

The Guide's Forecast - volume 13 issue number 20

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **May 20<sup>th</sup> – May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Although sport anglers are appreciative for the extended opportunity on the mainstem Columbia, flows are very high, keeping fish on the move and not motivated to bite. Bank anglers working the Rainier stretch were picking up fair numbers of salmon and steelhead in the higher flows. Boat angling will remain challenging.

Adults continue to cross Bonneville Dam in good numbers but jack counts look very promising for next years adult returns. A few shad are beginning to cross the facility as well.

Spring chinook are crossing Willamette Falls by the hundreds every day. Summer steelhead counts remain good. Spring chinook catches on the lower river have been well worth the trip. Despite high water, Oregon City anglers continue to fare well using smaller clusters of eggs and plugs along the shoreline, where flows aren't as strong.

McKenzie fly anglers have been doing well for cutthroat and reddsides. Nymphs and attractor patterns are most effective in water that's higher than seasonal average and likely to stay that way for a while.

The entire Santiam system remains too high to fish well although summer steelhead are available with better odds on the South Santiam which is forecast to be dropping. Watch out for a log jam at the confluence.

Fish low on the Clackamas for the best chance of hooking a chinook or steelhead. Sea lions have been eating springers as far upriver as High Rocks.

Anglers on the Sandy are catching a few summer steelhead and spring chinook but it's been slow. Although only a fair run is in the forecast, peak season is upon us.

**Northwest –** Spring chinook catches are beginning to improve on Tillamook Bay. Anglers working the jetty late last week took fair numbers of quality fish. This week, effort is switching to the upper bay where anglers are taking a few fish on spinners or herring. Chinook have entered the lower Trask.

Low flows will continue to keep springers low in the system on both the Wilson and Trask Rivers but bobber and bait casters should encounter some opportunities. Some summer steelhead should be available on the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers but stealthy tactics will have to be employed.

Some sturgeon remain in Tillamook Bay and may provide fair catches into early June. Anglers however will be focusing mainly on salmon in the coming weeks.

Ocean conditions allowed for good halibut catches on last weeks all-depth opener. Halibut season is closed this week but will resume for 3 days beginning May 26<sup>th</sup>. Fishing should remain excellent.

Bar crossings will be dangerous this weekend but the ocean may be in fair condition to target bottomfish. Crabbing is fair at best with an overnight soak producing the best results.

Razor clam digging is excellent along the north coast although tides will peak out before the weekend hits. Fair digging should last through the weekend however.

Sturgeon fishing on the lower Columbia is predictably slow with the high, cold run-off from upriver tributaries. Action will likely remain slow into mid-June.

**Southwest** – Ocean chinook fishing has been slow to spotty with bottom fishing producing good numbers of rockfish and lingcod. Halibut fishing is open within 240 feet with the next all-depth opportunity taking place Thursday through Saturday, May 26-28.

Crabbing is only fair in Winchester Bay due to freshwater runoff. Striped bass action is fair, sturgeon catches are slow. A few chinook have been taken in the estuary. Spring chinook fishing has been good on the Umpqua mainstem with catches improving on the North Umpqua. South Umpqua fishing will reopen with trout season.

A few striped bass are being taken in Coos Bay and in tidewater on the Coquille with best catches at first and last light or overnight.

Boats launching out of Port Orford for all-depth halibut on May 12-14 did well although offshore conditions were challenging on the 13th. Most charters and many recreational boats took limits with some fish 50 pounds or better.

Spring chinook fishing is slowing on the lower Rogue. Anchor fishing migration lanes with wrapped plugs has been most productive on the middle river. Catches of springers are fair to good on the upper Rogue as chinook push upstream. Wild steelhead and salmon must be released river-wide.

Bottom-fishers launching out of the Port of Brookings have enjoyed excellent results for a variety of rockfish and lingcod along with good catches of dungeness. Ocean chinook season opened south of Humbug Mountain on Saturday, May 14. Fishing for surfperch is good on south coast beaches. Fishing is closed in the Chetco River.

**Eastern** – Action for redsides keying on large salmon flies is just starting on the lower Deschutes. Nymphing has been most effective with occasional action on dries. River flows are swelling in the spring run-off, which will further compromise river conditions.

The Umatilla River has fishable numbers of spring chinook but river flows remain too high for productive fishing. As flows drop, catches will improve.

**SW Washington** – The Cowlitz remains the best bet for spring chinook and action is peaking now through the end of this month. The Kalama and Lewis are also fair bets for chinook but summer steelhead should begin making a stronger showing.

The Wind River and Drano Lake fisheries began to slow as fish continue to make their way upstream on the mainstem Columbia and Little White Salmon Rivers. Jacks made up a notable portion of the catch.

The Klickitat River is improving for spring chinook and could peak this week depending on river flows.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Although excitement certainly circulated amongst the angling community for the re-opener of the lower Columbia River spring Chinook fishery, reality

was, the river is so high that fishing will be very challenging, especially for boaters. In non-typical flows like what we're experiencing now, boat anglers aren't sure what they should be doing with themselves, especially after so many consistent years of productive fishing. Catch rates confirm this challenge while bank anglers show a clear advantage for the adults that tend to gravitate close to the bank in these types of conditions. Here is the ODF&W breakdown for the weekend fisheries:

**Gorge Bank:**

Weekend checking showed three adipose fin-clipped spring chinook adults and 15 adipose fin-clipped spring chinook jacks kept for 46 bank anglers.

**Gorge Boats:**

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped spring chinook adult and five adipose fin-clipped spring chinook jacks kept, plus two unclipped spring chinook jacks released for three boats (five anglers).

**Troutdale Boats:**

Weekend checking showed 18 adipose fin-clipped spring chinook adults and 11 adipose fin-clipped spring chinook jacks kept, plus seven unclipped spring chinook adults and two unclipped spring chinook jacks released for 50 boats (132 anglers).

**Portland to Longview Bank:**

Weekend checking showed 30 adipose fin-clipped spring chinook adults, 23 adipose fin-clipped spring chinook jacks and nine adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, plus four unclipped spring chinook adults, five unclipped spring chinook jacks and one sockeye released for 195 bank anglers.

**Portland to Longview Boats:**

Weekend checking showed three unclipped spring chinook adults kept, plus one unclipped spring chinook jack released for four boats (eight anglers).

**Estuary Boats:**

No report.

You can see by the creel counts that jacks are accounting for a large percentage of the catch and passage numbers at Bonneville are also indicating a strong return of jacks. This bodes well for next years return of adults to the Columbia.

Also notable is the catch rate for bank anglers in the downstream fisheries. Catch rates like this from the bank only exist in conditions like what we're experiencing now; high, fast flows. Conditions and opportunity couldn't be more ideal for bank anglers and river levels don't look like they're about to fall anytime soon.

Spin-n-glos take the bulk of the fish on the bank in these conditions with greens working best for Chinook and hot colors working good for steelhead. Both are in ample numbers on the mainstem right now. Anglers using heavily scented lures also fish with an edge in these conditions.

Steelhead catches were surprisingly subdued this week. Bank anglers don't mind spring Chinook making up the bulk of the catch however. We're in for a great summer steelhead run on the mainstem again and if water conditions persist, catch rates should be good. These are the times when you want to fish close to the river bank. With these calorie counting migrants, don't hesitate to target your quarry in 3 to 5 foot of water. The faster the flow, the closer they'll hug the shoreline.

Sturgeon anglers will have several more weeks to wait to see how the season shapes up. Portland to Longview boats did best last week although catch rates remained unimpressive. The estuary opened up for catch and keep and there was fair participation in the fishery but catch rates were poor. That was to be expected in the high, relatively cold flows in the mainstem right now. One guide reported just a few shakers for 6 rods in an all-day effort.

Sturgeon fishing upriver is now restricted to the below Marker 82 fishery to protect spawning adults near Bonneville Dam. This fishery is producing poorly for all sizes of sturgeon but shad are beginning to make a show although not necessarily in fishable numbers just yet. Since temperature often triggers migration and spawning of oversize fish, it may be a late spawn this season, but it should be successful.

Although walleye catches have been higher earlier in the season, this fishery certainly remains viable. Catch rates in The John Day Pool was better than a walleye a boat with high water likely effecting catch rates. Here is some good info from the ODF&W recreation report for those upriver areas:

### **WALLEYE AND BASS:**

#### **Troutdale Boats:**

Weekend checking showed no walleye catch for one boat (two anglers).

#### **Bonneville and The Dalles Pools:** smallmouth bass, walleye

Springtime is the best time to catch large smallmouth bass. Water temperatures will remain relatively cold for smallmouth until summer comes, so fish with slow moving baits such as rubber grubs and worms. Look for fish in slow moving water or places with lots of structure such as rock ledges. As water temperatures get warm in late spring, try using some top water plugs in shallow water near brush and other debris structure.

Walleye are typically caught at the highest rates of the year in April and May. Boat anglers are the most successful by trolling plugs or a worm harness. Try trolling in about 15 feet of water along the shorelines. Another method is to vertically jig baits on humps on the bottom 20-40 foot deep.

#### **John Day Pool:** walleye, smallmouth bass

March is the prime month for big walleye in the John Day pool; anglers target the Irrigon to Glade creek area for best results. Anglers target walleye during the winter months in deeper water 30 to 50 feet, a vertical presentation is essential with jigs/night crawlers and blade baits. Weekly checking showed 22 walleye kept for twenty boats (forty anglers).

Smallmouth anglers are look for a warming trend to get fish moving towards shallow water spawning areas. Fish will stage in deeper water areas and move into the shallows as the water temperature warms in the afternoon.

#### **McNary Pool:** smallmouth bass

Smallmouth can be targeted near vertical structure out of the main current, a slow presentation is essential. As water temperatures warm smallmouth will begin moving to inshore areas to spawn.

Downriver, crabbing in the estuary remains surprisingly good for this time of year, especially given the fact we have huge amounts of fresh water coming down the Columbia. Although it's not limit crabbing, it is certainly worth your time if you are able to put it in. With good bait, you can count on 12 to 20 keepers for a tides effort.

Not the best tides for recreating on the jetty for bottomfish this week. Strong tides in the a.m. will make for hazardous bar crossings and lame production for most target species along the jetty out of the mouth of the Columbia. Better options lie ahead.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Although spring Chinook and steelhead are queued up for this week, we're well past the peak time as numbers at Bonneville are beginning to slow. After such an impressive period of peak passage, counters saw their first under 2000 adult day on the 17<sup>th</sup>. It's a clear indication that the run will come in about as predicted with the current (updated) forecast to be at about 210,000 adults. Over 150,000 fish have already passed so catch rates are likely to fall.

Anglers should continue to employ techniques however that target shore running adults. With flows predicted to remain high, bank anglers should be in good shape. Bump these river conditions up with a minus tide through the weekend and flows will be screaming downriver, causing fish to gravitate to the shoreline. Greens will still be the color of choice for those targeting Chinook and hot colors (pink, orange, red) the best colors for steelhead. It is legal to fish up to 3 hooks per rig so run one of each color schemes to target both. You can also run a plug down the line to increase your chances at a rogue fish. Just remember, no more than 3 hooks per angler may be deployed.

Boat anglers will want to focus their efforts in shallow water as well. Until flows slow, most fish will be running in shallow water and likely, shallower than you would think. Fish the same water bank anglers will be targeting and use scent liberally to attract biters. With the flows as high as they are, if you fish upriver far enough, you should have good flow for a large part of the day.

Sturgeon anglers won't have much to get excited about. Keepers are most available in the Portland to Longview stretch and the estuary isn't like to turn on for many more weeks. The oversize fishery will be slow to start as well but they should be staging in the gorge anytime now, especially as shad begin to show.

Lower river crabbing and jetty fishing won't be a good option with the tide series we're currently on. Bar crossings will be dangerous and rip tides will make it hard to keep gear (both fishing and crab) down and fishing. A soft tide series is on the heels of this one however so better times ahead. The ocean is becoming a bit more predictable and offshore anglers are thankful for that.

Clamming will remain an option but the best tides are behind us now. There should still be some good opportunity through the weekend along north coast beaches however.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Spring Chinook counts are somewhere north of 13,000 with good numbers crossing daily. About 2,600 summer steelhead have been counted at the Falls which is a respectable number for this time of year. Spring Chinook results slowed starting Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, and have remained spotty this week with water in the lower Willamette rising. Water color and temperature have been unaffected by the increase in flow, but it will remain high for a while with the Columbia backing up into the lower Willamette. While never providing anything approaching 'hot' fishing, it has been worth a try for plunking from the bank below the mouth of the Clackamas River. Doing so has yielded both springers and summer steelhead for bank anglers this week.

Waters of the McKenzie have been high and cold this spring but are dropping this week with although the water temperature is holding fairly steady in the mid-40s.

Level and flow of the Santiams have moderated this week and the trend is forecast to continue through the coming weekend. With good counts at Willamette Falls, there should be plenty of fish in the system for anglers to target. Boaters should be vigilant with hazardous debris creating difficult passage between Shelburn and Green's Bridge.

Scheduled for trout stocking this week are Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, Huddelston Pond, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Timothy Meadows, West Salish Pond, Alton Baker Canal, Big Cliff Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Coast Fork Willamette River, Detroit Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Foster Reservoir, Junction City Pong, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salmon Creek, North Santiam River above Detroit Lake, Smith Reservoir, Sunnyside Park Pond and the Middle Fork Willamette River above Hills Creek Reservoir.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Try a prawn spinners behind a diver as this combo has resulted in good results this week. Other successful rigs have included trolled herring, plug-cut herring fished on anchor, wrapped Kwikfish and back-bounced roe. Oregon City has produced good catches along with several limits but be versatile and stay patient in the high water. Keep an eye out for sea lions which are becoming an ever-greater nuisance (or worse) on the lower Willamette. The best advice we've heard is to remain seated when a fish is hooked and raise the net only at the very last moment. Sea lions consider signs of a hookup as a dinner bell. While springers have been taken by anchor fishers on the upper Willamette, this activity seems to be thwarted over year by algae growth. Cool water has prevented this situation from occurring thus far in the season but boaters and plunkers above the Falls had better get with the program while passage is decent and the water remains free of green goo.

Summer steelhead have been taken recently on the McKenzie by fly anglers targeting trout who confirmed that these sea-run rainbows are a handful on light tackle. Numbers are building daily and a worthwhile fishery is in the offing. There are plenty of stocked trout available as well as reddsides and cutthroat for fly anglers who will find hatches ongoing with warm weather this week.

A few fish are being taken below Foster Dam on the South Santiam by those are willing to fish swift water. With the best counts of summer steelhead at Willamette Falls since 2006, improved water conditions may bring the Santiam back to its glory days ... but then we've hoped for that occurrence for years.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Clackamas levels are seasonally high but will be dropping over the coming week. Spring Chinook are in the lower river and summer steelhead have been entering for weeks.

**The ODFW reminds anglers**, "Clackamette Park Boat Ramp and RV Park will be closed from May 20 - 22 for the Oregon City Family Fun Festival. Regular traffic is only available to vendors, stage acts and RV Park users."

Sandy River levels are dropping this week. Snowmelt will keep water temperature low but has had no effect on the water color which has remained consistently good. The water has remained cold over the past week.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Summer steelheading should be worthwhile on the Clackamas as conditions will be good over the coming weekend and the water color is excellent. Target spring Chinook anywhere below McIver. While still a little early for best springer results, catches will continue to improve as the water warms and fish become more receptive to angler offerings.

Both summer steelhead and spring Chinook are available in the Sandy River although prospects for either will improve with some warming of the water. While the water is cold, take your time and cover as much water as possible to find that biter.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Spring Chinook have begun to show and by the numbers we're seeing this early in the fishery, it should be a good year! Last week, jetty fishing was pretty good for those willing to stick out the late tides. Soft outgoings provided good opportunities for herring trollers along the north jetty (inside the bay) with several good fish falling to anglers in the afternoon. As that tide wanes, anglers are concentrating their efforts in the upper bay.

Upper bay fishing wasn't very good the day I ventured out (Tuesday) with only 1 fish caught in my view for the a.m. effort I put in. We did however see a few fish roll near us as we sat on anchor working plugs in the screaming outgoing tide. Becoming more common, we had some real seaweed issues on the beginning of this big tide series, consistently fouling plugs on the strongest part of the outgoing tide. There is a lot of grass and seaweed moving around on these big tides.

Although the Oyster House Hole remains a local favorite, the picket fence and Ray's Place Piling slot has received some effort this season already. In these extreme tides, it's a good option as many anglers choose not to venture into unfamiliar territory, especially when the estuary changes after every winter. It has changed from last fall, by the way.

Tidewater is putting out a few fish but it should get more consistent later in the month in this reach. The Trask is getting the bulk of the returns but some fish should be present in the Wilson as well. Some fish stray into the Tillamook River as well but often turn off at the Tillamook River handicap dock as that channel joins up with the Trask River just upstream of the 5<sup>th</sup> street put in. There have been fish caught by driftboaters in the Loren's to Highway 101 drift.

Although it may not happen every morning, fish are being caught by bank anglers working the Loren's Drift area near the hatchery on the Trask River. Drifted eggs or bobber and bait is most likely to produce in this area. A few spent winter steelhead are also in the catch. Not as much chatter coming from the Wilson River but that should change soon.

Although there are some good sturgeon opportunities in Tillamook Bay, the primary focus remains on salmon. There are some keeper and larger fish in the estuary. The upper bay remains the best option as juvenile crab will steal your bait before a sturgeon does much past the middle section of Tillamook Bay.

On that note, keeper crabbing is tough in and outside the bay. I soaked 6 pots on Saturday and Sunday, only taking 8 keepers over 2 days for that quality soak. It may be several more months before the crabbing gets good again.

Still not much effort for salmon, either by the commercial or sport fleet in the offshore fishery. With bolstering California Chinook stocks, which we harvest off our shore, the fishing should be picking up in the near future. Commercial success seems to be best from Newport south.

**The Guide's Forecast** – We'll have a few more days of quality upper bay tides to work with for anglers fishing from smaller boats. Minus tides will work to the advantage of upper bay anglers through the weekend. With low slack happening an hour later each day, more opportunity will exist for early morning anglers.

Troll spinners or backtroll plugs in the strong outgoing current but be prepared for seaweed. Seaweed shouldn't be as much an issue since we've bypassed the peak tide now but high tides will still likely bring vegetation downstream in the morning tides.

You might be surprised that most effort will give it up after low slack but anglers can have some good luck on the incoming tide. I've had good action on the first part of incoming and in the middle of the peak as well. I had the bay all to myself during those times too. Spinners or herring work best when working the incoming tide.

Don't overlook sturgeon opportunities on the tide series we're currently on. Although the peak sturgeon tide happens about the same time peak salmon fishing would, you can do both over the course of an outgoing tide. Sand shrimp is of course, the bait of choice.

Rivers won't be a great option this week as they will remain low and clear. Some summer steelhead and spring Chinook should be available for stealthy anglers. The Trask will have the higher number of spring Chinook but the Wilson and Nestucca will have early run summer steelhead. Small baits will produce the best results and you had better be fishing early in the morning.

Offshore fishing will be hit or miss this weekend with early morning bar crossings rather hazardous. The swell looks good but the wind wave action may produce unfavorable conditions. Here's the forecast:

.FRI...N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO NW IN THE AFTERNOON.  
GUSTS UP TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

.FRI NIGHT...NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BECOMING W 5 TO 10 KT AFTER  
MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF  
SHOWERS.

.SAT...W WIND 5 TO 10 KT...RISING TO 10 TO 15 KT IN THE  
AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

.SAT NIGHT...W WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES  
2 FT. W SWELL 7 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

.SUN...NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 8 FT.

.MON...NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 8 FT.

Crabbing is less than impressive but if you feel the need, head to the ocean and soak your pots overnight for the best results. The small crab and females will enter early and the large males will come in later.

Big Creek Reservoir and Olalla Creek Reservoir are scheduled for trout stocking.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – The first all depth halibut fishery was a mixed affair with rough seas hampering ocean access although many of those who did get out to face difficult fishing conditions managed to catch some fish. According to today's update on the ODFW Marine Resources website, anglers took 28,754 pounds of the 115,578-pound quota in the spring opener, leaving 89,824 to be taken. This is the spring fishery, however, and after the quota fills, a summer all-depth season will follow. The next all-depth opportunity occurs Thursday, Friday

and Saturday, starting May 26th. Nearshore halibut season, which has provided above-average numbers and size of fish, had over 80% of the 11,214 pound quota as of the first week of May.

Offshore forecasts are optimistic for the coming weekend with mild swell, wide periods and manageable breezes. Limits of rockfish await ocean anglers and ling cod fishing is expected to be worthwhile as some large lings have been taken this week despite the 40-fathom limit which will remain in place through September.

Ocean Chinook fishing has been worthwhile for the few recreational boats which have made it out although commercial efforts have been doing well.

Mild ocean conditions will also provide rock and jetty fishing opportunities for kelp greenling and rockfish. Try for surf perch from beach areas where there are distinct depressions or where breakers are nearer shore, indicating a steeper beach. Many baits are effective including shrimp, clams, mussels, bloodworms, mole crabs and nightcrawlers. Try the last two hours of an incoming tide with the bite sometimes continuing into the first hour of outgoing.

Temperate coastal lakes have been providing good results for bass and panfish as well as trout which are stocked in many of them.

Bottom fishing has been rewarding out of Newport for rockfish and good sized ling cod with many boats taking limits of both. Similar results are occurring out of Depoe Bay with one boat returning to port Wednesday this week with not one but two halibut in the four-foot range.

Crabbing has been fair and seems to be improving on Winchester Bay. South Jetty fishers are having good results for rockfish and greenling. Mainstem Umpqua anglers have been taking spring Chinook in fair to good numbers. With the river forecast to be dropping over the coming week, conditions may improve sufficiently to create opportunities to catch some of the shad which have been entering over the past week or so but have been challenging to take in high flows. Springers have been entering the North Umpqua for a while and are being counted at Winchester Dam with sufficient number for a few to have been caught. The South Umpqua will open with the trout season on May 28th.

Shad fishing is expected to start up with the arrival of the prolific fish expected to occur any time on the Coos and Coquille rivers.

**Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife News:** "ODFW Outdoors will host an adult fly fishing workshop at Laverne County Park on the North Fork of the Coquille River on Saturday, June 11.

"The workshop, which will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., is designed for new or beginning fly fishers and will include sessions on equipment, casting, aquatic insects and reading the water.

"According to Gary Vonderohe, ODFW fish biologist, the class will be helpful for both new and experienced anglers. "We have a lot of accomplished anglers who have fished for years with gear or bait, but have always wanted to try fly fishing," he said. "This class will be a great introduction to a new technique."

"The class costs \$40 and includes use of all necessary equipment, instruction/materials and lunch. For more information about the workshop call Gary Vonderohe at (503) 947-6259 or visit the ODFW website for registration information."

The Rogue River rose early this week but has been falling since and is predicted to drop through the coming weekend and beyond with another front expected in the middle of next week. Spring

Chinook fishing has been slow to fair at best on the lower river. Middle Rogue boaters have continued to enjoy fair to good results with wrapped plugs and by backbouncing roe with best results coming downstream of Grants Pass. Springers are being taken on the upper Rogue with numbers climbing at Coles River Hatchery Facility.

Ice and snow at Diamond Lake persists but is melting. It's far too soft for ice fishing yet inaccessible for bank or boat angling. The thaw is ongoing and we're cautiously optimistic that the water will be open by Memorial Day although it's been darned cold here lately.

Many south coast rivers which closed to all fishing will open with trout season on May 28th. These include the South Umpqua, Elk, Sixes and Chetco rivers. Other rivers and streams which have remained open for other species will add trout to the list of targetable quarry.

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

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Creative technique will be required by fly fishers with the Deschutes up again slightly this week and the water still murky. Big Stoneflies are hatching early evenings around Maupin on the lower Deschutes. Expect to see good hatches of Golden Stones and Salmonflies over the coming weekend and to find trout keying on them. They'll be thick with warmer weather. A few fishers are banging springers at Sherars Falls.

Fly fishing has been fair to good on the challenging Metolius with hatches good and improving.

Trollers pulling plugs are connecting with good-sized lake trout at Odell although patience is required. Kokanee catches have been good at times for jig fishers.

Early mornings have been best for kokanee at Wickiup with good numbers taken this week. A few brown trout are being taken with bait fishing most effective.

Green Peter trollers have been seeing few kokanee this week and catching even fewer although trout fishing has been fair.

Wallowa Lake has been productive for fat rainbows and kokanee running 12 to 20 inches or better. Trolling has been most productive here.

Kokanee limits have been taken by trollers at Crescent Lake recently.

Fewer than two weeks since ice-out, Davis Lake is producing good catches of largemouth bass fishers in this flies-only location. While water temps are still cold, poppers are taking fish although slow-moving, dub-surface offerings are tempting larger fish. ODFW officials have been electro-shocking bass at night this week to hold them in net pens at Davis, the goal of which is to relocate them elsewhere. Bass fishing here may be a limited-time opportunity, a situation which is drawing mixed reviews in the angling community.

Scheduled for trout stocking are Century Gravel Pit, Antelope Flat Reservoir, Malheur Reservoir, Duncan Reservoir, Clear Lake (The Dalles), Burnt River, Lugar Springs Pond, Powder River #2, 7th. Street Pond and Trout Farm Pond.

**Washington fishing reports:**

***From the WDF&W Weekender Report for May 2011***

## North Puget Sound

The blackmouth salmon season comes to a close at the end of April, but openings for halibut, lingcod and shrimp fisheries are coming up. For freshwater anglers, one of the most anticipated fishing opportunities gets under way at the end of April with the lowland lakes trout season.

Beginning April 30, anglers can cast a line in many of the region's lakes, where thousands of legal-sized **trout** have been planted. "This is the biggest fishing day of the year," said Phil Anderson, director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Lakes in every county are well-stocked, so fishing families can keep travel costs down by enjoying good angling close to home."

Under statewide rules, anglers have a daily limit of five trout on most lakes. Released legal-sized trout, caught with bait, count toward the daily bag limit. Before heading out, anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for all regulations.

Even after the opener, fishing should be good throughout the season as WDFW continues to stock lakes with trout. Information on stocking schedules for rainbow, cutthroat and triploid trout is available on [WDFW's website](#).

On saltwater, selective fisheries for hatchery **blackmouth** – resident chinook – are coming to a close. Marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) close at the end of the day April 30. Marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) are already closed to salmon fishing.

The **halibut** season, however, is just around the corner. The fishery is scheduled to run from May 5 through May 29 in marine areas 6-10. Marine Area 5 (Sekiu) will be open May 26 through June 18. These fisheries will be open three days a week (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) but are closed Sunday through Wednesday except for Memorial Day weekend when they will be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

All areas that will be open to halibut fishing have a one-fish daily catch limit, with no minimum size, a possession limit of one fish while on the vessel, and a possession limit of two fish in any form once the angler is on the shore.

Halibut fishing will remain closed in marine areas 11 (Tacoma) and 13 (southern Puget Sound) to protect three species of rockfish listed for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act. Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal) will remain closed due to low dissolved-oxygen conditions.

Fishing for **lingcod** and **cabezon** also gets under way in May. During the hook-and-line season (May 1-June 15), there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 36 inches. The season for cabezon also opens May 1, when anglers will have a daily limit of two fish with no minimum size limit.

Don't forget those **shrimp** pots. The shrimp season opens May 7 in Puget Sound. In all areas of Puget Sound, fishers are limited to 80 spot shrimp per day. Here are the fishing schedules for the Puget Sound region:

- Hood Canal Shrimp District (Marine Area 12): Open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 7, 11, 14 and 25. Additional dates and times may be announced if sufficient quota remains.
- Discovery Bay Shrimp District (Marine Area 6): Open May 7, 11 and 14 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Additional dates and times will be announced if sufficient quota remains.
- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5, 6 and 13 (excluding shrimp districts): Open daily beginning May 7 at 7 a.m. The spot shrimp season closes when quota is

- attained or Sept 15, whichever comes first, except for Marine Area 13, which closes for spot shrimp May 31.
- Marine Area 7: Opens May 7 at 7 a.m. and will be open May 11, 13, 14, 25 and 28. Additional dates and times will be announced if sufficient quota remains. The season for coonstripe and pink shrimp (with area and depth restrictions) runs daily from June 1 through Oct. 15.
  - Marine areas 8, 9, and 10: Open May 7 and May 11 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Additional dates and times will be announced if sufficient quota remains.
  - Marine Area 11, extending from the northern tip of Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge: Open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 7 only.

More details on the shrimp fishery are available on WDFW's [recreational shrimp fishing website](#).

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

More spring fishing opportunities begin in May, when shrimp and lingcod fisheries open in Puget Sound and the halibut season gets under way there and off the coast. But for freshwater anglers, one of the most anticipated fishing opportunities starts at the end of April with the lowland lakes trout season.

Beginning April 30, anglers can cast a line in many of the region's lakes, where thousands of legal-sized **trout** have been planted. "This is the biggest fishing day of the year," said Phil Anderson, director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Lakes in every county are well-stocked, so fishing families can keep travel costs down by enjoying good angling close to home."

Under statewide rules, anglers have a daily limit of five trout on most lakes. Released legal-sized trout, caught with bait, count toward the daily bag limit. Before heading out, anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for all regulations.

Even after the opener, fishing should be good throughout the season as WDFW continues to stock lakes with trout. Information on stocking schedules for rainbow, cutthroat and triploid trout is available on [WDFW's website](#).

Meanwhile, three ocean beaches will open in early May for a razor-clam dig that could be the last dig of the season. Morning digs are set on two beaches – Long Beach and Twin Harbors – for six straight days, May 3-8. Mocrecks Beach, which extends north from the Copalis River to the southern boundary of the Quinault Indian Reservation, will also be open for razor-clam digging May 7-8.

No digging will be allowed on any of those beaches after noon.

Rather catch finfish? **Lingcod** fishing opportunities expand May 1, when the fishery opens in Puget Sound. Lingcod fisheries in marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) are already under way. For more information on lingcod fishing regulations, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

The **halibut** season also is just around the corner. The 2011 recreational halibut seasons approved for Washington's marine areas are:

- **Columbia River (Ilwaco):** Marine Area 1 will open May 5, three days a week, Thursday through Saturday until 70 percent of the quota is reached, or until July 17. The fishery will then reopen on Aug. 5 and continue three days a week (Friday through Sunday) until the remaining quota is reached, or Sept. 30, whichever occurs first. The 2011 catch quota is 15,418 pounds.

- **South Coast (Westport/Ocean Shores):** Marine Area 2 will open on May 1, two days a week, Sundays and Tuesdays. During the fourth week in May the fishery will be open Sunday only (May 22). Beginning the following week the fishery will resume the Sunday, Tuesday structure until the quota is reached. The northern nearshore area will be open seven days per week, until the quota is reached. The 2011 catch quota is 43,500 pounds.
- **North Coast (La Push/Neah Bay):** Marine areas 3 and 4 will open on May 12, two days per week, Thursdays and Saturdays, through May 21. If sufficient quota remains, the fishery will reopen the week of June 2. If sufficient quota remains after that opener, the fishery will reopen starting June 16. The 2011 catch quota is 108,792 pounds.
- **Strait of Juan de Fuca/Puget Sound:** Marine areas 6 through 10 (Strait, Port Angeles, Admiralty Inlet and Everett) will be open May 5 through May 29. Marine Area 5 (Sekiu) will be open May 26 through June 18. These fisheries will be open three days a week, Thursday, Friday and Saturday closed Sunday through Wednesday except for Memorial Day weekend when they will be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The 2011 combined catch quota for these areas is 58,155 pounds.

All areas that will be open to halibut fishing have a one-fish daily catch limit, with no minimum size, a possession limit of one fish while on the vessel, and a possession limit of two fish in any form once the angler is on the shore.

Halibut fishing will remain closed in marine areas 11 (Tacoma-Vashon) and 13 (South Puget Sound) to protect three species of rockfish listed for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act. Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal) will remain closed due to low dissolved-oxygen conditions.

Don't forget those **shrimp** pots. The shrimp season opens May 7 in Puget Sound. In all areas of Puget Sound, fishers are limited to 80 spot shrimp per day.

Here are the fishing schedules for the Puget Sound region:

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- Marine Area 7: Opens May 7 at 7 a.m. and will be open May 11, 13, 14, 25 and 28. Additional dates and times will be announced if sufficient quota remains. The season for coonstripe and pink shrimp (with area and depth restrictions) runs daily from June 1 through Oct. 15.
- Marine areas 8, 9, and 10: Open May 7 and May 11 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Additional dates and times will be announced if sufficient quota remains.
- Marine Area 11, extending from the northern tip of Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge: Open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 7 only.

"Fishing prospects in many areas are looking even better than last year," said Mark O'Toole, a shellfish biologist for the department, who noted that he expects a strong turnout by shrimp fishers – especially on opening day. "Some of the boat ramps can get pretty crowded, so we encourage fishers to be patient and wait their turn."

That will be especially important at **Twanoh State Park**, a popular access site on Hood Canal

where construction work will limit parking facilities for boaters through June. The State Parks and Recreation Commission encourages fishers to use an alternate launch site – especially during the season opener. More details on the shrimp fishery are available on WDFW's [recreational shrimp fishing website](#).

Anglers are reminded that **salmon** fishing in marine areas 11 and 12 closes at the end of the day April 30. In addition, **wild steelhead** retention closes at the same time on the Bogachiel, Calawah, Dickey, Quillayute and Sol Duc rivers.

However, a couple of rivers are open for **salmon** fishing, including the Quillayute and a portion of the Sol Duc. The Hoh River also opens for salmon May 14. For details on those and other fishing opportunities, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

### **Southwest Washington**

Spring chinook and summer steelhead are moving into area rivers in increasing numbers, sturgeon retention is allowed on portions of the Columbia River and several popular trout lakes will open for fishing April 30.

As part of that lineup, anglers can catch and keep hatchery-reared **spring chinook** from May 7 through May 10 on a section of the Columbia River stretching 163.5 miles above Bonneville Dam. But it remains to be seen whether that fishery – or the one that closed April 19 below the dam – will reopen later in the season.

That depends on the in-season update to the run forecast in early to mid-May, said Guy Norman, southwest regional director for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "We're hopeful that the updated forecast will come in at least as strong as the pre-season forecast," Norman said. "That would allow for additional fishing days both above and below Bonneville Dam."

That's because state harvest guidelines below McNary Dam include a 30 percent "buffer" in case returns of upriver spring chinook fall short of the pre-season forecast. If the in-season update equals or exceeds that number, the buffer will be converted into fishing time above and below the dam, Norman said.

"But nothing is certain at this point," he said. "We really won't know where we stand until more fish cross Bonneville Dam and we can get a clear idea of the run-size."

Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist, said poor fishing conditions – specifically high, cold, turbid water – held catch levels below expectations, and also appear to have delayed the movement of spring chinook over Bonneville Dam. Yet, test fisheries using tangle nets found relatively high concentrations of spring chinook in the lower river.

In response, fishery managers from Washington and Oregon extended the season in the lower river by 12 days. By the time fishing closed April 19, anglers had kept or released an estimated 9,379 spring chinook, including 5,669 upriver fish that count toward the 7,700-fish pre-season harvest guideline for upriver fish.

Above Bonneville Dam, the season was extended six days though May 1 between the Tower Island powerlines below The Dalles Dam and the Washington/Oregon state line, 17 miles upriver from McNary Dam. Bank fishing is also allowed through May 1 from Bonneville Dam upriver to the powerlines located about 6 miles below The Dalles Dam.

Anglers fishing above Bonneville Dam can retain up to two marked, hatchery-reared adult chinook salmon or **hatchery steelhead** as part of their daily limit. All wild chinook and wild steelhead must be released unharmed.

That is also true of **area tributaries**, where the daily limit is two spring chinook, two steelhead, or one of each. The Wind River and Drano Lake are traditional hotspots for spring chinook in May, although anglers should be aware that all sport fishing will be closed at Drano Lake on Wednesdays through June. Other prospects include the White Salmon River as well as the lower Klickitat River, the latter which is open for fishing Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Below Bonneville, anglers can find hatchery spring chinook and steelhead in several rivers, including the Cowlitz, Lewis, and Kalama. The Cowlitz River is usually the best bet for spring chinook, and also offers good fishing for winter and summer run steelhead.

Starting May 16, fishing is also scheduled to open for hatchery steelhead – as well as **sockeye** and hatchery chinook jacks – from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line to the Interstate 5 Bridge. Fishing for **shad** from Bonneville Dam downstream also opens the same day.

Other fishing opportunities in May include:

- **Trout:** Several popular trout-fishing lakes are scheduled to open April 30, including Mineral Lake in Lewis County, Rowland Lake in Klickitat County and Swift Reservoir in Skamania County. All were freshly planted for opening day, and will likely draw a big crowd. Plenty of year-round lakes will also be open for trout, and many are scheduled to be planted with catchable-size fish in May. (See the southwest Washington [Trout Stocking Schedule](#) for details.) Starting May 1, anglers may use two poles on Swift Reservoir from the dam to markers below the Eagle Cliff Bridge. Those looking to catch **kokanee** are advised to try Merwin Reservoir, which has been hot for the landlocked salmon in recent weeks.
- **Warmwater fish:** Fishing for **walleye** tapers off in May when the fish turn their attention to spawn, but **bass** fishing should pick up as water temperatures rise. Bonneville, The Dalles, and John Day pools should be good bets for both species.
- **Sturgeon:** The retention fishery below the Wauna powerlines on the Columbia River closes May 1, but reopens May 14 seven days a week with a one-fish daily limit, fork-length requirement of 41 to 54 inches. The retention fishery above the powerlines is open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with a fork-length requirement of 38 to 54 inches. Starting May 1, fishing is prohibited in spawning sanctuaries below Bonneville, John Day, McNary and Priest Rapids dams. See the [Fishing in Washington](#) rules pamphlet for details.

### Eastern Washington

The month of May is full of fishing promise throughout the region, with the lowland lakes trout season getting under way April 30 and spring chinook salmon coming into the Snake River.

"Fishing is great all month in all of our open waters," said Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Central District Fish Biologist Chris Donley. "If you can't catch a fish anywhere that is open in the month of May you should take up needlepoint."

Among the region's many lakes that open April 30, Donley says the traditional best bets include Badger, Williams, West Medical, Fish, and Clear lakes in southwest Spokane County and Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County. Anglers usually average about two trout each at all of these waters. Most have **rainbow trout**, but some also have **cutthroat** and **tiger trout**.

Bill Baker, WDFW northeast district fish biologist, said a couple of Stevens County lakes that open in late April are often among the state's top 10 in catch rates. Cedar Lake, near the Canada border, and Rocky Lake, just south of Colville, last year provided limits of five rainbow trout for every angler out on the opener. "The month of May this year could be colder, maybe even snowier, than usual," Baker said. "But the fish are here for anglers willing to brave the weather."

Other good trout fishing in Stevens County can be found at Waitts, Loon, Deep, the Little Pend Oreille chain of lakes, and Potter's Pond. Selective gear fisheries like Bayley, Rocky and Starvation lakes are also good through May.

Pend Oreille County's Big Meadow and Yocum lakes usually provide anglers an average of two to three trout each. Other good producers include Diamond, Frater, North and South Skookum, Marshall and Sacheen lakes.

New this fishing season, and effective May 1, is a ban on the use of lead weights or lead jigs measuring 1 1/2 inches or less along the longest axis at Big Meadow, Yocum and South Skookum lakes where loons are known to breed and rear young. The ban is intended to improve loon survival by keeping the birds from being poisoned by ingesting small lead fishing gear lost by anglers. For more information on this new rule, check [WDFW's website](#).

The lead restriction is also in effect at three other northeast lakes that host nesting loons: Ferry County's Swan and Ferry lakes, and Stevens County's year-round-open Pierre Lake. No fishing flies containing lead are allowed at fly-fishing-only Long Lake, another loon-nesting water in Ferry County.

In the south end of the region, where many lakes and ponds are either open year-round or have been open since the first of March, WDFW hatchery trout stocking continues to keep fishing productive through May. Excessive rain and snow this spring has delayed some fish stocking in some of the Tucannon River impoundments, said WDFW Wooten Wildlife Area Manager Kari Dingman.

"But now all of the lakes have been stocked again and Big Four Lake, our fly-fishing only lake, was finally stocked for the first time this season, now that the river level is back down," Dingman said.

Check the complete [trout stocking plan](#) for details. The latest weekly stocking reports are available [here](#).

The Snake River **spring chinook salmon** fisheries that recently opened in three sections have been slow but should be picking up this month. "I expect that with the late run and fewer fish than last year over McNary Dam by late April, the catch won't pick up until early May," said Glen Mendel, WDFW southeast district fish biologist. "These chinook should be very good quality and there is expected to be a higher proportion of the larger five-year-old fish this year."

WDFW Regional Fish Program Manager John Whalen noted that an update on the run in the first week of May will likely give a better picture of how long the fisheries can continue. "The Snake River chinook fishery is scheduled to go through May 31," Whalen said. "But I suspect we will see a run size downgrade in early May, which could force us to close earlier."

Emergency fishing rule changes are distributed through [self-subscribing e-mail services](#) and posted on [WDFW's website](#).

All salmon and steelhead anglers are reminded to turn in 2010-11 catch record cards as soon as possible, whether or not you harvested anything or even fished at all. The cards help contribute to a data base that supports season setting.

WDFW officials also remind anglers to clean boats thoroughly before transporting them between fishing waters this season. WDFW's eastside Aquatic Invasive Species biologist Mike Wilkinson said that mandatory boat inspections at various water access sites throughout the state begin this month to try to prevent the illegal transport or spread of everything from milfoil to zebra mussels. For more information, see WDFW's [Aquatic Invasive Species website](#).

### **Northcentral Washington**

Although many regional lakes have been open for trout fishing since early March or April, anglers can look forward to more options – and rising catch rates – during the month of May.

In Okanogan County, the traditional king of catch rates at this time is Pearrygin Lake, near Winthrop. Pearrygin usually produces a daily limit of five **rainbow trout** – most 10 to 12 inches, some up to 15 inches, with a few one to pound triploids -- for most anglers early in the season, said Bob Jateff, a district fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Fish Lake, northeast of Conconully, and Alta Lake, southwest of Pateros, are also good producers of rainbow catches through May. Last year, both averaged three trout per angler on the opener. Conconully Reservoir, south of Conconully, and Conconully Lake, east of town, are also good bets, giving up an average of two trout per angler per day.

Other newly opened lakes in Okanogan County that fish well include some with special rules: Big Twin Lake, near Winthrop, is under selective gear rules and a one-fish daily catch limit; Chopaka Lake, near Loomis, is fly-fishing only with no boat motors allowed. Aeneas Lake, near Tonasket, is also fly-fishing only with no boat motors allowed, but has some **brown trout** up to 18 inches.

Blue Lake, located within WDFW's Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, also has some brown trout as well as rainbows, and is under selective gear and electric motors only rules. Blue is also one of three Okanogan County lakes with a new restriction this season to protect loons that breed and rear young there.

Effective May 1, there is a ban on the use of lead weights or lead jigs measuring 1 ½ inches or less along the longest axis at Blue Lake, and on Bonaparte and Lost lakes, northeast of Tonasket, where loons also occur. The restriction is intended to improve loon survival by keeping the birds from being poisoned by ingesting small lead fishing gear lost by anglers. (For more information on this new rule, see [/conservation/loons/](#).)

In Chelan County, top trout producing lakes include Clear Lake, south of Wenatchee, and Wapato Lake, north of Manson. In Douglas County, Jameson Lake, south of Mansfield, usually provides good fishing and is well-stocked. In Grant County, Blue and Park lakes near the town of Soap Lake, and Warden Lake east of O'Sullivan Dam on Potholes Reservoir are also well-stocked and traditionally fish well through May and beyond.

For the complete trout stocking plan for fishing waters throughout the region, see [/fishing/plants/statewide/](#) . For the latest weekly stocking reports, see [/fishing/plants/weekly/](#).

All salmon and steelhead anglers are reminded to turn in 2010-11 catch record cards as soon as possible, whether or not you harvested anything or even fished at all. The cards help contribute to a data base that supports season setting.

No matter where in the region or what kind of fishing you pursue, WDFW officials are reminding anglers to clean their boats thoroughly before transporting them between fishing waters. WDFW's eastside Aquatic Invasive Species biologist Mike Wilkinson notes that mandatory boat inspections at various water access sites throughout the state begin this month to try to prevent the illegal transport or spread of everything from milfoil to zebra mussels. For more information, see [/ais/](#).

### **Southcentral Washington**

Anglers have from May 7 through May 10 to fish for **spring chinook salmon** in the Columbia River from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Washington-Oregon border, 17 miles upstream of McNary Dam. Whether that fishery will be extended will largely depend on an in-season run update in early to mid-May, said Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) based in Pasco.

"The run has been slow to move upriver, making fishing tough in this area," Hoffarth said. "But we're still hopeful the pace will pick up in the weeks ahead."

Starting May 1, the Ringold Area bank fishery will open for spring chinook from the markers one-quarter mile downstream from the Ringold wasteway outlet to markers a half-mile upstream from Spring Creek. Only the hatchery side of the river is open to fishing. The daily limit is two hatchery Chinook, measuring at least 12 inches and a night closure is in effect.

Anglers should be aware that two sections of the Yakima River open to fishing for hatchery spring chinook salmon in May.

The Yakima River from the Interstate 182 bridge in Richland (river mile 4.5) to 400 feet downstream of Horn Rapids (Wanawish) Dam (river mile 18.0) will be open from May 7 through June 15. The section of the Yakima from the Interstate 82 bridge at Union Gap (river mile 107.1) to the BNRR bridge approximately 500 feet downstream of Roza Dam (river mile 127.8) will be open from May 14 through June 30.

For details, check the [emergency rule change notice](#).

Meanwhile, crews from WDFW continue to stock lakes with catchable-size and jumbo **trout** throughout the region. In Yakima County, Clear Lake is in line to receive 10,800 catchables in May, Dog Lake 3,500 and Lost Lake 2,000. Dog Lake will also get more than 400 jumbo trout weighing up to 1½ pounds apiece, with another 1,000 jumbos going to Lost Lake in Kittitas County and 500 to Columbia Park Pond, a popular fishing hole in Kennewick reserved for anglers under age 15 and people with disabilities. A complete trout-planting schedule for southcentral lakes and ponds is available on the [WDFW website](#).

On May 7, Columbia Park Pond will host a Kids Fishing Day, limited to 1,200 youths between the ages of 5 and 14. All anglers must register with Kennewick Parks and Recreation before May 5. Anglers can register online at <http://go2kennewick.com>. Registration is \$10 and includes a rod and reel and everything you need to fish. Lots of volunteers will be on hand to help.

Hoping to catch a legal-size **sturgeon**? John Day Pool (Lake Umatilla) is now catch-and-release only, but Lake Wallula remains open through July for retention of sturgeon measuring 43 inches to 54 inches from snout to fork. Anglers should be aware that sanctuary areas described in the Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are closed to fishing – including catch-and-release – from May 1 through July 31.

For a different experience, try hooking one of the large **catfish** now showing up at the mouths of rivers including the Yakima, Walla Walla, and Palouse. "Bring a good rod and strong line and expect a fight if you hook into one of these monsters," Hoffarth said.

**Walleye** fishing is also picking up at Scootenev Reservoir, with fair catches reported. **Bass** fishing should also improve as soon as the water warms a bit.

### **TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail**

Subscriber and latest TGF field reporter **Damon S.** wrote this week, "Thought I would give some info. Not sure if you want info from non-guides, but here it goes.

"Made the 1st halibut trip on Sunday to my favorite spot inside 40 fath out of Newport. We fished from 6 am to 2 pm. Fishing was really slow. The currents were strong as was the wind, we needed 3lbs of lead and help from the kicker to keep baits down. The 2 fish we caught out of 4 rods were 45 and 52 lbs so the size was good. We normally limit out in this area.

"We talked to the checker who said the halibut fishing had been so slow people were switching to rock fish. Hope this is useful.

"P.S. I find you reports very informative. Keep it up"

TGF co-editor and pro guide Bob Rees responded, "Thanks for the comments and thanks for the reports too Damon! Glad the fish were of quality size! I'm not sure how you could stay that motivated with such challenging conditions but good for you for sticking with it!

"Good luck this season and thanks again!"

### **Write to the TGF staff:**

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Michael Teague: [Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com](mailto:Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com)

### **Random Links**

Check commercial net results here:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/comm\\_fishery\\_updates.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/comm_fishery_updates.asp)

How to clam:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/index.asp>

Where to clam:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/mrp/shellfish/bayclams/dig\\_where\\_to.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/mrp/shellfish/bayclams/dig_where_to.asp)

**GOOD LUCK!**