

The Guide's Forecast - volume 14 issue number 28

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 6<sup>th</sup> – July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** The Columbia River remains high for this time of year, helpful to juvenile fish migrating downstream but tough on sport anglers in pursuit of the adult variety. Catch rates for summer chinook and steelhead were slow last week. Summer chinook season is now closed but steelhead catches should ramp up in the coming weeks with spinners and spin-n-glos tipped with shrimp producing the best results along rocky outcroppings in the Columbia River Gorge.

The Willamette River continues to kick out spring chinook. On Sunday there was a decent bite at the head of the Multnomah Channel. The usual springer haunts like Sellwood and Willamette Park are barren of salmon fishermen so little is discernible other than speculation.

There is little pressure on the Clackamas other than above Barton where summer steelhead are present in good numbers. The springer show is nearly nonexistent but the deeper holes should provide a few stragglers.

As the water level drops on the Sandy, the deeper slots upstream of Oxbow Park have been the only game in town here. Both steelhead and late springers should provide some action through the middle of the month.

With the water level dropping over the past week, McKenzie fly fishers have been hooking impressive numbers of wild reddsides and the occasional bull trout on large dry flies and small nymphs. Steelheading has been fair.

Steelheading has been worthwhile on the upper North Santiam. About 2,500 spring chinook and nearly 4,000 summer steelhead have been counted at Forster Dam on the South Santiam. Fishing is good.

**Northwest –** Catch and keep sturgeon fishing closes below Wauna beginning on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Catch rates have varied lately but models indicate anglers will have achieved their quota by then. Catch and release opportunities should still provide a quality experience.

Offshore salmon action remains good out of Astoria with chinook still a primary target in the nearshore waters just north of the Columbia River entrance. Anglers fishing in 28 to 30 foot of water with anchovies are posting consistent results. Coho numbers, although still inconsistent are improving with a fair grade of fish showing for this early in the season.

There are only two more 3-day halibut openers for the north of Falcon all-depth halibut fishery. Forty-one percent of the quota remains with a likely balance to be transferred to the summer quota unless anglers ramp up their effort.

Warm water has inundated much of the north coast and it's seemingly affecting the ocean coho bite. Catches are poor out of Garibaldi and several north coast ports but that should improve odds for albacore in the near-term. Ocean crabbing is fair with Tillamook Bay crabbers yielding 6 to 8 keepers per boat despite the strong tide series.

**Southwest –** Chinook catches have been fair to good out of southwest ports. With ocean coho open as of July 1st, limits should come a little easier. Coho must be fin-clipped and at least 16

inches to keep and may be retained through July 31st or a quota of 8,000 fish.

Albacore have been coming to the docks out of central Oregon ports almost daily. Catches will only improve through July. The limit is a generous 25 tuna per angler.

While the spring all-depth halibut season wrapped up on June 29th and 30th, the nearshore fishery continues inside the 40 fathom curve with 26% of the 32,000-pound quota remaining as of June 24th.

Bay crabbing has been good for numbers, poor for keepers. Ocean crabbing is producing limits or near-limits although many are a little soft this time of year.

Pinkfin perch continue to be taken in Winchester Bay with best results coming early mornings. Mainstem Umpqua fishing has slowed with algae thick. Springers are being taken on the North Umpqua. Smallmouth bass fishing is improving on the South Umpqua.

Late-run springers are being taken in modest number on the lower Rogue. Fall fish are already on the way. Best results are from Agness down to Quosatana Creek. The middle river has been slow to fair. Upper Rogue fishers are taking good numbers of spring chinook and summer steelhead catches are improving.

Chinook fishing has been good just a couple of miles out of the Port of Brookings. Offshore rockfishing is excellent and lingcod are being taken to 20 pounds or better.

Weather fronts shut down the trout bite at Diamond Lake over the past weekend but good weather this week will have them back on the prowl for food. Bait fishers will do best here.

**Eastern** – Elk Lake is putting out good-sized brook trout for anglers throwing plugs.

With caddis and Pale Morning Duns hatching, the Metolius has been fishing well.

Kokanee fishing was slow to fair at Green Peter early this week with the weather unsettled.

Wickiup has been slow for kokanee although a few large fish have been taken.

**SW Washington** – The Cowlitz River remains the best option for summer steelhead with spring chinook winding down. The Lewis and Kalama are also good options for steelhead.

Most anglers continue to pursue summer steelhead on the banks of the Columbia with plunkers taking fair numbers of steelhead using hot-colored spin-n-glos tipped with coon shrimp.

As fish passage at Bonneville Dam ramps up, the Drano Lake fishery will improve for summer steelhead. Anglers have their best luck fishing at night but early morning can also produce fair results.

The Klickitat River should also begin to produce fair catches of steelhead throughout the month of July.

**Soapbox Update:** Do you value state forest lands for growing the wild salmon and steelhead you like to catch? The North Coast State Forest Coalition needs your support for developing permanent conservation areas on state forest lands. Go here:

[http://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/50686/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action\\_KEY=7998](http://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/50686/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=7998)

to sign a petition, asking the Oregon Department of Forestry to develop these high value fish and wildlife habitats into areas of permanent conservation. Waters currently open to harvest will remain that way as well as hunting grounds. Read the petition and call or email Bob Rees with any questions or concerns.

Bob Rees: [brees@pacifier.com](mailto:brees@pacifier.com) or (503) 812-9036

We're also looking for business or organizational endorsements for this initiative. We'd be happy to present this information to your interested group of people.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Closures and more closures. This week, the Columbia closed to the retention of both all salmon and sturgeon. This effectively shuts down the bulk of the effort on this waterway with just steelhead left to harvest. Although steelhead is a viable option, the bulk of the catch lately has been sockeye, sturgeon and chinook, likely in that order. Although the season didn't close with a bang, action was fair for plunkers on this latest tide series and I even witnessed one bank angler taking an illegal chinook and sockeye after the closure. Too bad the state police weren't closer by.

With steelhead in the crosshairs, anglers will want to continue to concentrate on the strong outgoing tides during the big minus tide series that we're just coming off of. This week should be producing good numbers of summer steelhead but action isn't quite what one would expect for this time of year and given the early returns that we've experienced on many of the NW basins. Plunkers have the advantage here, as steelhead spend most of their migrating time in shallow water on their way upstream in the mainstem Columbia. The big minus tide series we're currently on should bolster catches although ODF&W's latest catch stats showed just 5 fin-clipped steelhead landed for 221 bank anglers in the Portland to Longview stretch.

The Gorge typically produces good numbers of steelhead at this time of year but more water releases has this fishery on the fritz. Anchor anglers working the rocky outcroppings catch consistent numbers of fish on spinners and spin-n-glos with coon shrimp. This fishery should kick in within the next few weeks but water flows will dictate success.

Sturgeon anglers will also see a dramatic downturn in effort as consumptive opportunity disappears. The fishery closed effectively on July 5<sup>th</sup> and although final numbers have yet to be tallied, models predicted that we would slightly exceed the quota for the Wauna to Buoy 10 stretch. Action was consistent but few anglers ever saw an awesome flurry throughout the course of the season. This fishery is clearly suffering.

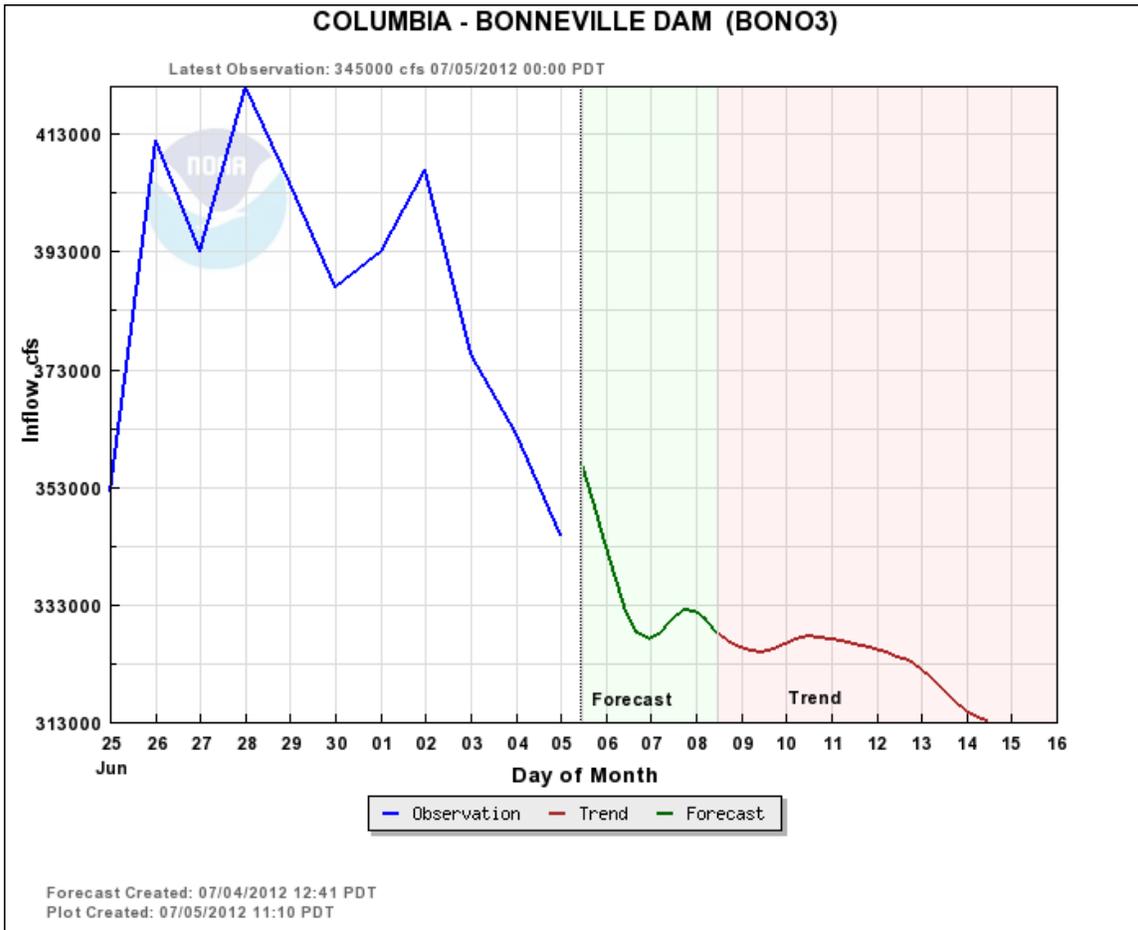
Offshore, action remains consistent for nearshore chinook and spotty for offshore coho. Although it's certainly possible to get good numbers of both species, the coho seem to be more scattered than usual right now. Keep in mind that there aren't oodles of them available this year but anglers should still see measureable results of quality fish as the season progresses. Trolled anchovies fished 8 to 16 strips just north of the north jetty (Columbia River mouth) in 30 to 35 feet of water is producing consistent catches, at least for now. Those in pursuit of coho are hitting the standard CR Buoy and to the SW spots from 180 to 220 foot of water. Anchovies work best for these coho too but they'll likely take small, green label sized herring as well.

Ocean crabbing has been producing much better than the river although it hasn't reached its potential. A string of sport pots is likely to attain 15 to 25 keepers for a good soak.

Clammers had some good digging on this tide series but it's waning now. This was the last minus tide series before the mid-July razor clam closure.

**The Guide's Forecast** – With a waning tide series, steelheaders will be flying a bit blind this week although additional spill at upriver facilities may provide additional velocity that could draw steelhead close to shore. Numbers should dramatically increase in the coming weeks, which will certainly bolster catches. Spin-n-glos tipped with shrimp (either coon shrimp or small sand shrimp), should continue to produce occasional catches for bank anglers. If you're not using shrimp, you'll need to apply liberal amount of scent to stand out from the plain-Jane anglers. Hot colors (pink, orange or red) are the only colors you should be using. Chinook and sockeye catches are likely to continue, these fish must be released unharmed.

As far as upriver steelheaders, don't expect action to light up this week either. Although the river is dropping, it remains quite high for this time of year. This should draw fish closer to the shoreline where both bank and strategically anchored boats have good access to them but fish will be slower to migrate under these conditions. Here is the predicted flows for the week ahead:



The Gorge fishery produces better when flows are below 200,000 cfs. Thankfully, it's headed that way in the near future.

Catch and release opportunities for sturgeon should be good throughout the month of July. Fresh anchovies should remain available because of the offshore salmon season but fresh jigged anchovies produce even better results. Estuary anchovies should be easier to come by as the summer progresses but you'll still likely have to go close to the river mouth to find consistent numbers of them. Fish are well distributed throughout the estuary with a consistent pocket of

them along the Oregon side just downstream from the East End Basin in about 30 feet of water. Sand shrimp will also remain a very effective bait for sturgeon.

Offshore opportunities will remain the focal point for much of the Astoria fleet with chinook numbers still good just north of the north jetty. It seems this fishery may remain consistent for a good part of the season; hopefully, that won't compromise the ocean season as there should be many more weeks of potential out there. Coho are scattered but try the regular haunts SW of the river mouth. Keep your baits shallow in the early morning and if the sun is shining, drop them deeper as the day progresses.

Crabbing and bottomfishing should become an option when the strong tide series fades. The weakest exchange will take place around the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, making for some good jetty fishing for lings and seabass. The best crabbing will definitely be taking place in the ocean.

Razor clam digging is effectively over until the fall re-opener.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** reports, "The Willamette river wont quit kicking out springers ! On Sunday there was a decent bite at the head of Multnomah channel for the thirty or so boats that gave it a go. Vu Tran a Willamette and channel regular picked up a nice springer in shallow on a blue label plug cut herring, while Dave Schamp of Cornelius also put a nice springer in the box. Reports indicate about 25 fish taken all day. Fewer reports are coming from lower in the channel and further up the river but a handful were known to be taken up at Oregon City over the weekend. The rest of the usual springer haunts like Sellwood and Willamette Park are barren of salmon fishermen so little is discernible other than speculation. Bass boats are a frequent occurrence in the slower areas and the timing and river temperature are optimum for good smallmouth action."

Despite the moderating flow of the Willamette River at the Falls, the temperature has remained in the low 60s although that's likely to change with the scorching heat this week. Data updates are only available though June 29th, at which time spring Chinook counts has topped 32,000 and nearly 22,000 summer steelhead had been counted. Daily counts remain steady and strong. So many fish, so little pressure.

Trout fishing is excellent on the McKenzie and steelheading is improving as numbers build. The water level is predicted to be gradually dropping through the coming weekend.

The Santiam system is in excellent shape now that high water conditions have passed. Steelheading has been decent on the North Santiam. Spring Chinook are passing over Foster Dam on the South Santiam in good number. Over 1,100 were counted June 26th through 28th along with well over 2,500 crossing last month. In addition, over 4,000 summer steelhead are above the dam. Most of the steelhead have been recycled downstream to give anglers another shot at them.

Estacada Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Trillium Lake, Big Cliff Reservoir, Blue River above Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Detroit Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, Salmon Creek, And the North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake are scheduled for trout stocking.

**The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** predicts, "It might be worth trying the Portland harbor and the Power lines for the last few Chinook to pass through.

In past years, the action has continued through the forth of July holiday and there's no good reason why it shouldn't this season. Although trolling herring will be the favorite approach, spinners in size 5,6 and 7 will shake down the more aggressive biters. In deeper water, watch the depth finder for hovering fish and work those depths. Usually 11 to 20 pulls with 6-8 ounces puts you in the zone, in water 20ft or less keep your gear on the bottom. Anchor fishermen at Oregon City should expect to see some late spring salmon taken below the falls. Smallmouth bass congregating around structure and behind the islands will provide plenty of action for the willing warm water fisherman. Walleye are available to worm/harness trollers down in the Multnomah channel."

Try upriver on the middle Willamette for cutthroat. Fly fishing has been good with caddis and Pale Morning Duns hatching.

Try a dry fly with a dropper or a soft-hackle on the McKenzie to fool the native redsides in residence here. Steelheaders will tempt biters by drifting corkies & yarn of floating a bobber & jig. Side-drifting is popular here and has been quite effective. Spring Chinook are in the system in good number and many anglers are targeting only salmon with a fair degree of success. Expect plenty of company on the weekends at this time of year.

Most steelheaders fish bobber and jig on the Santiams but good-quality cured eggs have been effective recently. North or South, you'll find fish everywhere now. Getting them to but is between you and the fish.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports,** "Little pressure here on the Clackamas other than above Barton where summer steelhead are present in good numbers. The steelhead blow through the lower river this time of year and start to slow down above Carver. The Springer show is nearly non existent but the deeper holes should provide a few stragglers for anglers fishing small baits. The water level has been holding out at just a hair under optimum (12ft) so drift boat and bank anglers alike are enjoying with the light sled traffic.

"As the water level drops on the Sandy, the deeper slots upstream of Oxbow park have been the only game in town here. Spring Chinook remain present and a few summer steelhead were taken by bank anglers around Revenue bridge and Cedar creek. Both steelhead and late springers should provide some action through the middle of the month."

It's summertime and it's gonna be a scorcher. This means the best time (perhaps the only time) to catch a fish will be first light and late evenings, particularly on the Clackamas which will be awash with happy-splashers during the daylight hours.

Hot weather this week may trigger glacial runoff at the Sandy River which will turn the water milky gray. This is a common problem on the Sandy in summertime.

**The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts,** "If summer steelhead are what you are after, the Clackamas remains a strong option from Rivermill dam down to Barton. Drift the river with a driftboat or walk in to all the popular bank spots like the mouth of Eagle Creek, Barton, Feldheimers and Dog creek. Bobber/jig, bobber/bait, drifting bait and casting spinners will all produce fish. #4 brass Blue Fox spinners and pink and white 1/8 ounce marabou jigs are favorites but few self respecting summer steelhead will ever turn down a well presented sand shrimp.

"Expect a few more spring Chinook to be taken one roe and shrimp from the deeper runs above Cedar creek. While the in between riffles and boulder laden tail-outs will hold good numbers of summer steelhead. This is the perfect water type for tossing a #4 weighted spinner or floating jigs under a bobber. Although pressure has been light, the adventuresome angler still has good opportunity for picking up summer Chinook and a late springer or two from the mouth just inside the Columbia river deadline. Trolling small spinners here will produce as well as prawn spinner combo's."

Bank anglers will do well for summer steelhead on the Clackamas at McIver below the dam but only if they're on the river before the sun rises. While springer fishing has been slow on the Clack, Chinook are due to arrive in Eagle Creek and should be worth a try there.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Ocean coho remains the focus for most north coast anglers but the coho action has been less than impressive lately. It seems that there are some biters out there but they are well scattered, making for some challenging fishing. Most anglers are heading out NW of Garibaldi and running into a few chinook and a few coho. Anglers are running green label herring to draw strikes although fresh anchovies may become available soon but not yet from Garibaldi Marina.

Ocean crabbing is productive and Tillamook Bay crabbing is picking up too.

Bottomfishing remains fair and with a waning tide series, it should be a good week for deep water anglers. Nearshore halibut remains a good option too as action is picking up based on a diminishing quota. Get after them on the calm seas that lie in the forecast:

**FRI**

NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 5 FT AT 9 SECONDS.

**FRI NIGHT**

NW WIND 15 TO 20 KT...BECOMING N 10 TO 15 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

**SAT**

N WIND 15 TO 20 KT...RISING TO 20 TO 25 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 4 FT...BUILDING TO 6 FT IN THE AFTERNOON. W SWELL 4 FT.

**SAT NIGHT**

N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 6 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

**SUN**

N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 5 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

**MON**

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

Those "wind waves" are likely to be afternoon wind waves. The mornings are most likely to be pretty calm out there. The wind direction may dictate which way you turn to pursue your salmon however. Fishing to the north in the morning and returning to port with the north wind is much easier than the other way around. There should be fish in both directions, just not a lot of salmon.

Spring chinook remain available in the Tillamook area rivers with the Wilson and Nestucca also summer steelhead options. Both salmon and steelhead will be in the broken surfaced water or in the case of the salmon, the deep, dark holes where they feel the most secure this time of year. Small bait and lures will entice some fish early in the morning but these fish will be pretty finicky throughout the day. Pocket water can be pretty productive this time of year for both species. The Trask River Hatchery Hole remains open to sport angling and there are lots of fish present there.

Cutthroat trout fishing should be picking up in the rivers and tidewater sections of most north coast streams. The old lake troll and worm trick should make fishing in the tidewater sections of many of these streams pretty productive.

### **From the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife:**

"ODFW and the Siletz Tribe will be hosting a family fishing event on Sunday, July 8 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Lhuuke Illahee Fish Hatchery at Milepost 13 on the Logsdan Rd. east of Siletz. Fishing gear will be provided and angler instructors will be available to teach both youth and their families how to bait a hook, cast a rod, and land a fish. Youth 17 and under are invited to participate in this free event, but those 14 and older must bring their juvenile angling license. For more information, contact Christine Clapp with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife at 541-265-8306 x253.

"The Lhuuke Illahee Fish Hatchery, owned by the Siletz Tribe, is located east of the city of Siletz. To get to the hatchery from Highway 20, take Highway 229 to Siletz and turn east on the Logsdan Road. The hatchery is five miles past the Logsdan Store on the right, at milepost 13."

**The Guide's Forecast** – Softer tides should make bar crossing easier in the coming weeks but anglers had better plan on early mornings and early arrivals back to port as north winds are forecasted to be pretty strong this week. The wind likely won't blow until the afternoon however. Troll herring or anchovies shallow in the morning, beginning you day to the north to ride the afternoon winds back to port (Garibaldi).

Crabbing should be worth the effort too with the fresher bait getting the best response. Bay crabbing should improve too.

River fishing will remain challenging for all but the most experienced and stealthy anglers. Small baits will take both spring chinook and steelhead but you'll have to hunt then down in the early morning hours. Don't come into this fishery with high expectations but you can score if your presentation is right.

Nehalem Bay chinook is once again becoming an option for anglers. After a sad absence of fish from the previous years, this fishery seems to be rebounding and should provide some opportunity in the coming weeks. The small tide series we're coming up on should produce near the jetty tips this week and just outside if it's safe to pass the bar. Herring fished on the bottom produces the best catches with both blue and green label herring producing. Tidewater anglers need to check regulations for new deadlines.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Another stellar forecast for offshore launches out of Oregon ports combined with a wealth of options will make for an exciting weekend. The ocean should be very friendly to boaters.

Ocean salmon anglers have been releasing coho for weeks, but starting July 1st, they're keepable. If, that is, they're fin-clipped and 16 inches or better and, so far, th slivers coming

over the gunwale have been mostly wild. The ratio of hatchery fish should improve. While most of the coho that will be caught this week will be less than six pounds, these fish are eating machines and will be packing on the weight rapidly and will be closer to 10 pounds if the quota holds through July as scheduled. Frankly, it's more likely that 8,000 hatchery coho will be caught, bringing this fishery to a close before the end of the month.

Albacore are being landed daily out of central Oregon ports. Fishing has been good and tuna will be putting on weight in the coming weeks. There's a limit of 25 per angler per day.

Nearshore halibut fishing has been worthwhile out of Depoe Bay with some boats targeting them using light tackle and 20-pound test. Sporty!

Boats were unable to cross the bar out of Reedsport over the Fourth of July but a few Chinook came right at the jaws, including a 25-pounder. Perch fishing has slowed but anglers have managed to catch a few. The Umpqua water level is forecast to continue dropping through the coming weekend. Bait fishers are doing best for summer steelhead on the lower mainstem Umpqua River. Shad fishing has been slow but will improve as the weather warms. The North Umpqua is giving up a few spring Chinook. Smallmouth bass fishing is heating up along with the water temperatures on the South Umpqua.

Coos Bay has produced a few Chinook but it's a hit-or-miss affair. Trolling plug-cut herring is the only way to go here. Crabbing has been fair to good for boaters, slow for those trying off the docks. The majority of Coos Bay crab are still soft from molting. Keep an eye out for tagged red rock crabs. Keep the tag & call the ODFW if you catch one.

Lower Rogue late-season spring Chinook catches are good thanks to excellent water conditions. The ODFW reports one to three salmon per boat on the lower river. Summer steelhead are also available but few are targeting them. Summers have become an incidental catch for spring Chinook anglers. Steelhead are being taken on the middle Rogue by plug-pullers and spinner flingers but springer fishing is slow. Chinook catches have remained good on the upper Rogue where backbouncing cured eggs has been more effective than wrapped plugs. Summer steelhead catches are improving here as well. Stoneflies are winding down but still in evidence on the far upper Rogue.

Boats launching out of the Port of Brookings have continued to take limits of rockfish and some large ling cod this week. Ocean crabbing has been good although many are softshells. The Chetco River is producing fair to good catches of sea-run cutthroat trout.

The Rogue above Lost Creek is scheduled for trout planting.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Caddis hatches are picking up on the lower Deschutes where fishing is pretty good. Dries are effective at times but if you get no takers, try a dropper or throw nymphs at 'em. Caddis emergers have been working well around Warm Springs.

There has been a lot of pressure on the Metolius and it seems the fishing has suffered for it. Bugs are scarce so anglers using spinners have been most successful.

Shallow trolling has been effective in taking trout at Timothy Lake although wind can be problematic here at times.

The kokanee bite is early in the day at Wickiup with the action shutting down mid-morning.

Some trollers at Green Peter are taking 25-fish limits using downriggers at the 50-foot level. Others aren't faring as well. Fish are averaging 12 inches here.

Lake Billy Chinook is fishing very well for kokanee and has been producing all day long. A few bull trout are being caught as well.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

***From the WDF&W Weekender Report for July 2012***

#### **North Puget Sound**

The summer fishing season revs up in July, when numerous fishing opportunities are available. Freshwater anglers can fish for trout and salmon at some of the region's rivers. On Puget Sound, additional salmon openers are just around the corner, while the popular crab season gets under way July 1 in most areas.

All but one marine area in Puget Sound opens for crab fishing July 1. The exception is Marine Area 7, where the crab fishery opens July 15 in the area's southern portion (San Juan Islands/Bellingham) and Aug. 16 in the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia).

The crab fishery in all marine areas of Puget Sound will be open Thursday through Monday of each week. Crabbers should note, however, that the season gets under way with a two-day opening (July 1-2), and will be closed July 3-4 before re-opening on its regular weekly schedule Thursday, July 5.

Rich Childers, shellfish policy lead for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), said state and tribal test fisheries indicate the crab population in Puget Sound remains abundant. "The test boats have done very well," Childers said. "I expect this summer's fishery to be similar to last year's, when crabbing was good throughout the entire season in most areas of Puget Sound."

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Most marine areas will close the evening of Sept. 3 for a catch assessment. However, Marine Area 7 will remain open through Sept. 30.

Additional information on the crab fishery is available on [WDFW's crab fishing webpage](#).

July also brings opportunities to hook salmon in the marine areas of Puget Sound. Those saltwater opportunities include:

- **Marine Area 7** (San Juan Islands), which opens July 1. Anglers can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit.
- **Marine Area 10** (Seattle-Bremerton), where anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon beginning July 1. However, anglers must release all chinook through July 15. Beginning July 16, anglers can retain hatchery chinook – marked with a clipped adipose fin – but wild chinook must be released.
- **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery** remains open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 3. Salmon anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit, and are allowed to use two fishing poles with the purchase of a two-pole endorsement.
- **Marine Area 9** (Admiralty Inlet) will be open July 1-15 with a daily limit of two salmon, but anglers must release chinook and chum. Hatchery chinook retention will begin July

16, when anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon but must release wild chinook and chum.

Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager for WDFW, said he expects anglers will do well in some areas opening July 1. "The San Juan Islands have been a steady producer of hatchery chinook the last few years," he said. "And Marine Area 9 is a fair bet for resident coho." Before heading out, anglers can check [creel reports](#) for information on catch and effort in Puget Sound. WDFW fishery samplers collect the information each week at fishing access sites throughout Puget Sound.

In freshwater, portions of the Skagit and Cascade rivers are open for hatchery **chinook salmon** fishing through July 15. The Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 Bridge at Rockport to Cascade River Road. On the Cascade, anglers can fish for salmon from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge.

The daily limit on the Skagit and Cascade rivers is four hatchery chinook, two of which may be adults (chinook salmon at least 24 inches in length).

The Skagit also is open to fishing for **sockeye** salmon. Anglers can fish for sockeye, from Highway 536 (Memorial Highway Bridge) at Mount Vernon to the mouth of Gilligan Creek through July 15. Anglers have a daily limit of three sockeye, with a minimum size of 12 inches. Despite high flows and dirty water, anglers on the Skagit continued to catch fish as June came to a close, said Brett Barkdull, another WDFW fish biologist. "Anglers, especially bank anglers, are doing very well given the river conditions," he said. "With the high water, the sockeye are hugging the shore where bank anglers can get to them."

Anglers should note that gear restrictions take effect on portions of the Skagit River beginning July 5. For more information, check the [emergency fishing rule change](#).

Meanwhile, the **Baker Lake sockeye fishery** gets under way July 1. The daily limit at Baker is three sockeye salmon. Barkdull said the fishery will likely start slow, but should pick up later in the month. "I wouldn't really expect there to be significant numbers of fish in the lake until mid-to-late July," he said.

Anglers can check the number of sockeye released into the lake on [WDFW's website](#).

**Trout** fishing also is open at several of the region's rivers and streams. 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 of the region's rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep. For details on river fishing opportunities, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

Lake fishing for **bass, bluegill, perch, and crappie** is steadily improving as water temperatures increase and fish become more active. "Early summer can be a tricky time for anglers, given the abundance of natural food and unstable weather patterns," said Danny Garrett, WDFW fisheries biologist. "As we move into summer and temperatures rise, fish tend to feed in shallow water – about 2 to 5 feet – early in the morning and late in the evening." When fishing for lunker bass, Garrett recommends topwater baits, such as buzzbaits, frogs, and poppers, and soft plastic twitch baits, including stick baits and flukes.

During the heat of the day, bass often move to deeper water near structures or other cover, Garrett said. In clear, deep lakes, such as Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, anglers

should focus on the outside edge of boat docks and along the weed line in 15 to 20 feet of water, he said, noting that a drop-shot technique with plastic bait is a good approach.

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

Summer salmon fishing is in full swing along the coast, where anglers have been reeling in bright chinook since mid-June.

"The chinook selective fishery got off to a quick start and anglers have continued to do well since," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "I expect that will continue in July, when anglers should start finding more hatchery coho salmon as well."

Anglers fishing marine areas 1 and 2 can retain one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit. They must, however, release wild coho salmon.

On the north coast, the chinook selective fishery continues through June 30 in marine areas 3 and 4, where anglers have a daily limit of two salmon. Anglers are required to release wild chinook and all coho during the selective fishery.

Beginning July 1, the traditional recreational fishery for chinook and hatchery coho will get under way in marine areas 3 and 4. Anglers fishing marine areas 3 and 4 will have a daily limit of two salmon, but must release wild coho salmon.

Salmon fishing is open seven days a week, except in Marine Area 2 where fishing is open Sundays through Thursdays.

**Halibut** is still an option out on the coast. Marine Area 1 is open for halibut fishing Thursday through Saturday each week through July 14 or when the quota is reached, whichever occurs first. The fishery will reopen on Aug. 3 and continue three days a week (Friday-Sunday), until the remaining quota is taken, or Sept. 30, whichever occurs first.

In **Puget Sound**, salmon fishing seasons open July 1 in marine areas 5 (Sekiu), 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) and 12 (Hood Canal – south of Ayock Point), while salmon fisheries in marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 13 (South Puget Sound) are already under way.

Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager, said salmon anglers fishing the inside portion of Marine Area 4 have done well, suggesting that fishing will get off to a good start in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. "Early indications look good," he said. "Anglers have done really well for chinook during the ocean selective fishery, and that could stretch into the Strait."

Farther south, fishing for hatchery chinook in Marine Area 11 has been good, Thiesfeld said. "Westport is getting all the attention, but the folks fishing the Tacoma area are doing pretty well," he said. "There are definitely some fish to be caught in Marine Area 11."

Thiesfeld reminds anglers fishing Hood Canal that chum and wild chinook must be released. Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for all regulations.

Before heading out, anglers also can check [creel reports](#) for information on catch and effort in Puget Sound. Recreational fishery samplers with WDFW collect the information each week at fishing access sites throughout Puget Sound.

Meanwhile, the **crab fishery** gets under way July 1 in all but one marine area in Puget Sound.

The exception is Marine Area 7, where the crab fishery opens July 15 in the area's southern portion (San Juan Islands/Bellingham) and Aug. 16 in the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia). The crab fishery in all marine areas of Puget Sound will be open Thursday through Monday of each week. Crabbers should note, however, that the season gets under way with a two-day opening (July 1-2), and will be closed July 3-4 before re-opening on its regular weekly schedule Thursday, July 5.

Rich Childers, shellfish policy lead for WDFW, said state and tribal test fisheries indicate the crab population in Puget Sound remains abundant. "The test boats have done very well," Childers said. "I expect this summer's fishery to be similar to last year's, when crabbing was good throughout the entire season in most areas of Puget Sound."

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Most marine areas will close the evening of Sept. 3 for a catch assessment. However, Marine Area 7 will remain open through Sept. 30.

Additional information on the crab fishery is available on [WDFW's crab fishing webpage](#). In freshwater, a few rivers are open for **salmon** fishing, including the Hoh, Quillayute and the Sol Duc. Beginning July 1, a few other rivers open for salmon fishing, including the Bogachiel, Calawah and Nisqually.

**Trout** fishing also is open at several of the region's rivers and streams. 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 of the region's rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep. For details on river fishing opportunities, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

### **Southwest Washington**

Anglers who fish the lower Columbia River are gearing up for hatchery steelhead now that most salmon-fishing opportunities are moving upstream. Steelhead fishing is expected to heat up in the weeks ahead after the summer salmon fishery below Bonneville Dam closes at the end of the day July 1.

Approximately 364,000 upriver steelhead are expected to enter the Columbia this year, along with thousands more bound for lower-river tributaries, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Those fish, bound for the upper Columbia and Snake rivers, tend to run four to eight pounds apiece.

"This year's return is expected to be about the same as last year's," Hymer said. "Steelhead tend to run close to shore, so bank anglers will likely have the advantage in the weeks ahead, especially with the river running high and cold."

Anglers fishing downriver from Bonneville can take up to two hatchery steelhead per day as part of their six-fish catch limit, which can also include hatchery jack chinook salmon. All wild fish with an intact adipose fin must be released.

Hymer said fishery managers had hoped to extend the salmon fishery beyond July 1, but bumped into two obstacles. On one hand, only about 54,000 summer chinook returned this year, compared to the pre-season projection of 91,200. That reduced the allowable catch, although anglers fishing the lower river are still expected to take home 2,850 adult hatchery summer chinook by the end of the season.

On the other hand, anglers caught 4,000 sockeye this year, shattering last year's record of 1,300 fish and pushing up against the impact guideline for the lower river. "Those fish were a welcome addition to this year's fishery," Hymer said.

Anglers gearing up for hatchery steelhead should consider fishing area tributaries as well as the mainstem Columbia River, he said. As Hymer sees it, the best bet is probably the Cowlitz River, where fish start arriving in larger numbers early in the month.

Other options include the Lewis (North and East forks), Kalama, Washougal, South Fork Toutle, Green, and Elochoman rivers. Anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington](#) rule pamphlet for regulations specific to those rivers.

Above Bonneville Dam, fishing seasons remain open for adult hatchery chinook and sockeye salmon, as well as hatchery steelhead. For adult fish, the daily limit remains two salmon, two steelhead, or one of each.

Anglers might also want to try fishing Drano Lake, the lower Wind River or the White Salmon River, where salmon and steelhead have historically dipped in to beat the heat. Just how many enter the White Salmon remains a question, however, since the process of removing Condit Dam filled the mouth of the river with sediment.

"All three of those waters are open for fishing, and we encourage anglers to give them a try," Hymer said. "We planted the White Salmon with hatchery steelhead, and we're very interested to see how anglers do in those waters."

Rather catch a **sturgeon**? Fishing remains open in The Dalles Pool seven days a week, with a daily limit of one fish measuring 43-54 inches (fork length). From Marker 82 approximately 9 miles below Bonneville Dam down to the Wauna powerlines, anglers can retain sturgeon measuring 38- 54 inches (fork length) Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through July. After a strong finish, the sturgeon fishery in the estuary below Wauna is set to close at the end of the day July 4, four days earlier than previously scheduled. That area will remain open to catch-and-release fishing.

"Catch rates improved significantly in recent weeks, which cut the fishery short by a few days, said Cindy Le Fleur, WDFW's Columbia River policy manager. "Our goal was to keep the estuary fishery open to anglers through the Fourth of July, and we hit that mark."

As the snow recedes, trout fishing is gearing up in the region's many high lakes. Access to these lakes will improve quickly as the weather continues to heat up, said John Weinheimer, another WDFW fish biologist.

Goose Lake, a forest lake in Skamania County, was recently planted with thousands of good-sized brown and cutthroat trout, Weinheimer said. Meanwhile, kokanee fishing is still going strong at Merwin Reservoir and fishing for rainbows has been good at Swift Reservoir. Riffe Reservoir on the Cowlitz River has also been good for landlocked coho.

Bass, walleye, and tiger musky fishing are in full swing, too, Weinheimer said. For bass and walleye, head to the Columbia River. Tiger musky are biting in the Merwin and Mayfield reservoirs.

### **Eastern Washington**

As water temperatures warm, fishing success shifts from coldwater trout to warmwater or "spiny ray" species like bass and bluegill.

"These fish are just more active in warmer water and are easier to catch," said Marc Divens, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) warmwater fish biologist in Spokane. "There are some waters in the region that are specifically managed for warmwater species and others that are mixed waters, where trout fishing slows at this time and warmwater fishing picks up."

With a "slot limit" on largemouth bass, Divens encourages anglers to keep and use the smaller fish caught. As explained under the statewide freshwater rules on page 17 of the fishing rules pamphlet, only largemouth bass less than 12 inches may be retained, except that one over 17 inches may be kept. Up to five largemouth bass may be kept each day.

Smallmouth bass also have a size restriction – only one over 14 inches may be retained – with a daily limit of 10 fish. As with largemouth, anglers are encouraged to keep smaller bass. Overpopulation of these species can reduce the quality of fisheries.

Eloika Lake, seven miles north of Chattaroy off Highway 2 in north Spokane County, has **largemouth bass, yellow perch** and **black crappie**. Eloika is open to fishing year-round and has a resort and a recently refurbished WDFW access site

Downs Lake, seven miles east of Sprague in southwest Spokane County, also has largemouth bass, yellow perch and black crappie. Downs Lake is managed under a nine-inch minimum size and 10-fish limit on crappie. Downs is open March through September and has a resort with a small boat launch.

Silver Lake, one mile east of the town of Medical Lake in Spokane County, has largemouth bass, black crappie, **bluegill**, and **pumpkinseed sunfish**. There's a nine-inch minimum size and 10-fish limit on crappie there as well. Silver is open year-round and has both a resort and WDFW access.

Newman Lake, 12 miles northeast of Spokane in eastern Spokane County, has a variety of species, including largemouth and **smallmouth bass**, bluegill, black crappie, yellow perch, and **bullhead catfish**. Newman Lake also offers the opportunity to fish for tiger musky (a sterile hybrid northern pike/muskellunge cross). Newman is open year-round and has two resorts, plus WDFW access.

Liberty Lake, about a mile from the Idaho border in eastern Spokane County, is a mixed species fishery where **rainbow** and **brown trout** rule at the outset of the season, from March through May, but the spiny rays come on through the summer. Liberty has virtually all of the warmwater species, including **walleye**, but both species of bass and yellow perch dominate. There's a WDFW boat launch available.

Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, is a mixed-species water, where Divens says surveys show an abundant population of small largemouth bass. "There are a few up to five pounds but most are 10 to 12 inches," he said. "There's also a developing panfish population – bluegill and crappie – but in general they're still small and growing in size." Sprague is open year round and has two resorts and WDFW access.

Coffeepot Lake, 12 miles northeast of Odessa in Lincoln County, can be excellent for yellow perch, black crappie and largemouth bass, but it's under selective gear rules. That means only unscented artificial flies or lures with one single-point, barbless hook are allowed.

The Twin lakes, in the Lake Creek drainage upstream of Coffeepot, have largemouth bass, perch,

crappie, and other panfish. Upper Twin can be particularly good for bass. Both are open year-round and have Bureau of Land Management access.

Deer and Loon lakes in Stevens County generally shift at this time of year from trout to largemouth and smallmouth bass and other warmwater fish, especially at Deer Lake, 14 miles southeast of Chewelah. (Loon is a few miles further south, on the west side of Hwy. 395.) Early summer kokanee fishing at Loon Lake, primarily in the evenings, can also be very good. Both of these lakes are open through October and have WDFW access and resorts.

Lake Roosevelt **walleye** fishing in the upper portion of the reservoir (upriver from Kettle Falls) can be very productive during early July. There's a good population of smallmouth bass in the big Columbia River reservoir, too.

The Snake River in the south end of the region is also a good bet for smallmouth bass plus nice **channel catfish**.

Good **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** fishing can still be had these days, said John Whalen, WDFW regional fish program manager. Lowland trout lakes are better in very early morning or late evening hours. Trout lakes at higher elevation, mostly in the northeast district of the region, remain productive longer in the summer.

The Tucannon River impoundments in the south end of the region are still providing good fishing for rainbow trout, said Kari Dingman, WDFW Wooten Wildlife Area manager. The cool, rainy weather this spring has probably extended the life of those hatchery-stocked fisheries, although Dingman notes "it's finally starting to warm up and feel like summer."

From July through September, anglers making weekend outings of their fishing trips in forested areas of the region need to keep in mind that campfires are only allowed in approved fire pits within designated state, county, municipal or other campgrounds. That's under orders of the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the state's wildfire fighters who protect lands, including WDFW's. The use of gas and propane self-contained stoves and barbecues is allowed under the ban. For more information, see [DNR fire safety news](#).

### **Northcentral Washington**

Based on the record numbers of **sockeye salmon** coming over Bonneville Dam and heading this way, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) fish biologists are expecting excellent fishing during the season that opens July 1 within the mainstem Columbia River and selected tributaries above Priest Rapids Dam.

In late June few summer Chinook and sockeye had made their way above Priest Rapids, but by mid-July biologists expect the fisheries to really kick in and provide good action. Check the status of incoming adult fish through the interagency interagency [Columbia River Data Access in Real Time \(DART\) website](#).

The daily limit is six chinook salmon, minimum size 12 inches. Up to three adult chinook may be retained, of which only one may be a wild adult. Anglers are also allowed to keep six sockeye salmon, minimum size 12 inches. All salmon with a colored floy (anchor) tag and/or tail (caudal) punch must be released as these fish are part of ongoing studies being conducted by the Yakama Nation, Colville Confederated Tribes and WDFW. Anglers may fish with two poles in areas open to salmon fishing, as long as they have purchased the Two-Pole Endorsement. All salmon fishing on the Columbia requires the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement.

In addition, from Hwy 173 Bridge in Brewster to 400 feet below Chief Joseph Dam, anglers can

fish for and retain **trout** through August 15. Daily limit is 10 fish with a minimum size of 12 inches.

"The Methow River is currently running high," said Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist in Twisp. "Serious trout fishing is probably delayed until the first or second week of July."

Jateff reminds anglers the Methow and selected tributaries are only open for catch-and-release fishing under selective gear rules. Anglers will need to consult current regulations, since a number of tributaries are closed to all fishing. Any **bull trout** caught must be released unharmed and can't be taken out of the water.

Jateff suggests trying some smaller tributaries in the Methow area, such as Beaver Creek (Methow River tributary) and Boulder Creek (Chewuch River tributary). **Eastern brook trout** are the main species in both of these small streams and liberal catch limits are provided. In Beaver Creek, it's five brook trout per day, no minimum size, and in Boulder Creek, it's 10 brook trout per day, no minimum size.

"Trout production lakes to try are Alta, Wannacut, Pearrygin, Spectacle, and both Conconully reservoir and lake," Jateff said. "**Rainbow trout** are the main species in these waters and anglers can expect to catch fish in the 11- to 13-inch range, with larger carryover fish up to 15 inches. There are private resorts and/or state parks on most of these lakes, with boat launching facilities available."

Jateff says **yellow perch** anglers should try Patterson, Palmer, or Spectacle lakes for fish in the six- to 10-inch range. Palmer Lake also has a good population of **kokanee** in the 11- to 13-inch range; Patterson Lakes has kokanee in the 10- to 11-inch range.

Travis Maitland, WDFW Chelan District fish biologist, reports the Icicle River **spring chinook salmon** fishery, that opened June 2 and continues through July 31, has been consistently producing a few fish each day.

"We've seen the occasional 'hot day' when most everyone is getting them to bite," Maitland said. "As groups of salmon move out of the Wenatchee River into the Icicle, that action will continue. It seems to occur with water temperature and river discharge fluctuations, so it's a timing game, and not exact science."

Maitland also notes that although the Lake Chelan **kokanee** fishery has slowed down a bit from earlier in June, "anglers still continue to catch some of the nicest kokanee that Lake Chelan has offered in recent memory." Many of the fish have been in the 14- to 16-inch range and occasionally larger.

Chad Jackson, WDFW Columbia Basin district fish biologist, said warmwater fishing is finally heating up after a slow start to traditional summer weather. "The Basin's big three for good **walleye** and **largemouth** and **smallmouth bass** fishing are Moses Lake, Banks Lake, and Potholes Reservoir," Jackson said.

All three year-round-open waters also have varying populations of **bluegill**, **crappie** and **yellow perch** that can produce good catches through the summer. With late run-off this year, these big waterways are still at or near high pool, which has slowed normal shoreline or dockside action at some, like Potholes.

Evergreen Reservoir on the Quincy Wildlife Area in Grant County is another good July fishery in the Basin, with walleye, largemouth bass, bluegill and other species.

Lower Goose Lake, one of the Seep lakes south of Potholes Reservoir, has a good crappie and bluegill fishery. Lower Goose has a minimum size of nine inches and a daily catch limit of 10 for crappie. It also has a restriction that only five bluegill over six inches can be kept, although there is no daily limit.

Hutchinson and Shiner lakes, on the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge, which is seven miles north of Othello in Adams County, should be heating up this month for largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie and perch.

From July through September, anglers making weekend outings of their fishing trips in forested areas of the region need to keep in mind that campfires are only allowed in approved fire pits within designated state, county, municipal or other campgrounds.

That's under orders of the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the state's wildfire fighters who protect lands, including WDFW's. The use of gas and propane self-contained stoves and barbeques is allowed under the ban. For more information, see [DNR fire safety news](#).

### **Southcentral Washington**

Area anglers have several good fishing opportunities in July, ranging from an extended spring chinook season on a portion of the Yakima River to newly stocked jumbo trout in three popular high-mountain lakes. On the Columbia River, the catch is running to walleye, shad and the occasional summer chinook salmon.

Citing the late arrival of this year's run, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) extended **spring chinook** fishing through July 31 on the 20-mile stretch of the Yakima River between the Interstate 82 Bridge in Union Gap to the Burlington Northern Railroad bridge 500 feet downstream from Roza Dam. The daily limit remains two hatchery chinook, with clipped adipose fins.

"Fishing has been very good for springers, especially in that stretch of the Yakima River," said Eric Anderson, a WDFW fish biologist in Yakima. "We expect to have hatchery fish available for harvest well into July."

Anderson noted that fishing is closed for steelhead, and that terminal gear in the spring chinook fishery is restricted to one single-point, barbless hook with a hook gap (from point to shank) of three-quarters of an inch or less. Bait and knotted nets are allowed in the section of the river open to salmon fishing.

For more information, see the [fishing rule](#) on the WDFW website.

On the Columbia River, most anglers fishing below McNary Dam have been focusing on **walleye** and **shad**. Anglers have also been picking up a few **summer chinook** below McNary Dam, but the action has been slow. Summer chinook and **sockeye** can be harvested in the Columbia River upstream to Priest Rapids Dam but only those chinook with a clipped adipose may be retained. For additional rules on the salmon fishery, see the 2012-13 [Fishing in Washington](#) pamphlet. A Columbia River Salmon/Steelhead endorsement is required to participate in salmon fisheries on both the Yakima and Columbia Rivers. A two-pole endorsement is also available for anglers fishing the open section of the Yakima River and for salmon fisheries opening in July above Priest Rapids Dam on the Columbia River.

Rather catch **sturgeon**? Anglers can catch and keep sturgeon measuring 43 to 54 inches (fork length) through July 31 in Lake Wallula (McNary Dam to Priest Rapids and Ice Harbor dams). Be aware, however, that sturgeon spawning sanctuary areas below each of those dams are closed to all sturgeon fishing. The sanctuary areas are described on Pages 75 and 81 of the fishing rule pamphlet.

Fishery managers are asking sturgeon anglers fishing in the Columbia and Snake river reservoirs above McNary Dam to watch for and return **special tags** found in some of the fish. The yellow plastic markers are shaped like a piece of spaghetti, and are attached to the base of the fish's dorsal fin.

"The tag program helps inform us of the abundance and distribution of white sturgeon above McNary Dam," said Olaf Langness, WDFW fish biologist. "We appreciate anglers' cooperation in this effort."

Fishery managers ask that anyone who encounters a tagged sturgeon remove and return the tag, along with information on the date and location of the catch and whether the fish was kept or released. Anglers who keep a tagged fish are asked to report the sturgeon's fork length, measured from the tip of its snout to the fork in its tail.

The tags and information should be mailed to the Sturgeon Tag Reward Program, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), 17330 SE. Evelyn St., Clackamas, OR 97015. Respondents who include their name, mailing address and telephone number will be sent a complimentary "Columbia Basin Sturgeon Conservationist" baseball cap.

Meanwhile, fishing for stocked **rainbow trout** is still going strong on lowland lakes near Yakima, Ellensburg and Cle Elum, said Anderson, the WDFW fish biologist based in Yakima. He especially likes the prospects at Clear and Dog Lakes in Yakima County and Easton Ponds and Cooper Lake in Kittitas County.

Anderson notes that WDFW is planting hundreds of 1.5-pound **jumbo** trout in three popular "drive to" high-mountain lakes the last week of June. Those lakes include Leech and Dog Lakes near White Pass, and Lost Lake near Snoqualmie Pass. Cooper Lake, in the upper Cle Elum River basin, also received a planting of 765 jumbos along with 8,160 catchable rainbows (11-13 inches) planted in mid-to-late June. All four "drive-to" mountain lakes should provide excellent trout fishing through the summer months and into the early fall.

"These lakes will provide some outstanding fishing opportunities for the Fourth of July weekend," Anderson said.

Mountain streams were still running high in late June, but fishing conditions should improve there and in high lakes through July, Anderson said. For **kokanee**, he recommends Bumping Lake, Rimrock Lake and Keechelus and Kachess reservoirs.

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

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

Bob Rees: [brees@pacifier.com](mailto:brees@pacifier.com)

Doug Rees: [doug@TheGuidesForecast.com](mailto:doug@TheGuidesForecast.com)

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

**Random Links**

Nice fish cleaning station, \$130,000:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2012/June/062612b.asp>

Wind Tracker: <http://windalert.com/>

**GOOD LUCK!**