

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **May 24th – May 30th, 2013**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Shad fishing is underway on the Willamette River at both Coon Island and Oregon City below the falls. Many anglers have reported flurries of nonstop action if the shad's travel lane is located. Expect the run to continue through the second week of June. Spring chinook fishing is open and the occasional salmon is caught, however effort is at a minimum due to this seasons low catch rates. A few fish have been taken earlier this week in the Multnomah Channel and below Willamette Falls at Oregon City. Many of the sea lions are beginning their mass exodus and heading for their own breeding grounds. Catch and release sturgeon fishing remains open below I-205 at Oregon City and continues to be the best, most under-fished opportunity in the region. Double digit days are the norm for many sturgeon anglers who are experienced at locating the herds of aggressively feeding fish.

Fly flingers on the upper McKenzie enjoyed the whitewater and good fishing over the past weekend as abundant hatches of a myriad of species had fish looking up and grabbing offerings off the surface. This stretch of the Mac should continue to reward anglers through June.

Springers are headed up the Willamette along with summer steelhead. As numbers increase, fishing will continue to improve on the Santiams. Mehama would be a good place to start on the North Santiam. Steelhead counts should top 1,000 this week at Foster Dam with downstream recycling of fish an ongoing process on the South Santiam.

The Clackamas River has both summer steelhead and spring chinook available. The peak of the Spring chinook run is still a couple weeks out and summer steelhead are well spread throughout the system. The water is holding at a favorable level giving access to jet boats and drift boats alike. Bank fishermen find the most opportunity in the upper stretch from Rivermill Dam down to Feldheimers.

On the Sandy River, the water level has dropped to 9 feet, which will soon start limiting the jet boats. Summer Steelhead and a few spring chinook are available and like the Clackamas, the peak of the springer run is still a couple weeks away. Small baits of cured roe and sand shrimp are the favorite but some drift boaters have been doing well back trolling small plugs.

Northwest – Spring chinook continue to show on Tillamook Bay although catches are far from consistent. With the weak tide series, effort has largely been focused on the lower bay. Trolled herring were taking springers on the last half of outgoing tide in the afternoon early in the week but adjacent ocean fishing has been challenging. The new set of minus tides coming up this weekend will shift effort to the upper bay. Significant precipitation mid-week will also likely draw fish in and send them upstream for both bank and driftboat anglers to take advantage of.

The Trask, Wilson, Nestucca and Three Rivers should all receive a shot of fish from the current rain freshet. Levels are expected to reach ideal heights by Thursday, also the best opportunity to fish the river. By the weekend, flows will likely drop and fish may become more cautionary again. The Trask will offer the best opportunity as that receives the largest number of hatchery plants.

Although no all-depth halibut season will occur this week, ocean conditions look improve by the weekend. Crabbing is very poor but bottomfishing may be productive. Be aware however of the extreme low tide that will create hazardous bar crossings.

Razor clam digging should be excellent along Clatsop Beaches this weekend.

Southwest- Currently, ocean swells under three feet and mild winds are forecast for the long holiday weekend ahead.

All-depth halibut fishing rewarded many with large fish out of Depoe Bay over last Thursday and Friday with rough ocean conditions preventing trips on Saturday. The next all-depth opener off the central coast is May 30-June 1.

Combo trips are not feasible when the all-depth halibut opener is underway but anglers may fish for (and retain) both targeted species during near-shore halibut openers. The regulations are confusing this way so check the ODF&W regulation page carefully before attempting to pursue either of these species.

Rivers opening May 25th with the trout season include the South Umpqua, Coos, Coquille, Applegate, Chetco, Winchuck, Elk and Sixes.

South Coast Estuary crabbing is fair but requires sorting of undersized Dungeness. With molting occurring early this year, start checking for softshells.

Ocean conditions were conducive to offshore trips out of Gold beach over the past week. Then it turned sour for the weekend. While it was decent, rockfish and lingcod limits were the rule with plenty of halibut taken on Thursday and Friday last week as Saturday was rough. Without sufficient rainfall to rise levels of the lower Rogue, chinook fishing remains slow. It has been somewhat better on the middle river with plug-pullers and back-bouncers taking fish. Upriver remains the best bet although springers have been slow to bite over the past week. The numbers are there.

Boats launching out of Brookings are having little trouble limiting on large black rockfish but lingcod have been elusive for some. Small boats and even kayakers are reported to be jigging up fish in nearshore kelp beds. Ocean chinook fishing is on schedule to kick into gear in June.

Trollers are getting fish at Diamond Lake as clouds of tiny bugs create the annual hatch which causes trout to move up in the water column according to the resort. Bait fishers are also taking a few but fishing slows when midges hatch.

Eastern – While big bugs are evident on the Warm Springs to Trout Creek stretch of the Deschutes, trout were slow to react to imitations over the past weekend. Anglers are having success with redsides as they drift from Trout Creek downstream. Stoneflies are popping and trout are responding.

Seasonal warming of the water at Wickiup has triggered surface vegetation to grow. Take advantage of good fishing here early mornings before the wind comes up.

Bait fishing has been productive at Big Lava Lake with decent numbers of trout 15 inches or better being taken.

SW Washington- District anglers remain challenged for spring chinook. The Cowlitz remains the top option and the North Fork is closed to all fishing until the steelhead opener later this month.

Anglers working the Drano Lake and Wind River fisheries are still scoring some salmon with a large percentage still jacks. The Klickitat River is putting out fair numbers and steelhead are beginning to show.

More razor clam opportunities on the Washington Coast beginning on Friday; check the WDF&W website for details.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With the recent good news for additional time for spring chinook, anglers will have the rare opportunity to pursue both sturgeon and salmon/steelhead on the same day. Salmon catches are not likely to be red-hot but at least if we intercept one, and it has a fin-clip, we can take advantage of a consumptive opportunity. The date of the re-opener is May 25th. Here is the official press release:

NEWS RELEASE

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Contact: **John North** **(971) 673-6029**
 Kevleen Melcher **(971) 673-6030**
 Rick Swart **(971) 673-6038**

Internet: www.dfw.state.or.us

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Fishery managers extend lower Columbia chinook season

CLACKAMAS, Ore. – Sport fishermen will get an additional three weeks to get out and catch a chinook salmon on the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam under a season extension approved Monday by fishery managers from Oregon and Washington. During a joint state hearing fish and wildlife officials from the two states decided to reopen the spring chinook season on the lower Columbia from Saturday, May 25 through Saturday, June 15. The extended spring season takes place for three weeks immediately prior to the summer chinook season, which is scheduled on the lower Columbia from June 16 through June 30.

“We’re pleased to be able to provide five weeks of uninterrupted chinook salmon fishing,” said Steve Williams, deputy administrator of ODFW’s fish division.

The joint state action is based on revised estimates of salmon returns and harvest data that showed an additional 1,357 upriver spring chinook salmon are available for sport fishermen to harvest in the lower Columbia, based on management guidelines established earlier in the year. The revised forecast shows an expected return of 107,500 upriver spring chinook, which is down from the preseason estimate of 141,400 chinook.

“We have fewer fish than expected at the beginning of the year but the harvest was also lower than anticipated so we have some extra fish to catch,” said John North, ODFW’s Ocean Salmon and Columbia River Program manager.

The season opens from Tongue Point up to the deadline at Bonneville Dam with only bank angling allowed from Beacon Rock to Bonneville. Above Bonneville Dam, the chinook season

remains closed until the summer season opens June 16 – July 31 since most of the spring chinook quota was used prior to the May 6 closure. .

The daily bag limit prior to June 16 is two adult salmonids per day, of which only one may be a chinook. Any sockeye salmon caught must be released unharmed. Only barbless hooks are allowed.

In a separate action last week, the states approved four days of white sturgeon retention fishing in the Bonneville Pool. Those seasons will take place June 14-15 and June 21-22. The bag limit is one white sturgeon per day and two for the year. Only sturgeon with fork lengths of 38-54 inches may be retained, and only barbless hooks may be used.

For more information, visit ODFW's website at www.dfw.state.or.us.

Meanwhile, limited effort continues for sturgeon. Sturgeon catches in the Longview to John Day area out of Astoria have been decent for this early in the season. For those anglers willing to drive to the Astoria area, target keepers upstream of Tongue Point. Fishing at Miller Island and Marker 3 has been fair but anglers will have to bump around in order to find the concentrated pockets of fish. Both sand shrimp and anchovies are available for bait but the early season often produces best for those fishing shrimp in the shallows. It's not a bad idea however for anglers to take advantage of this weak tide series, targeting fish in the deeper water but still remaining largely upstream of Tongue Point. For those not wanting to travel so far, sturgeon fishing is a good option in Longview. Anglers remain restricted to a days per week fishery but keepers are available during that three day catch and keep window. Sand shrimp is the go-to bait here.

Reports of a great steelhead bite for the opener come from a credible source, which is often an indication of a strong run ahead. Let's hope we just had a one year hiccup starting with last year's summer run, fall coho run and winter steelhead. The common denominator here being that all three of those species migrate out to the ocean at the same time. This summer steelhead run, if strong, would point to the realization of a predicted strong fall coho return and subsequent winter steelhead return. If the steelhead reports are accurate, the upcoming minus tide series, certainly the largest of the month, could produce excellent results for beach plunkers and boaters targeting steelhead in the shallower water. Here is the salmon/steelhead/shad check from the weekend:

Gorge Bank:

Weekly checking showed 308 shad kept for 47 shad anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekly checking showed 80 shad kept for three shad boats (10 anglers).

Troutdale Boats:

No report.

Portland to Westport Bank:

Weekly checking showed three adipose fin-clipped jack Chinook and 14 adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, plus three adult spring Chinook released for 134 bank anglers.

Portland to Westport Boats:

Weekly checking showed no catch for five steelhead boats (13 anglers); and 35 shad kept, plus 28 shad released for seven boats (13 anglers).

That bank check is a pretty good one for this early in the season. Puzzling that the boat fishery (typically the more productive of the two) didn't show parallel results.

Offshore activity outside of the mouth of the Columbia remains subdued with halibut results poor. Bottomfishing has been fair to good however, for the few people pursuing them.

The Guide's Forecast – With great opportunity available for salmon, steelhead and sturgeon, the mainstem holds good promise. With the upcoming minus tide series, an angler will have to decide which direction he or she wants to go. It's certainly an opportune situation given the magnitude of the minus tide series for beach plunkers to take advantage of salmon and steelhead that will likely migrate close to the shore where bank anglers have access to them.

Boaters of course will have access as well but are encouraged to pursue both steelhead and salmon close to the river bank. Boaters typically motor to an island and fish at the head of it, targeting fish with spin-n-glos often tipped with coon shrimp and/or small plugs slid down the main line. Both techniques are effective but anglers are reminded that plunking is the only technique where fish have to come to you. For this reason, liberal amounts of scent application is a good idea.

Steelhead clearly respond best to the hot colors; pinks, reds and oranges, while chinook seem to respond best using green or a combination of green/orange or green/red. Both species willingly take hot colored plugs but as most anglers know, green is a consistent salmon producer. We can't seem to overemphasize enough that the stronger the current, the closer you should fish to shore. Don't be afraid to cast your outfit in water shallower than 4 foot as fish often travel this close to shore in the fast flows.

As for sturgeon anglers, with the increase in tidal exchange coming up, anglers will want to look to the shallower water for success. The strong tides should effectively push fish up into the shallows in search of freshwater clams and shrimp. Shrimp will likely continue to be the best early season option but anchovies will occasionally take keepers too. If I were using anchovies, I would save them for the deep water, just prior to the change of tide. Stick to the water upstream of John Day (Astoria area) although with the low spring flows this year, action may heat up early in the estuary downstream of the bridge if stronger numbers of baitfish make a showing down there. The Longview area should remain a good option as well but be mindful of the open days versus the 7 day per week fishery downstream of Wauna. It's also worth of a mention that the general angler is having a much harder time than the experienced guide in the estuary. Those already producing consistent keepers have put in many years of experience in this fishery.

A bar crossing would not be advisable in the early morning this weekend. Strong minus tides should make the bar hazardous, based largely on the west swell. Regardless, sportsmen should consider digging razor clams instead of boating in the early morning over the holiday weekend. The clamming should be great along Clatsop Beaches.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Shad fishing is underway on the Willamette River at both Coon island and Oregon City below the falls. Shad fishing is underway on the Willamette River at both Coon island and Oregon City below the falls. This week's cool, wet weather should slow the fishing significantly. Prior to the adverse weather, many anglers have reported flurries of nonstop action if the shad's travel lane is located. Expect the run to continue through the second week of June. Spring Chinook fishing is open and the occasional salmon is getting caught, however effort is at a minimum due to this seasons low catch rate and poor water conditions. A few fish were taken earlier this week in the Multnomah Channel and below Willamette Falls at Oregon City. The prevailing weather could improve the bite by the weekend, but don't hold your breath. Some welcome news, many of the sea lions are beginning their mass exodus and heading for their own

breeding grounds. Catch and release sturgeon fishing remains open below I-205 at Oregon City and continues to be the best, most under fished opportunity in the region. Double digit days are the norm for many sturgeon anglers who are experienced at locating the herds of aggressively feeding fish. Anglers in the know work the 50-80 ft holes in the Portland Harbor with smelt, squid, herring, anchovies, sand shrimp and even worms. Having at least a couple different baits to offer can pay big dividends when the fish get picky."

McKenzie levels and flow have been fluctuating below Leaburg Dam this week. Fishing has been worthwhile on the river above Leaburg Lake, however. Leaburg Dam reports 46 fresh, fin-clipped steelhead counted on May 20th. That may not sound like a lot but last year they didn't start reporting until June 6th. Rain this week will cause the Santiams to rise rapidly over the next couple of days. It may be worthwhile to hit the water by Sunday but results have been less than spectacular here so far this season.

TGF welcomes **Pro Guide Kyle Miller (541-971-6745)** who reports this week on the South Santiam, "[Army] Corps of Engineers have been fluctuating waters levels which has not turned on the bite. I saw photos of a 34 and a 31 pound springer. Some large fish in rivers and these both were taken on blue fox spinners. As steelhead goes, the bite has been fair to good with many multiple fish days. With fluctuating water levels the numbers returning to hatchery are low these fish are attracted to the water pouring out of the spillways."

Smallmouth bass have been caught in fair to good number on the lower Yamhill River on the stretch from Dayton to the Willamette. Use caution at the Dayton boat ramp as it's a very bumpy ride. Safer access might be from the Willamette to access the Yamhill from the mouth.

ODFW sez, "FISH CAMP FOR KIDS: Looking for a place for your child to land in camp? Or land a fish? Cook it? Tie a fly? Shoot an arrow? Hike with nature? Try (the late) Gus Kriara's Fish Camp at Camp Angelos, along the Sandy River between Troutdale and Sandy.

"The week-long camp (July 7-12) offers a great experience for up to 100 kids, ages 9-14, in a pastoral 60-acre setting. The camp costs \$350. Scholarships are available on a first-come basis for those whose parents or guardians can show a need. The youngster must also submit an essay: "Why I want to learn to fish." Deadline is July 1. Rod Brobeck, camp manager, is also looking for volunteers to teach.

"For information and registration, contact Mary Jo Brobeck at 503-695-5888 or maryjo@campangelos.org. Materials also are available online at www.campangelos.com."

For anyone who missed the memo, **Free Fishing Weekend** is June 1st and 2nd. All kidding aside, this is an opportunity to take out friends, neighbors and particularly youngsters to share our passion possibly spark an interest in fishing.

Harriet Lake, Henry Hagg Lake, Mt Hood Pond, Sheridan Pond, Silver Creek Reservoir, Trillium Lake, South Fork Yamhill River, Alton Baker Canal, Blue River above Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek above Fall Creek Reservoir, Foster Reservoir, Hills Creek above Hills Creek Reservoir, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Salmon Creek, Smith Reservoir and the Middle Fork Willamette River above Hills Creek Reservoir have been stocked with hatchery trout for the Memorial Day weekend.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Expect the shad fishing on the Willamette to pick back up after the weather stabilizes. Shad usually bite best when the weather is nice, suggesting that barometric pressure has a negative effect on their

daily mood. The weather forecast indicates little improvement through the weekend, so at best, sporadic shad fishing is to be expected. The cooler temperatures could improve the springer bite, but with this seasons poor showing, I wouldn't get too excited. A few salmon are being taken right below Willamette Falls and in the Multnomah Channel, be on the lookout for a very slight improvement. Catch and release sturgeon fishing should remain steady for the willing participants. Fishing for smallmouth bass will also cool off until the weather returns to sunny and warm."

Fly fishers have been doing well on the McKenzie for weeks and results are expected to be good through June. Recently, the upper Mac has emerged as the place to be, however. Expect nymphs to be most productive as hatches as hatches are likely to be sparse. For those who prefer taking home a few, fish the stretches recently planted with hatchery trout. Green McKenzie Caddis are hatching on the lower river now.

Keeping track of fish counts at Willamette Falls gives us a handle of the populations on upriver tribs and the Santiams in particular. Daily spring numbers have been steady at the Falls, and even lacking any thousand fish days in May (there were a couple in April), the passage YTD total is comparable to the last couple of seasons at this time of year. The lower South Santiam spring Chinook fishery should be worthwhile in June. With nearly 5,000 summer steelhead in the mix, results for summers have been fair on the North Santiam.

Pro Guide Kyle Miller (541-971-6745) reports on the North Santiam, "Chinook have been found around the Stayton area. Numbers are not good but when you find them multiple fish have been landed."

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "The Clackamas River has both summer steelhead and spring Chinook available. The peak of the Spring Chinook run is still a couple weeks out and summer steelhead are well spread throughout the system. The river had been holding at a favorable level giving access to jet boats and drift boats alike. The recent wet weather will bring the river up a smidge by the weekend, giving the jet boaters a bit more of a cushion to work with. Bank fishermen find the most opportunity in the stretch from Rivermill Dam down to Feldheimers. Remember that both summer steelhead and spring Chinook love a sand shrimp so anglers take note.

"On the Sandy River, the water level had been running around 9 feet, but the spring rains have brought the river back up to winter time levels. Summer Steelhead and a few spring Chinook are available and like the Clackamas, the peak of the springer run is still a week or two away. The summers are spread throughout the system while most of the springers will be taken from Oxbow Park downstream. Small baits of cured roe and sand shrimp are the favorite, but some drift boaters have been doing well back trolling small plugs."

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "The Clack has bumped back up to its winter time level and is scheduled to top 14 feet by Tuesday. Look for the fishing to deteriorate through the weekend and remain undesirable till it drops. Optimum flow on the Clackamas is between 11 and 13 feet, anything more than that makes for difficult fishing. Expect more springers to enter the lower river this week and continue through the first or second week of June. When the river drops, the local guides will hit the Clack hard.

"Mid-week, the Sandy River saw some decent action for summer steelhead and a handful of spring Chinook. As of this writing, the river is at optimum flow, but all things point to a rising river (if the rain continues as forecast). Expect the catch to drop off if the river takes a sharp rise. When the river gets back to its sweet spot of 9.5 to 10.5 feet, let the bite resume. Springer

numbers should increase as we approach the peak of the run, while summer steelhead will continue to trickle in through July."

North Coast Fishing Report – Spring chinook angling remains a top priority for anglers in the district. With this week's weak tide series, anglers remain focused on the lower reaches of the bay. On what is likely the smallest tide exchange of the month, a soft outgoing tide, especially after maximum ebb, can often produce some of the best catches of the year. Although far from the case, there was a decent bite on Monday this week for those slow trolling herring on the second half of the outgoing tide Monday afternoon. Surprisingly, with a significant weather front on the horizon, springers did not seem to be staging just outside the bay entrance. The morning bite on a fairly calm ocean produced little results. I only know of 2 fish caught Monday morning for a pretty good effort just outside the jaws. Whales and sea-lions were abundant however. Killer whales were witnessed inside Tillamook Bay on Friday; too bad they didn't stick around and play with those sea-lions..... With a NW swell making the south side of the jetty a bit hazardous, most of the effort took place right in front or just to the north of the north jetty. The incoming tide bite is predictably slow although it seems some fish are typically caught on the last part of incoming tide as well as at high slack. I have been running larger sized green-label herring and anchovies yielding nearly equal results on both types of bait. **Pro guide David Johnson (503-201-4292)** reported seeing anchovies in the bellies of a few of his fish recently. A large school of bait, presumably anchovies, were seen feeding heavily, likely on crab larvae, near the Coast Guard Tower, just inside the bay entrance.

The upper bay and the west channel have had a pathetic showing this week which is quite common during a weak tide series. Effort has only been fair but results have been poor. Anglers remain committed to trolling spinners and herring up there. There were clearly a bunch of fish there last week, the question is, where did they disappear to? It seems most likely that they dispersed themselves in tidewater, with the Trask River likely to have the greatest concentration. With the first significant rain of the season happening this week, river action is likely to change dramatically. That river action will likely focus on the Trask as this system typically receives the greatest number of hatchery returns in the basin. This is the system anglers have been waiting for. It remains to be seen how high the river will rise, which will dictate how good the fishing will be. Of course the Wilson will also receive some returning hatchery adults but we'll get into that in the forecast section. To date, very little activity has taken place in these systems with the exception of an occasional motivated biter at the Trask hatchery; that game is about to change however.

Offshore fishing remains less than stellar, although it seems halibut fishing did pick up for the all-depth sportfishers. Success seemed more consistent on the second week for reasons I can't fully comprehend. Anglers will have to take a break from targeting halibut outside of 40-fathoms this week but that's not necessarily a bad thing as fishery managers tally last week's results and a strong minus tide series may make for hazardous bar crossings over the weekend. Bottomfishing action was once again fair but limits aren't always the rule as was the case earlier in the year. Charter boats out of Garibaldi have been running both north and south but it seems that the northern prospect remains consistently better. Dinner reef out of Garibaldi did produce some bass several weeks ago but seems to be void of life more recently.

Crabbing both in the ocean and in the estuary is out and out pathetic. One guide reported one keeper for 3 pots in the ocean last weekend. Commercial effort remains intense as prices are up justifying the expenditure of effort.

Big Creek Reservoirs 1 & 2 and Olalla Creek Reservoir are on the trout planting schedule this week.

The Guide's Forecast – Of course spring chinook will be all the rave this week as the strongest minus tide of the season will occur over Memorial Day weekend. Effort will largely take place in the upper bay and with the recent rain freshet, anything can happen. Fish remaining in the bay will largely depend on how much precipitation falls this week. River forecasts indicate a rise close to half a foot, which should put a significant shot of salmon into coastal rivers that receive hatchery plants. Before we go there, let's button up the bay forecast.

Target springers in the upper bay, particularly the last half of outgoing tide. There should be a few fish taken at first light, particularly as we get deeper into the tide series. The reach from the lower tidewater sections to Ray's Place piling should yield the best results. Anglers may consider backtrolling plugs in the minus tide series but trolled spinners and herring will certainly work too. Anglers serious about targeting fish in the upper bay should not only consider the last half of outgoing tide, but high slack in the area often yields fish as well. This was consistently the case in recent years at the mouth of the Wilson River. Anglers targeting fish in the lower bay will likely not find high success rates as the strong tide exchange not only makes it hard to keep baits on the bottom but will inundate the lower bay with seaweed. I failed to mention that even on the weak tide series we're currently on, the seaweed has been an unwanted issue. The early spring is likely to blame. (Where's that spring now?) The ocean may be an option however as the strong tides will typically not effect salt-chuck action. Seas are forecast to be somewhat friendly this weekend. Here's the offshore forecast:

FRI

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO NW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 7 FT AT 14 SECONDS. SHOWERS LIKELY.

FRI NIGHT

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 6 FT AT 13 SECONDS. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SAT

W WIND TO 5 KT...BECOMING SW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 5 FT AT 13 SECONDS. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SAT NIGHT

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO NW AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 5 FT AT 12 SECONDS. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SUN

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

MON

S WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 3 FT.

Driftboaters are waiting with anxiety as to how high area rivers will get on the current rain freshet. Here is the hydrograph readings for the Wilson River:



As of this writing, it's headed straight up, we just don't know where it will crest. Although the peak height is forecasted to reach over 4 foot, only time will tell if this prediction come to fruition. If indeed the river comes close to 4.5 foot on the Wilson, most north coast streams will receive a fresh batch of quality spring chinook. Topping the list will of course be the Trask River, which receives more hatchery planted spring chinook than any other Tillamook County system.

Anglers pursuing fish in these systems should find aggressive biters using eggs or egg/shrimp combos as well as backrolled plugs for success. The reach from Cedar Creek to Loren's Drift should yield the best results.

Again, the all-depth halibut season is not an option this week/weekend but the nearshore fishery remains open Thursday – Saturday. Check detailed regulations here: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/halibut/seasonmaps/2013_hbt_map.pdf.

Bottomfishing should be good however, especially if the weather cooperates. Here's where you get your info on bottomfish. Keep in mind that retention of cabezon remains closed until July 1st (it was originally April 1st). http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish_sport/index.asp.

Central & South Coast Reports – Rough seas out of Newport and Depoe Bay chased boats off the ocean on Wednesday this week but forecasts look friendly for boats launching out of Newport and Depoe Bay on Saturday or Sunday.

In the first three days of fishing (May 9-11) at the opening of the spring all-depth halibut season off the central Oregon coast, anglers took 34,712 pounds or 29% of the 120,947-pound quota. Inside the 40-fathom line, nearshore halibut fishers nicked that quota by only 3% or 775 pounds of the 22,038 pounds during the opener on May 2-4.

While nearshore fishing for halibut is allowed every Thursday through Saturday until the 23,038-pound quota is filled or October 31st, whichever comes first, the next all-depth opportunity will not occur until May 30-June 1 and June 6-8. Additional days will be added as the quota allows and any poundage remaining at the closure in late July will be rolled in to the summer all-depth season which opens August 2nd.

To clarify the rules regarding combo trips (rockfish and halibut), these trips are allowed only on those days when all-depth halibut is open. Try for halibut first as no groundfish are allowed on board while fishing for halibut.

Halibut fishing is open seven days a week from Humbug Mountain to the California border without depth restrictions.

Hundreds of saltwater anglers and charter boat owners will receive Shelton Fish Descenders along with instructions for use and a fish ID chart. These are intended to reduce mortality of rockfish such as yelloweye and canary which must be released but often suffer from trauma which would otherwise be fatal. These devices will return fish to deep water where they will recompress. Funded by a surcharge on fishing license sales, it falls short of qualification as a gift but is a good idea and gratifying to see our money being spent in a tangible manner which directly benefits fish populations.

"Siletz has been slow, slow, slow. I have seen summer fish but not many takers, with rain it might turn bite on" according to **Pro Guide Kyle Miller (541-971-6745)**.

Catches of redbait surf perch have remained good this week and extreme minus tides mornings over the coming weekend will allow surf casters to inspect beach areas for structure, particularly nearshore troughs and holes. These areas will attract feeding perch when the tide comes in.

The ODFW reports indicate good crabbing in the ocean when offshore conditions allow sage launches but biologists advise that Dungeness are molting early this year, resulting in a percentage of softshell crab in catches. The meat in softshells will be spare, pale and watery. While the carapace (back shell) may seem firm, pinch the foremost leg of the crab in the section nearest the shell. If there's any give, it's a softshell.

Crabbing has improved at Winchester Bay along with surf perch catches. Shad have entered the lower Umpqua but fishing will be spotty at best until the river stabilizes and the sun comes out. It was decent at Yellow Creek periodically when the water was low. The spring Chinook fishery slowed this week on the mainstem Umpqua due to low, clear water. It appears relief is on the way as levels have started to rise and are forecast to continue to do so through Saturday. There may be springer opportunities on Monday if the river drops as predicted but that's a tough call. A better idea might be to try the lower North Umpqua as Chinook have been moving upstream to seek out cooler water here. With a rise of only six inches or so forecast for the South Umpqua, smallmouth bass fishing should be worthwhile. South Umpqua Falls Campground will be open for the Memorial Day weekend. Contact the Tiller Ranger District for information at 541-825-3100 or see **Random Links**, below for details.

Crabbing is slow to fair at Coos Bay with many juvenile and female Dungeness showing in traps and nets. Clamming should be excellent in the bay with minus tides occurring every morning over

the long holiday weekend. Rock and jetty fishing has been fair for rockfish and greenling. Cutthroat trout may be found in tidewater and the lower Coos River.

The best ocean Chinook fishing on the coast has been reported out of Charleston with 50% of offshore anglers taking a fish.

It's about time there was some good news for the lower Rogue River. Unfortunately, we can't offer it this week. Rainfall will be insufficient to relieve low levels and high water temperatures. Continued spotty results for springers are expected through the weekend with early mornings and late evenings offering the best chance of a hookup. The middle Rogue is forecast to fluctuate which will do little to improve prospects. Fortunately, the upper Rogue remains a bright spot. While the bite has been irregular, it's still the place to be for Rogue spring Chinook. As numbers build at Cole Rivers Hatchery, springers are being trucked back downstream so anglers will have a second chance at them. The upper Rogue will be dropping until Monday. Concentrate on migration lanes with plugs or cured eggs. Lost Creek Reservoir and the Rogue River above it should provide good fishing for hatchery trout but check on access as snow may fall this coming weekend.

Chetco River levels will be gradually dropping on Saturday and Sunday, May 25th and 26th. With the river having opened for trout on May 24th, anglers will find willing cutthroat in tidewater and above. These trout will readily hit spinners or brightly-colored flies but anglers should be aware that they frequent areas quite unlike steelhead or other trout. Sea-run cuts will be in dark, boiling water above riffle and runs or will be found hanging bankside under still water beneath overhanging brush. Chetco levels are forecast to rise sharply on Monday with rainfall.

Despite a couple of inches of snow which fell mid-week, Diamond Lake is expected to provide fair to good fishing with rewards coming as fat trout averaging 13 inches are being caught with the bite improving and multiple eight-fish limits reported. A few fish to five pounds or better have been landed recently. Trolling has been more productive than still fishing this week. Maybe the cold weather and white stuff on the ground will keep the massive midge hatch in check.

Willow Lake, Applegate Reservoir, Lost Creek Reservoir, Lake Selmac, Spaulding Pond 600 and the Rogue above Lost Creek are scheduled to be planted with trout.

Central and Eastern Oregon – The Deschutes is a premier destination for Memorial Day weekend anglers. While fishing boat traffic will be predictably heavy for the holiday, fishing results should be well worth the effort. Those big stoneflies will be making a significant appearance although redsides are much more likely to respond to nymphs and emergers. The inside track indicates the stonefly hatch has yet to reach a climax and trout will key on them just as hatches begin to wane. That has certainly been the case in years past.

With Crooked River level good and flows remaining steady at just over 200 cfs, results are expected to be good over the long holiday weekend.

Wallowa Lake earned a reputation as the place to catch the largest kokanee in Oregon. That reputation was sustained with the production of record-breaking kokanes in 2009 and 2010 which caused concern among fisheries biologists who had seen other bodies of water in Idaho and Canada to suffer population crashes following a couple of years of similar production. Not so at Wallowa Lake, however, where there has been a population explosion described by ODFW biologist Jeff Yanke as "unprecedented," resulting in an

abundance of younger fish. As a consequence (and of benefit to anglers) the daily kokanee limit has been increased from 10 to 20 per day with no more than five over 12 inches. For those taking some of these tasty fish back home, two limits per day may be in possession.

According to the resort at Crane Prairie, "the fishing has been the best in years!" According to anglers who have fished there recently, it has been pretty good. Either way, it's a decent destination this weekend.

Action has slowed a little at Wickiup since opening day but it's still worthwhile. The bit often drops off with bugs hatching as they are now but it's possible to take a limit at first light and be done for the day before the insects or the winds come up.

Limits or near-limits of both kokanee and trout has have been taken by trollers at Green Peter this week.

Pro Guide Kyle Miller (541-971-6745) adds this regarding Green Peter, "Kokanee fishing has been great some say best in years with limits of 25 more often than not. Large landlocked chinook have been taken with largest so far of 16.6# ODFW states there are larger Chinook to be taken. The Chinook have been found in the arms looking to head up river."

The Umatilla River has been subject to an emergency action which terminated salmon fishing from the Hwy 730 bridge upstream to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation boundary on May 15th.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for May 2013

Last updated May 1, 2013

North Puget Sound

(Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties)

The lowland lakes fishing season is officially under way and anglers can expect to reel in some nice-size fish throughout May.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is adding more **trout** this month to several of the region's lakes, including Cranberry Lake in Island County; Desire, Green, Meridian, Morton, Shadow and Spring lakes in King County; Mountain Lake in San Juan County; Pass and Vogler lakes in Skagit County; Ballinger, Blackmans, Shoecraft and Gissburg Ponds in Snohomish County; and Squalicum and Terrell lakes in Whatcom County.

Under statewide rules, anglers have a daily limit of five trout on most lakes. Released legal-sized trout, caught with bait, count toward the daily bag limit. Complete information on stocking schedules for rainbow, cutthroat and triploid trout is available on [WDFW's website](#).

Anglers are also encouraged to check the "[Fish Washington](#)" webpage for details on lake fishing opportunities. The map-based webpage includes fishing information by county, lake and fish species throughout the state.

On Puget Sound, fishing for **lingcod** and **cabezon** begins May 1. During the hook-and-line lingcod season (May 1-June 15), there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 36 inches. Cabezon anglers have a daily limit of one fish with an 18-inch minimum size limit.

Saltwater anglers can also reel in **halibut** this month. Several areas of Puget Sound will open for the big flatfish in early May. Heather Reed, coastal policy coordinator for WDFW, said this year's seasons were reduced by five days in the eastern region (Marine Areas 6-10) and nine days in the western region (Marine Area 5) to compensate for exceeding last year's quota.

"Catch rates were up again in Puget Sound last year, so we had to make some adjustments," Reed said. "In doing that, we made sure the seasons will open on the traditional opening dates, so folks can plan their annual halibut fishing trips well in advance."

The 2013 Puget Sound halibut seasons are as follows:

- **Marine Area 5:** From May 23-26, the fishery will be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday for Memorial Day weekend. From May 30 through June 1, the fishery will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday and then will be open for one final day on Saturday, June 8.
- **Marine Areas 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10:** From May 2-4, the fishery will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday. From May 16-18, the fishery will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday. From May 23-26, the fishery will be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday for Memorial Day weekend. The fishery will be open May 30 and 31, Thursday and Friday.
- **Marine Areas 11, 12, 13:** These areas will remain closed to halibut fishing this year to protect threatened and endangered rockfish species.

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

Prefer shellfish? The **shrimp season** opens May 4 in Puget Sound, where recreational shrimp fishers will get more days to fish and a larger share of the catch.

This year's sport fishery for spot shrimp is expected to run from one day to several weeks longer in various areas of the Sound, due to policy changes recently adopted by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission.

"Recreational shrimp fishers will see a real difference in the length of this year's seasons, particularly in the San Juan Islands and the Strait of Juan de Fuca," said Rich Childers, WDFW shellfish manager. "Sport fisheries in other areas are also likely to pick up some extra fishing days under the updated policy."

In the San Juan Islands, the recent change in the state's spot shrimp policy will increase the sport fishery's share of the catch from 15 percent to 80 percent. To accommodate that change, WDFW split Marine Area 7-North into two subareas – 7 West and 7 South – each with its own season.

Under the higher sport quota, Childers said the new Marine Area 7-West could be open for more than a month this year, up from six days of fishing in those waters last year. The spot shrimp fishery in Marine Areas 7 East and 7 South, also open six days last year, is expected to run 13 days during the 2013 season, he said.

A map of the new subareas is available on WDFW's [Recreational Shrimp Fishing webpage](#) and is published in the [2013 Spot Fishing Rule pamphlet](#).

The shrimp season in Marine Area 6 in the Strait of Juan de Fuca is also expected to expand by several weeks under the new allocation policy, which increased the sport fishery's share of the catch in those waters from 15 percent to 22 percent this year.

The sport fishery in Hood Canal has received 100 percent of the state shrimp allocation in previous years, so it is not affected by the change in the commission's policy, Childers said. However, sport shrimpers will have five days to fish – up from four days last year – because stock trends have been healthy in recent years, he said.

Childers said the new policy does increase sport fishing allocations in other areas of central Puget Sound, but WDFW will determine whether that will translate into additional fishing days during the course of the season.

"The question is whether the higher catch shares will be enough to add a third day of fishing in those areas," he said. "We'll be watching the catch totals during the season and will make that decision on an area-by-area basis."

Puget Sound recreational shrimp season opening days are:

- **Hood Canal Shrimp District (Marine Area 12):** Open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 4, 8, 15, 18 and 22.
- **Discovery Bay Shrimp District (Marine Area 6):** Open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 4, 8, 15, 18 and 22.
- **Marine Areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5, 6 and 13 (excluding Discovery Bay Shrimp District):** Open daily beginning May 4 at 7 a.m. The spot shrimp season closes when the quota is attained or Sept. 15, whichever comes first. The exception is Marine Area 13, which closes for spot shrimp May 31.
- **Marine Area 7 East and South:** Open May 4 at 7 a.m. for a one-day fishery and will reopen May 8-11, May 15-18, May 29-June 1.
- **Marine Area 7 West:** Open May 4 at 7 a.m., open Wednesday through Saturday each week until June 1. After June 1 the area will be open Thursday through Saturday each week until the quota is reached or Sept. 15, whichever comes first.
- **Marine Areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10 and 11:** Open May 4 and May 8 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Additional dates and times will be announced if sufficient quota remains after the initial fishing days scheduled above.

In all areas of Puget Sound, fishers are limited to 80 spot shrimp per day and a valid 2013-14 fishing license is required to participate in the fishery. For a description of the marine areas and fishing rules, see WDFW's [Recreational Shrimp Fishing website](#).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

(Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, Thurston and Pacific counties)

A range of new fishing opportunities begin in May, when shrimp and lingcod seasons open in Puget Sound and halibut fishing gets under way in the Sound and off the coast. Anglers fishing coastal waters also will have an opportunity to hook hatchery chinook salmon during two short openers this month.

Marine areas 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) will be open for **hatchery chinook salmon** May 10-11 and May 17-18. Anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon, except they must release coho and wild chinook.

John Long, statewide salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), said the two salmon openers overlap with halibut fisheries in those areas. "This a great

opportunity for halibut anglers who make the trip to the northern coast to round out their weekend by putting some salmon in the cooler as well," he said.

Anglers heading out to the north coast should note that **halibut seasons in marine areas 3 and 4** are open May 9, two days per week, Thursdays and Saturdays through May 18. If there is available quota the fishery will re-open May 30 and/or June 1 and continue again starting Thursday, June 13 until the quota is reached.

Halibut seasons elsewhere on the coast and in Puget Sound are:

- **Marine Area 1:** Open Friday May 3, three days per week (Friday through Sunday) until 80 percent of the quota is achieved. If the early season quota is not obtained prior to Aug. 3, the fishery will remain open three days per week (Friday through Sunday), until the remaining quota is taken, or until Sept. 29, whichever occurs first.
- **Marine Area 2:** Open Sunday, May 5, two days per week, Sunday and Tuesday for three consecutive weeks. The primary fishery is closed May 26 and 28. If sufficient quota remains, the fishery will open the following Sunday and/or Tuesday and continue until the quota is achieved, or Sept. 30, whichever occurs first. The northern nearshore area will be open on May 5, and continue seven days per week until the nearshore quota is reached or until Sept. 29, whichever occurs first.
- **Marine Area 5:** Open May 23-26, Thursday through Sunday; May 30-June 1, Thursday through Saturday and Saturday, June 8.
- **Marine Areas 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10** (Marine Areas 11-13 are closed): Open May 2-4, Thursday through Saturday; Open May 16-18, Thursday through Saturday; May 23-26, Thursday through Sunday; May 30-31, Thursday through Friday.

In all marine areas open to fishing, there is a one-fish daily catch limit and no minimum size restriction. Anglers may possess a maximum of two fish in any form, and must record their catch on a WDFW catch record card.

Anglers should also be aware that bottomfishing restrictions in marine areas 3 and 4 have changed from last year. Starting May 1, bottomfishing will be limited to waters shallower than 20 fathoms, except on days when halibut fishing is allowed. On those days, anglers may retain lingcod, Pacific cod and sablefish caught in waters deeper than 20 fathoms.

"The change was made to help avoid exceeding our yelloweye harvest quota through accidental by-catch," said Heather Reed, WDFW coastal policy coordinator. Anglers should take note of bottomfishing restrictions in place by consulting the [Fish Washington](#) pamphlet for regulations for marine areas they are interested in fishing.

Meanwhile, **lingcod** fishing opportunities expand May 1, when the fishery opens in all Puget Sound marine areas except marine area 12 (Hood Canal). Lingcod fisheries in marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) are already under way. For more information on lingcod fishing regulations, check the 2013-14 [Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet](#).

Don't forget those **shrimp** pots. Shrimp fishing opportunities get under way May 4 in Puget Sound. Spot shrimp seasons for various areas of Puget Sound are:

- Hood Canal Shrimp District (Marine Area 12): Open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 4, 8, 15, 18 and 22.
- Discovery Bay Shrimp District (Marine Area 6): Open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 4, 8, 15, 18 and 22.

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5, 6 and 13 (excluding shrimp districts): Open daily beginning May 4 at 7 a.m. The spot shrimp season closes when the quota is attained or Sept 15, whichever comes first. The exception is Marine Area 13, which closes for spot shrimp May 31.
- Marine Area 7 East and South: Open May 4 at 7 a.m. for a one-day fishery and will reopen May 8-11, May 15-18, May 29 – June 1.
- Marine Area 7 West: Open May 4 at 7 a.m., open Wednesday through Saturday each week until June 1. After June 1 the area will be open Thursday through Saturday each week until the quota is reached or Sept. 15, whichever comes first.
- Marine areas 8, 9, 10 and 11: Open May 4 and May 8 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Additional dates and times will be announced for these areas if sufficient quota remains.

In all areas of Puget Sound, fishers are limited to 80 spot shrimp per day. For a description of the marine areas and fishing rules, including regulations for coonstripe and pink shrimp fishing seasons, see WDFW's [Recreational Shrimp Fishing website](#).

For freshwater anglers, **trout** are biting at dozens of lakes throughout the region. Opening day of the lowland lakes trout fishing season is over, but WDFW will keep stocking area waters with rainbow, cutthroat and triploid trout right through the season. Information on stocking schedules for trout is available on [WDFW's website](#).

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

Additionally, the Fish Washington [website](#) offers information for all levels of anglers. This website contains the when's, where's and how-to's of fishing in Washington.

Anglers are reminded that the retention season for **wild steelhead** closed April 30 on the Bogachiel, Calawah, Dickey, Quillayute and Sol Duc rivers.

However, some rivers remain open for **salmon** fishing, including the Quillayute and a portion of the Sol Duc. The Hoh River also opens for salmon May 16. For details on those and other fishing opportunities, check the [Fish Washington pamphlet](#).

Also, for those interested in introducing kids to fishing this spring, youth fishing events are planned throughout May in cities around the state. Events on or near Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula are taking place May 4, May 11, and May 18. Visit WDFW's [Youth Fishing webpage](#) for more information on some of the events taking place this summer.

Southwest Washington

(Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Skamania and Wahkiakum counties)

Thousands of **spring chinook salmon** are moving up the fish ladders at Bonneville Dam each day, setting the stage for a succession of upriver fisheries on the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries.

The lower Columbia River is currently closed to salmon fishing until further notice, but spring chinook – along with **hatchery steelhead, white sturgeon, shad** and **trout** – will be available for harvest in various waters throughout the region in May.

Above Bonneville Dam, the fishery for salmon and steelhead is set to run through May 5 on the mainstem Columbia River between the Tower Island power lines and the Washington/Oregon state line, 17 miles upriver from McNary Dam. Bank anglers can also fish upriver from Bonneville Dam to the Tower Island power lines during that time.

After a slow start this season, anglers fishing in that area caught nearly 200 upriver spring chinook salmon during the last week of April, accounting for most of the springers caught there this season. Before the season got under way, state fishery managers estimated that anglers would catch 658 upriver fish in that area through May 5, said Ron Roler, Columbia River policy coordinator for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"We expect to see some high catch rates through May 5," Roler said. Catch totals can ramp up very quickly when fish passage over the dam starts to peak."

Roler said fishery managers from Washington and Oregon may extend the season above Bonneville, but will hold off making that decision until mid-May when the estimated run size is updated and more is known about how many hatchery fish are available for harvest. (This report will be updated online to reflect any additional fishing time approved for spring chinook fisheries above or below Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River.)

Whether or not the season is extended on the mainstem Columbia, Roler said anglers are likely to find this month's best fishing for hatchery spring chinook in the Wind River, Drano Lake and Klickitat River – more or less in that order. All three fishing areas typically heat up as fish passage begins to surge at Bonneville Dam, he said.

Like last year, anglers will have more room to fish at the mouth of the Wind River, where the outside fishing boundary has been moved about 250 yards out into the Columbia, Roler said. "Our goal last year was to help relieve overcrowding in that area, which proved successful," he said. Monitoring costs for that project are supported by the endorsement fee paid by anglers who fish the Columbia River and its tributaries.

Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist, said he also expects to see fishing for spring chinook salmon improve this month on the Cowlitz River. In addition, hatchery summer run **steelhead** are beginning to move into the Cowlitz, Kalama, East Fork Lewis, North Fork Lewis, and Washougal rivers. "That should help to sweeten the pot," said Hymer, noting that selective fishing rules will be in effect through early June on the lower East Fork Lewis and Washougal rivers.

Current fishing regulations for the Wind River and other waters throughout the state are described in WDFW's 2013-14 *Sport Fishing Rules* pamphlet, now [available online](#) and from statewide recreational license dealers by early May.

Starting May 1, one new rule requires anglers to use **barbless hooks** when fishing for salmon or steelhead on the Columbia River and most of its tributaries downstream from Chief Joseph Dam. That rule, adopted last month by WDFW, expands on a similar regulation previously in effect on the stretch of the Columbia River that constitutes the border between Washington and Oregon.

The new rule extends the ban on barbed hooks another 250 miles upriver on the Columbia River and to dozens of its tributaries, including the Cowlitz, Wind, White Salmon, Klickitat, Snake, Yakima and Okanogan rivers. Anglers fishing any of those waters will still be allowed to use single, double-point or treble hooks, so long as the barbs have been filed off or pinched down.

With only a few exceptions, the rule requiring the use of barbless hooks will be in effect on rivers and streams where a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement is required in addition to a current fishing license.

Other fishing rules that take effect May 1 include:

- **Cowlitz Falls Reservoir** (Lewis County): Salmon season opens year round in the reservoir, also known as Lake Scanewa.
- **Fort Borst Park Pond** (Lewis County): Opens to all licensed anglers until further notice. Two poles may be used with a Two-Pole Endorsement.

- **Kalama River** (Cowlitz County): Anglers may retain up to two hatchery steelhead starting 1,000 feet above the fishway at the upper salmon hatchery upstream to Summers Creek.
- **Merwin Lake** (Clark/Cowlitz County): The kokanee limit increases to 10 fish, and kokanee will not count as part of the trout daily limit.

On May 25, fishing will open from the mouth of the Green River to 400 feet below the Toutle Hatchery water intake, and from the mouth of the South Fork Toutle River to the 4700 Road Bridge. Anglers must release all trout, but may retain up to two hatchery steelhead. Selective gear rules apply in both areas.

Emergency fishing rules are also in effect on several rivers to ensure that spawning goals for spring chinook are met at local hatcheries:

- **Lewis River:** All chinook must be released from the mouth upstream to the mouth of the East Fork until further notice. The mainstem Lewis remains open for hatchery steelhead.
- **North Fork Lewis River:** All chinook must be released from the mouth of the East Fork upstream to Merwin Dam until further notice. Through May 31, fishing is closed for all species from Johnson Creek (located downstream from the Lewis River Salmon Hatchery) upstream to Merwin Dam. The North Fork Lewis from Johnson Creek downstream remains open to fishing for hatchery steelhead,
- **Kalama River:** All chinook must be released from the boundary markers at the mouth upstream to the upper salmon hatchery (Kalama Falls Hatchery). The Kalama River remains open to fishing for hatchery steelhead.
- **Wind River:** Through July 31, anglers are limited to one hatchery chinook or one hatchery steelhead per day from the mouth (boundary line/markers) upstream to 400 feet below Shipherd Falls. Wild chinook and wild steelhead must be released. All fishing is closed until further notice from 400 feet below Shipherd Falls upstream, including all tributaries.

For additional information, see the [rule change notices](#) on the WDFW website.

Meanwhile, anglers can catch and keep **white sturgeon** from Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam, and in The Dalles and John Day pools during the times specified below. Fishing has been slow, but anglers have been landing a few legal-size fish, particularly in the Dalles and John Day pools.

The limit is one legal-size white sturgeon per day, with a two-fish annual limit. The new annual limit was approved by the Washington and Oregon fish and wildlife commissions to help address the decline of legal-size sturgeon in the lower Columbia River in recent years.

Current fishing opportunities for sturgeon are as follows:

- **Buoy 10 to the Wauna powerlines:** Retention of white sturgeon is allowed daily from May 11 through June 30. During that period, sturgeon must measure between 41 inches to 54 inches (fork length) to be retained. Catch-and-release fishing is allowed on days when retention is prohibited.
- **Wauna powerlines to Bonneville Dam:** Retention of white sturgeon is allowed three days per week (Thursday through Saturday) through June 15 and from Oct. 19 through Dec. 31. Sturgeon must measure between 38 inches and

54 inches (fork length) to be retained. Catch-and-release fishing is allowed on days when retention is prohibited.

- **Pools above Bonneville Dam:** Bonneville Pool is open daily for catch-and-release fishing only, but anglers may retain legal-size sturgeon in the two reservoirs between The Dalles and McNary dams until their respective 300-fish and 500-fish guidelines are met.

Just as soon catch some **trout**? Several trout streams, stocked with feisty rainbows, will open for fishing on the Saturday of Memorial weekend. They include Canyon Creek and the upper Little White Salmon River in Skamania County, and Bird Creek, Outlet Creek, and Spring Creek and in Klickitat County.

WDFW also will continue to stock lowland lakes with catchable-size trout. Those receiving additional plants in May include Sacajawea, Kress, and Horseshoe lakes in Cowlitz county; Battleground Lake in Clark County; Kidney Lake in Skamania County; and Spearfish and Horsethief lakes in Klickitat County. Also, as the snow recedes in the mountains, many high lakes will become available to anglers.

Eastern Washington

(Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla and Whitman counties)

Trout-stocked lake fishing is in full swing in May throughout the region with some of the best producing waters just open since April 27. Opening-day catch rates for nearly 100 lakes throughout the state are summarized in a [news release](#) on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) website.

Two lakes in Spokane County and one each in Lincoln and Stevens counties were among the state's top dozen lakes, ranked according to catch-and-keep rates during the first weekend of fishing.

West Medical Lake, near the town of Medical Lake in southwest Spokane County, has been producing daily limits of five trout – mostly **rainbow** and **brown trout** – within a few hours for most anglers. The 114 anglers surveyed on opening day had kept 477 fish and released 98 others for an average catch per angler of 5.4 fish, of which 4.3 were retained. The largest fish recorded caught on opening day at West Medical was a 20-inch rainbow.

The 78 anglers surveyed at Williams Lake, southwest of Cheney in Spokane County, had kept 330 fish and released 93 others. had about the same catch and keep rates on the opener. The largest fish recorded caught there then was a 19-inch rainbow. A 16-inch **tiger trout** and five smaller **cutthroat trout** were also checked on the opener.

Fishtrap Lake, east of Sprague on the Lincoln-Spokane county line, had a 4.7 fish per catch rate and 4.4 fish kept per angler rate on the opener. Randy Osborne, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), reported checking 37 anglers at Fishtrap with 161 rainbow trout and 12 released fish. The largest catch recorded was a 24-inch hatchery broodstock rainbow trout.

Based on a check of 15 anglers with 67 fish, WDFW northeast district fish biologist Bill Baker reported a 4.5 fish per catch rate on the opener at Rocky Lake, south of Colville in Stevens County. Baker said about a quarter of the trout caught were carryovers bigger than 14 inches, with the rest averaging 11.5 inches from fry plants last year. The largest trout recorded was a 17.5-inch rainbow.

At Fish Lake northeast of Cheney in Spokane County, anglers averaged 2.6 trout kept, but catch-and-release anglers using selective gear averaged 6.9 fish, making the overall catch rate one of the highest in the state. The biggest fish recorded that day was a 17-incher, and Osborne said anglers caught some nice Eastern brook trout, too.

Clear Lake, south of the town of Medical Lake in Spokane County, also had a high overall catch rate on the opener – 6.7 fish per angler, with a 3.9 kept fish per angler average, based on 22 anglers checked with 85 fish and 63 released fish. Many kept fish were 14-16-inch carryover rainbows, in addition to the 10-12 inch catchable-size rainbows recently stocked. About 11 percent of the harvest was brown trout. The largest fish recorded there was a 17-inch rainbow.

Another high overall catch rate on the opener was measured at Ellen Lake, north of Inchelium in Ferry County, where 16 anglers were checked with 58 fish and 39 released fish, for a 6.1 average catch rate and 3.6 average fish kept rate. Ellen's largest fish on the opener was a 16-inch rainbow.

Stevens County's Starvation Lake, southeast of Colville, had lots of happy anglers on the opener, Baker reported, with an overall average catch rate of 3.8 mostly kept fish. That was based on a check of 39 anglers with 137 fish and just 10 released. Baker says almost of half of the kept fish were carryovers bigger than 13 inches, with the largest fish a 16-inch rainbow.

Waitts Lake, in southern Stevens County near Valley, also had a good opener, with an overall average catch rate of 3.5 fish per angler, based on a check of 72 with 175 fish and 75 released. The largest measured that day was a 21-inch rainbow.

Diamond Lake, near Newport in Pend Oreille County, had an opening day average catch rate of 3.2 fish per angler, based on 25 with 81 fish. The catch at Diamond is a mix of rainbow and brown trout, with the largest record on the opener a 22-inch rainbow.

Cedar Lake, north of Leadpoint near the Canada border in Stevens County, produced an average catch rate of 2.4 fish per angler on the opener, based on 23 with 55 fish and just one released. Baker reported anglers happy at Cedar with nice-sized carryovers; the biggest was a 16-inch rainbow.

Badger Lake, south of Cheney in Spokane County, produced an average of 2.2 trout per angler on the opener, based on 61 anglers catching 134 fish. The largest recorded were an 18-inch rainbow and a 17-inch cutthroat.

Mudgett Lake, in southern Stevens County near Fruitland, was slower on the opener, probably because the windy conditions throughout the region seemed to pick up there earlier in the day. The catch rate measured was 1.6 fish per angler, based on 13 with 21 fish. The largest was a 16.5-inch rainbow, one of the few carryovers from fry plants.

Deep Lake, southeast of Northport in Stevens County, had the least number of anglers checked on the opener, largely due to wind very early in the day. Just nine anglers were fishing in the morning and none had catches. With better conditions, fishing for rainbow, cutthroat and brook trout should pick up and stocked **kokanee** will come on strong next month.

In the southeast end of the region, lake fishing has been under way on all but one of several Tucannon River impoundments in Columbia County since March. Curl Lake, an acclimation pond for spring Chinook salmon smolts that are now gone, just opened April 27 for fishing on hatchery-stocked rainbow trout. Curl will have plenty of action through this month and next on 10-12 inch rainbows and some "jumbos" that run about 1.5 pounds each.

Meanwhile on the Snake River, fishing for hatchery-marked **spring chinook salmon** open two days each week in three zones, but is expected to close before the month is over. The zone from Pasco upstream to near Ice Harbor Dam is currently open on Fridays and Saturdays. On Sundays and Mondays, fishing is open in the stretch from Texas Rapids to near Little Goose Dam, and in

the stretch from the intersection of Steptoe Canyon and Wawawai River roads to the state line in Clarkston.

Anglers are advised to [check the details](#) of this restricted fishery and watch the WDFW website for possible notice of an early closure.

Many more lake fishing opportunities are available throughout the region and can be found in detail by county on WDFW's [Fish Washington website](#).

Northcentral Washington

(Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan counties)

Trout-stocked lake fishing is in full swing in May throughout the region with some of the best producing waters open since April 27. Opening-day catch rates for nearly 100 lakes throughout the state are summarized in a [news release](#) on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) website.

Conconully Reservoir in Okanogan County was one of the state's top dozen lakes on opening day with a catch-and-keep rate of 4.3 fish per angler. Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist, said the catch at the reservoir has been running about two-thirds **rainbow trout** in the 10-12-inch range and one-third **kokanee** in the 11-13-inch range.

Pearrygin, Alta, Fish, and Conconully lakes in Okanogan County are also producing good catches of rainbow trout in the 10-12 inch range, with larger fish to 18 inches, Jateff said. On the opener, Pearrygin anglers checked averaged 5.8 fish caught, with 3.8 kept, including a five-pound **brown trout** and five-pound triploid rainbow. At Alta Lake, anglers averaged 2.7 caught fish, with almost all kept. Conconully Lake anglers averaged 2.2 fish each, and Fish Lake anglers averaged 2.1 fish.

Other Okanogan County lakes that opened in late April but were not creel-checked are also producing well, Jateff said. Anglers at Blue and Big Twin lakes, which are under selective gear rules, are reportedly catching rainbows in the 10-16 inch range. Leader and Wannacut lakes received plants of 10-12-inch rainbows along with fish weighing a pound or more right before the opener.

Jateff also noted that Spectacle Lake, which has been open since April 1, continues to produce limits of rainbows in the 11-12 inch range for both shore and boat anglers. Patterson Lake, which is open year-round, continues to provide good fishing for kokanee in the 10-11 inch range along with catches of **yellow perch**. Year-round Palmer Lake has also been a consistent producer for kokanee in the 11-14 inch range.

In Chelan County, WDFW district fish biologist Travis Maitland of Wenatchee reports checking 75 anglers at Wapato Lake on the opener when they averaged 2.3 fish each, most in the 14-15-inch range with several over 19 inches. Clear Lake anglers averaged 3.4 fish caught, with the largest about 18 inches. Anglers fishing Beehive Lake anglers averaged 1.6 fish each, the largest 16.5 inches along with some **tiger trout**.

In Douglas County, 40 anglers were checked on the opener at Jameson Lake for an average of 3.3 fish caught, including rainbows from nine to 24 inches.

Many Columbia Basin fishing lakes have been open since the first of March or April, but some top producers opening on the fourth Saturday of April were worth the wait. WDFW district fish biologist Chad Jackson of Moses Lake expects the good fishing measured on opening day will continue through May at Grant County's Blue, Deep, Park, Perch, Vic Meyers and Warden lakes.

The 36 anglers checked at Blue Lake on the opener averaged 3.8 fish caught and 3.6 fish kept, with most averaging 12.5-13.5 inches and carryovers from 16 to 20 inches. Ninety-one anglers checked at Deep Lake had great fishing for 11-15-inch trout, averaging 4.7 fish caught and 3.8

fish kept. Park Lake was a little slower with an average of 2.9 fish caught, but anglers checked there were happy with the quality of the fish, Jackson said.

Perch Lake generally has few anglers because it's mostly a shoreline effort, Jackson said, but it has nice fish and it's a good place to get away from the crowds at the other lakes. Seven anglers were checked on the opener at Perch with an average of 5.3 fish caught and 3.6 fish kept, most 11-13 inches with some 14-16-inch triploids.

Vic Meyers Lake anglers averaged four fish caught, most in the 11-13-inch range with some carryovers and triploids running 14 to 20 inches. Warden Lake has good fishing for mostly 11-inch yearling trout, with some carryovers 16-20 inches. On opening day, 65 anglers checked at Warden averaged 3.9 fish caught and 3.6 fish kept.

Many more lake-fishing opportunities are available throughout the region and can be found on WDFW's [Fish Washington website](#).

Southcentral Washington

(Benton, Franklin, Kittitas and Yakima counties)

Anglers will have a chance to land some feisty spring chinook salmon this month and can catch good-size rainbow trout in well-stocked lakes around the region. Sturgeon also will be available in the waters above John Day Dam and McNary Dams.

With **spring chinook** just beginning to move into the Yakima River, state fishery managers are now planning to open the fishery sometime in mid-May. As of April 29, only four adult hatchery spring chinook had passed Prosser Dam.

"There's no good reason to open the fishery until there are enough fish to catch," said John Easterbrooks, WDFW regional fish program manager. "That would be a disservice to anglers and incur unnecessary monitoring costs for the department."

Easterbrooks said he expects that a fishing rule setting an opening for the fishery will be posted on [WDFW's website](#) and distributed to media outlets during the first or second week of May.

According to the pre-season forecast, approximately 3,200 adult hatchery spring chinook salmon will return to the Yakima River in 2013, compared to 5,700 predicted last year. Easterbrooks said this year's season will be similar to last year's, but will likely reflect a smaller return.

Like last year, anglers will have a daily limit of two adipose-fin-clipped hatchery chinook. All wild salmon, identifiable by an intact adipose fin, must be released unharmed and must not be removed from the water prior to release. Bait is allowed, but anglers will be required to use single-point, barbless hooks with a hook gap from point to shank of 3/4 inch or less when fishing for salmon.

Trout are another option. Waters scheduled to be stocked with rainbow trout this month include Bear Lake, Clear Lake, Dog Lake, McCabe Pond and Columbia Park Pond. A complete trout-planting schedule for south-central lakes and ponds is available on the [WDFW website](#).

The 13th annual **Kids Fishing event** will be held at Columbia Park Pond in Kennewick on May 11. All youths [must pre-register at Kennewick Parks and Recreation](#) to attend.

As of late April, anglers could still catch and keep **legal-size sturgeon** in Lake Umatilla (John Day Dam to McNary Dam), but that fishery will close as soon as the 500-fish quota for those waters is reached. Anglers planning to fish the lake should keep an eye on the WDFW website for possible updates. Farther upriver, the retention fishery for white sturgeon above McNary Dam (Lake Wallula) is scheduled to run through July 31.

In both areas, anglers may retain only those white sturgeon that measure between 43 inches and 54 inches when measured from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail. Sturgeon spawning sanctuaries below Priest Rapids Dam and Ice Harbor Dam close to all sturgeon fishing (both

harvest and catch-and-release) beginning May 1. They reopen for catch-and-release fishing on Aug. 1.

Rather catch **warm-water fish**? Catch rates should continue to improve on area rivers for smallmouth bass, channel catfish and walleye right through spring.

Anglers age 15 or older are reminded that they must purchase a 2013-14 license to fish state waters. Those who fish for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River and its tributaries are also required to purchase an endorsement that helps maintain and improve fishing opportunities throughout the Columbia River Basin. Licenses and permits are available [online](#), by phone (1-866-246-9453) and from sporting goods stores and other retail license dealers around the state.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

Subscriber Mike S. wrote to TGF this week, "I have noticed that for the last two weeks The Guides Forecast has reported that Catch & Release Sturgeon Fishing on the Willamette is excellent for the few that try it. Catch & Release Sturgeon Closed on May 1 it concerns me that you are making it sound like the season is still open, this could encourage misinformed anglers to fish for Catch & Release Sturgeon when it's not even open, due to inaccurate reporting."

Pro guide and TGF editor Bob Rees responded. "Thanks Mike,

"As you can see below, you're both right and wrong. Catch and release is open except for the small area from Willamette Falls to the I-205 Bridge about ½ mile downstream of Willamette Falls. I've Cc'd Willamette Valley editor Chris Vertopoulos. We'll try and clarify this in our next release. Thanks for making us aware of this. It remains open below I-205."

Sturgeon

Willamette River downstream of Willamette Falls including the Multnomah Channel and Gilbert River

Sturgeon retention is closed effective Jan. 1, 2013.

Retention allowed Thursday through Saturday, July 11-13 and Thursday through Saturday, July 18-20. Staff will review catch rates after each retention period and may adjust seasons, if necessary, to stay within allowable harvest of 1,733 fish.

Effective April 1-December 31, 2013, the annual bag limit for Oregon is two legal white sturgeon total for all zones statewide. All white sturgeon caught and retained during January 1-March 31, 2013 will count toward the annual limit for all zones statewide.

Catch and release angling may continue during retention closures, except for the following permanent rules:

Angling for sturgeon, including catch-and-release, is prohibited seven days per week during May 1 through August 31 from Willamette Falls downstream to the I-205 Bridge.

Bank angling is prohibited from the east shore of the Willamette River the entire year at the "Oregon City Wall" defined as the area beginning west of Highway 99E, at the northern-most extent of the parking area near the intersection of 8th Street and Highway 99E in Oregon City, approximately 290 feet downstream of the Oregon City/West Linn bridge (Hwy 43) and extending upstream approximately 1715 feet to the retaining wall extending into the Willamette River at the NW corner of the Blue Heron Paper Mill."

Mike S. replied, "Excuse me... I stand corrected... Now I'm embarrassed, I don't know how I missed those last few words. I even rechecked the regs before I wrote the email. However I am glad to know it's still open. I love to take newbies out and see how much fun they have fishing catch & release for Sturgeon.

"I also want to thank you for publishing the Guides Forecast. I have been subscribing for a few years now, and have read the free version for many years. I rely on & plan my trips many times based on your reports. I can't say enough about how valuable the information in the weekly reports is to help plan when & where to go fishing.

"I especially like to read the reports that Chris Vertopoulos writes and put a lot of faith in what he has to say, especially reports in the Portland area. Seeing how it's a 1.5 hr. drive for me to fish in the Portland area.. I should have known better than to question what Chris writes. It would be an honor to fish with him sometime.

"Tight lines,

"Mike"

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Michael Teague: TGFMichael@gmail.com

Chris Vertopoulos: chrisv@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Free Fishing Weekend events in Southern Oregon:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2013/may/052113b.asp>

South Umpqua Falls Campground Information:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/umpqua/null/recarea/?recid=63858&actid=29>

Freshwater flats fly fishing for Carp:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPSq1i-0YwE>

GOOD LUCK!