

The Guide's Forecast - volume 14 issue number 38

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 14<sup>th</sup> – September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Fall chinook are here** and I'm thinking you wished you booked September 13<sup>th</sup> for your fishing date! With just a few open dates left for this fishery, it's clear that the run is going to come in strong this season! Call **pro guide Bob Rees at (503-812-9036)** to book an October date (sorry, all September dates are already gone) and catch some of these! Book before October 15<sup>th</sup> and weather permitting, we may get out in the ocean for an easy limit of large Dungeness crab!

Pictured here is our catch for about 3.5 hours of fishing on 9/13. Two fish over 30 pounds with the largest tipping the scales at 37 pounds! :



**Willamette Valley/Metro-** The Columbia River is kicking out chinook salmon from Tongue Point all the way up to Bonneville Dam, with coho and steelhead being part of the catch to boot. Nearly 15,000 chinook a day are passing through the Bonneville Dam fish ladders and that number will likely double any day now. But surprisingly more than 1500 steelhead a day are still making the commute. Although Bonneville hasn't seen the peak of its action yet, this fishery is already in full swing. Backtrolling sardine wrapped Kwikfish will be the preferred method for boaters while plunking a spinner, wobbler or spin n glow will work well for the bank bound anglers. The Bonneville fishery will peak by the end of September but last well into October.

Check the new regulations before fishing your stretch of the Columbia as new ones exist this year. Wobbler plunkers are finding sporadic success despite large numbers of fish passing through the Portland to St. Helens area. The upcoming stronger tide series may bolster catches.

There might be a few coho staging below the mouth of the Clackamas on the Willamette River but no successful reports have surfaced as of yet. Bass fishing will pick up with the cooler temperatures and any fall freshets.

The recent cool spell and lower overnight temperatures have combined to boost results for fly fishers targeting trout and steelhead on the McKenzie River.

Steelheading has been slow to fair on the South Santiam. On this and other rivers, try fishing below spawning salmon with roe or egg imitations.

No reports of coho on the Clackamas yet. Given that fewer coho have been planted the last few

years, a small return is expected. These fish will shoot right up to Eagle Creek and the water below Rivermill Dam.

Reports have come in of a few coho being caught at the mouth of the Sandy and rumors of a handful milling around up at Cedar Creek. At the mouth, casting spinners is the method of choice either from a boat or wading out to the sand bar and casting into the deeper channel. When some measurable rain comes to the valley, the coho will pour up towards Cedar Creek.

**Northwest** – Chinook and coho catches were blistering late last week through the weekend on the lower Columbia near Astoria. Easy limits were the rule but fishing has now slowed and will likely quickly taper for the remainder of the season. Coho will be the main focus, along with recreational crabbing on the lower Columbia but coho returns are forecasted to be lower than in previous years so don't expect easy limits here.

Chinook are starting to nose into north coast estuaries in force with good catches reported district wide last weekend. Soft tides were conducive to great lower bay fishing although seaweed sometimes hampered success. Tillamook and Nehalem Bays as well as the Alsea system will be prime targets for the next several weeks. Trolled herring will take the bulk of the catch but spinners will work well in upriver areas. Coho should become more prevalent in the coming weeks with most seasons opening up for wild coho beginning September 15<sup>th</sup> but annual bag limits and open days vary by basin so check regulations carefully.

With no rain in sight, action for chinook will remain focused in the estuary and tidewater sections of most systems. Bobbers and bait may prove productive when the weekend tides intensify.

Bay and ocean crabbing remains productive but an unusual number of soft-shell crab are showing up in the catches.

**Southwest**- Surf perch fishing continues to produce 15-fish limits for long-rodders angling from south coast beaches.

The non-selective coho fishery has been rewarding for most offshore anglers and will continue Thursday, September 13th through Saturday, September 15th.

Tuna fishing has been spotty out of Newport and Depoe Bay over the past week. It's been scratch fishing although an occasional Dorado has been landed, a certain indicator of warm water nearshore.

Chinook fishing has been good on the lower Umpqua with fish taking plugs or cured roe. The upper mainstem and South Umpqua are providing good smallmouth fishing while steelheading is worthwhile on the North Umpqua.

Boats launching out of Charleston over the past week have traveled 18 miles or more offshore to find tuna. Bottom fishing has been good as has crabbing in the ocean and in Coos Bay. Chinook fishing in Coos Bay has been very productive over the last week and will likely continue to produce well into September.

Ocean chinook fishing was slow out of Gold beach early this week amidst tons (literally) of migrating whales. Bottom fishing was redemptive, however, with rockfish limits, lings to 40 pounds and great crabbing. Fall chinook, half-pounders and adult summer steelhead are being caught on the lower and middle Rogue. While closed to chinook fishing, the upper Rogue has been productive for steelhead although only flies may be used.

Chinook fishing closed offshore south of Humbug Mountain on Sunday, September 9th, but was a spectacular fishery for the Port of Brookings. Even better results are expected when the Chetco Bubble opens for two weeks beginning the 1st of October, during which, chinook weighing 30 to 50 pounds will be caught.

**Eastern** – As fall approaches with milder weather and cooler nights, steelheading will improve on the Deschutes. Summer steelhead counts are picking up at Sherars Falls.

The Metolius has been fishing well with a variety of bugs hatching including Green Drakes.

With the water level dropping, all bag limits have been lifted at Thief Valley Reservoir near Baker.

**SW Washington-** District anglers will begin focusing on fall chinook for the next several weeks. With chinook in good shape this early in the season, anglers are more likely to find eager biters earlier rather than later in the season. Small clusters of eggs under a bobber or backbounced should produce fair results on the Cowlitz, Kalama and Lewis Rivers.

The Lewis River opens up on September 15<sup>th</sup> for the retention of wild chinook and fishing should be good.

Drano Lake anglers are showing improved catches of fall chinook and as steelhead passage remains uncharacteristically strong for this time of year, they remain a viable option as well. The larger "B" strain of steelhead should be showing in good numbers for the next few weeks.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – After a banner season on the lower Columbia, the well has dried up. The last good holdover tide series produced phenomenal results for Tongue Point chinook and Washington side coho. Both fisheries were blistering hot in what is likely to be the grand finale. Through Monday, chinook catches for bait draggers were consistently good. The best fishing typically takes place at high slack and the first part of outgoing tide. Early 1-fish chinook limits were the rule through the weekend but fish have moved upstream in what should be peak season for the mid-river anglers from Warrior Rock to Bonneville Dam; more on that section of river in a bit.

During the same period, anglers were able to take advantage of great coho catches on the Washington side of the river, above the bridge. Spinners and bait took ample numbers of fish with some guides reporting 25 to 40 fish days. Sensible guides took their business to the upper end of Blind Channel so that they at least had a chance of getting their fish to the boat before a sea-lion grabbed it, along with their gear. The sea-lions have been over the top this year and the fewer boats that fish it, the more concentrated the mammals are on the boats that are fishing it. With the dramatic effort drop recently, they'll have to fend for themselves. There won't be many fish passing through this area without some type of battle scar.

Upriver, anchor anglers are finding good action using wobblers. Although the action isn't consistent from day to day (and nobody really knows why that is), overall, the fishery has produced good results.

Wobbler fishers from the Lewis River mouth to the airport are all reporting that some days are great and some are mystifyingly slow. We all know the fish are there on a daily basis; they just bite better on some days than others. It's really about hitting the right lane and although that can change on a daily basis, some "lanes" have more consistent success than others. Water from 35 to 50 foot depths are the place to start, where to go from there is really a crap shoot. And then comes the colors, which to use, how long should the leader be? How long should the

dropped line be? Leader length and dropped lead line length are pretty standard at 5 foot X 5 foot. As far as colors, you really can't go wrong with chrome but then again, that's what everyone else is using....

Catch rates did jump for the few anglers targeting the all coho fishery off of the mouth of the Columbia. With no restriction on wild or hatchery coho or chinook AND a 2 fish bag for any species, it's a wide open fishery that is going underutilized. It's no secret however that the bulk of the Columbia River run, both chinook and coho is in the river and out of reach for the saltwater angler fishing out of the mouth of the Columbia. Combine this fishery with some Dungeness crabbing effort, maybe even a stop at the south jetty for bottomfish and you have the possibility for an epic day. There are however, more productive ports to fish from if that's what you choose to do to target chinook and even wild coho.

Crabbing on the lower Columbia is productive but as we enter a stronger tide series, success will drop off and the chance of losing your crab pots if not properly weighted grows. Your window of pot pulling also diminishes with the more extreme tide exchanges we're currently on.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Certainly still an option, the lower Columbia River for coho will not be the popular choice for anglers this week. It's really an "in-between" period from the early returning "A" run fish to the "B" run coho mostly destined for Washington State hatcheries. Those "B" run fish typically run later in the month and into October. Trolled herring or spinners should produce fair to good results in the lower river with lower Desdemona Sands and the shallows above the bridge producing the best results. Keep in mind however that any fish caught (or should I say hooked) above the bridge, is likely to be taken by sea-lions; that's one thing I can guarantee.

Wobbler fishers will have to deal with additional regulations but will have a few more days of mark select fishing below Warrior Rock. The upstream fishery should continue to produce good opportunities this week although consistency should not be expected here.

**Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** gives his input on the lower river fisheries, "Pick a stretch of the lower Columbia River, choose your game plan and go fishing. Plenty of Chinook, coho and even viable numbers of summer steelhead are still available whether you choose to fish closer to the estuary or up near Bonneville Dam. From Buoy Ten to Tongue Point, fin clipped coho only are the option. Retention of two fin clipped Chinook, coho or steelhead is in place for the Tongue Point to Warrior Rock section and from Warrior Rock to the dam it's a two fish bag limit only one of which can be a Chinook, clipped or unclipped. Trolled spinners or herring catch most of the fish in the estuary up to the top of Rice Island, while it's a wobbler show from there on up. Once you approach the dam, backtrolling bait wrapped Kwikfish is the ticket for boat anglers and plunking wobblers, spinners of spin-n-gloves for the bank bound. Bankrollers use K-15 or K-16 Kwikfish, wrapped with sardine or tuna belly. A Jumbo Jet diver(size 50) is used to get your lure down and keep it working near the bottom. One important tip is to let out 75-100 feet of line behind the boat so that your diver and lure can get down to the 35-50 ft depths where the kings are holding, let out any less and you won't be in the fish zone. Keep your wigglers cleaned and tuned for best results and prepare to hook an oversize sturgeon or two as they have a fondness for wiggling sardine laden intruders early in the fall."

The offshore forecast doesn't look all that great for outside recreation. It's likely that anglers can have as good of luck fishing inside as they can outside so why bother? If you're into targeting wild coho, other ports to the south should offer even better opportunities and a much shorter distance to the fishing grounds. Remember, they don't call it "The Graveyard of the Pacific" for anything....

Crabbing in the lower Columbia will remain excellent but the window of opportunity won't be as extensive with the upcoming tide series. Make sure to be on your pots at high slack and don't plan on retrieving them if you let them soak too far into the outgoing tide.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** reports, "With little effort and few fish to be had, very little is happening on the Willamette river other than water skiing, dragon boat paddling and wave runner's bouncing of each other's wakes. As the daily temperature begins to cool with the onset of fall, expect smallmouth bass to more readily bite a bait of size. Conditions are becoming optimum for Multnomah Channel walleye, but little ever leaks out about this tight lipped fishery. There could be a few coho staging off the mouth of the Clack at Clackamette Park, but no reports have come in yet."

Water temperature at Willamette Falls is down to 66 degrees with the flow gradually increasing. Coho counts have been in the low double digits over the past week or so with over 300 upstream thus far this season. A free presentation regarding the wild coho fishery in the upper Willamette will take place at the Farmstead Restaurant located at 28313 S. Highway 213 in Molalla on Thursday, September 20, 2012 at 6:30 PM. Those who crack this challenging fishery can enjoy a three-fish-per-day bag limit.

With the exception of minor and typical fluctuations in water flows, the McKenzie has been stable over the past week. Water temperature is gradually dropping. Bait will be disallowed on the Hendricks to Hayden stretch of the McKenzie starting in 2012, a change intended to better protect wild fish.

Water is being released from Detroit Reservoir which has the North Santiam slowly but steadily on the rise which is not optimum for fishing. Spring Chinook are spawning by the thousands between Packsaddle Park and Mehama. A similar situation occurred at Foster Dam which affected the South Santiam but flows have been stable since September 10th and are forecast to remain that way over the coming week.

**The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** predicts, "Not much to report here and no one putting in any time yet. There might be a few coho staging below the mouth of the Clackamas but no report have surfaced as of yet. Bass fishing will pick up with the cooler temps and any fall freshets."

Catch and release sturgeon fishing on the lower Willamette has turned on over the past week with anglers taking several large fish and a few oversize, the latter sometimes landed and sometimes not. Large sturgeon are just all pull. Lately, these leviathans have found sand shrimp irresistible.

Fly rodders can have a blast on the McKenzie at this time of year. As nighttime temperatures drop and light levels decrease, summer steelhead will become more active. In addition, once Chinook are spawning, the steelhead dominate the river and become more aggressive. Try egg imitations as summers will hold below spawning salmon to feast on eggs as they drift downstream. Steelheading will only improve in the coming weeks.

Expect very little competition on the North Santiam despite decent steelhead numbers available as most people are concentrating on coastal waters now. Steelhead may be seen feeding below Chinook redds and this is an excellent place to target them with cured roe or egg imitations.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Clackamas River: No reports of coho here yet. Given that fewer coho have been planted the last few years a small return is expected. These fish will shoot right up to Eagle Creek and the water below Rivermill Dam.

Sandy River: Reports have come in of a few coho being caught at the mouth of the Sandy and rumors of a handful milling around up at Cedar Creek. At the mouth, casting spinners is the method of choice either from a boat or wading out to the sand bar and casting into the deeper channel. When some measurable rain comes to the valley, the coho will pour up towards Cedar Creek.

**The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** reports, "No reports of coho here yet either but with the first measurable rain, a small pilot run will b-line for Eagle Creek. Expect fewer hatchery fish this season and coming seasons as stocking hatchery fish silvers on the Clack has become a low priority. But nicer sized wild coho can be caught and released in Oct, Nov. and even December.

"Cast #4 and 5 blue fox or coho-bolo spinners at the mouth of the Sandy for silvers. Anchor fishermen just below the mouth are catching Chinook on small spinners and Alvin, Simon or Clancy wobblers. With the first rains, a slug of coho will quickly make their way up to Oxbow Park and Cedar Creek. Every year the hole adjacent to Gordon Creek has a good showing of fat and feisty silvers but the bulk of the run rockets up to Cedar Creek. For offerings, use spinners, spoons, bobber and jig or drifted corky and a nickel size gob of cured roe. "

**North Coast Fishing Report** – If last weekend was any indication on how the chinook season in Tillamook is going to go, it's going to be a fun one. Granted, we'll still have to fight the eelgrass and seaweed but at least there will be fish in between all the vegetation.

Weekend catches were good last Friday and Saturday with good numbers of chinook taken in the jaws of Tillamook Bay. There were some chinook taken outside as well but it seemed that the best fishing took place inside the bay, along the north jetty on the soft outgoing tide. Most recently, on Wednesday, **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** reported 7 opportunities, mostly for chinook and mostly along the jetty on both the outgoing and incoming tides. Chris ended up taking 3 chinook and a very nice hatchery coho in the bay on Wednesday, all on herring. With the wind forecast for that day, effort remained light but the wind never came to fruition. The ocean was closed on Wednesday so there was no ocean report but that should change by the weekend.

Upper Tillamook Bay anglers are catching some fish but numbers aren't all that impressive. An occasional chinook is being taken on spinners in the upper bay and herring is gaining in popularity as well. Weed is a problem and will continue to be so until we get the first significant rain and the temperatures begin to drop. There are reports of chinook in the tidewater stretches of the Trask and Tillamook Rivers but catches have been light. West Channel pressure has been light with only an occasional fish being taken. Only a rare coho is seen jumping but that should change in the near future.

The Nehalem is putting out fish but like last year, it seems the summer run was stronger than the fall run. Although numbers are likely to ramp up in the very near future, it's not producing what it's capable of. Coho are beginning to show with a few more hatchery fish in the mix; wild fish will soon be on their heels.

The Nestucca and Salmon Rivers are beginning to ramp up with the Salmon likely a better option for much of this season. Anglers should focus their effort towards the mouth this early in the run but the peak, especially for the Salmon River, likely to happen sooner rather than later.

The Alsea River had a wonderful weekend with lots of large chinook coming off of the bar down there. Herring trollers, or more accurately herring "holders" (as the tide keeps everyone just hovering near the bar) took ample numbers of fish throughout the tide.

Not much word from the Siletz yet but that action should be coming into its own in the near future.

Back to the north, the Necanicum River is also an option for chinook anglers for much of this month. It does receive hatchery plants and it's likely to see some fair returns this year. There isn't much pressure in the tidewater fishery.

Crabbing is good coast-wide, both in the ocean and in the estuary. There are a lot of soft-shelled crab in the catches however. Those large soft-shelled crab are the hardest to throw back. That is, until you realize that you only get a few ounces of meat for every crab.

The ocean will once again be open to the taking of any salmon, 2 fish bag, this Thursday, Friday and Saturday. There are good numbers of wild coho present but even with the good catches, limits of coho are not the rule. That could change as we near the end of this limited opportunity for wild coho.

Albacore fishing should be good too when the ocean cooperates. It's not a fun ride out when there is any wind chop to speak of.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It should be another productive week for salmon anglers on most north coast estuaries. With no rain in sight, the action will remain in the bay and lower tidewater sections of most rivers. Here's the bay by bay breakdown, in order of likely success:

Tillamook Bay- A natural choice due to its size and the magnitude of the return it's going to get. Trask and Tillamook River chinook are in right now and their numbers should grow. With the heavier tide exchanges, this will open up opportunities for upper bay anglers as well. The morning low tides may produce a few fish in the upper bay and along the jetty but anglers may want to put their effort into the incoming tide both in the middle bay, west channel and upper bay. The closer to high tide you get to, the higher in the estuary you want to target your quarry. Herring will certainly be a strong option no matter where you fish but plugs and backbounced eggs should produce good results as well. Spinners will also take fish and allow anglers to fish more effectively if seaweed fouls your gear. Hopefully the ocean will be an option but with a forecast (as shown below) comes true, we may all be restricted to bay fishing this weekend and early next week. Early mornings will offer up the best chance at outside opportunity.

**FRI**

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

**FRI NIGHT**

N WIND 15 TO 20 KT...EASING TO 10 TO 15 KT AFTER  
MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT. AREAS OF FOG.

**SAT**

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

AREAS OF FOG.

**SAT NIGHT**

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

**SUN**

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

**MON**

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

Nehalem Bay- Coho should start to show in better numbers but most anglers will remain focused on Chinook as their numbers should begin to increase in the coming weeks. Like Tillamook Bay, stronger tides will spread the bite out with the upper estuary becoming a fair to good option for both herring trollers and spinners. Wheeler should produce results as well as the Nehalem area. There should be a decent push of fish this week on this system as the fall run enters its peak migration. Decent numbers of wild coho are still a few weeks away and wild coho season opens on Saturday.

Nestucca Bay- This system should start to produce fair catches of fish even though sub-par returns are in the forecast. This weekend should be a good indicator if ODF&W chinook predictions are accurate, hopefully they are not. Bobber and bait tossers from the Boat Ramp Hole to Woods should produce some catches but trollers both at the mouth and in the tidewater section of the Nestucca should also take an occasional fish.

Salmon River Estuary- Often a sleeper given its distance from Portland, this beautiful estuary can produce good catches of chinook this time of year. Trollers working the mouth do catch fair numbers of fish on some tides and bobber tossers working the ever-popular hole above Highway 101 score results on occasion too. This such tide series should see a fair jump in success here.

Alsea Bay- Well underway, this estuary is slated to receive a great return of chinook this year. Although this weekend isn't the best tide to be fishing herring on the bar, it should produce some fish. Bobber and bait tossers as well as spinner and herring trollers working tidewater may take the lion's share of fish this weekend. In another 3 weeks or so, it will become a strong bobber and bait show.

Siletz Bay- This system has become very popular in recent history but the run size of chinook has dwindled in recent years. It may come back this season but returns get stronger as we get into October.

Necanicum River- This system can get a good return and tidewater trollers should be able to take a few fish until the first rain freshet sends them upstream. These stronger tides should allow more fish to cross the challenging bar at the mouth. Learn to fish this the right way and you could have a gem of a river all to yourself.

Offshore coho anglers could find good results on the Thursday through Saturday opener if the weather cooperates. You'll want to start early to take advantage of this fishery. For coho, the early bird does get the worm.

Crabbing will be good but the more extreme tides will limit the amount of time that you can successfully crab in the estuary. If the ocean is doable, crabbing will be excellent but many in the catch will be soft-shelled.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Ocean coho fishing, during which either clipped or non-clipped fish may be kept, is scheduled to be open again this week from today, September 13th, through Saturday, September 15th from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain.

Bottom fishing charters out of central Oregon ports cancelled mid-week as offshore wind has been pretty fierce. Needless to say, no tuna trips were made.

Offshore ventures for albacore are being organized for the coming weekend as predictions indicate a moderation of wind and wave over the next several days.

Sea-run cutthroat trout are in most southwest coastal rivers in fine number now. Bait is allowed above tidewater in many rivers and streams as of September, but why bother? These fish are suckers for spinners or brightly-colored flies. Just stick to so-called 'frog water' water or stretches of brush along the bank line.

For a complete list of waters offering a wild coho fishery with dates and quotas, see **Random Links**, below.

Also in **Random Links** this week are new regulations for 2013 which will include allowing "partial cleaning" of albacore at sea which means removal of entrails and the head. This means tuna will take up less space on board and there will be less waste in cleaning station dumpsters.

Results for trollers targeting Chinook on the Siuslaw have been poor all this week. There are certainly decent numbers of fish as they are making their presence apparent but for all the boats trying, one or two fish a day seems to be about all they can manage. In addition, seaweed is thick and is a nuisance requiring frequent cleaning of lines; doubly frustrating when fish are off the bite. This is historically the time of year when this fishery starts to shine, too

Chinook fishing has been good at Winchester Bay with both bank and boat fishers taking salmon. There is no entry fee required to take part in the Winchester Bay Crab Bounty Hunt which continues through the month of September. There are 100 Dungeness in the bay which have been tagged with a spinner blade. If you catch one, take the whole, live crab to Sportsman Cannery. The least you'll get for doing so is a hat and one number is worth \$1000. Even if that tag isn't turned in, a drawing will disburse the prize money to three lucky crabbers. Chinook fishing has been fair but steady on the lower mainstem but smallmouth bass fishing has been good on the upper mainstem. Steelheading has been fair on the North Santiam while the South Umpqua has produced solid smallmouth catches. The South Umpqua closes to all fishing on Sunday, September 16th and will remain closed until Monday, October 1st.

Coos Bay trollers have been taking good numbers of a mix of adult and jack Chinook over the past week. Coho fishing will be allowed starting September 15th and will continue through November 30th or a quota of 1,200 fish. This is a wild coho fishery and is open from the jaws of Coos Bay to the Dellwood Trap on the South Fork Coos River and the confluence of the East Fork and West Fork on the Millicoma. One wild coho may be kept per day up to five for the season from this and all other southwest waters. Crabbing remains very good for boaters in the bay and fair to good for dock crabbers. If a tagged red rock crab shows up in the net or trap, please call the information to the ODFW Charleston office at 541-888-5515.

Trollers dragging herring on the lower Coquille are catching a few Chinook but catches have only been fair. As above for the Coos, a wild coho fishery also opens here on September 15th from the jaws to the Highway 43S Bridge at Studivant Park. The quota will be 1,500 fish.

Chinook fishing in the Rogue estuary has been slow but is expected to improve as numbers build and the river level drops into September. This will all change if a storm front drops significant rainfall, of course, which would clear out the bay and send salmon upstream. Side-drifting on the lower Rogue has been productive for Chinook and summer steelhead. Half-pounders are being taken in many places on the Rogue from Agness upstream. Chinook numbers have continued to improve on the middle river although catches have been only fair. Steelheading has been good at times. On the Rogue above the old Gold Ray Dam site, Chinook are off limits and only artificial flies may be used. Catches of summer steelhead remain good, however, with the best return of summers to Cole Rivers Hatchery in over 12 years.

With ocean salmon fishing closed south of Humbug Mountain as of September 9th, Brookings anglers must content themselves with trolling in the harbor. That is, until the (officially-titled) Chetco River Fall Chinook State Waters Terminal Area Recreational Fishery or (as it's known locally), the Chetco Bubble fishery which takes place October 1st through 14th. This eagerly-anticipated opportunity historically produces some of the largest Chinook of the year, with fish averaging over 30 pounds and occasionally topping the 50-pound mark. Gear up accordingly for this two-week, kick-ass fishery.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Summer steelhead movement is finally picking up on the lower Deschutes with over 85 fish counted at Sherars Falls Sunday through Thursday this week. Catches have remained fairly low but there is reason for optimism and reasonable expectation for improvement. One or two chances a day is about average now but Acton will improve weekly.

While there is a variety of insect activity on the Metolius at this time of year, the flip side of this situation is the trout are highly selective and can be skittish. Pack a variety of patterns including Pale Morning and Evening Duns, Caddis Blue-Winged Olives and Green Drakes. You'll be rewarded with active rainbows and bull trout.

Callibaetis are hatching like crazy now at East Lake with trout responding to dry imitations most of the day.

Fishing has improved at Crane Prairie as the season changes. It's subtle, but is actually producing the occasional Cranebow. Changes in regulations coming in 2012 will serve to restore the trophy trout fishery here.

Native trout fishing is worthwhile on the Wallowa River with Blue-Winged Olives hatching early in the day. Summer steelhead have yet to show up on the Imnaha.

Crescent Lake is producing good numbers of kokanee only a few of which are starting to show indication of the upcoming spawning season. Dodgers and hoochies on the troll have been effective.

Kokanee fishing is fair at Wickiup for trollers using downriggers or long-lining. Best results are coming from mid-morning through the afternoon. It's getting late in the season to expect much when fishing for kokes.

**Washington fishing reports:**

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

## North Puget Sound

Anglers are hooking some bright **ocean coho** in portions of Puget Sound, where more ocean salmon are expected to arrive in September.

Point No Point, Jefferson Head, Possession Bar and Shipwreck should be good spots to catch ocean coho, said Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Anglers fishing those areas – or other waters of marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) – have a daily limit of two salmon, but must release chinook. In Marine Area 10, anglers also must release chum salmon through Sept. 15, while those fishing in Marine Area 9 must release chum through Sept. 30.

“We’ve seen tremendous coho fishing the last two weeks of August in central Puget Sound,” Thiesfeld said. “Fishing should continue to be good as more of those ocean coho make their way into the area.”

Marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) are also open for salmon. Anglers fishing those two marine areas have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release chinook salmon.

Another option is Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), where anglers have a daily limit of two salmon, but can keep only one chinook. Anglers in Marine Area 7 must release chum and wild coho.

Thiesfeld said the best bet for **freshwater anglers fishing for coho** salmon in the region might be the Nooksack, Snohomish and Green rivers. Other options for coho include the Skagit and Stillaguamish rivers.

Meanwhile, most areas of Puget Sound close to **recreational crab fishing** at sunset on Labor Day (Sept. 3). However, Marine Area 7-North (Gulf of Georgia) and 7-South (San Juan Islands/Bellingham) will remain open through Sept. 30.

Sport fishers who crab in marine areas 7-North and 7-South after Labor Day must record their catch on winter catch record cards. Winter cards are now available at sporting good stores and other license vendors across the state.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's [sport-crabbing website](#) for more information.

Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Oct. 1 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2011 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2012 Puget Sound crab endorsement. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on [WDFW's website](#).

WDFW will announce winter crab seasons for Puget Sound in early October, after completing its assessment of the summer fishery.

Elsewhere, **Lake Sammamish** is open for salmon fishing, with a daily limit of four salmon, of which two may be chinook. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. Nearby **Lake Washington** opens Sept. 16 to coho fishing. Anglers will be allowed four coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) but may only fish in waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge.

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

The ocean salmon fishing season is in its final stretch, but anglers should continue to hook bright fish into late September.

"As we move into the final weeks of the season, fishing should continue to be good," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "That's especially true for coho, which tend to be larger later in the fishery."

Anglers have a two-salmon daily limit in all four marine areas off the Washington coast. Up to two chinook may be retained in all areas.

Milward reminds anglers that regulations for coho change in early September in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) and Marine Area 2 (Westport). Anglers will be allowed to retain both hatchery and wild coho salmon beginning Saturday, Sept. 1, in ocean waters off Westport and Monday, Sept. 3, off Ilwaco.

In addition, anglers fishing off Westport will be allowed to retain only one coho as part of their two-salmon daily limit beginning Sept. 1, while the coho catch limit in Ilwaco will remain two fish. Those changes do not affect ocean salmon fisheries off LaPush (Marine Area 3) and Neah Bay (Marine Area 4), where anglers can continue to retain hatchery coho but must release wild coho.

All ocean areas (marine areas 1-4) are open to salmon fishing seven days a week.

Ocean salmon fisheries are currently scheduled to continue through Sept. 23 in marine areas 2, 3 and 4, and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1. However, salmon fisheries in those areas could close early if catch quotas are reached. Milward reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at [WDFW's website](#).

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers fishing marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release chum, chinook and wild coho. Regulations change in Marine Area 5 on Sept. 15, when anglers will be allowed to retain wild coho.

Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager for WDFW, said fishing for hatchery coho has been good in the Strait and expects that to continue in early September. "Effort typically drops off after Labor Day and then picks up again the middle of September, when anglers fishing off Sekiu can retain any coho," he said. "But anglers might not want to wait until then because fishing for hatchery coho has been pretty darn good."

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

Salmon fishing is currently open south of Ayock Point, where anglers can retain two hatchery chinook as part of their four salmon daily limit. However, they must release wild chinook and chum salmon.

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

Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the [Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet](#) before heading out on the water.

Meanwhile, most areas of Puget Sound will close to **recreational crab fishing** at sunset on Labor Day. The only two areas of the Sound that will remain open to crab fishing after Labor Day are marine areas 7-North (Gulf of Georgia) and 7-South (San Juan Islands/Bellingham). Crabbing in those two areas is open through Sept. 30.

Sport fishers who crab in marine areas 7-North and 7-South after Labor Day must record their catch on winter catch record cards. Winter cards are now available at sporting good stores and other license vendors across the state.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's [sport-crabbing website](#) for more information.

Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Oct. 1 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2012 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2013 Puget Sound crab endorsement. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on the [WDFW website](#).

WDFW will announce winter crab seasons for Puget Sound in early October, after completing its assessment of the summer fishery.

In freshwater, the popular salmon fishery on the **Puyallup River** is in full swing. Anglers are reminded that the Puyallup River is closed to fishing Sept. 2, 3, 9, 10 and 11 from the 11th Street Bridge to the City of Puyallup outfall structure across the river from the junction of Freeman Road and North Levee Road.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that the salmon fishery on the Skokomish River, from the Highway 106 Bridge to the Highway 101 Bridge, closes at the end of the day Sept. 3. Although, the salmon fishery for the lower Skokomish River, from the mouth to the Highway 106 Bridge, runs through Sept. 5 and then reopens Sept. 16. Check the [Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet](#) for details.

Elsewhere, **several rivers** around the region open to salmon fishing Sept. 1, including the Carbon River in Pierce County; Copalis River, Van Winkle Creek and Joe Creek in Grays Harbor County; and the Bear and Niawiakum rivers in Pacific County. Salmon fishing on the Nisqually River is already under way.

Recreationists should be aware that WDFW's access site at Ward Lake in Thurston County will be closed beginning Sept. 1 due to poor water quality at the lake. Recent tests conducted by the City of Olympia and Thurston County show fecal coliform bacteria levels that are unsafe for swimming and water recreation. Once water quality improves, WDFW will reopen the access site. For more information, check Thurston County's [website](#).

## **Southwest Washington**

September is prime time for salmon fishing in the Columbia River Basin, as large numbers of fish move upriver and into tributaries on both sides of Bonneville Dam. At the Buoy 10 fishery near the mouth of the river, the catch of **chinook salmon** is expected to be the highest in more than two decades. Although that chinook fishery ends there Sept. 3 at the end of the day, anglers still have a lot of options to catch both chinook and **coho salmon** upriver from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line.

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

Of the 655,000 fall chinook included in the pre-season forecast, about 350,000 are projected to be upriver brights – the fourth largest return since record keeping began in 1964. This year's coho salmon run is fairly modest, but will help to round out the catch, Hymer said.

Through Sept. 9, the daily limit is six fish per day – including two adult salmon, two adult steelhead or one of each – from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line to the deadline below Bonneville Dam. Only one of the adult salmon may be a chinook. Anglers may keep any chinook, but must release any coho salmon or steelhead that is not marked with a clipped adipose fin.

Starting Sept. 10, rules for adult chinook retention in those waters will change in at least two ways.

- Anglers can retain two adult chinook as part of their daily limit from a line from the Warrior Rock lighthouse through Red Buoy #4 to the orange marker atop the dolphin on the Washington shore at Bachelor Island upstream to Bonneville Dam.
- Below this line, permanent rules require anglers to release chinook salmon through Sept. 30 – although there may be an exception to this rule. Fishery managers have agreed to allow a pilot mark-selective fishery for chinook Sept. 10-16 from Rocky Point/Tongue Point line to the Warrior Rock line – *if all other sport fisheries can meet their management objectives*. That question has not yet been answered because those sport fisheries are still under way. In any case, anglers will be allowed to retain two adult chinook in that area beginning Oct. 1.

WDFW will update this report and issue a news release about the proposed selective fishery once that decision is final.

"Our hope is that we can move forward with the weeklong mark-selective fishery below the Warrior Rock line, but first we have to make sure enough chinook are available for harvest in the regular fisheries on the lower Columbia River," said Cindy LeFleur, WDFW Columbia River policy manager. "We're still waiting to see how that turns out."

In the meantime, Hymer has a couple of tips for anglers fishing for chinook salmon in the Columbia River.

"Anglers targeting chinook do best in fairly deep water – 40 to 50 feet down," he said. "Some of the best fishing for both salmon and steelhead will be at the mouth of tributaries, where the fish hold up before heading upstream. When anchoring in deeper water, anglers should be alert for ship traffic."

As the month progresses, salmon fishing will heat up farther upstream in the tributaries, Hymer said. He reminds anglers of several new rules that will be in effect on various rivers this season:

- **Release wild chinook** – Anglers must release all wild chinook on the Tilton River from mouth to West Fork; the Cispus River from mouth to North Fork; the Cowlitz River from posted signs on Peters Road to mouth of Ohanepecosh and Muddy Fork; plus Mayfield Lake and Lake Scanewa (Cowlitz Falls Reservoir). However, anglers may keep up to 10 hatchery rainbows at Lake Scanewa starting Sept. 1.
- **North Fork Lewis River from mouth of East Fork to the overhead powerlines below Merwin Dam** – Wild chinook may be kept beginning Sept. 15.
- **Drano Lake** – Any chinook or coho salmon, with or without a clipped adipose fin, may be retained. Effective Sept. 15, anglers with a two-pole endorsement can put it to use.
- **Klickitat River from mouth to Fisher Hill Bridge** (located about 3 miles upstream from the mouth) – Night closure and anti-snagging rules are in effect. Only fish hooked inside the mouth may be retained.
- **Washougal River** – Fishing is closed from 200 feet (or posted markers) below to 200 feet above the temporary weir (when in place).

Like last year, anglers may retain up to six hatchery adult coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal. Regulations for these and other fisheries are described in WDFW's [Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet](#).

Apart from salmon, anglers are still catching **walleye** above and below Bonneville Dam. **Trout** fishing is also still an option at a number of lowland lakes, including Swift and Merwin reservoirs where anglers can take advantage of increased catch limits for rainbow and kokanee approved in early August. At Swift Reservoir, anglers must release all salmon larger than 15 inches in length. For anglers who don't mind a hike, September is also a great time to head for the **high wilderness lakes** around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens. Hymer recommends three such lakes – Goose, Council and Takhlakh – that all offer drive-in access.

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

### **Eastern Washington**

Sept. 1 is the traditional opening of the catch-and-keep season for hatchery-marked Snake River **steelhead**. For a second consecutive year, hatchery-marked **fall chinook salmon** are also fair game then.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Glen Mendel says the steelhead run appears to be coming in weak this year. As of late August, the A-run of upriver summer steelhead was about 61 percent of the preseason forecast. The B-run steelhead passage was also tracking less than expected so far.

However, a large run of upriver bright hatchery fall chinook is expected to return to the Snake River, so anglers should have good opportunities, said Mendel.

Up to three hatchery-marked steelhead (those with clipped adipose or ventral fins and a healed scar at the clipped fin location) can be retained daily. The salmon daily harvest limit in the Washington portion of the Snake River is three adipose fin-clipped fall chinook adults (24 inches in length and larger), and three adipose fin-clipped jack fall chinook (less than 24 inches). Minimum size for chinook is 12 inches.

Barbless hooks are required when fishing for steelhead or salmon. All wild steelhead and chinook, which are protected under the Endangered Species Act, must be released immediately without removing them from the water. Once anglers have retained three hatchery steelhead, they must cease fishing for salmon and steelhead for the day, regardless of whether the salmon daily limit has been retained.

Mendel reminds salmon and steelhead anglers of the change in the Snake River boundaries for catch record card codes for zones 648 and 650 near Clarkston. The upper end of code 648, and the lower end of 650, was the interstate bridge. But that was moved to the state line, from the Greenbelt boat launch to the state line sign on the north shore, as relayed in the current fishing rules pamphlet. Mendel said this change allows separation of harvest data for the boundary waters with Idaho.

The steelhead season runs through March 31, but the chinook season closes Oct. 31, or earlier, depending on monitored harvest rates and run size.

This month is the last chance to fish several of the region's best **rainbow** and/or **cutthroat trout** fishing lakes. Closing Sept. 30 is Badger, West Medical, and Williams lakes in southwest Spokane County, and Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County. Two other southwest Spokane County lakes change seasons soon -- Amber Lake shifts to catch-and-release-only on Oct. 1 and North Silver Lake switches to catch-and-release-only on Nov. 1.

Randy Osborne, WDFW central district fish biologist, said that if conditions are right, September fishing at these lakes can almost rival the first weeks of the season in the spring. "Air and water temperature changes during this month can trigger late summer/early fall insect hatches, which can equate to some pretty productive fishing conditions all month long," he said.

Spokane County's Downs Lake and Lincoln County's Coffeepot Lake also close at the end of the month but can yield good catches of **yellow perch**, **black crappie**, and **rainbow trout** during September.

Plenty of other lakes throughout the region remain open through October or year-round. Clear Lake, near the town of Medical Lake in Spokane County, typically produces good catches of **brown trout**, **crappie**, and **largemouth bass** as fall advances. Lake Roosevelt and Sprague Lake both offer good-size rainbows. Stevens County's Deer and Loon lakes continue to provide a variety of fish, from bass to kokanee.

Anglers heading for a weekend of camping near the Tucannon River, or its trout-stocked impoundments on WDFW's Wooten Wildlife Area in Columbia County, need to keep fire restrictions in mind. Wooten manager Kari Dingman said that with hot, dry conditions, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has a campfire ban in effect until further notice.

The 63,000-plus-acre, lightning-caused Cache Creek wildfire, adjacent to the Snake River on the Washington-Oregon stateline, was still burning in late August, with expected containment sometime in early September. Most of the fire is in Oregon, but anyone recreating in Washington's southeast corner may want to check out possible road closures [online](#).

### **Northcentral Washington**

A **chinook salmon** fishery opens Sept. 1 in the Lake Chelan Project Tailrace area near Chelan Falls and runs through Oct. 15. Up to three chinook may be kept daily (only one of which can be a wild adult fish), and fishing is allowed from the railroad bridge to the Chelan Public Utilities District (PUD) safety barrier below the powerhouse.

WDFW Chelan District Fish Biologist Travis Maitland said up to 3,000 adult chinook salmon—released as juveniles from net pens just below the Chelan PUD powerhouse—are expected to return to the waterway.

"Last year when we were able to open this area for the first time, fishing pressure was very light, due to the fishery being new and confusion over fishing access," said Maitland. "Chelan County ordinance prohibits the use of internal combustion engines, so last year we did not allow fishing from a floating device of any kind. This year floating will be allowed, so this could be a great little fishery for the angler with a kayak or a small pontoon boat."

This year there's also some bank fishing on the north shore, although anglers must stay downstream of Chelan PUD boundary signs on that shoreline. Fishing along the southwest shoreline is limited to wading only with no fishing from the bank.

Anglers planning to participate in this fishery must have WDFW's Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement and should check other [specific rules](#) for the fishery.

The Lake Wenatchee **sockeye salmon** fishery that has provided great opportunities since early August closes on Labor Day (Sept. 3). The daily limit was increased from three to five fish in mid-August and since then limits have been taken by many happy anglers.

The Wenatchee River hatchery summer **chinook salmon** fishery—open from the river mouth to below Dryden Dam—continues through Oct. 15. Angling pressure has been relatively light, Maitland said, but there have been a few nice hatchery chinook harvested. As of Sept. 1 the fishery extends upriver to the Icicle River road bridge that crosses the Wenatchee River. Check [fishery rules](#) on the WDFW website.

Chinook fishing in the Columbia River from Priest Rapids to Wells Dam is still producing, although anglers need to work a lot harder now to get the fish to bite, Maitland said. Chinook also are still being caught off the mouth of the Okanogan River, WDFW Okanogan District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff reports.

"Catch rates are lower than anglers experienced earlier this summer, but the fish are continuing to average 12 to 15 pounds," Jateff said. "As water temperatures cool in the tributaries, fish will start to move upstream and out of the mainstem Columbia River. During September, reduced numbers of chinook will continue to be caught in upstream areas just below Chief Joseph Dam." Anglers are reminded that the salmon fishing section of the mainstem Columbia River—from Wells Dam to the Highway 173 Bridge in Brewster—closed Aug. 31 to protect steelhead.

Meanwhile, **trout** fishing on the Methow River can be at its best in September, when other river users start to thin out and only anglers are left, Jateff said.

"At this time anglers can do well with surface flies, lures and nymph patterns," he said.

Trout anglers are reminded that the section from Lower Burma Road Bridge to the Highway 153 Bridge at McFarland Creek closes at midnight on Sept. 15. The rest of the river upstream to Foghorn Dam closes at midnight on Sept. 30.

The Methow River trout fishery is conducted under a permit with NOAA Fisheries and can close at any time if limits on incidental encounters with steelhead are reached.

Okanogan County's Davis, Campbell, and Cougar lakes in the Winthrop area open Sept. 1 for catch-and-keep fishing for rainbow trout.

"These lakes provide a nice fall fishery to mix things up between fishing the Methow River for trout and fishing the mainstem Columbia for salmon," Jateff said.

### **Southcentral Washington**

September is prime time to fish for **trout** on one of the many high-elevation lakes or rivers in the region, said Eric Anderson, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) based in Yakima. As temperatures begin to drop, waters ranging from the Yakima River to Taneum Creek come alive with fish eager to feed.

"After months of high water, the conditions are perfect for fishing many area lakes and streams," Anderson said. "Most of the mosquitoes burned off in the summer heat, and it's just a great time to be out catching fish."

Anderson noted that most rivers and creeks have statewide trout catch limits of two trout with an 8-inch minimum size. Most also have special regulations, including selective gear rules that prohibit bait. Rules for specific waters are described in the Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet, available [online](#) and from license vendors throughout the state.

Meanwhile, counts of **chinook salmon** and **steelhead** passing McNary Dam have been climbing day by day, setting the stage for popular fisheries throughout the region. While those fisheries often start out slow, they can ramp up quickly by mid-September as more fish move past the dam, said Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist based in Pasco.

"There's a lot of anticipation out there right now," Hoffarth said. "Anglers are catching fish here and there, but they know a lot more are headed our way. By the middle of the month, we could have several thousand upriver brights in the Hanford Reach."

According to the preseason forecast, 650,000 fall chinook salmon will enter the Columbia River this year, and about two-thirds of them will keep moving past Bonneville Dam. Most areas of the Columbia River have been open for salmon fishing since Aug. 1, and two major tributaries will open in September.

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

Anglers have also been catching some **hatchery steelhead** both above and below McNary Dam, and the harvest should pick up throughout the month, he said. Anglers can retain two **hatchery** steelhead per day, identifiable by a missing adipose fin with the healed scar, measuring at least

20 inches. Steelhead fishing above the Highway 395 Bridge at Kennewick is not scheduled to open until Oct. 1, but could open earlier if the numbers pick up, Hoffarth said.

Farther east, the Snake River also opens Sept. 1 for hatchery fall chinook and steelhead above the Highway 12 Bridge. Anglers must use barbless hooks when fishing for salmon and steelhead in the Snake River. Anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet and [emergency rules](#) for all waters before heading out.

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

**Walleye** fisheries are already in full swing, producing nice catches in the Columbia River below McNary Dam as well as in the Snake River. **Sturgeon** fishing is restricted to catch and release in most of the Columbia River, including Lake Wallula and the Hanford Reach.

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

Nothing this week, send us a note!

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### **Random Links**

Fish and Wildlife Commission sets 2013 sport fishing regulations:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2012/Septemer/090712b.asp>

2012 Coastal Coho Salmon Fishing Regs:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2012\\_Coastal\\_Coho\\_Salmon\\_Sport\\_Regulations.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2012_Coastal_Coho_Salmon_Sport_Regulations.pdf)

**GOOD LUCK!**