

The Guide's Forecast - volume 14 issue number 25

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 15th – June 21st, 2012**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Summer chinook season opens up on June 16th from Tongue Point to the OR/WA border. Only fin-clipped chinook adults greater than 24" in length may be retained. Chinook salmon counts should again begin to ramp up with the peak passage happening by the first week of July.

Sturgeon fishing in the Marker 82 stretch remains challenging for oversize sturgeon anglers but there are some oversize and keeper sized fish available downstream of Troutdale.

Spring chinook and summer steelhead totals are higher at Willamette Falls than at this time last year with fish passage steady. Shad remain in the spotlight with spring chinook receiving less attention. Shad numbers remain strong, with nearly all the effort being spent at Oregon City, while a few anglers try in the Multnomah channel. Chinook are still available from the mouth to Willamette falls, but salmon pressure is light.

Despite fluctuating water conditions on the McKenzie River, it has been fishing well for fly anglers. Steelheading has continued to improve as are the numbers of summers available.

The Santiams have been dropping this week and are predicted to continue that trend through the coming weekend. Summer steelhead numbers are good in both the North and South Santiam and spring chinook density is building. Counts are improving over Bennett and Foster dams.

The Clackamas continues to be less than exciting for spring chinook anglers, but summer steelhead continue to bend rods for fishermen targeting them.

Sandy River anglers continue to have good success with summer steelhead and decent fishing for spring chinook. The summers seem to be here in better numbers than previous years, while chinook are worth the effort but their numbers have yet to be impressive.

Northwest – Spring salmon anglers in Tillamook County continue to have options although this will be the last good week for action in the district. Action in the lower estuary was good again this week with anglers taking fair numbers of springers in along the jetty and in the spring bubble fishery just off of the mouth of Tillamook Bay. Chinook must be fin-clipped until you get out of the control zone (check ODF&W web site) through July 31st. Action is likely to taper however with in-river options picking up through the rest of the month.

Nestucca River and bay anglers also saw more activity through the weekend although the news effectively spread as it was crowded over the free fishing weekend. Action will focus on the mainstem Nestucca and Three Rivers should be a strong option through June as well. Anti-snagging regulations are in effect on this system as well so be sure to check updates on the ODF&W web site.

Sturgeon anglers were easily frustrated as action on the lower Columbia was frequently sporadic over the weekend. Fishing was consistently poor but should pick up as water temperatures warm and flow subside. The grade of keepers is impressive however as fish over the 50 inch mark are available.

Summer steelhead and chinook should become more available this week as tides this weekend

become more favorable for bank and boat anglers. Fish should be running the banks in the faster flows, becoming more susceptible to spin-n-glos tipped with coon shrimp through all of next week. Sockeye are available as well but anglers need to be reminded that sockeye, no matter how small, must be tagged as adult salmon on your punch-card. These fish are high quality and are expected to return in high numbers this season. Target them by using smaller sized spin-n-glos in flame colors.

Anglers may have good opportunity for bottomfish along the south jetty out of Astoria this weekend as the ocean forecast looks favorable for offshore effort. A selective chinook salmon fishery is underway as well with fish being caught on trolled spoons and bait. This fishery targets Columbia River bound summer chinook and will last through June 22nd or when 8,000 chinook are harvested.

Beach clamming for razor clams should get good again starting Sunday through the middle of next week.

Southwest – Boats out of central Oregon ports over the past weekend took limits of rockfish and near limits of lingcod. Chinook fishing remains slow but is due to start producing.

With 48% of the 120,821-pound spring all-depth halibut quota remaining, the fishery will open again on June 14, 15 and 16 with good results anticipated.

With algae becoming problematic on the mainstem Umpqua, spring chinook catches have slowed. Smallmouth bass fishing has started up on the South Umpqua but has been slow in the cool water.

Although tuna fishing has yet to start up, ocean chinook catches have been good out of Charleston. Coos Bay is providing fair to good crabbing and excellent clamming on minus tides.

Bottom fishing out of Gold Beach has been hot or cold but when it's hot, it's great, yielding quick limits of rockfish and lingcod for all. Offshore chinook fishing has been worthwhile about five miles out. A combination of hatchery and wild spring chinook are being taken as catches pick up on the lower Rogue but remain slow in the middle river. It doesn't matter as of the 1st of June; finclipped or not, they're all fair game below the old dam site. Only hatchery chinook may be kept on the upper river and catches have remained steady.

With a strong ocean chinook season forecast this year, ODFW fish counters at the Port of Brookings note a trending improvement in catches as the season progresses. Ocean anglers trolling anchovies with hoochies are doing best. Beaches are producing very good catches of surf perch.

Eastern – Following an extended high water period, the Willowa dropped into good condition over the last weekend. No reports although a five-pound kokanee was landed at Willowa Lake.

The Imnaha is in good shape and is open for chinook although no catch reports have been forthcoming.

When the water of the Snake River warms, smallmouth bass move upstream into the Grande Ronde to spawn. Fishing here can be very good when this occurs.

SW Washington – Effort and catch for steelhead and spring chinook is greatest on the Cowlitz River but overall, return rates seem below expectations. Summer steelhead counts should be

ramping up soon.

The Lewis and Kalama Rivers remain poor options with the Kalama remaining closed for chinook retention.

Effort and catches are starting to slow on the Wind River and Drano Lake.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Still benefitting from the minus tide series, anglers along the Columbia were seeing improving catches for summer steelhead and sockeye with some chinook still in the catches. Bank anglers in the Portland to Longview stretch actually caught more “spring” chinook than steelhead or sockeye, creating an atmosphere of anticipation for the June 16th (Saturday) opener for summer chinook. Counts at Bonneville are remaining consistent but should pick up significantly in the coming weeks. Here are ODF&W’s checks from the previous week:

Gorge Bank:

Weekend checking showed 1,219 shad kept for 122 shad anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekly checking showed 57 shad kept for three shad boats (nine anglers).

Troutdale Boats:

Weekend checking showed 32 shad kept for five boats (12 anglers).

Portland to Longview Bank:

Weekend checking showed 11 adipose fin-clipped steelhead and 12 sockeye kept, plus one unclipped steelhead and 16 spring chinook adults released for 156 salmonid anglers.

Portland to Longview Boats:

Weekend checking showed five spring chinook adults released for eight salmonid boats (21 anglers); and 20 shad kept for 12 shad boats (30 anglers).

Estuary Bank (Wauna Power Lines to Clatsop Spit):

Weekend checking showed six adipose fin-clipped steelhead and two sockeye kept, plus six unclipped steelhead and one spring chinook adult released for 34 bank anglers.

Estuary Boats (Wauna Power Lines to Buoy 10):

Weekend checking showed eight adipose fin-clipped steelhead and three sockeye kept, plus one unclipped steelhead and three spring chinook adults released for nine boats (17 anglers).

The best check, as is often the case, was in the estuary, where anglers often take advantage of somewhat deserted islands in the lower reaches. Anglers will boat to these islands and take advantage of the low effort and prime beach real estate to catch beach hugging runs of salmon or steelhead. As salmon begin to enter into the river in greater numbers, these boaters will target them a bit farther offshore but steelheaders will still find success plunking hot-colored spin-n-glos in shallow water during the minus tide series.

And what’s in store for the future weeks? Well, study the forecast section of this report but the offshore selective fishery opened on Saturday and preliminary results indicate there are good numbers of chinook to be had. Admittedly however, anglers are having to cull their catches as a large portion of these chinook are non-fin-clipped, requiring release. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be retained. Trolled anchovies seem to be the bait of choice and it’s obvious as to why that

is, the lower bay and ocean are full of them this year. Most of the effort and success is taking place north of the Columbia River mouth with some good action reported just off of Long Beach in about 80 to 90 feet of water. ODF&W reported that every 4 out of 5 anglers fishing out of the Astoria area bagged chinook in this fishery.

While we're offshore, the bottomfishing remains fair to good for Columbia River fishers although the black sea bass numbers seem to be down from previous weeks. I fished on the sunken jetty and along the south jetty on Tuesday, netting 28 bass, 5 kelp greenling and 8 lingcod for 6 rods mostly using P-line jigs fished near the bottom. The action wasn't as fast as what we witnessed about 10 days ago but the lingcod were sure of a nice grade. There were large schools of baitfish in the area with many of the fish we retained spitting up anchovies from their gut.

Sturgeon fishing in the estuary remains a bit challenging but anglers putting in the effort are being rewarded with some quality sized fish. After bottomfishing on Tuesday, we put in some time around Hammond, picking up 47 and 49-inch keepers as well as an oversize on sand shrimp just after high tide. There are of course, many competing critters for your bait. Most effort is taking place out of the Tongue Point area with consistent catches coming from upstream of Marker 3 and some activity out of Tongue Point. It's still not slam dunk fishing however and the age-old technique of moving if you're not getting bit routine doesn't work like it used to. If anglers are finding fish, they most likely will remain in one spot for a long period of time. Sand shrimp remains a top bait but some nice keepers have fallen on anchovies recently and that bait should become more consistent in the coming weeks. The best time to target keepers in this area is the first part of outgoing tide in the shallower water and nearing low slack and the first part of incoming tide in the deeper water. The main channel and upstream to Miller Island has not yielded impressive results lately. That can change at any time however.

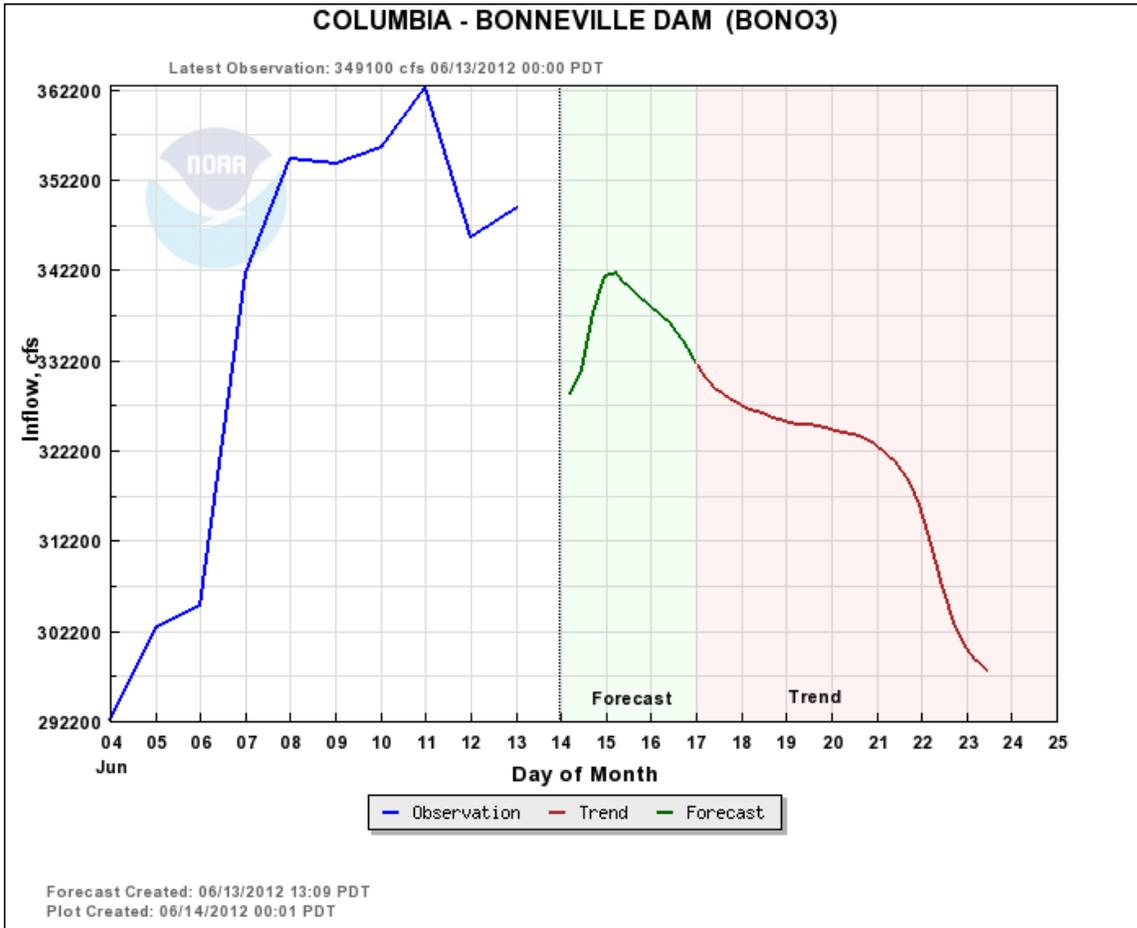
Sturgeon fishing in the Portland to Longview stretch may have slowed slightly from previous weeks but action still warrants a trip out if you know what you're doing. Keepers are still being caught near Portland but it's likely to continue to wane.

Up at Bonneville, shad anglers are having a field day with 10 shad/angler averages for the Bonneville area. It's clearly going to be a banner year for these fish again. Numbers at Bonneville are swelling. Small Dick-Nite spoons make shad fishing easy. Salmon anglers are getting anxious for their opportunity starting on Saturday. Passage numbers aren't impressive lately but that likely won't quell opening day excitement.

The Guide's Forecast – The Saturday salmon opener will draw the most excitement this weekend with catches expected to be just fair unless counts at Bonneville begin ramping up significantly. The minus tide series will benefit beach plunkers and boaters in the lower reaches would be doing themselves a favor by anchoring close to the shoreline where fish will likely be traveling to avoid heavy currents. Small plugs or spinners are likely to take summer chinook while steelhead will continue to hit flame colored spin-n-glos tipped with coon shrimp ideally. Coon shrimp will become more necessary as you get upstream where more people are using them. Spin-n-glos amply soaked in scent will only work to your advantage too. The bulk of the effort will take place in the Bonneville area but the estuary and Portland to Longview stretch will also offer up some quality opportunities. The estuary is often the most productive section to fish.

Bonneville boaters will get more excited when dam counts increase although catchable numbers of fish are present now. Officially, summer chinook counts don't begin until June 15th and we should start to see over 2,000+ fish a day begin passing if the run is to come to fruition. Sockeye counts are beginning to swell. Anglers in this area typically use spinners to entice summer chinook but plugs can be equally effective as well. In flows like what we're experiencing, expect to find fish in water anywhere from 12 to 20 feet and that will vary by day, most often dependent

on what the flow velocities are. Flows are scheduled to continue to drop on the mainstem Columbia:



Anglers will be excited (not) to know that ODF&W and WDF&W have recently set the summer chinook gillnet seasons. At least the sport fleet got a few hours jump on the biters in the system. The first opener is:

Summer Chinook Commercial Fishery

Adopted a non-Indian commercial season as follows:

Season:

9 PM Sunday June 17 to 5 AM Monday June 18, 2012 (8 hours)

Area:

Zones 1-5

Sanctuaries:

Grays River, Elokomina-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A, Lewis-A, Washougal and Sandy River sanctuaries in effect as applicable.

Gear:

Drift gill nets. 8" minimum mesh size restriction in effect.

Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater.

Allowable Sales:

Chinook, sockeye, white sturgeon, and shad.

A maximum of five white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) the fishery is open. The weekly white sturgeon sales limit applies to mainstem fisheries only.

With sockeye catches likely to increase (that is, if the run comes in as forecast), anglers should know the regulations. Yes, these fish have to be tagged as adults, no matter how small they are. Do check the ODF&W web site for updated regulations but here is a salmon identification guide you can use so you know one when you see it. They are generally pretty small.

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/FishID/FishIDLists.asp> These fish will typically hit smaller offerings as they are plankton feeders.

Sturgeon anglers should count on the estuary bite to continue to improve in the coming weeks. Good tides this weekend should open up some opportunities for shallow water fishing where action has been sparse lately. Sand shrimp produces best in this type of water although don't overlook anchovies as baitfish begin to show in greater numbers as flows drop. It still seems likely that the best fishing will be taking place upriver of Tongue Point as charter boat checks continue to indicate that there isn't much action below the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Effort was high over the free fishing weekend but it's likely to remain high as many know it's the time of year to produce quality keepers in the estuary.

Upriver, action may very well continue to slide as we enter the summer months. Feed becomes much more readily available this time of year with many of the upriver fish likely to migrate downstream in search of greener grass. None-the-less, keepers in the Portland to Longview stretch will remain an option for a few more weeks.

Shad fishing will only get better. This is a great fishery to treat kids to. Anchor in 6 to 12 feet of water and put out your Dick-Nite spoons in chartreuse/brass or simply just brass or nickel. Prepare for a fun ride! You may even catch a salmon in pursuit of shad! It just has to be fin-clipped.

The extreme tide series won't lend itself to a friendly bar if you're thinking about salmon fishing out of Astoria. Any swell at all will kick up the bar, making for a treacherous ride west. The ocean forecast is:

FRI

NE WIND 5 TO 10 KT...EASING TO 5 KT IN THE AFTERNOON.

WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

FRI NIGHT

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO NW AFTER MIDNIGHT.

WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 3 FT.

SAT

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

SAT NIGHT

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

SUN

NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 7 FT.

MON

NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

Friday and Saturday certainly look like the best options. Troll anchovies or spoons for the best action. Fish have been relatively shallow (70 to 90 foot of water) north of the Columbia River mouth. Remember, these fish must be fin-clipped.

Bottomfishing won't be a great option this weekend with the extreme tide series. The swifter the currents, the more you should plan on snagging up and losing your gear.

River crabbing and ocean crabbing out of Astoria has not been all that productive. It's not likely to change anytime soon either.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "On the Willamette, shad remain in the spotlight leaving the spring Chinook feeling like a second class citizen. Shad numbers remain strong, with nearly all the effort being spent at Oregon City, while a small portion of anglers are putting in time in the Multnomah channel. Chinook salmon are still available from the mouth to Willamette falls, but "salmon" pressure is relatively light. Fish are being posted on the board daily at Fred's Marina, being caught down in the channel, at the head of the channel and from the harbor. Oregon City salmon anglers are catching a few up near the falls and down along Meldrum bar but finding a back trolling lane can be a challenge with all the anchored shad-o-holics. Although effort is light, it's a safe bet that sturgeon fishing would be worth a try with all the shad in the river. Bass fishermen are starting to have a regular presence as the water temp continues to warm, so keep a sharp look-out for speeding fiberglass rocket boats."

Over 24,000 spring Chinook and 16,000 summer steelhead had been counted at Willamette Falls as of June 13th with hundreds of fish crossing daily. Water temperature at the Falls is in the mid-50s with the water flow moderating.

McKenzie River levels have been fluctuating since the first of June as waves of rainfall have been interspersed with sunny periods. That's just springtime in Oregon. The water has been on the drop over the last five days, however, and conditions will be good for the weekend to come.

It was revealed in a television news story (see **Random Links**, below) that it is illegal to fish the Willamette from Portland Parks, including the East Bank Esplanade, one of the areas mentioned in the ODFW's "50 Places to go Fishing within 60 Minutes of Portland." Hopefully, a public outcry will reverse this silliness.

ODFW sez, "The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will host a Father's Day fishing event Sunday, June 17 at St. Louis Ponds Fishing Area from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. ODFW staff and volunteers will be available on site to provide instruction to anybody who wants to sharpen their fishing skills. For this event, ODFW will stock the ponds with

2,500 legal-sized rainbow trout and an additional 60 trout ranging in size from 2-4 pounds. The department will loan out fishing gear to individuals who do not have their own gear and will provide bait, while supplies last."

North Fork Reservoir, Sheridan Pond, Silver Creek Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Timothy Meadows, Trillium Lake, Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake, Trail Bridge Reservoir are scheduled for trout stocking.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "As water levels on the Willamette remain consistent, both shad and spring chinook fishing should continue with little variance. The shad will be around for another couple weeks but expect pressure to drop off gradually as the Columbia River shad run is now in full swing. Boats anchoring in just about any piece of water in the two mile stretch below Willamette falls stand a good chance of having a shad bonanza. Small lures like the Dick Nite spoon, tiny chartreuse grubs and shad darts will all take shad in good numbers. A simple longtime favorite of local anglers is a size 5 nickel swivel with a #2 or #4 single siwash hook attached. Impart a jigging action and you are in business. Nothing new to the shad crowd, but don't be surprised if something larger and more formidable latches on to your tiny shad offering. Every season brings tales of 25lb spring Chinook giving the un-expecting shad-man a run for his money. Springers will continue to be caught for anglers willing to give it a try as decent numbers continue to ascend the fish ladder at Willamette falls. Multnomah Channel and the Portland harbor will continue to kick out a few fish each day for herring and spinner fishermen. Oregon City anglers will also take their share on spinners, wobblers and prawn/spinners combos. If a back trolling lane is not available due to all the anchored boats, do as the Romans do and drop the anchor amongst them and fish with salmon gear."

The Head of Multnomah Channel has been a hotspot at times this week, producing several spring Chinook. It is getting late in the season but there are still good numbers of salmon to be caught although it's a patient man's game at this time of year.

While the McKenzie will be dropping over the weekend, most fishers familiar with it would like to see the level a little lower and water temperatures a little higher. Regardless, trout have been responsive, summer steelhead are being caught on diver and sand shrimp and there are fishable numbers of spring Chinook, several of which have fallen to savvy anglers this week. For springers, try wrapped Kwikfish in the lower river or backbounce cured roe.

The majority of those tens of thousands of steelhead and salmon which have been counted at Willamette Falls are bound for the Santiam system. With these rivers on the drop and a nice weekend in the offing, optimism is getting higher every day. Figure roughly two weeks from the day the fish are counted to the day they enter the Santiams.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "The effort is relatively high for salmon fishermen and the participation is bolstered by a high percentage of fishing guides (they have few other options if they want a pay-day). A handful of springers are being caught to keep things interesting but the industrious guides will target steelhead as well to keep the interest level somewhat at a premium. Both species are spread from the mouth up to Rivermill dam.

"Sandy river anglers continue to have good success with summer steelhead and decent fishing for spring Chinook. The summers seem to be here in better numbers than previous years, while Chinook are worth the effort but their numbers have yet to impress beyond "just OK". Both

species are available from the mouth to Revenue Bridge and beyond but anglers looking for springers would be well advised to spend their valuable time in the stretch between Dabney Park and Dodge park."

According to ODFW creel checks on the Clackamas over the past weekend, seven Chinook and 16 summer steelhead were kept for 27 boats trying. Springers have been caught at High Rocks this week. Spring Chinook are returning to Eagle Creek from a smolt release in 2010.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "It's still not too late for the springers to make a decent showing in the Clackamas but hope is quickly waning. Meanwhile there are plenty of summer steelhead in the river to keep the attention level piqued. Mild temps and occasional showers are keeping the river in premium condition so expect fishing to remain consistent. Bank anglers will catch both species with bobber and jig and bobber and bait set-ups as well as drifted bait, while boat anglers should continue to back-troll diver and bait combos and small plugs. Keeping sand shrimp in the mix is a safe bet as both species favor this delicate bait in the spring. Expect fishing to hold up through the 4th of July.

"The Sandy should also fish well through the 4th of July holiday as long as the weather stays mild. Spring Chinook will be taken at the mouth and up river in the deeper runs. A few guides are trolling spinners and prawns below the I-84 Bridge and their continued presence indicates some success. The chance for the bonus Columbia River dip-in is very good here but stay upstream of the deadline because eyes are watching. Upriver, concentrate in the deeper runs with rock and gravel bottoms as the silty bottoms rarely hold fish. Summer steelhead are spread throughout the system and the best numbers will be taken from Dodge Park, Cedar Creek and Revenue Bridge. If one could only pick a single technique for summer steelhead on this river, a bobber and jig set-up with a light and dark contrasting jig would be the outstanding favorite. Fish pocket water, flats and tail outs that are 3-7 ft deep for the best success."

Clackamas level and flow will be moderating over the coming week. The combination of additional boat traffic from spring Chinook hopefuls who are fishing the Clack instead of the lower Willamette and the happy splashers who appear in sunny weather here, the best chance for anyone wanting to actually hook a fish will come at first light.

North Coast Fishing Report – Spring chinook anglers took Tillamook Bay salmon for another ride this weekend as catches picked up once again before the downturn in hatchery returns. Anglers working the lower bay and ocean bubble fared well over the weekend with consistent catches coming on herring. Upper bay anglers continue to struggle with little help from a Tillamook River that continues to spew moss due to a water quality violation by an upstream landowner. The friendly ocean and bar lately has justified the effort in the lower estuary.

Effort was on the increase in the south channel of Tillamook Bay where herring trollers were taking fair to good numbers of fish early in the week. By mid-week, the catches had begun to taper but fish were still available in catchable numbers. Target the last part of incoming tide and the first part of outgoing tide for the best results. Shortly after tide change, the inside of the north jetty (jaws) should also produce favorable results on the outgoing tide, particularly the last half of the outgoing. Keep those herring on the bottom and keep them weed free.

Tidewater anglers are getting a few fish but given the good conditions to keep fish in the tidewater reach, the action isn't stellar. The best action has been reported between the 2-bit Hole and the Highway 101 Bridge. Driftboat anglers are still experiencing low water conditions with no major change in sight. Following last week's high water, action did pick up on many north coast streams but not as much as one would think given the significance of the freshet for this time of

year. Fish are well distributed now but are once again spooky in nature under these low water conditions.

The Nestucca has boasted good catches in the last week with good reports coming from the mouth and upstream following the rain freshet. Most of these fish are destined for Three Rivers where the season modification also warrants a quick study of the newly released regulations preventing poachers from snagging pooled up salmon.

The Wilson should have fair numbers of fish as well with the bonus chance at a summer steelhead.

And speaking of summer steelhead, the Siletz River booted out numerous summer run steelhead following last week's rain freshet. One boat reported nearly 15 hook-ups for summer steelhead fishing from Logsdon to the upper town run. It was great for 2 days in a row but has since slowed. They were using bobber and jigs for an offering.

Trout remains an option but offshore, bottomfishing has tapered, including nearshore halibut but folks should be looking offshore for the next round of opportunities for the all-depth option beginning today.

The Guide's Forecast – Although spring salmon catches are highly likely to wane, fish should still be available in Tillamook Bay itself and at the jaws although the extreme tide series will likely push motivated fish up-bay into the upper reaches. The traditional spinners, plugs and bait should take fish in what I consider the last hurrah for in-shore springer seekers. If you're willing to wait until the late afternoon outgoing tide (and it can be well worth the wait), drag your herring with the outgoing tide along the north side of the jetty (inside the bay) on the last half of outgoing tide. If you go with the flow (troll with the tide), you'll cross many more fish faces, increasing your chances of running across a motivated one.

The tidewater of the Trask River can oftentimes produce great catches this time of year near the last half of outgoing tide as well. Trolled spinners or plugs in the lower few holes of the Trask (below the output of Hoquarten Slough on the Trask) does have a good history of producing good catches during this time of year and there are clearly ample numbers of fish present in the estuary right now.

Stealthy drifters on the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers are producing good catches as well. Early morning will remain the best and anglers need to downsize their baits and offerings to expect any results. The most motivated of biters will be in the deepest, darkest holes

Summer steelhead will remain available in the Nestucca, Wilson and Siletz Rivers. No one river should stand out from the other but anglers will have to employ low water techniques to be successful.

Look under the Columbia River report for a copy of the offshore forecast.

Offshore, catches of salmon are coming in from the 100-120 foot mark. Trolled herring will work the best but apex lures should offer up some opportunities as well. Catches are likely to remain sporadic throughout the summer season as Garibaldi is traditionally not the best port to target chinook from. Coho season is not far away however.

Central & South Coast Reports – Rockfishing and lingcod catches slowed this week out of central Oregon ports. Crabbing has been worthwhile in the ocean, however, yielding near-limits of large Dungeness.

All-depth halibut is open today through Saturday, June 16th and if recent trips are any indication, good numbers of large fish will be taken. With less than half of the spring quota available (48%), it's possible this could be the last opportunity for deep water flatties until the summer season opens August 17 & 18. Go if you can.

Herring are still available out of Newport in Yaquina Bay. The size is mixed but there were plenty of them at mid-week. If the wind continues from the NW however, cooler water will prevail and the herring will take off.

Ocean Chinook remains an option but is slow north of Winchester Bay and best out of ports to the south. While a few are being taken out of Newport and it is improving, the best bets for an ocean launch for Chinook are Coos Bay, Bandon or Brookings.

It was announced this week that, for the fourth year in a row, coho salmon returns are strong enough to allow the opening of certain coastal rivers and one lake to the harvest of wild fish. Under the regulations adopted today, anglers will be able to keep one wild coho per day may be retained from the Siletz, Yaquina, Alsea, Siuslaw, Umpqua, Coos and Coquille rivers as well as from Tenmile Lake. The season on most rivers begins on September 15th and will continue through November or until river-specific quotas have been met.

Boaters with the proper craft, equipment and fuel capacity have been talking tuna (which is not unusual with this crowd in mid-June) but no albacore catches have been confirmed. Warm water has been moving near shore periodically. It won't be long.

Crabbing has been productive for boaters in Coos Bay. Rockfish and greenling are being taken in fair number from the jetties. Clamming is expected to be excellent as usual in the bay during the next minus tidal series starting June 16th. Sea-run cutthroat trout fishing has been fair to good on the Coos River for those using spinners or brightly-colored flies.

Crabbing remains slow in Winchester Bay although perch fishing has been fair to good. A few sturgeon are being hooked on the upper bay but these are mostly oversized. Steelheading and spring Chinook fishing is slow to fair on the mainstem Umpqua. Shad are in and have been getting caught with results improving as water levels drop. Best results will come on bright, sunny days at Sawyer's Rapids and near Yellow Creek. Springers are in the North Umpqua although fishing has been slow. South Umpqua smallmouth bass fishing is underway but with the water color murky and the temperature still too low to rev up the fishes, warm-water metabolism, results have been fair at best. Soft plastics are the best choice in these conditions.

Spring Chinook fishing has been good on the lower Rogue with several fishers taking limits but late-season action is expected to slow as water levels drop and water temperatures rise. Not many are targeting summer steelhead with the possibility of hooking a Rogue springer preferable. A few summers are being caught on the middle river where spring Chinook results have been only fair at best. Above the old Gold Ray Dam site, Chinook must be fin-clipped to keep but enough fish are being caught to make the effort well worthwhile. Cured eggs and pulled plugs have been effective. Springer returns to the hatchery have been the highest since 2004 according to the ODFW and over 30% higher than the 10 year average.

Boats launching out of the port of Brookings are taking limits of rockfish, good numbers of ling cod and experiencing fair to good results for Chinook.

Despite reports of slow fishing at Diamond Lake as millions of bugs hatch, fly anglers using Chromonid pupa patterns are taking good numbers of trout over 15 inches with one reported over four pounds earlier this week.

Scheduled for trout planting are Expo Pond, Reinhart Pond, Emigrant Reservoir and Spaulding Pond.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Weather has been mixed and sometimes tumultuous on the lower Deschutes with conditions (especially wind) making for tough fishing at times. Trout are still responding to large dries, despite the end of salmonfly and golden stone hatches but that response will soon stop as well. Fortunately, caddis hatches have started and will carry fly anglers through the summer months. Plan accordingly and hope for sunny days. Fishing has been very good in the evenings at Mecca Flats with trout becoming less selective as the sun dips low in the sky. There will likely be a few big bugs mixed with caddis here through the coming weekend.

The Metolius can be tricky for fly fishers but is producing now as trout are keyed on Green Drakes, responding to dry imitations even when no hatch is evident. The middle and lower river have been fishing best.

Crooked River level and flows are low and stable which generally indicates good fishing.

Green Peter has been producing fair to good numbers of both kokanee and bass.

Deep water jigging has been taking good numbers of kokanee at Paulina.

Odell has been productive for kokanee with fish being taken by both trollers and jig fishers. Several nice lake trout have also been taken over the past week. Run for the dock if the wind comes up.

Limits of kokanee are being taken at Crescent Lake.

With a derby scheduled for Saturday, June 16th at Wickiup, reports have been hard to come by. Suffice to say there are some very large kokes to be caught here.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for June 2012

North Puget Sound

June offers several fishing opportunities, including the opening of river fishing, a chance to fish for free, and special jumbo trout plants in more than a half-dozen regional lakes.

Hatchery chinook salmon fishing runs through the month on a portion of the Skagit River, from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Marblemount Bridge at Cascade River Road. The hatchery chinook fishery also is open on the Cascade River, from the mouth to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. In both locations, anglers have a daily limit of four fish, including up to two adults.

Sockeye salmon fishing opens June 16 on the Skagit River, from Highway 536 (Memorial Highway Bridge) at Mount Vernon to the mouth of Gilligan Creek. Anglers have a daily limit of three sockeye, with a minimum size of 12 inches.

Most of the region's rivers and streams open for both game fish and trout fishing June 2 (the first Saturday of the month). The action starts a day earlier (June 1) on some waters, including the Skagit River, portions of the Skykomish and Cascade rivers and Fishtrap Creek in Whatcom County. In most rivers and streams there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches under statewide rules. However, some of the region's rivers and streams require that trout be at least 14 inches long to keep. For details on all fishing opportunities, check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet.

The Reiter Ponds area of the Skykomish River opens June 1 for steelhead fishing, earlier than in previous years. Reiter Ponds anglers are reminded that fishing is not allowed from any floating device from 1,000 feet downstream to 1,500 feet upstream of Reiter Ponds outlet from June 1 through July 31. The rule is aimed at avoiding conflicts with bank anglers.

In Puget Sound, lingcod fishing remains open through June 15, with a one-fish daily limit and a 26- to 36-inch size limit.

Meanwhile, the Tulalip Bay "bubble" salmon fishery continues Fridays through noon Mondays each week. The exception is June 9, when the area is closed for the Tulalip Tribes salmon ceremony. Salmon anglers fishing the bubble this year will be allowed to use two fishing poles from June 10 through Sept. 23, with the purchase of a WDFW two-pole endorsement. For details, check the WDFW fishing rule change. Anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit.

For those wanting to give fishing a try, Free Fishing Weekend is coming up June 9-10. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any state waters open to fishing. Also during Free Fishing Weekend, no Discover Pass or vehicle-access pass will be required to park at any water-access site maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state. Before heading out, anglers should check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet for all regulations.

June offers a special opportunity to try for large "triploid" trout, when WDFW fish hatchery crews stock 5,000 additional triploid rainbow trout in selected lakes just before Father's Day weekend (June 16-17). Specially stocked waters in the North Puget Sound region — and the number of triploid trout they'll receive — include: Green Lake (870), Lake Geneva (450), Bitter Lake (100), and Echo Lake (100) in King County; Blackmans Lake (300) and Gissburg Ponds, also known as Twin Lakes, (350) in Snohomish County; and Whistle Lake (300) in Skagit County.

"We encourage families to get Dad out fishing, especially if he hasn't been for awhile," said WDFW Inland Fish Program Manager Chris Donley. Lakes that will be stocked with these large trout have good shore and boat access. More details are available at the Father's Day fishing page on WDFW's website.

Washington fishing licenses make a great Father's Day gift. They can be purchased online, toll-free by phone at 1-(866) 246-9453 or at any of 600 license dealers statewide.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Summer fisheries get under way in June, when numerous rivers and streams open for trout and the salmon season starts up off the coast.

The popular ocean salmon season opens with a hatchery chinook selective fishery June 9 in marine areas 1 and 2 and June 16 in marine areas 3 and 4. The selective fishery will run through June 22 in Marine Area 1, June 23 in Marine Area 2 and June 30 in marine areas 3 and 4, or until a coastwide quota of 8,000 hatchery chinook are retained.

In all marine areas, the fishery will be open seven days a week with a daily limit of two salmon. Anglers will be required to release wild chinook and all coho during the selective fishery.

"We've seen chinook up and down the coast during the troll fishery," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "That's a good sign for the sport fishery, which I expect to be very good once again this year."

Recreational ocean salmon fisheries for both chinook and hatchery coho will continue June 23 in Marine Area 1, June 24 in Marine Area 2, and July 1 in marine areas 3 and 4. Anglers fishing marine areas 1 and 2 will be allowed to retain one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit. Anglers fishing marine areas 3 and 4 will have a daily limit of two salmon. Fishing will be open seven days a week, except in Marine Area 2 where fishing will be open Sundays through Thursdays.

Before heading out, anglers should check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet for all regulations.

In Puget Sound, Marine Area 13 is open for salmon, while salmon fishing gets under way June 1 in Marine Area 11. Anglers fishing those areas have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook.

Halibut fishing in most of Puget Sound is coming to a close. The fishery is set to close June 2 in most areas. The exception is Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), where anglers can fish for halibut three days a week, Thursday, Friday and Saturday through June 23.

On the coast, Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) is open three days a week (Thursday through Saturday). However, Marine Area 2 (Westport/Ocean Shores) is already closed except in the northern nearshore area, said Heather Reed, a WDFW fish biologist.

Farther north, La Push and Neah Bay (marine areas 3 and 4) will open for two more days of fishing May 31 and June 2. "Once we tally the catch during those two days of fishing, we'll see if we can provide another opening," she said.

In all marine areas open to fishing, there is a one-fish daily catch limit and no minimum size restriction. Anglers may possess a maximum of two fish in any form, and must record their catch on a WDFW catch record card. For more information on the halibut fishery, check WDFW's website.

Anglers have through June 15 to fish for lingcod in Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. However, the lingcod season on the coast remains open through mid-October. Meanwhile, freshwater anglers might want to head out to the Chehalis River, where a spring chinook fishery is open through June 30. Anglers fishing the Chehalis, from the mouth to the Highway 6 Bridge in the town of Adna, have a daily limit of one salmon.

Anglers should be aware that a portion of the fishing regulations for the Chehalis River in the new Fishing in Washington pamphlet are incorrect. Anglers fishing the Chehalis, from the mouth to high bridge on Weyerhaeuser 1000 line approximately 400 yards downstream from Roger Creek (south of Pe Ell), are not required to follow selective gear rules.

A couple of other rivers are also open for salmon fishing, including the Hoh, Quillayute and Sol Duc.

Elsewhere, trout fishing will open at several rivers and streams beginning June 2. Under the statewide rule for trout, there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches in rivers and streams. However, some rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep. Check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet for details.

Washingtonians who are interested in fishing but haven't actually given it a try have a perfect chance to do so during Free Fishing Weekend, scheduled June 9-10. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle access pass or Discover Pass will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state.

The following weekend offers anglers another unique opportunity. WDFW fish hatchery crews will be stocking 5,000 triploid rainbow trout in 14 lakes just before Father's Day weekend, June 16-17. "We encourage families to get dad out fishing, especially if he hasn't been for awhile," said Chris Donley, WDFW Inland Fish Program manager. "Giving dad a fishing license as a gift and taking him out to catch one of these big fish is a great way to spend the weekend."

In addition to the 14 lakes that will be stocked with triploids, hundreds of other lakes have been stocked in Washington with millions of trout over the past year, said Donley.

Lakes stocked in the region and the number of triploids that will be stocked, include:

- Kitsap County: Island Lake, 300.
- Grays Harbor County: Vance Creek (Elma) Ponds, 100.
- Pierce County: American Lake, 1,200.

More details are available at WDFW's website.

Southwest Washington

Anglers may still get a few days in early June to catch spring chinook salmon, but many are shifting their attention to the next big opener on the lower Columbia River. That begins June 16, when fishing opens for summer chinook and fishing for hatchery steelhead and sockeye expands upriver from the Interstate 5 Bridge.

Pre-season forecasts anticipate a strong run of 91,200 summer chinook and an even stronger run of 462,000 sockeye this year, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"This year's fishery offers anglers a chance to catch chrome bright trophy-sized fish weighing up to 40 pounds," Hymer said. "There's a good reason why these fish are known as 'June hogs,' and this season will give anglers a good chance to catch some."

The Columbia River will open to fishing for salmon and steelhead from the Megler Astoria Bridge upstream to Priest Rapids Dam. The daily limit is six fish, including two adult salmon, or two adult hatchery steelhead, or one of each. Only sockeye salmon, adipose-clipped chinook and adipose-clipped steelhead may be retained. All sockeye count as part of the adult daily limit.

Anglers can also catch shad, which have been open without size or catch limits since mid-May. Bank anglers have been catching shad in good numbers just below Bonneville Dam and at the public dock in Washougal. Boat anglers can do well in shallower water from Longview upstream.

Above Bonneville Dam, the season for summer chinook and steelhead is scheduled to run through July 31. Below Bonneville, the initial season will run through July 1, but anglers may get additional time on the water if the fish come through as expected, said Cindy LeFleur, WDFW Columbia River policy coordinator.

"Last year's summer chinook run came in at 12 percent below forecast," she said. "We need to make sure we're on target before we start adding fishing days in the lower river."

The same is true for spring chinook, LeFleur said. "We'd like to add a few days to the start of the summer chinook season, but we'll have to see what the run forecast for spring chinook does between now and then," she said.

Below Bonneville, anglers can still catch hatchery spring chinook and hatchery steelhead in several tributaries, including the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers. The Cowlitz River is the best bet for spring chinook, and Lake Scanewa (Cowlitz Falls Reservoir) opens for hatchery spring chinook June 1. Nearly 500 fish were planted in the lake as of May 26.

Summer run steelhead can also be found on the lower sections of the South Fork Toutle, Green, Washougal, and East Fork Lewis rivers, where bait is prohibited until the general season starts June 2. Though closed for spring chinook, the lower Kalama remains open for hatchery steelhead.

Anglers fishing any of those waters should check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet and WDFW's emergency rule website for additional regulations. As noted in the pamphlet, anglers with a two-pole endorsement can use two poles to fish for spring chinook salmon and other species on sections of the Cowlitz, Lewis and Wind rivers and at Drano Lake.

The daily limit for salmonids has been increased to six fish at Drano and on the Wind River upstream from the railroad bridge. Up to four may be adults, of which no more than two may be hatchery steelhead. Any chinook – whether adipose-fin clipped or not – may now be retained on the Wind upstream from Shipherd Falls. The daily limit on the Wind River below the railroad bridge remains two hatchery origin chinook, two hatchery steelhead, or one of each.

Starting June 1, the Klickitat River from the mouth to the Fisher Hill Bridge will be open seven days per week with a six-salmon daily limit, of which no more than two may be adults. Wild chinook must be released. Anglers may also retain two hatchery steelhead there and – starting June 1 – on the upper Klickitat River. Hatchery chinook jacks may also be kept from 400 feet above fishway #5 to the boundary markers below the salmon hatchery.

Rather catch sturgeon? Below the Wauna powerlines, the retention fishery is open daily through July 8 (or when the quota is met) with a one-fish daily limit, fork-length requirement of 41 to 54 inches. Above the powerlines, sturgeon retention is allowed Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with a fork-length requirement of 38 to 54 inches. Fishing is prohibited in spawning sanctuaries below Bonneville, John Day, McNary and Priest Rapids dams.

In the Bonneville Pool, fishery managers have approved four additional days of retention fishing: June 15-16 and June 22-23. Based on public input, WDFW carried forward 1,060 fish from the fishery that ended Feb. 18 in those waters to provide a summer season, said Brad James, a fish biologist for WDFW. Anglers will be allowed to retain one white sturgeon a day between 38 inches and 54 inches fork length on the mainstem Columbia and its tributaries between Bonneville Dam and The Dalles Dam on those days.

When fishing for sturgeon, all anglers are limited to one single-point barbless hook

Anglers looking to catch some trout should check the region's trout stocking schedule for good spots to go in June. Canyon Creek, Klineline Pond, Rowland Lake and Spearfish Lake are some of the waters scheduled to receive fish this month.

Starting June 2, anglers also have the option of catching trout in a number of rivers and streams throughout the region. Many of those waters – ranging from Skate Creek to the Little White Salmon River – are being stocked with fish from area hatcheries. Information about fish plants is available on WDFW's website.

For walleye and bass, fishery managers suggest casting a line between Bonneville and McNary dams. For tiger muskie, try Mayfield or Merwin reservoirs.

Those who don't have a fishing license but would like to try fishing will get their chance June 9-10 during Free Fishing Weekend. During those two days, no license will be required to fish any waters open to fishing in Washington state. No vehicle access pass or Discover Pass will be required to park at WDFW wildlife areas or water-access sites those days.

During Free Fishing Weekend, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will host a public fishing event at Spearfish Park near Dallesport June 9 from 9 a.m. until noon. Co-sponsors include WDFW and the Klickitat Chapter of Trout Unlimited. For more information, call (541) 506-7819.

Eastern Washington

June is the start of river and stream fishing in many regional waters, from Asotin Creek and the Walla Walla River in the southeast, to the upper section of the Spokane River and LeClerc Creek in the northeast.

Anglers should check the WDFW Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet for special regulations that apply to rivers that open in June, as well as those rivers that opened earlier.

Many of the region's best trout lakes that opened in late April continue to produce good catches through June, including Spokane County's Amber, Clear, Fish, Williams and West Medical lakes and Lincoln County's Fishtrap Lake.

As snowpack melts further north in the region, additional waters are becoming productive. In Stevens County, the Little Pend Oreille chain of lakes—Gillette, Heritage, Sherry and Thomas—are providing catches, as are Pend Oreille County's Skookum and Yocum lakes and many others at higher elevation. Northeast lakes that produced well on the late April opener continue to see

action, including Cedar, Loon, Mudgett, Rocky, Starvation and Waitts lakes in Stevens County, and Curlew and Ellen lakes in Ferry County.

Waters open year-round are good bets through June not only for trout, but also for warmwater fish species that begin to bite as air and water temperatures rise. Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam that extends along the Stevens, Ferry and Lincoln county lines, has big rainbow trout, kokanee, walleye and smallmouth bass. Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, is producing catches of rainbow trout, largemouth bass and catfish. Rock Lake in Whitman County has rainbow and brown trout, largemouth bass, bluegill and crappie.

In the south end of the region, the Tucannon River impoundments—Big Four, Blue, Curl, Deer, Rainbow, Spring and Watson lakes—continue to be stocked with hatchery rainbow trout and are still providing lots of catches, reports WDFW Wooten Wildlife Area Manager Kari Dingman.

June 9-10 is Free Fishing Weekend statewide when no fishing licenses are required. Discover Pass or vehicle-access pass also are not required June 9 and 10 at WDFW water-access sites.

“Free Fishing Weekend is the perfect time to take a non-fishing friend or family member along on your fishing trip,” said WDFW Eastern Regional Fish Program Manager John Whalen. “In this region we’re also offering an opportunity for un-licensed adults to learn how to fish.”

The fishing class will be held on Thursday evening, June 7, and Saturday morning, June 9. Registrations may be made through June 6 at WDFW’s Spokane Valley regional office or by calling (509) 892-1001. Class space is limited.

On Father’s Day weekend, June 16-17, Williams Lake in Spokane County will receive 365 extra triploid rainbow trout to encourage families to take dad fishing. Williams is one of 14 lakes across the state to receive extra jumbo trout; it was chosen for its excellent public and private shore and boat access. Learn more about the Father's Day fishing opportunity on the WDFW website.

Northcentral Washington

A new **trout** fishery in the region opens June 1 on the Columbia River from 400 feet below Chief Joseph Dam to the Highway 173 Bridge in Brewster, (Okanogan County).

“This new fishery allows anglers to fish for and keep **triploid rainbow trout** that wash down river from Rufus Woods Lake,” said WDFW Okanogan District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff. “It could be quite a fishery if the numbers of fish in there are as high as we think they are.”

The new fishery, which is listed in the Special Rules section of the WDFW [Sport Fishing Rules](#) pamphlet, is scheduled to run through August 15, with a daily catch limit of 10 fish, minimum size 12 inches.

June is also the start of river and stream fishing in many waterways throughout the region. Check the [Sport Fishing Rules](#) pamphlet carefully to make sure of all special regulations on rivers and streams, like catch-and-release, selective gear restrictions, minimum size, and daily catch limits.

Jateff also reports that Okanogan County lakes have been producing well for both boat and shore anglers. Trout-producing waters such as Spectacle, Wannacut, Pearrygin, and Conconully lakes, plus Conconully Reservoir, all are providing good fishing for **rainbow trout**. Selective-gear waters, such as Big Twin, Blue (Sinlahekin) and Big Green lakes are predominately rainbow

fisheries. Anglers should consult the current sportfishing rules, Jateff notes, since some of the selective-gear lakes have varying bag limit restrictions.

Kokanee anglers should try Palmer, Bonaparte, and Patterson lakes in Okanogan County for fish in the 10 to 13-inch range.

"Spiny ray fisheries will pick up as water temperatures warm," Jateff said. "Some of the best bets would be Patterson and Palmer lakes for **yellow perch** and Leader Lake for **bluegills** and **crappie**."

Columbia Basin year-round waters, such as Banks Lake, Moses Lake and Potholes Reservoir, provide good fishing through June for **smallmouth** and **largemouth bass, walleye, yellow perch, crappie** and other species.

June 9-10 is [Free Fishing Weekend](#) statewide, when no fishing licenses are required. WDFW Northcentral Regional Fish Program Manager Jeff Korth says Free Fishing Weekend is a great time to take an unlicensed friend or family member along on a fishing trip. Discover Pass or vehicle-access pass are not required on June 9 and 10.

Southcentral Washington

Anglers have a variety of options available in June, starting with **hatchery** spring chinook salmon on sections of the Yakima River, then summer chinook on the Columbia River. Meanwhile, hatchery crews are still stocking trout in area lakes, and many rivers also open for trout fishing Saturday, June 2.

Smallmouth bass and walleye are also warming up to anglers' lures, and sturgeon fishing is still an option

"This is the time of year when you see boats on trailers heading in every direction," said Eric Anderson, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) based in Yakima. "June is a good time to catch fish in this part of the state."

Two sections of the Yakima River are currently open to **spring chinook** fishing. Although the river was swamped by high water after the fishery opened, Anderson said the flows have dropped and the river is in good condition.

"Anglers are definitely catching springers now," he said.

In the lower river, the fishery will likely remain open through June 30 from the Interstate 182 Bridge in Richland to the Grant Avenue Bridge in Prosser, Anderson said. The upper river, from the Interstate 82 Bridge at Union Gap to the railroad bridge below Roza Dam, is expected to remain open through July 31.

Anglers may keep two adipose-fin-clipped hatchery chinook per day. All wild salmon, identifiable by an intact adipose fin, must be released unharmed and must not be removed from the water prior to release. The same is true for all steelhead, as noted in the fishing rule on [WDFW's website](#).

Anglers are required to use single-point, barbless hooks with a hook gap from point to shank of 3/4 inch or less when fishing for salmon. Use of bait is allowed, and anglers have the option of purchasing a two-pole fishing endorsement.

Fishery managers are predicting a return of approximately 5,000 adult hatchery chinook to the Yakima River this year.

John Easterbrooks, regional WDFW fish manager, noted that the department is seeking anglers' cooperation in two aspects of the fishery – a hooking-mortality study and an effort to ensure continued access across Roza Dam to the popular fishing area downstream from the railroad bridge boundary. Both are described in a [news release](#) on the WDFW website.

To participate in the fishery, anglers must possess a Columbia River Salmon/Steelhead Endorsement (CRSSE), which supports maintaining and expanding fisheries in the Columbia River Basin.

That is also the case with the **summer chinook** fishery, which gets under way June 16 upriver to Priest Rapids Dam. The daily limit is six hatchery fish, of which up to two may be adult hatchery chinook.

Fishery managers are anticipating a strong return of 91,200 summer chinook and a record return of sockeye to the Columbia River this summer.

"Anglers often have a tough time landing summer chinook," said Paul Hoffarth, a WDFW fish biologist based in the Tri-Cities. "But with the high water and cooler temperatures this spring, anglers might be able to boat a few before the fish reach the Upper Columbia."

Meanwhile, anglers have been reeling in **channel catfish** from the lower reaches of the Yakima and Walla Walla rivers. Fishing has been good for "channel cats," which typically run 2-8 pounds but can easily weigh twice that amount, Hoffarth said.

"Put some cut bait on your hook and leave it on the bottom," he advises. "That's about all there is to it."

Steelhead fishing will remain closed until fall in the Columbia River upstream of the Highway 395 Bridge and in the Snake River, but Hoffarth recommends several other fisheries now under way on those river systems:

- **White sturgeon:** Fishing remains open in Lake Wallula (McNary Dam to Priest Rapids/Ice Harbor Dams) through July 31 this year. Fish must measure 43 inches to 54 inches (fork length) to be retained. Anglers should be aware that sturgeon fishing is prohibited in sturgeon sanctuaries in the Snake River from Goose Island upstream to Ice Harbor Dam and in the Columbia River upstream of the Priest Rapids Hatchery outlet to Priest Rapids Dam.
- **Shad:** By mid-June, shad should reach McNary and Ice Harbor dams in numbers that make for great fishing. While not as prized as salmon or sturgeon, they can put up a good fight and make for good eating, Hoffarth said.
- **Smallmouth bass** and **walleye:** Fishing for both species should improve in the Columbia and Snake rivers as those waters warm.

Rather catch some **trout**? WDFW will continue to stock lakes and ponds through June in the region, including Cooper, Easton, FioRito and Quartz in Kittitas County; and Bear, Clear, Dog and Indian Flat in Yakima County.

Starting June 2, a number of rivers will also open for fishing around the region. Anderson reminds anglers that most streams have reduced catch and size limits for **trout**, and there are catch-and-release zones on the Yakima River above Roza Dam, in sections of the Naches River and in Rattlesnake Creek where all trout must be released unharmed. Also, in most large mainstem rivers and streams in the Yakima basin, anglers must use single-point barbless hooks and no bait.

Always check the fishing rules pamphlet for details on a specific river or stream. The *Fishing in Washington Sportfishing* Rules guide is available free at stores that sell fishing licenses. It also can be downloaded from [WDFW's website](#).

Those who don't have a fishing license but would like to try fishing will get their chance June 9-10 during **Free Fishing Weekend**. During those two days, no license will be required to fish any waters open to fishing in Washington state. No vehicle access pass or Discover Pass will be required to park at WDFW wildlife areas or water-access sites those days.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Go figure - Portland to enforce fishing ban on downtown waterfront:

<http://www.koinlocal6.com/news/local/story/Portland-to-enforce-fishing-ban-on-downtown/am-hhIM9-0CeUOeLvy69bg.csp>

Oceans of Garbage:

<http://www.mastersdegree.net/ocean-garbage/>

GOOD LUCK!