

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 38

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 17th – September 23rd, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- After a flurry of success by Bonneville anglers, the bite has slowed although fish are still being hooked with some regularity. Backrollers are scoring the best results with bait-wrapped Flatfish the most common lure of choice. Action should pick back up again in early October.

The anchor wobbler fishery has also slowed in the Portland to Longview stretch but a few fish will still be taken throughout the rest of this month.

Coho are crossing Willamette Falls in good numbers. Steelheaders on the upper Willamette have been catching steelhead around Eugene.

Trout fishing has been fair on the McKenzie. Spring chinook can be observed spawning here.

Summer steelhead remain available on the North Santiam. Chinook appear to have finished spawning.

Rain showers caused a slight bump in flows at the Clackamas on September 9th but the water level quickly dropped back to summer level lows. Rain this week will put coho in Eagle Creek.

Coho are in the Sandy River in good number now although they can be challenging to hook. Spinners were taking some earlier this week.

Northwest – Lower Tillamook Bay tallied some good fall chinook fishing on Tuesday with some boats taking their 1-fish limits of chinook. Julie Chick of Nehalem boated a fresh buck, tipping the scales at nearly 32 pounds. The fish took a plug cut herring on the inside of the north jetty on the soft outgoing tide.

Hatchery coho have been plentiful in upper Tillamook Bay. The adults have fallen to spinners and herring close to high tide. Although only a slight rise in river levels is in the forecast, the rain freshet could send anxious hatchery fish up the Trask and North Fork Nehalem Rivers over the weekend. This should give bank anglers ample opportunity in the early morning hours.

Calm seas allowed anglers and crabbers to recreate on the ocean for much of this week, taking big numbers of dungeness crab in the nearshore and tuna offshore. A southerly influence may bring tuna even closer to shore where anglers should have a great shot at big numbers when seas calm once again.

The Nestucca River opened for chinook today but detailed restrictions remain in place. Check updated regulations for north coast systems by logging onto the ODF&W web site. Chinook are starting to penetrate the mainstem Nehalem in fair numbers. An occasional pink salmon is showing in some north coast basins and by regulation, are allowed to be retained as part of your daily bag limit.

More coho are due back to the lower Columbia but action was very slow over the weekend. A second run of coho typically runs through the area in mid-October, destined for Washington hatcheries. Crabbing remains good in the lower Columbia, especially on the current low tide exchanges.

The Alsea and Siletz are beginning to show signs of promise. Catches have been best near the estuary. The Salmon River near Lincoln City is also beginning to gain attention and should peak this week.

Southwest – Tuna are being caught 20 to 30 miles off the central Oregon coast but the opportunity will be over when the water cools.

Chinook fishing has picked up for trollers at Winchester Bay and the lower Umpqua. Crabbing continues to improve here as in most southwest bays and estuaries.

Salmon fishing has improved on the Coos with jacks supplementing catches.

The Coquille is now open for coho retention. Trollers are experiencing spotty results for chinook.

Rogue Bay has been spotty for fall chinook with evenings most productive. Half-pounder steelhead catches are good at Agness. The middle Rogue is roiled from the Gold Ray Dam removal site although chinook are being landed. Upper river fishing is worthwhile for steelhead in flies-only water. The Indian Creek Salmon Derby will take place on September 18th with \$1,500 prize money to be awarded to the top finishers. Sign up at local merchants.

Ocean conditions are forecast to be friendly for offshore boaters out of Brookings this coming weekend. Bottom fishing and ocean crabbing should be good.

The first significant fall rain will kick off the fall fishery at Elk River.

The first Chetco Bay chinook of the season was landed recently by Brookings resident Wayne Sargent. The Chetco remains closed at River Mile 2.2 until November 6th.

There's \$5,000 in prize money up for grabs at the Diamond Lake Trout Derby taking place September 25th. Call 541-973-4831 for information.

Eastern – Steelhead counts at Sherars Falls have picked up significantly over the past week and the majority of these are hatchery keepers. Steelheading is good from Maupin to Macs Canyon and fishing pressure is building commensurately. Trout fishing has improved with nymphing effective during the day and dry caddis patterns taking fish in the evening.

It's getting fairly late in the season to expect quality kokanee from Oregon lakes and reservoirs with spawning time approaching.

SW Washington – Most district streams are producing a mix of coho, chinook and steelhead. Coho numbers should continue to build into October with brighter fish more likely to bite offerings. Chinook regulations are more complicated this season so check local listings before heading out.

The Toutle already has coho present although fishable numbers will build later into this month.

Drano Lake anglers should find larger steelhead in their catches. Idaho's "B" run fish are peaking at the Bonneville facility. The mouth of the Klickitat should begin to produce some fair catches of chinook and an early coho.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The lower Columbia continues to be a biological desert for coho. It also remains closed to chinook. Coho are still due to make another fair showing, possibly as early as next week but serious anglers may want to look into mid-October when the later running "B" run of fish are peaking. Most anglers will likely have their focus on other areas of the coast at that time however.

Wobbler fishing just a bit upriver has also taken an expected nosedive. The bulk of the chinook have clearly passed Bonneville so this fishery will continue to fade fast after some blistering catches earlier this month.

Bonneville anglers also experienced good fishing last week with good catches coming from backtrollers working plugs in the area. Although the action will likely pick back up again in the next month, a lull in action is clearly taking place and catches will likely continue on the downslide this week. A good check for boat anglers did come from the gorge area last weekend however. The check tallied better than a fish every other boat; 30 adult chinook for 53 boats.

Crabbing on the lower Columbia continues to improve and limits are likely from now through the commercial crab opener in early December. Smaller tides like the one we're on right now will yield the greatest results.

Tuna fishing offshore out of the mouth of the Columbia is fading. Fish may move closer into shore when the south wind influences warm water this week. Tuna were responding best to live bait or cast jigs. Ocean crabbing is good as well.

The Guide's Forecast – Don't look for action to pick up anytime soon for any section of the Columbia River this week. Next week, we'll get more serious about looking at the upcoming sturgeon opener.

Bonneville will likely remain the best bet for intercepting salmon on the lower Columbia. Backtrolled Kwikfish should yield the best results but some will anchor with spinners as well. This fishery will gain momentum when water temperatures cool in October and fish stage in preparation for spawning later into November.

Weak incoming tides will keep crabbing productive in the estuary but coho fishing will likely remain challenging until next month.

Offshore, the ocean forecast looks favorable for albacore fishing as well as crabbing. After the south wind subsides, tuna should be in greater numbers closer to shore. Live bait will continue to produce the best results if you can sneak up on active schools without spooking them. Casting swimbaits should also be effective.

Crabbing should be good outside as well. Use fresh tuna or salmon carcasses for the best results.

Here is your updated offshore forecast:

Fri Night...S wind 10 to 15 kt with gusts to 20 kt. Wind waves 2 ft...building to 4 ft after midnight. SW swell 6 ft. Rain in the evening...then rain likely after midnight.

Sat...S wind 10 to 15 kt with gusts to 20 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. SW swell 5 ft. Rain likely in the morning...then chance of rain in the afternoon.

Sat Night...SW wind 5 kt...backing to S after midnight. Wind waves 1 foot. SW swell 4 ft. Chance of rain.

Sun...S wind 5 to 10 kt. Wind waves 1 foot. SW swell 5 ft.

Mon...W wind 5 to 10 kt. Wind waves 1 foot. SW swell 4 ft.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The coho count at Willamette Falls is into the hundreds although the latest data remains unavailable. On September 14th, over 500 were counted but cumulative counts are only available through September 8th. They're here and doing what comes naturally - heading upriver.

Although Chinook fishing is closed on the Santiams, there are good numbers of summer steelhead available throughout the system. North Santiam water conditions are excellent for fishing.

The Guide's Forecast – Sturgeon fishing is open on the lower Willamette but you can't keep 'em. It's catch-and-release only until the 1st of November. Fishing has been slow to fair.

Santiam steelhead are challenging to hook but the best chance of doing so will be high on the North Santiam. With Chinook spawning now, egg imitations are likely to be most effective. The mainstem, north Santiam to the Stayton/Scio Bridge and South Santiam To Grants Pass bridge are open to hatchery coho retention but numbers are too few for this to be a viable fishery. Coho should be worth targeting here in a week or two considering the number crossing Willamette Falls.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – With coho showing in the lower Clackamas, there have been some crowded banks at the Bowling Alley Hole. As many coho as are presumably charging over Willamette Falls, there are hundreds of fish in the lower river, many of which will logically enter the Clackamas. The bag limit on the Clack is three hatchery fish per day which may be any combination of steelhead or coho.

Coho are entering the Sandy River and are scattered up to Cedar Creek.

The Guide's Forecast – Coho prospects are not the brightest but the numbers of fish in the Clackamas are improving daily. Anglers are an optimistic bunch, however, so the best shot at a hookup will be on the lower river. Try at first light for the best chance of banking one.

Coho catches are slow on the Sandy although pressure is building on Cedar Creek. Spinners have been effective but should be fished ticking the bottom for best results and good-quality cure eggs fished under a float will sometimes take fish that snub lures. Report any illegal activity as Cedar Creek is a good place to witness some.

North Coast Fishing Report – The Tillamook Bay fishery is underway although it's likely consistent catches will not be the rule this early in the season. For the early part of the season however, action was looking quite favorable for those putting in time near the jaws at mid-week. Tuesday (9/14) was one of the best days we've seen to date with numerous fish taken throughout the outgoing tide that day. Both chinook and coho were in the catches but chinook have dominated the catch along the jetty for the last few days. Some fish were weighing in over 30 pounds, most likely destined for the Trask or Tillamook Rivers. With the soft tide series, the lower bay is where the best action has been.

There have been fair catches of coho in the west channel recently. Although there are some wild

fish in the catches, the bulk of the fish are of hatchery origin. That will likely change in the coming weeks however. Those fish have been taking spinners and trolled herring but could escape upstream on the current rain freshet now inundating the north coast. Only a rare chinook is being caught in the west channel.

The seaweed has been horrific when the heavier tides have been upon us. Thankfully, we have the ocean to get away from it but since we're on a weak tide series, it won't wreak as much havoc if you plan for it.

Upper bay anglers were catching a few fish but the bite slowed when the strong incoming tide slowed. Spinners were taking both ample numbers of coho and a fair number of chinook. The seaweed is most tolerable between the mouths of the Trask and Tillamook Rivers to the break in the picket fence (Cap Johnson's).

Other systems on the north coast have not fared so well. The Nestucca opens today so no reports are available and the Nehalem has light effort. ODF&W netters upriver are handling several chinook, an occasional coho and an even rarer catch of a pink salmon stated one state biologist.

The Salmon River near Lincoln City is beginning to gather some decent crabs there right now. The run should be peaking as we write.

The Siletz and Alsea Rivers are underway with a rare, limited wild coho opportunity for the next few weeks. Anglers working the lower end should score the best results.

Crabbing offshore has been good. It can be limit crabbing for all on board if you're willing to put your mind to it. Fresh fish carcasses help ensure an easy limit when available.

Like the north, tuna fishing has been good out of Garibaldi but not as good as it can get. Double-digit landings are likely but you would have had to work hard to attain anywhere near the limit of albacore recently. Of course, that could change with the southerly influence that is currently upon us.

The Guide's Forecast – Tillamook Bay will remain the strongest option for chinook seekers on the north coast. The Nestucca and Nehalem should be a distant second. Troll herring on the lower end, especially on the north jetty, inside the bay. The soft tide series should produce some fair fishing although we may lose some fish upstream on the rain freshet that is currently setting up. Keep your baits spinning near the bottom and keep your offering free of seaweed, there is plenty of it in the estuary. Be sure to check detailed regulations on the Nestucca and Nehalem estuaries before venturing out.

The Trask and North Fork Nehalem River may be a good option for fresh coho and chinook once we see how much rain the north coast is really going to get. Plugs will take both species but if you're targeting the main fish in the river right now, you'll want to use eggs or spinners for your best opportunities. This may prematurely end the coho run in Tillamook Bay so utilize this technique and be prepared to chase these quality fish upstream when the bay action dries up.

The ocean looks to be a friendly place this weekend, you just have to decide what you want to do out there. Tuna fishing should be a strong option, especially considering a south wind warming the core temperatures and bringing bigger numbers of fish closer to shore.

Don't leave port without your crab pots, it will be worth the effort.

The Salmon, Siletz and Alsea Rivers should all be holding catchable numbers of chinook and we'll know more by next week. Trolled herring on the bar or at the jaws will produce the best catches.

Central & South Coast Reports – Offshore launches should be no problem this weekend if wind and wave forecasts remain accurate. Boats will encounter a soft incoming tide mornings for the next three days. Bottom fishing has improved recently although boats are still restricted to less than 120 feet of water, ocean crabbing is good and albacore have been caught 30 or so miles from the beach. The Oregon tuna fishery is a thing of wonder which will draw to a close as the ocean waters cool.

A few Chinook are being caught in tidewater at the Siletz River. While the wild coho fishery is open here, catches have been very few.

Trollers are taking a few Chinook with herring in Alsea Bay.

Fall Chinook season is just getting started on the Siuslaw. It's been very slow.

It's been fair to good at Winchester Bay and in the lower Umpqua with boat and bank anglers are taking Chinook and coho. Locals are hoping rain this week will improve the situation. Crabbing is good in the bay as the quality of Dungeness continues to improve. South Jetty anglers are taking good numbers of rockfish. Steelheading is good on the flies-only stretch of the North Umpqua. While smallmouth bass catches have been good, it came to a end with the South Umpqua closing to all fishing as of September 16th. It will re-open December 1st.

The fall Chinook fishery is underway on the lower Coos and Coquille with catches improving over the past week. Anglers are making good catches of jacks this season. They're great on the grill and the bag limit is five per day. The wild coho fishery on the Coquille is open until the end of November or a quota of 1,200 fish is caught.

Chinook trollers experienced a slight improvement in action this week while plying the Rogue estuary although catches remain better upstream around Agness where half-pounder steelhead action has also been good. There should be a respite this week from turbidity in the middle Rogue as a result of the Gold Ray Dam removal site. A improvement in water visibility should result in an improvement in Chinook hookups which would be a welcome change as it's been very slow in this stretch. Not so on the upper Rogue where this flies-only area is fishing very well for long-rodgers and spin-fishers using bubbles to toss flies to willing summer steelhead. Leave the Chinook alone on the upper Rogue - they're off limits now.

It remains to be seen if sufficient rain has fallen this week to entice ocean-roving Chinook into the Elk River. There have been no catch reports as yet but we can't help but think it won't be long. Hey, readers, we count on you to let us know.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Summer steelhead are entering the Deschutes in good number with counts at Shearers Falls increasing as are catches at the Falls. Try s[inners, bobber & jig or good cured eggs in the stretch below Sherars. The lower river remains the stretch to target although as fishing improves, so does pressure, particularly on weekends. Fishing at the mouth has been crowded and slow.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for September 2010

September 2010
Contact: (Fish) 360-902-2700
(Wildlife) 360-902-2515

North Puget Sound

Coho salmon are moving into Puget Sound in increasing numbers, with the bulk of the run expected to arrive from the ocean later this month. Anglers can also expect good fishing in several rivers and lakes.

"After Labor Day is when we usually see a big push of ocean coho move into Puget Sound," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "We should see more and more of those ocean fish make their way into the Sound as the month progresses."

Once those fish arrive, Point No Point, Jefferson Head, Possession Bar and Shipwreck should be good spots to hook ocean coho, Thiesfeld said. Anglers fishing those areas - or other waters of marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) - have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook. In Marine Area 10, anglers also must release chum salmon through Sept. 15, while those fishing in Marine Area 9 must release chum through Sept. 30.

Marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) also are open for salmon fishing. Anglers fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild coho and chum. Those fishing marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 also have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Meanwhile, recreational **crab** fishing will close for a catch assessment in most areas of Puget Sound on Labor Day. Areas closing one hour after sunset Sept. 6 include Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal)

Marine Area 7 remains open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, through Sept. 30. Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) remain open for crabbing through Jan. 2, seven days a week.

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/fishing/shellfish/crab/>) for more information.

Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Oct. 10 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2010 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2011 Puget Sound crab endorsement. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/crab/crc.html> . Crabbers who continue to fish in an open area after Sept. 6 should record their catch on their winter catch card.

In freshwater, Thiesfeld said the best bet for anglers fishing for coho salmon in the region might be the Stillaguamish and Skagit rivers, where abundant runs are expected to return this year. The Stillaguamish and Skagit, as well as the Snohomish, Skykomish, Snoqualmie and Green (Duwamish) rivers open for salmon fishing Sept. 1.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers fishing the Green River that chinook salmon must be released. Elsewhere, Lake Sammamish is open for salmon fishing, with a daily limit of four salmon, of which two may be chinook. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. Sammamish Lake's larger neighbor, Lake Washington, opens Sept. 16 to coho fishing. Anglers will be allowed four coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) from waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Salmon anglers on the coast are still catching fish as the ocean fishery enters the home stretch. Coho fishing is expected to peak in mid-September, as the bulk of the run moves through the Strait of Juan de Fuca into Puget Sound.

During the last week of August, anglers on the coast were still finding some bright chinook as the coho catch began to climb, said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for WDFW. "I expect fishing to continue to be good for chinook and coho as we move into the final weeks of the fishery," he said.

Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay), through Sept. 19 in Marine Area 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores) and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco). 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>.

Anglers fishing marine areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 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

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers fishing in late August were picking up a few ocean coho but the big push of silvers into Puget Sound isn't expected until after Labor Day, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "By the middle of September, coho fishing should pick up in the Strait, as well as in areas of northern and central Puget Sound," he said.

Anglers fishing marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) have a two-salmon daily limit but must release chum, chinook and wild coho. However, anglers fishing Marine Area 5 will be allowed to retain wild coho beginning Sept. 16.

Farther south, salmon fishing opens Sept. 1 north of Ayock Point in Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), where the daily limit is four coho only. All other salmon species must be released. The same rules apply to Dabob and Quilcene bays, which opened for salmon fishing Aug. 16.

In the southern portion of Puget Sound, anglers fishing Marine Area 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook. Anglers fishing Marine Area 13 (South Puget Sound), have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook and wild coho.

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.

Meanwhile, recreational **crab** fishing will close for a catch assessment in most areas of Puget Sound on Labor Day. Areas closing one hour after sunset Sept. 6 include Marine areas 6, 8-1

(Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 and 12.

Marine Area 7 remains open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, through Sept. 30. Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) remain open for crabbing through Jan. 2, seven days a week.

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/fishing/shellfish/crab/>) for more information.

Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Oct. 10 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2010 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2011 Puget Sound crab endorsement. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/crab/crc.html> . Crabbers who continue to fish in an open area after Sept. 6 should record their catch on their winter catch card.

Several **rivers** around the region open to salmon fishing Sept. 1, including the Carbon River in Pierce County; Copalis River, Van Winkle Creek and Joe Creek in Grays Harbor County; the Bear and Niawiakum rivers in Pacific County; and Clearwater River in Jefferson County. Salmon fisheries on the Skokomish, Puyallup and Nisqually rivers are already under way.

On a portion of the Hoh River, anglers can now fish for salmon seven days a week and keep up to two adult salmon as part of their six-fish daily limit.

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

Southwest Washington

September is prime time for salmon fishing in the Columbia River Basin, as large numbers of fish move upriver and into tributaries on both sides of Bonneville Dam. Anglers fishing the lower river below the dam are expected to reel in nearly 30,000 **fall chinook** and 13,000 **hatchery coho** this season - most of which will be taken this month.

"Prospects are good for salmon fishing this month, but it's important to remember these fish are on the move," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "As the month goes on, successful anglers will follow the fish upriver and into the tributaries."

The retention fishery for chinook salmon ended Aug. 31 at Buoy 10, but hatchery coho should remain strong below Rocky Point throughout the month. Even so, the prospect of catching a hefty chinook salmon is drawing most anglers farther upstream.

Through Sept. 12, anglers may take one chinook per day as part of their limit from Rocky Point upriver to Bonneville Dam. Anglers fishing those waters have a daily limit of six fish, including two adult salmon or steelhead or one of each. The retention fishery for chinook ends Sept. 12 below the Lewis River, but that section will remain open to fishing for hatchery coho, hatchery steelhead and hatchery **sea-run cutthroats** .

"Anglers targeting chinook do best in fairly deep water - 40 to 50 feet down," Hymer said. "Some of the best fishing for both salmon and steelhead will be at the mouths of tributaries, where the fish hold up before heading upstream."

As the month progresses, salmon fishing will heat up farther upstream in tributaries ranging from the Cowlitz to the White Salmon rivers, Hymer said. He reminds anglers of several new rules that will be in effect on those rivers this year:

- **Wild chinook release:** New this year, all unmarked chinook (adults and jacks) must be released on the Cowlitz, Toutle, Green, Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake and Camas Slough. Like last year, anglers must also release unmarked chinook on the Grays, Elochoman and Kalama rivers.
- **Lewis River rule:** Hatchery fall chinook may be retained through September on the Lewis River, including the North Fork. Beginning Oct. 1, all chinook must be released and fishing from any floating device will be prohibited on the North Fork Lewis River from Johnson Creek upstream to Colvin Creek.
- **Fishing closures:** Cedar Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Lewis River, is closed to all fishing in September and October. Lower Lacamas Creek, a tributary of the Washougal River, will also close to all fishing in September.

Like last year, anglers can 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.

Regulations for these and other fisheries are described in WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet, available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>.

There are, of course, a variety of other fishing opportunities besides salmon available to area anglers this month. **Smallmouth bass** are coming on strong above John Day Dam, and **trout fishing** is still an option at Skate Creek, Tilton River and a number of lowland lakes, including Swift Reservoir.

But for anglers who don't mind a hike, September is a great time to head for the **high wilderness lakes** around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens. Hymer points to three such lakes - Goose, Council and Tahkalkh - that even offer drive-in access.

"The mosquitoes should die down around the high mountain lakes after the first frost arrives," Hymer said. "Sure, the fish are usually small, but the leaves are beginning to turn, the air is crisp and you can really experience the change of season."

Eastern Washington

The Snake River **steelhead** catch-and-keep season opens Sept. 1 and it promises to be another good one. "Steelhead are returning to the Snake in large numbers again this year," said Glen Mendel, WDFW's southeast district fish biologist. "We have seen very strong early returns throughout the summer so far."

Mendel said about 375,000 fish are expected to return this year - not as many as last year, when about 600,000 entered the Columbia River. But this year's projected return is still large enough to provide good fishing opportunities, said Mendel. "Snake River water temperatures are currently warm and that may slow the bite when the steelhead retention season opens Sept. 1," Mendel

said. "But water temperatures should drop soon with cooler weather ahead, and then the action should pick up."

Mendel notes that the mouths of the Snake's tributaries, such as the Tucannon and Grande Ronde, and the confluence with the Clearwater River on the Idaho border, are usually most productive at the start of the season. He reminds steelheaders that barbless hooks are required and the daily trout catch limit of six fish includes up to three hatchery-marked steelhead (healed scar at clipped adipose or ventral fin).

Trout fishing throughout the region usually picks up as fall approaches, said Chris Donley, WDFW district fish biologist, who reminds anglers that several of the best-producing trout lakes near Spokane close Sept. 30. "This is the final month for fishing Badger, Williams, and Fish lakes in southwest Spokane County and Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County," Donley said. "Badger and Williams have both cutthroat and rainbow trout, Fish Lake has brook and tiger trout, and Coffeepot has rainbows plus **yellow perch** and **black crappie** ."

Donley said September can also be good for yellow perch fishing at southwest Spokane County's Downs Lake, which also closes Sept. 30. Amber Lake, near Badger and Williams, is also good for cutthroat and rainbow trout fishing, Donley said. Selective gear rules are in effect at Amber Lake through September.

Clear Lake, near the town of Medical Lake, has **brown trout** and usually produces good catches of crappie and **largemouth bass** in late fall. Like a number of other waters throughout the region, Clear Lake remains open through October.

Year-round waters that produce well in the fall include Lake Roosevelt and Sprague Lake, both of which offer good-size rainbows.

In the north end of the region, access to the Boundary Dam reservoir on the Pend Oreille River is limited this month because of a drawdown for maintenance of the Seattle City Light dam. Beginning Sept. 1 and lasting up to 11 days, the reservoir will slowly be drawn down 40 feet to an elevation of 1,950 feet.

The low water condition is expected to prevent access at all boat launch facilities Sept. 9-16 on the Boundary reservoir, including the Boundary Forebay, Metaline Park, and Campbell Park immediately below Box Canyon Dam. The Boundary Dam campground and boat launch will be closed Sept. 11-19 to accommodate the maintenance project. For more information about this project, see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regions/region1/> .

Northcentral Washington

Several popular Okanogan County **trout** lakes that have been under catch-and-release rules in past years will open Sept. 1 for a new "catch-and-keep" season. Those waters include Davis, Cougar, and Campbell lakes in the Winthrop area, where anglers will have a five-fish daily trout limit and bait will be allowed.

Rainbow trout are the predominant species, Jateff said, and anglers should expect fish in the 10- to 12-inch range, with carryovers up to 15 inches, said WDFW Okanogan District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff. Anglers should also note that, effective this year, there will be no gas-powered motors allowed on Davis Lake due to a new county ordinance.

Jateff said trout fishing has been good at the Methow River, where catch-and-release and selective-gear rules are in effect. The Methow River from Lower Burma Road bridge upstream to

the McFarland Creek bridge will close Sept.15. The rest of the river upstream to Foghorn Dam (Winthrop area) will close Sept. 30.

"September is also a good time to hike up to one of many alpine lakes in Okanogan County," Jateff said. "There are many waters with predominately **cutthroat trout**, which can be a good change of pace from lowland lake fisheries during the fall. Just be aware of fire restrictions this time of year."

Jateff also said **salmon** fishing on the Columbia River near Brewster/Bridgeport has been fair, with a few more chinook starting to show up in the catch. "Most of the fish are being picked up in the 40- to 50-foot depth while trolling with spinners tipped with a whole shrimp," he said. "**Sockeye** are still being caught as well."

The salmon fishery from Wells Dam to the Highway 173 Bridge in Brewster closed Aug. 31, but other portions of the Columbia, Okanogan and Similkameen rivers remain open through Sept. 15 or into October. For all rules, see the special regulation online at <https://fortress.wa.gov/dfw/erules/efishrules/erule.jsp?id=925>.

Anglers looking for information about **steelhead** fishing on the upper Columbia River and its tributaries should watch the WDFW website for any special openings that are not in the sportfishing regulations pamphlet.

Southcentral Washington

Counts of **chinook salmon** and **steelhead** passing McNary Dam have been climbing day by day, setting the stage for popular fisheries throughout the region. While those fisheries often start out slow, they can ramp up quickly by mid-September as more fish pass the dam.

"There's a lot of anticipation out there right now," said Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Anglers are catching fish here and there, but they know there are a lot more headed our way. By the middle of the month, we could have a couple thousand upriver brights in the Hanford Reach."

According to the preseason forecast, 664,900 fall chinook salmon will enter the Columbia River this year, and about two-thirds of them are headed past Bonneville Dam.

Most of the Columbia River is open for salmon fishing, and the Yakima River opened for salmon fishing on Sept. 1 from the Columbia River upstream to Prosser Dam. The area around the Chandler Powerhouse will remain closed as in previous years. "The best fishing on the Yakima is in October, but some fish will start moving in this month," Hoffarth said.

Fishing for **hatchery steelhead** should also pick up throughout the month, he said. Catches were slow in late August on the Columbia River, which is open for steelhead fishing from the Highway 395 Bridge (Blue Bridge) downstream. Effective Sept. 1, the Snake River opened for hatchery steelhead fishing with barbless hooks.

"As with salmon, look for fishing to improve as the water cools and more fish move upriver," Hoffarth said. "Steelhead move fast. They don't stay in one spot very long, so anglers have to be there when they arrive."

Meanwhile, the month began with **walleye** fisheries in full swing, producing nice catches in the Columbia River above and below McNary Dam, as well as in the Snake River. **Sturgeon** fishing is

restricted to catch and release in most of the Columbia River, including Lake Wallula and the Hanford Reach.

Trout fishing remains available in many southcentral region rivers and streams, including the Yakima, Naches, Little Naches, and Bumping rivers in Yakima County, and the upper reaches of Taneum Creek, Naneum Creek, Manastash Creek, and the forks of the Teanaway in Kittitas County. Most rivers and creeks have special regulations like selective gear rules that prohibit bait. Most also have statewide trout catch limits of two trout with an 8-inch minimum size. Anglers should check the regulation pamphlet for all details.

Thinking about catching **kokanee** in Rimrock Reservoir? Sooner is better than later, advises Perry Harvester, regional WDFW habitat manager. Water drawdowns began at the reservoir in late August and will likely render the launch ramps useless for larger boats by mid-September. "Car-top boat should still be fine, but it's going to be tough to get larger boats in the water with the ramp high and dry."

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

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

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Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

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Video - Fly Fish Float Tube Tarpon:

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Whole Foods to Post Seafood Environmental Ratings:

<http://finance.yahoo.com/family-home/article/110654/whole-foods-to-post-seafood-environmental-ratings>

GOOD LUCK!