

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **May 31<sup>st</sup> – June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** The recent cool, wet weather has revived the spring chinook fishing on the Willamette River. The water temperature had dropped to the mid-50's, putting salmon back on the bite. With the expected continuation of cooler days and some precipitation, we might be in for a spell of late springer action. Fish have been caught in all the usual haunts, but Oregon City has showed the best numbers. Shad continue to be caught at Oregon City as well and should stick around for the next week or two. Catch and release sturgeon fishing remains good on the Willamette River, but anglers are allowed to keep a sturgeon Thursday through Saturday on the Columbia and the fishing has picked up from Kelly Point up to the deadline at Marker 82.

Rising water flows on the McKenzie this week will be moderating as the weather turns dry for the first week of June. Caddis and Pale Morning Dun patterns have been effective recently but look for Green Drakes hatching afternoons when there is cloud cover.

Daily numbers of Chinook have been tapering off at Willamette Falls but nearly 16,000 are upstream now along with about 4,800 summer steelhead which indicates an increasing population of fish in the Santiams. Water levels are high this week but will be improving into the first week of June. Fishing has been fair but spotty on the North Santiam. Most all of the nearly 1,000 summer steelhead which have been counted at Foster Dam were recycled downstream on the South Santiam.

The Clackamas River has been slow overall, but both spring chinook and summer steelhead are available. Recent rains have pushed the river up to a higher than optimum flow, making for challenging conditions. The river is expected to be on the drop and should be back to good fishable condition by the weekend.

Spring chinook and summer steelhead fishing on the Sandy River has been average at best. The river has been running a bit high but not at all unfishable. The forecast indicates a slow drop through next week which puts the river at prime level by the start of the weekend. We are approaching the peak of the spring chinook run on the Sandy, so the coming weeks should give up some fish.

Hard-core anglers typically stay at home for Free Fishing Weekend but it's important that we take a more positive view as this is a great opportunity to personally demonstrate to friends and neighbors why you're so passionate about fishing. OR to take that youngster who's at an age where he'll decide how he'll most enjoy spending his free time: on the couch or on the river? You could be the influence for him or her to make a good decision. Free Fishing Weekend is June 1st and 2nd.

Trout planting has taken place in most regularly-stocked waters in anticipation of additional participation over the coming weekend.

**Northwest –** Spring chinook have made a decent showing in the Tillamook district but bay angler opportunity will wane as the recent rain freshet put a large portion of the bay population into area rivers. Upper bay anglers did score fair results this week on the big tide swing however. The lower bay should turn on by the weekend as a weak tide series returns. Unfortunately, rough seas are in the forecast, making the ocean a poor option for halibut (Thursday through

Saturday), salmon, crab and bottomfish. Lower Tillamook Bay anglers will likely find their best opportunity during the last half of outgoing tide over the weekend.

Driftboaters had a rare opportunity this week with high flows making for decent opportunity for north coast anglers working the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. Although catches were only fair, water conditions should remain favorable through Saturday. Summer steelhead have not made a strong showing however; anglers should keep their focus on salmon, targeting the deeper, slower water using plugs or egg/shrimp combinations. The Trask will remain the top option as it receives the greatest number of returning hatchery fish but the Wilson and Nestucca should come on-line with fair catches into the weekend. Bank anglers should also have good opportunity through early next week but if you're going to fish the Trask or Three Rivers, pay attention to the new regulations designed to reduce illegal snagging in these high traffic areas.

Offshore opportunities will remain limited with the rough seas that are predicted. Crabbing in local estuaries is poor.

**Southwest**- The next opportunity for all-depth halibut fishing off the central coast will Thursday through Friday, May 30-June 1.

Southwest beaches have produced not only large redbait surfperch recently but some remarkably large specimens. Fishing is best when the ocean is fairly calm.

Fishing for redbait surf perch picked up again at Winchester Bay over the Memorial Day weekend following a two-week lull since initial catches were made. Hopefully, the spawning run will provide steady fishing for a while. Bay crabbing has been slow with best results coming out of Half Moon Bay. Shad fishing should be decent in the Umpqua mainstem with water levels dropping. The North Umpqua is on the rise this week but should be recovering by the weekend. Smallmouth bass fishing is improving on the upper mainstem and lower South Umpqua.

Boats were able to get out of Gold Beach over the past weekend for limits of rockfish and lings but blanked on nearshore halibut. Rain this week put some water into the lower Rogue but not enough and levels are rapidly dropping to pre-freshet levels. Needless to say, springer fishing is slow and look no more promising on the Grants Pass stretch. The upper Rogue is still the place to be with springers entering the hatchery daily and water dropping late this week.

While salmon fishing is usually unproductive at the May 1 opener, off shore trollers out of Brookings got a pleasant surprise over the past weekend, hooking several early chinook. As with many southeast rivers, trout season opened on the Chetco over the past weekend. Sea-run cutthroat migrate back to the ocean in springtime, but there are always some which abide. Consequently, fishing has been fair to good here.

The clouds of tiny bugs hatching at Diamond Lake are annoying anglers and results for trout have slowed with foul, cold weather. A head net is recommended for those trying to fish.

**Eastern** – While the early hatch of big bugs on the Deschutes was fast and furious, it has started to wind down already in the Maupin area. Despite fewer Salmon Flies and Golden Stones in the area, trout will continue to be looking up for them for a while.

Nymphs have been effective for good numbers of trout and whitefish on the Wallowa River.

Trout fishing was good at Wallowa Lake over the past weekend. There are plenty of smallish kokanee with the daily limit recently increased from 10 per day to 20.

Kokanee fishing has been good early mornings at Wickiup. It's best to get out at first light to beat the insect hatch at which time the bite shuts down.

**SW Washington-** Spring chinook options are waning with poor returns to nearly all district facilities this year. Anglers have been discouraged but are hopeful that summer steelhead will provide options into July.

Columbia River beach angling was fair for steelhead on the recent tide series and although spring chinook opportunities have once again opened up, catches have been light.

The Wind River and Drano Lake fisheries have slowed dramatically but the Klickitat River should offer up some limited options with summer steelhead soon on tap.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – After quite a stint of lost opportunity, the Columbia once again shines with possibilities for the remainder of spring. Spring chinook, both for jacks and adults has opened back up again, steelhead are present and sturgeon catches are improving. Anglers certainly have some options on the mainstem Columbia below the I-5 Bridge in Portland.

Starting with salmon, rumors of some fair fishing for adult salmon have come from as low as Westport. Some late-season spring chinook have been coming into the cleaning station for anglers using plugs in the Westport area. One report claimed double-digit opportunities although as many have already experienced, the fall-off rate is rather embarrassing these days. Here's the real numbers based on ODF&W's weekend creel check:

**Gorge Bank:**

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult spring kept, plus one unclipped adult chinook released for 26 salmonid anglers; and 1,213 shad kept for 215 shad anglers.

**Gorge Boats:**

Weekend checking showed three adipose fin-clipped adult chinook and one adipose fin-clipped jack chinook kept for five salmonid boats (14 anglers); and 363 shad kept for nine shad boats (25 anglers).

**Troutdale Boats:**

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped jack chinook kept, plus three unclipped adult chinook released for 35 salmonid boats (78 anglers); and 84 shad kept for 14 shad boats (34 anglers).

**Portland to Westport Bank:**

Weekly checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult chinook, two adipose fin-clipped jack chinook and six adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept; plus two unclipped adult chinook and one unclipped steelhead released for 149 salmonid anglers.

**Portland to Westport Boats:**

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult chinook, two adipose fin-clipped jack chinook, and one adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept; plus one unclipped steelhead released for 43 salmonid boats (101 anglers); and 80 shad kept for seven shad boats (16 anglers).

**Estuary Boats (Tongue Point to Westport):**

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped adult chinook, two adipose fin-clipped jack chinook and one adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept for seven boats (15 anglers).

Based on reports from the steelhead opener at mid-month, I actually anticipated better fishing on this tide series than actually witnessed. At least the weather improved on Saturday.

Sturgeon fishing continues to be pretty good for this time of year. Both the Longview stretch and the estuary are producing fair results with Longview actually leading in success rates. Here is the ODF&W breakdown for the weekend sturgeon effort:

**Gorge Boats (below Marker 82):**

Weekend checking showed one sublegal sturgeon released for two boats (five anglers).

**Troutdale Bank:**

No report.

**Troutdale Boats:**

Weekend checking showed six sublegal sturgeon released for two boats (four anglers).

**Portland to Westport Bank:**

Weekly checking showed one legal white sturgeon kept for four bank anglers.

**Portland to Longview Boats:**

Weekend checking showed 16 legal white sturgeon kept, plus three oversize and 96 sublegal sturgeon released for 25 boats (61 anglers).

**Estuary Boats (Puget Island to Buoy 10):**

Weekly checking showed 48 legal white sturgeon kept, plus one legal, eight oversize and 208 sublegal sturgeon released for 84 boats (246 anglers).

**The Dalles Pool:**

Weekly checking showed 19 sublegal sturgeon released for 15 bank anglers; and one oversize and 23 sublegal sturgeon released for three boats (six anglers).

**John Day Pool:**

Weekly checking showed one legal white sturgeon released for 15 bank anglers; and one legal white sturgeon kept, plus one oversize and eight sublegal sturgeon released for six boats (13 anglers).

It's still a know-it-all fishery where guides and anglers that have consistently produced results over the years, are still producing catches in their secret little hide-outs. In the estuary, sand shrimp is producing in the shallower waters on stronger tides and anchovies is producing in deeper waters on softer tides. There has been a Tongue Point bite close to low slack and the very first part of incoming tide but it doesn't last long and that's where a lot of boats end up pursuing fish so competition is high. Most guides are remaining above Tongue Point, pursuing fish on both sides (the shipping channel and the Marker 3 channel) of the sands just upstream of Tongue Point. A salmon or steelhead/sturgeon combo trip is an option but you have to target the salmon/steelhead on the outgoing tide.

More rough waters offshore so bottomfishing and halibut are not an option this weekend, at least if you want to preserve your kidneys.

**The Guide's Forecast** – With the softer tide series this weekend, lower Columbia River salmon and steelhead action will be somewhat subdued. Action is always better on the minus tide series as fish gravitate closer to the shoreline in the stronger flows. If you have to plunk however, choose hot colors for steelhead (pink, orange and red) and green or purple for chinook. As a

general rule, not until steelhead counts get close to 200 per day at Bonneville does fishing for them get good. We haven't even broken 40 steelhead for a day's passage yet.

How about those shad counts though? If you want shad, now is the time to go. Too bad salmon fishing isn't open where the best shad fishing is, what a bonus that would be.

Salmon are certainly in good enough numbers to pursue them using herring or plugs if you fish deep enough. In the lower spring flows, fish are likely to be deeper but don't overlook shallow areas as well. Numbers are dwindling as the run shifts from spring to summer run and the recent gillnet opener should have slowed catch rates somewhat.

Sturgeon fishers also have something to celebrate. Lower than normal flows (at least compared to previous years) means catch rates for sturgeon continue to pick up. The Longview area will likely continue to be the best bet but the estuary is picking up too, especially upstream of Tongue Point. Keepers should be present in both shallow and deep water haunts this weekend. It might be wise to pick up both anchovies and sand shrimp for bait. For deep water, the first part and last part of outgoing tide will produce the best results. For shallow water areas, the first part of incoming will produce the best.

The ocean for halibut and bottomfish will be a very poor option this weekend. Lower Columbia crabbing is nothing to write home about either.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** reports, "Shad have been the main focus for anglers on the Willamette River. The bulk of the run is in, but fishing has been a bit spotty due to unstable weather. Shad fishing can be red hot, when the sun shines and the barometer stays steady. But even without stable weather, the shad will get caught, just with less consistency. Shad are fun and easy to catch, they fight hard for their size and they are willing biters. Great fun for kids and adults too. The down side is, they taste like lard with some sawdust mixed in for texture. Don't ask me how I know this. I have heard of people smoking and canning them, but you can smoke anything and make it taste OK. My opinion is that it's not worth the trouble. Shad do however make excellent crab, sturgeon and halibut bait and that is by far the widest use of them once harvested. Shad like small bright and shiny lures. Tiny Dick Nites, green and chartreuse grubs on a jig head, shad darts and Hildebrandt Flicker Spinners are all shad getters. Spring Chinook are still available and a handful are taken every day. The best action for springers is at Oregon City, but space is limited with the hordes of shad fishers. Salmon fishermen are scoring the occasional keeper Chinook in the Multnomah Channel and the Portland Harbor as well. The cooler water temperatures have helped to revive the salmon bite, although we are on the tail end of the run. Eggs, sand shrimp and prawns are the preferred baits at O.C. while herring and spinners are getting bites downstream. Catch and release sturgeon fishing remains strong for anglers willing to hunt for them. You might drop into a favorite spot and drown baits for 30 minutes with so much as a stare from a sturgeon, you check the fish finder and notice a blank screen. Move to another spot (and maybe even another) before you notice the fish are stacked on top of each other like cordwood. You get bit the instant your first bait hits the bottom and the action continues for an hour straight. Keep moving till you find the fish and success will follow. The lower river has been the favorite because that's where the majority of the effort has been, but sturgeon can be found from Oregon City Falls to the mouth at Kelly Point."

Water levels on the McKenzie have been fluctuating this week but will settle down for the weekend to come. Leaburg Lake will be planted with hatchery trout every week through July,

The North Santiam came up - way up - at Jefferson with rain this week, rising from 3.5 feet to six feet today, May 30th and is forecast to rise slightly on Friday this week. The South Santiam has followed a similar pattern. Santiam River levels will be dropping through the coming week. Foster Dam counts as of May 29th indicate over 1,100 summer steelhead have made the trip up the South Santiam. Nearly every one of these fish has been sucked from the river to be trucked downstream for steelheaders. Of the nearly 300 spring Chinook which have been counted at the facility, 175 have been recycled.

**Free Fishing Weekend** is this coming Saturday and Sunday, June 1st and 2nd. This event is reflected in trout stocking schedules, events and in angling participation as no licenses or tags are required. See **Random Links**, below, for lists of Free Fishing Weekend events around Oregon.

Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, Harriet Lake, Henry Hagg Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Alton Baker Canal, Blue River above Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above and below Leaburg Lake, Roaring River Park Pond, Salmon Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake, and the Middle Fork of the Willamette above Hills Creek Reservoir will be stocked with hatchery trout.

**The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** predicts, "The Shad run is about to start waning as the peak usually only lasts a few days. Fish will be caught for another week or so, but expect the numbers to drop off noticeably within a few days. With the sea lions gone and the river running a cool 57 degree's, fishermen might be in for some abnormally late salmon fishing below Willamette Falls at Oregon City. We are definitely on the back side of a smaller than expected run, but a few fish are always available till the fourth of July. Warmer weather is in the forecast starting this weekend, so the best opportunity will happen sooner rather than later. Typically, the Willamette's sturgeon bite diminishes by the middle of June as a bulk of the fish make way for greener pastures in the Columbia River. Although there are plenty of sturgeon still available, look for the bite to taper off in the coming weeks."

As McKenzie water levels drop, trout fishing will continue to deliver. This is the time of year to expect to find summer steelhead and an improving number of spring Chinook. Targeting these fish will become a worthwhile pursuit as numbers build. Results will be better once the river returns to fishable level and flow. I saw that one guide had trips for springers on the Mac nearly booked solid, a good indication that positive results await recreational fishers.

Expect to find high water on the Santiam system through the weekend. Steelhead fishing has been fair on the North and South Santiam with springers being taken on occasion. Summer steelhead numbers have picked up at Willamette Falls over the past week with the total approaching 5,500. Over 16,000 spring Chinook are also upriver now. It will pay to target these fish on the Santiam as the river recovers from rain this week with early mornings a prime time to be on the river.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** reports, "Both spring Chinook and summer steelhead are available in the Clackamas River, but the river has been running high resulting in little effort. Some opportunity exists in the upper stretches from Barton upstream, especially for bank anglers at McIver Park. The fishing and the catching should resume when the river drops closer to 12.5 feet. Peak spring Chinook season is upon us so fishermen should have their gear ready and the vehicles and boats fueled.

"The Sandy River has also been running on the high side, but prior to the rise, small handfuls of summer steelhead and spring Chinook had been taken. Boaters prefer sand shrimp and small gobs of cured roe, back trolled with a diver. Smaller plugs back trolled from a sled or drift boat also works well for both species. Bank anglers looking to hook into a springer, like to bobber fish with the same baits, while a 1/8 or 1/4 jig under a float works well for the steelhead. Hardware, like spoons and spinners will also account for a few fish."

**The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** predicts, "The Clackamas River should drop back into shape by Monday or Tuesday. With the peak of the spring salmon run upon us, local fishermen can then expect to catch springers and summer steelhead with more consistency after the weekend. The best case scenario for a lasting season includes weekly freshets or rain and cooler temperatures."

"The same holds true for the Sandy River. East county anglers can expect the river to drop into premium shape just in time for the weekend. Both salmon and steelhead will be on deck and the best part of the spring Chinook run is right in front of us. Expect the fishing to hold up through independence day and to stay more or less constant, as long as we don't see too much sun or too much rain."

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Despite terrible weather, action for Tillamook chinook was possible if you were brave enough to whether rain and wind on an open estuary. If you happened to be in the right place at the right time, you may have found fair to good action for spring chinook. The best report I heard of was a 5 fish day for a guide working the Ghost Hole late last week. The big minus tide series in the upper bay also produced fair results even though it was likely that fish were moving through at a steady clip to take advantage of the high water in the district's rivers, particularly the Trask and Wilson Rivers. More on river fishing in a bit. Trollers working the upper bay over the weekend did find a good bite at first light. As the tide continued to run out, action slowed, which is somewhat uncharacteristic for upper bay fishing. It was an indication that fish were clearly on the move to get upstream. The Oyster House Hole (Memaloose Boat Ramp), the mouth of the Wilson, picket fence and Ray's Place Piling (Corral) all produced fish this week on herring, plugs and spinners. It's clear that there was a batch of fish headed for their natal streams. The lower bay and ocean were very poor options.

As for stream fishing, it's rather unprecedented that anglers get the opportunity to pursue springers on the coast this late in the season. Fish are clearly in the systems with the Trask a top option given the fact it receives the largest number of hatchery plants. Anglers working the river have done fair over the past week but it's been hard to find a window when the river isn't rising. I fished the Wilson on Memorial Day and was the only boat on the drift from Vanderzanden's to Sollie Smith. We started off under ideal water conditions but about half way through the drift, the water levels started to come up and lots of leafy debris started coming down the river. This seemed to turn the bite off although it's hard to call 3 bites an official "bite". We did manage to take one hatchery springer from the upper reach but it was pure ecstasy to have the river to ourselves with the streamside vegetation in full bloom. We're used to floating this stretch in the winter time when there are no leaves on the trees. It was beautiful! We got bites on both diver and eggs and plugs but the fish we caught came on a K-14X green/blue Kwikfish fished in about 10 feet of water.

As I mentioned, the Trask is another strong option although there are considerably more people pursuing springers over there. Action has been good, especially after the initial rain freshet that rose the river by almost 2 feet before a short drop in flows. Early in the rise produced a few biters but the water drop late last week and over the weekend put ample numbers of fish into the system although no one reported easy limits despite the quality opportunity. Hatchery

manager Jim Skaar took a 2-fish limit in 2 casts on the 22<sup>nd</sup> in the afternoon. He stated he walked the creek (Gold Creek, the hatchery's water intake) and was bumping fish all the way down. There are a lot of fish in the system over there.

Springers are well distributed throughout Tillamook County streams now with Three Rivers also receiving a lot of attention as well over the weekend. Three Rivers, the Nestucca mainstem, and of course the Trask and Wilson Rivers as well as Big Creek along Highway 30 out of Astoria should all have good numbers of salmon present. Bank anglers should have good access to them well into the weekend with flows expected to remain ideal for several more days to come.

Saltwater fishing was not an option recently as rough ocean conditions didn't allow for safe (or legal) bar crossings lately. It doesn't look like this week's halibut opener will be a fun one either. See the Forecast section.

Razor clam digging was hit or miss for folks over the weekend. Diggers that kept their noses to the grindstone typically pulled up a limit. When seas combine to top over 10 foot however, success goes down. The next minus tide series starts on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Alder Lake, Big Creek Reservoirs 1 & 2, Buck Lake, Cape Meares Lake, Cleawox Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Dune Lake, Erhart Lake, Georgia Lake, Hebo Lake, Nedonna Pond, North Gerogia Lake, Olalla Creek Reservoir, Perkins Lake, Siltcoos Lagoon, Thissel Pond and Town Lake will be planted with trout for Free Fishing Weekend.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It's springers, springers, springers here in Tillamook County. Although we lost a lot of bay fish to the recent rain freshet, there are still a lot of salmon to come. Bay fishing may taper for a while as fish continue to make their way into the river systems but both boats and bank anglers will have some great opportunity through the weekend.

We'll be in transition week as tides switch from extreme too soft over the weekend. Upper bay anglers had their days and now a shift to lower bay fishing will become the norm by the weekend. Hopefully, we didn't lose too many fish to the river on this last series of rain freshets. If you are going to fish the estuary, it would be wise to target your efforts in the lower bay starting on Saturday. Although flows will still be higher than they have been in a while, with the tidal strength slowing fish aren't as likely to move up-bay as fast as they have been. Unfortunately, the ocean is forecast to be rough, making an outside option a poor one. I'll be targeting salmon from sun-up through low slack. High tide occurs pretty early in the morning over the weekend, you won't want to miss it. Although the high tide bite can produce some fish, the best part of the tide will consistently be the last half of outgoing tide. Once the peak ebb has passed, it will be game on for those trolling herring along the jetty (north jetty, inside the bay, that is). These fish, staging just outside of the bay entrance, will wait until the tide slows so they don't have to expend too much energy upon their grand entrance into the bay. They'll keep trekking in through low slack but oftentimes, the bulk of them have passed over the bar before the tide slacks out. Follow them up into the bay.

If you're going to fish the river, you have the best chance for success on the Trask. With the largest number of smolts put into the system on this river, it will obviously get the largest return of hatchery adults for us to harvest. Although you can still fish from the Cedar Creek Boat ramp downstream, there are new regulations that only allows for bobber fishing in this stretch. The new regulations are in blue and this is taken right from the regulation booklet:

**Trask River** (Tillamook Co.):

1. Mainstem up to North and South forks, (at Trask County Park)

including tidewater

- Open for adipose fin-clipped *steelhead* all year.
- Open for adipose fin-clipped *spring Chinook salmon* April 1-July 31.
- Open for *fall Chinook salmon* Aug. 1-Dec. 31; except **closed** for adult *Chinook salmon* upstream from Hwy 101 Bridge Aug. 1-Sept. 15. Two adult *Chinook* per day, 4 in any 7 consecutive days, 10 per season in aggregate from all Nehalem, Tillamook, and Nestucca bays and streams.
- Use of bait allowed.
- **Closed** from marker below Dam Hole upstream to Blue Ridge Creek Sept. 1-Nov. 30.

The Dam Hole is located near Milepost 7 on the Trask River Road.

- **Closed** from Gold Creek, at hatchery, 200 feet upstream and 900 feet downstream June 1-Nov. 30.

#### **Gear Restrictions:**

- From Cedar Creek wooden boat slide (RM 10.9) downstream to Loren's Drift wooden boat slide (RM 9.0) from May 1 to July 31 angling is restricted to fly angling and bobber angling only. Bobber angling gear must include a bobber and a leader no longer than 36 inches in length. Any weight (except the bobber) may be no more than 36 inches from the lowermost hook when suspended vertically. The leader below the bobber must remain suspended in the water column and not resting on the river bottom.

Unless you're a bobber angler, this will make boat fishing in this stretch a challenging situation. I did fish this stretch on Wednesday, floating from the Cedar Creek Boat Ramp to Loren's Drift. We spent a considerable amount of time in the hatchery hole but only saw one fish caught despite great water conditions. I thought that this hole would be wall to wall with salmon; I didn't necessarily get that feeling. Use smaller baits in this stretch and do bring sand shrimp; it seems to make a difference.

If you're going to target the Wilson or Nestucca/Three Rivers Basins, they have summer steelhead too but you wouldn't know it from the lack of success what few anglers are reporting (including myself). We did pursue steelhead on the Wilson on Monday to no avail. Here is the forecast for the Wilson through the weekend and beyond, it looks very favorable. A falling river is a productive river:



As for offshore, well, look for yourself, you won't be impressed with the weather:

**FRI**

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT. GUSTS TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT AT 11 SECONDS.

**FRI NIGHT**

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT AT 9 SECONDS.

**SAT**

NE WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT... BECOMING W IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 9 SECONDS.

**SAT NIGHT**

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT... RISING TO 20 TO 25 KT WITH GUSTS TO 30 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 9 SECONDS.

**SUN**

NW WIND 20 TO 25 KT. COMBINED SEAS 9 FT.

**MON**

N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. COMBINED SEAS 9 FT.

Halibut, salmon, crab, bottomfish oh my! I don't think so. It's likely that the biggest wind waves and swells will occur in the afternoon but from these forecasts, anglers aren't likely to have any fun during any part of the day out there. Sorry, this weekend looks like a wash.....literally. Did I mention that bay crabbing sucks?

**Central & South Coast Reports** – When boats have been able to launch out of Depoe Bay and Newport for bottomfish this week, rockfish limits were easy but ling cod have been a little more challenging to locate.

According to offshore forecasts, Saturday may be the best opportunity to cross into the ocean this weekend but conditions can change rapidly at this time of year.

During the last all-depth opener off the central Oregon coast May 16-18, boats took 16,229 pounds, roughly half the number taken on the initial opportunity. With 58% remaining in the spring season quota, all-depth Halibut may be targeted Thursday through Saturday this week. The ocean is scheduled to open for all-depth halibut again on June 6th through 8th. If catch rates are similar to previous openers, it may fulfill the spring quota. We'll be keeping close track on the numbers and report them here.

Groundfish may be taken on the same trip but must be targeted following halibut catches. This option is only available to offshore anglers on all-depth fishing days with rock and ling efforts still confined to 180 feet or shallower. Thanks and a top o' the fishing hat to **Pro Guide Bob Rees** for clarification of this regulation.

Nearshore halibut quota numbers were not updated as of mid-day Thursday, May 30th, but with 97% remaining following the May 2nd through 4th fishery, it's probable that we're still good to go.

South coast beaches have been kicking out some good catches of redbait surf perch, limits for those who target a productive area and put in two or three hours and can use a bag limit of 15 have a shot at it if they choose to do so.

Boats launching out of Winchester Bay have had little success with ocean Chinook. Inside the bay, redbait surfperch have rewarded anglers with some good catches but results have been spotty. The Umpqua rose a couple of feet at Elkton mid-week and will remain high through Thursday and Friday this week. While this is likely to roil the water in the lower Umpqua and shut down shad fishing for several days, it should also motivate spring Chinook, which have been escaping to the North Umpqua seeking respite from low clear water, to pay some attention to angler's offerings. Shad fishing will pick up as the river drops and should be good during sunny weather. With well over 12,000 summer steelhead above Winchester Dam, the flies-only section of the North Santiam has been improving. South Umpqua smallmouth bass fishing is expected to rev up as water in the South Santiam warms a few degrees.

Ocean Chinook fishing has been better for boats launching out of Charleston than elsewhere on the south coast with every other rod taking a Chinook. Crabbing in Coos Bay has been yielding juveniles and females but very few keeper Dungeness. Rock and jetty fishing has been spotty, producing only a few greenling and rockfish. While clamming here is excellent, the next round of minus tides will not occur until the second week in June. A handful of shad have been taken on the South Coos River but runs here are not significant.

Fishing for sea-run cuts is expected to improve on the lower Coquille as the river drops and clears. The Coquille River gets a little better run of shad than the Coos with fish being taken between the town of Coquille and Arago Boat Ramp.

Wild (unclipped) Chinook may be kept on the Rogue below the Fisher's Ferry boat ramps which is the landmark separating the middle from upper river now that Gold Ray Dam is gone. That makes every Chinook in the lower and middle river a keeper. Unfortunately, the lower Rogue will be rising on Friday this week and while dropping from June 1 forward, one can only hope that this little bump will improve results. Springers will be moving through the middle river and this freshet may put a few more on the bite. Best results are expected on the upriver however. Rain this week drew spring Chinook upstream to Cole Rivers Hatchery and now that the skies have cleared and water levels are moderating, expectations are high for the upper Rogue.

Chetco levels are high at this writing but the river actually crested on May 28th, has been dropping since with flows continuing to moderate over the foreseeable future. Sea-run cutthroat trout are available in tidewater and the lower Chetco.

Fishing has improved a little this week at Diamond Lake, particularly for trollers, a few of which reported limits. It's still a good idea to take lightweight face masks or netted headgear as clouds of tiny bugs will remain problematic over the coming weekend.

Rogue above Lost Creek, Howard Prairie Reservoir, Lost Creek Reservoir, Medco Pond, Lake Selmac, Expo Pond, Fish Lake, Lower and Middle Empire Lake, Millicoma Pond, North and South Tenmile Lakes, Loon Lake, Lake Marie, Plat 1 Reservoir, Red Top Lake, Clearwater Fly, Cooper Creek Reservoir, Galesville Reservoir, Hemlock Lake, Lake of the Woods and Lemolo Reservoir will be planted with trout to delight Free Fishing Weekend anglers.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – The early hatch of Salmon Flies and Golden Stones on the Deschutes, fired by above-average temperatures was waning earlier this week around Maupin. Now it's getting tough to even find big bugs on this stretch. Anglers will find redsides still looking up but better be prepared with a variety of imitations that include Pale Morning Duns and Caddis patterns.

Crooked River fly fishers have been enjoying good results. Caddis are hatching in good number now but that will change with sunny weather. While most of the trout here are small, every so often a 20-incher will catch anglers off guard.

Bull trout fishing is fair but many have been challenged locating kokanee. For those who have found the kokes, fishing has been good.

Green Peter has been producing good numbers of kokanee to trollers at the east end of the reservoir. Expect to find kokes in 35 to 40 foot depths. While there are plenty of fish here, a 12 incher would be considered a big one. The bag limit is 25 fish per day.

Once a well-known trophy kokanee fishery, the Wallowa Lake story (and fishery) has changed. OFFW biologists estimated an increasing population of smallish (under 10 inch) kokes from around 70,000 previously to about 900,000 currently which motivated the ODFW to increase in the daily bag limit from 10 to 20, five of which may be over 12 inches. Think of Wallowa Lake as a numbers rather than a big fish destination.

Kokanee fishing has been slow at Wickiup but fish are good-sized here.

Fly fishing has been rewarding at Davis Lake this week, even though unsettles weather. Largemouth bass over five pounds have been landed.

### **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 runsize 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**

**Reader Dan O.** wrote to ask, "I would like to inquire about shad fishing opportunities on the Siuslaw river, as I live in Florence. I have been unable to configure Outlook so I can send an e-mail to Michael Teague. Can I get his e-mail address or can he e-mail or call me so I can inquire about any info that I can learn about techniques and where on the river to try for Shad. Thank you for your time."

TGF webmaster Doug Rees forwarded this to Michael Teague who replied, "I considered mentioning the Siuslaw in the last full-length TGF newsletter, but while there are a few shad entering the Siuslaw, frankly, there are not many. The Umpqua offers a much better shad fishery with more and larger fish.

"I could try to find out more about the minor shad run the Siuslaw if you'd like, but if I lived in Florence (as my brother did several years ago), I'd take a trip south to the Umpqua. I would suggest waiting until the first weekend in June as the Umpqua mainstem should have settled

down following rainfall this week [it hasn't, yet – Ed.]. I'd also only go when it's sunny 'cause that's when shad fishing is best.

"You didn't mention whether you're fishing for the sport of it or to use the shad for crab or other bait purposes, but if the latter, a day trip should take care of you needs. Please let me know if you decide to go. I can provide specific locations the most productive lures.

"We appreciate every reader contact. Please write again anytime."

**Write to the TGF staff:**

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**Random Links**

Free Fishing Weekend events in Northwest Region:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2013/may/052313.asp>

Free Fishing Weekend events in Northeast Oregon:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2013/may/052813b.asp>

Free Fishing Weekend events in Southern Oregon:

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

Free Fishing Weekend events scheduled for central and southeast Oregon

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2013/may/052813.asp>

ODFW to host fly fishing class on North Fork Coquille River

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/education/outdoor\\_skills/workshops/adult\\_fly\\_fishing\\_coquille.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/education/outdoor_skills/workshops/adult_fly_fishing_coquille.asp)

**GOOD LUCK!**