

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

Catch a tuna or buy a whole albacore? Here's what to do with 'em:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb-jNxvSSrU>

Try the Tuna Bomb Recipe (it's great):

<http://www.ifish.net/board/showthread.php?t=177501&highlight=tuna+bomb>

We've seen lots of ratfish but for those who have not:

<http://allaroundangler.com/blog/archives/3771>

GOOD LUCK!