

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 2nd – August 8th, 2013**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Steelhead fishing below Bonneville Dam has been spotty. The catch has been roughly 80% wild to 20% hatchery and most are ranging 4-6 Lbs. Sturgeon fishing is also on the slow side with little effort. A few fish are also getting taken off the mouths of the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis and Sandy Rivers.

Willamette sturgeon fishers were given another opener Thursday through Sunday. Effort was way down from the previous week and few fish were caught. No announcements have been made as of yet for a future opener. Walleye fishing in the Multnomah Channel has been exceptionally good. So much so, that anglers who have yet to try it are venturing out and having reasonable success. Worm harnesses fished behind a bottom walker, trolled upstream is the ticket. Look for water from 12-20 feet deep. Bass fishing has also been good in the main river and anglers putting in their time are having 10-20 fish days.

While McKenzie River water levels have continued to gradually drop, fluctuation in flows has moderated. This should come as good news for fly fishers targeting trout. With the McKenzie receiving a smaller percentage of steelhead than other Willamette tributaries, catches have been fewer this year.

North Santiam levels are low but fishable. Trout fishing is fair but steelhead success is slow this season with the numbers of summers in the Willamette system far fewer than in previous years.

On the Clackamas River, summer steelhead fishing remains slow with little effort. Scattered fish are present in the section between Carver and Rivermill Dam, but anglers must work first and last light for any success. Low water tactics are a must with small baits and subdued lure colors getting the fish's attention.

Sandy River anglers have both summer steelhead and a few late spring chinook available. The water from the mouth of the Salmon River down to Oxbow County Park holds the best opportunity. Like the Clackamas, anglers are encouraged to use light gear and small baits for best results.

Northwest – Coho fishing has taken off again outside of the mouth of the Columbia. Although most boats continue to travel SW of the Columbia River Buoy, fish have been taken in the 150-foot range recently. This fishery should stay consistently good through August.

The Buoy 10 fishery is expected to produce mediocre results at first, with the mouth of Young's Bay the exception. Fair numbers of Rogue strain chinook, also called select area brights, have been taken by gillnetters and sport boats alike in lower Young's Bay. The chinook have been running large and the mainstem opener should produce nicely near high tide for herring trollers. This may be the last year for this fishery before a bubble restriction is enacted so take advantage of it. Mainstem chinook likely won't show in earnest for another week. Fishery managers are expecting a banner year.

Chinook catches in Nehalem Bay are good. Herring trollers working the mouth to Wheeler are producing good catches of summer chinook, likely to peak the first 10 days of August. George Hemingway of Manzanita, recently recognized by Governor Kitzhaber for his conservation work, landed a 16-pound chinook off of the Wheeler dock just over a week ago, simply mooching a

herring.

Coho fishing out of Garibaldi has been good but closes after today (July 31st). Albacore will be the primary focus for the next several weeks for the Garibaldi fleet.

Ocean crabbing remains good but most of the catches are soft-shelled. Bay crabbing is only fair.

Southwest- Wednesday this week was the last opportunity for coho in the ocean and the season had a hot finish. One charter out of Depoe Bay reported on July 29th with 11 hatchery coho on board having released 15 natives. The non-selective (hatchery or wild) season begins with a 2-day opener offshore starting September 1 & 2 for a quota of 16,000 coho.

Offshore wind and wave conditions are expected to be friendly for the weekend off the central Oregon coast. Mild westerly winds will be a pleasant change from gusts out of the north. This should come as good news to tuna hopefuls anxious to locate albacore as the water warms this week.

The all-depth halibut fishery for the summer season will start Friday and Saturday, August 2 and 3, continuing every other Friday and Saturday until the quota is fulfilled.

Chinook fishing has been slow for trollers at Winchester Bay. There's an occasional flurry of action for those fishing the jaws but overall daily catches have been in the single digits according to fish checkers.

Diminutive craft will return from the ocean following the Kayak Fishing Challenge out of Sunset Bay State Park near Coos Bay on Saturday, August 3rd. Expect to see large cabezon and lingcod at the weigh-in.

Offshore trips were sporadic out of Gold Beach over the past week with ocean conditions unsettled. Boats did well for rockfish and lingcod when they could get lines into the water. Rogue Bay has been producing fair, steady catches of chinook. The lower Rogue remains too warm to fish well and chinook seem to be off the bite in the middle river. A mix of summer steelhead and spring chinook remain available on the upper Rogue. Cutthroat trout fishing is also good in this stretch.

When boats have been able to cross the bar out of Brookings, ocean salmon fishing has remained rewarding. Anchovies, often festooned with hoochies, are effective trolled on the 35-foot range over about 150 feet of water for chinook averaging 16 pounds but occasionally hitting the 30-pound mark.

Eastern – Interest in Deschutes steelhead is building with the occasional summer landed by spinner flingers recently. Some improvement is expected toward mid-August and into September.

In the absence of rainfall and with hot eastside weather, Wallowa water levels have dropped and trout fishing has slowed. Nymphs remain effective for fair catches with dries effective evenings. Trout fishing is good in Wallowa Lake.

Bass fishing is good in the low water of the Grande Ronde River as smallmouth move upriver from the warmer water of the Snake River.

Kokanee fishing is excellent at Odell Lake with evening trolling most effective. Pink lures are preferred here.

SW Washington- The Cowlitz remains a viable bet for summer steelhead, the best option in the district. Kalama anglers are witnessing poor results. Fall chinook will soon show in these systems however but not for several more weeks.

Anglers fishing Drano Lake are finally producing catches although the vast majority of them are wild and must be released.

Horseshoe Lake in Woodland was planted with 600 brown trout averaging half-pound each on July 25.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With the ocean waters south of Cape Falcon closing on Wednesday, anglers will be focusing their efforts now more than ever out of the mouth of the Columbia River. Action has been steady but recently coho have been hard to come by.

On Wednesday, I took out a group of six anglers targeting salmon southwest of Buoy 2. We started in about 150 feet of water and easily worked our way out to over 250 foot of water. Expecting to find fish shallow, we came up short so we picked up and went to the CR Buoy. Working our way southwest from there, we found consistent action for the next several hours. By the time our day was done, we had gone through over for 5 pounds of anchovies; likely over 100 baits. Unfortunately, a large portion of the catch was undersized Chinook salmon. We had to work for what we got, taking 5 chinook and three Hatchery coho. Three of the five Chinook were just over the legal limit. One of the Chinook was a Rogue strain, destined for Young's Bay. Those fish are discernible by a left ventral clip. They also are short but stocky in stature. The biggest one was about 16 pounds. I did hear of one that was closer to 25 pounds taken nearby. We fished until one in the afternoon as ocean conditions were dreamy; only a very small rolling swell with no wind.

By the looks of the rest of the fleet, nobody did exceptionally well either. Coho were a rare find on Wednesday but there are reliable rumors of massive amounts of salmon off of Tillamook Head. Sardine seiners fishing in that area are reporting unimaginable numbers of salmon on the surface. One kayak angler fishing near Cape Falcon reported similar sightings. Coho should start to stage closer to the Columbia River mouth as we near mid-August. Action north of the river has been reported as poor, even those boats fishing on the beach by the lighthouse. That area was smoking hot for salmon just a month ago. Admittedly, it would've been challenging accessing the fish we did with a rough ocean, as far southwest as we went. Weather conditions improved dramatically at mid-week.

With the Buoy 10 Opening on Thursday, we have no reports from opening day. We will however cover this fishery in great detail in the forecast section. Good reports continue to come from the commercial fleet targeting Rogue strain chinook in Young's Bay. There were also rumors of good sportfishing there.

Catch and release sturgeon fishing in the lower river likely remained good but water temperatures have warmed to nearly 65° which typically puts sturgeon more off the bite. Sturgeon also become much more lethargic fighters in the warmer water temperature.

Summer steelhead anglers posted impressive numbers of wild and hatchery fish for as warm as the water temperatures are. There was a run of activity from mid to late July but anglers are anxious to refocus their efforts on the fall run salmon. Effort has been running especially high at the mouth of the Cowlitz River. Catch rates indicated from the ODF&W weekly fishing report do show good catches although the majority of fish required release as they were wild. Here is the report from up and down the river:

Gorge Bank:

Weekend checking showed four adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and six unclipped steelhead released for 53 bank anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekend checking showed seven adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, 21 unclipped steelhead released and one summer chinook released for eight boats (21 anglers).

Troutdale Boats:

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and two unclipped steelhead released for 12 boats (30 anglers).

Portland to Westport Bank:

Weekend checking showed one steelhead released for 22 bank anglers.

Portland to Westport Boats:

Weekend checking showed 24 adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and 29 unclipped steelhead released for 121 boats (289 anglers).

Estuary Bank (Tongue Point to Westport):

Weekend checking showed four adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and five unclipped steelhead released for 34 bank anglers.

Estuary Boats (Tongue Point to Westport):

Weekend checking showed 27 adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and 16 unclipped steelhead released for 24 boats (75 anglers).

Bonneville Pool:

No report.

The Dalles Pool:

Weekly checking showed one adipose fin-clipped summer Chinook kept plus three unclipped chinook released for 27 bank anglers; and one unclipped summer Chinook released for 10 boats (26 anglers).

Crabbing In the lower river remains fair to good. The a few Crabbers participating and willing to work for their catch are bringing in good hauls of keepers. Ocean crabbing is only fair and the bulk of the catch there are soft-shelled.

The tuna are in! Boats taking advantage of the friendly offshore conditions this week scored good catches of albacore. Soft seas yielded good catches are trolled clones and cedar plugs as well as swim baits cast once fish were hooked on the troll. For whatever reason, iron hasn't been working well jigged. Of course, live bait is producing good as well. Most boats were pursuing fish in the 61 degree water, which was between 35 and 40 miles offshore. Boats were picking up between 20 and 30 fish for a day's effort, most of the fish were between 17 and 27 pounds. It's only going to get better from here.

The Guide's Forecast – The Buoy 10 fishery will be forefront in the minds of most anglers this week with a record run of upriver brights in the forecast not to mention numerous coho. Anglers are pretty excited. With the exception of the mouth of Young's Bay, great catches are not expected during the first week.

Rogue River strain Chinook will likely be the first to show this week. Anglers would be best to focus their efforts around high tide near the mouth of Young's Bay. We typically troll from the mouth of the Skipanon River to the tip of Astoria in about 18 to 24 foot of water. The only real productive time to fish this area is centered around high tide. Anglers would be best to utilize the time stretch two hours before and one to 1 1/2 hours after high tide. Although we have had fair success trolling spinners and flashers in this reach, trolled Herring is the staple but you must keep your gear near the bottom. Fortunately, it's not a snaggy area and despite crowded conditions, it can handle a lot of traffic.

It will be challenging to find salmon in other areas of the river but like the mouth of Young's Bay, you'll want to focus efforts around high tide. Above the bridge on the Washington side is another high tide possibility but it will be hard to leave the best option this early in the season. Don't count on many coho in the river so hopefully, offshore conditions will remain viable for those seeking a daily limit of salmon.

High tides over the weekend are around noon and 1 o'clock so a late morning start is recommended if you're just going to stay in the river. One thing about the early season chinook, they do tend to be some of the largest of the season. You're more likely to get a 30 or 40 pounder in mid-August in the Buoy 10 area than you are later in the season, you'll just catch fewer of them.

If you're going to fish spinners, don't hesitate to go smaller, especially if you're going to employ a flasher with it. These Chinook seem to respond favorably to spinners in size 5 through 7 and yes, you should have green or red on the blade. Remember to go with solid colors in the morning or on overcast days and run metallic colors when the sun is shining.

Ocean anglers should still have ample opportunity for salmon offshore over the weekend. It does look however that we may return to a NW wind influence beginning Saturday afternoon. This will make early morning launches even more important as the weekend progresses. Here is the offshore forecast:

FRI

W WIND 5 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. NW SWELL 3 FT AT 7 SECONDS. PATCHY DRIZZLE IN THE MORNING. CHANCE OF SHOWERS IN THE AFTERNOON.

FRI NIGHT

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 3 FT AT 7 SECONDS.

SAT

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...RISING TO 10 TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 4 FT AT 19 SECONDS.

SAT NIGHT

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 3 FT AT 7 SECONDS.

SUN

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

MON

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

As for where to go, SW of the Columbia River mouth is always a safe bet. Typically, coho are most prevalent on this side of the river but this week, we found them in 150 foot of water out to 270 foot of water. Be prepared for jellyfish and chinook jacks. Both become much easier to deal with if you have the right tools. For jellyfish, use an old toothbrush to scrub jellyfish tentacles off of hooks and terminal gear, it's very effective. For chinook jacks and wild coho, employ the Association of NW Steelheaders hook removal tool of a dowel with a coffee mug hook on the end. You can see examples of how to do it here:

http://www.pugetsoundanglers.org/fishing/guidelines_for_releasing.htm

You'll want to bring anchovies as you'll go through a lot of bait here. You get about twice as many anchovies to use for bait as you buy them by the pound versus herring by the dozen. With the number of short chinook in the area, you'd be pennies ahead by buying anchovies.

It would likely be a waste of time, at least this week, to target chinook to the north. It might be best to wait another week as we'll know that by then, there will be ample numbers of chinook coming from the north, ready to enter the Columbia River by then. We'll keep you informed how this "north of the river mouth" fishery develops however. Weak morning and afternoon tides should keep the bar pretty tame this weekend. The ocean will be the place to fish. We did find coho and chinook to 100 feet of the line-counter. Don't hesitate to fish some outfits deep.

Lower river crabbing should remain good, especially in the weak tide series. There should be fresh tuna and salmon carcasses available in Hammond or Astoria. The ocean will continue to produce mostly soft-shelled crab and females.

Tuna fishing should remain a strong option as long as the ocean remains calm. It's too far to run in rough seas as the fish remain 30 to 40 miles offshore. Tuna clones and cedar plugs will likely continue to produce the best but swim baits or live anchovies should also produce very well when you bring the boat to a stop.

The all-depth summer halibut fishery is also underway north of Cape Falcon. It's open 3 days per week. All the details are located here:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/halibut/seasonmaps/2013_hbt_map.pdf

River fishers pursuing steelhead will have a tough week. Not only will you have to put up with a weak tide series but water temperatures are warming to the point that fish are less likely to bite. Bonneville Dam finally broke its first 100,000 summer steelhead mark; still well behind previous years returns.

Sturgeon interest will wane and rightfully so. Warming water temperatures will make fish lethargic and more susceptible to mortality. Fortunately, for the first time in my memory, there will be no zone 1 (estuary) gillnet fishery so additional mortality rates are not likely.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Steelhead fishing below Bonneville Dam has been spotty. Some days are producing with the next day being a drought. The catch has been roughly 80% wild to 20% hatchery and most are ranging 4-6 Lbs. Fish are also taken off the mouths of the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis and Sandy Rivers Up at Bonneville, small spinners and coon shrimp rigs are the ticket. At the river mouth mentioned above, small red and orange toned flatfish are popular. A few successful anglers are also fishing the deeper water at Rainier with lighted wiggle warts, also known as "blinkies". Catch and release sturgeon fishing is on the slow side with little effort. The

river just below Bonneville offers opportunity for the larger oversize fish. Whole shad or pieces of shad are the best bait."

"Willamette sturgeon fishers were given another opener Thursday through Sunday. Effort was way down from the previous week and few fish were caught. No announcements have been made as of yet of a future opener. Walleye fishing in the Multnomah Channel has been exceptionally good. So much so, that anglers who have yet to try it are venturing out and having reasonable success. Worm harnesses fished behind a bottom walker, trolled upstream is the ticket. Some anglers are also using diving plugs such as the Lure Jensen Hot Lips, also trolled upstream in the less snaggy sections of the channel. It pays to know the water and cost you \$\$ if you don't, as the Multnomah Channel is riddled with snags. Look for water from 12-20 feet deep. Bass fishing has also been good in the main river and anglers putting in their time are having 10-20 fish days. Look for water that has a sloping, rocky bank and shoals with downed trees. Smallmouth bass situate themselves near cover and snags like downed trees, pilings, boulders and rock beds etc. Fish can be taken with either plastics or crankbaits.

The McKenzie River has continued to drop a little daily and shows little of the fluctuation in levels that was indicated in the first three weeks of July.

On the North Santiam, over 400 hundred summer steelhead and 4,000 spring Chinook had been counted at Stayton as of the last week in July. Nearly 2,500 spring Chinook and 4,000 summer steelhead have been counted at the Foster Dam trap on the South Santiam.

Alton Baker Canal, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, McKenzie River above and below Leaburg Lake, Santiam River NF above Detroit Lake and Trail Bridge Reservoir are scheduled for trout stocking.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "On the Columbia River, summer steelhead are front and center. Expect similar results this week from the usual spots.

"Willamette River anglers will see little change if any. The best fishing opportunity is with walleye and smallmouth bass."

Caddis patterns will be the weapon of choice for fly fishers on the McKenzie River for a while. Nymphs will produce strikes during the day while anglers may expect some dry fly action in the evening.

While the Santiam system is low, it remains quite fishable. That said, there aren't a lot of springers or summer steelhead available so expect to put in a number of hours in an effort to hook up.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "On the Clackamas River, summer steelhead fishing remains slow with little effort. The river has been inundated with swimmers and rafters, who have been leaving loads of beer cans, bottles and other trash, making for an undesirable angling experience. If you bring it in, please pack it out. A few scattered fish are present in the section between Carver and Rivermill Dam, but anglers must work first and last light for any success. Low water tactics are a must with small baits and subdued lure colors getting the fish's attention.

"Sandy River anglers have both summer steelhead and a few late spring Chinook available. The water from the mouth of the Salmon River down to Oxbow County Park holds the best opportunity. Like the Clackamas, anglers are encouraged to use light gear and small baits for best results. This week's cooler weather will sooth the glacial melt and render the river a bit cleaner. This means even lighter gear and smaller presentations."

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "The Clackamas River will also see little change other than fewer rafters and swimmers with the cooler weather. Summer steelhead are few and far between.

The Sandy River will likely turn towards the clear side with the cooler weather. Use smaller baits, subdued colors and lighter leaders to fool summer steelhead and late spring Chinook."

North Coast Fishing Report – The north coast will go somewhat silent for the next few weeks. The exception to that will be the Nehalem Basin, where anglers are experiencing a good return of summer chinook right now. Anglers working the jaws are doing quite well with several fish reported nearly daily. The current weak tide series is the perfect time for targeting fish in this area. Trolled herring fished on the bottom if the key with both high tide through the outgoing producing the best results. Anglers fishing upstream towards Wheeler are faring well too although spinners play a larger role as you get further upstream towards the city of Nehalem. Soon, the bobber bite is likely to take off.

The offshore season for coho closed on Wednesday. Action was fair on the last day of the season although limits were certainly not the rule. Targeting chinook in the open water south of Cape Falcon is tough. Folks that do it often troll close to shore, particularly near the bay entrances.

Ocean crabbing remains good but largely for soft-shelled crab in the keeper range. Bay crabbing is improving and the weak tide series over the weekend should promote fair catches. If you can get your hands on fresh tuna carcasses, you'll be in a pretty good position to catch fair numbers of keepers.

The summer all-depth fishery opens two days per week starting August 2nd. Details can be found here: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/halibut/seasonmaps/2013_hbt_map.pdf

River fishing for summer steelhead remains challenging in the low water. With the fish well established in their summer deep water haunts, they will only become less likely to entice. Small, subtle baits will be a necessity.

The Guide's Forecast – Nehalem Bay will be primed for a good chinook catch this weekend. With a low tide exchange, peak season and ample number of fish coming in, action should be pretty good. Slow troll herring on the bottom at the jaws, assuming bar conditions are safe. The Wheeler area may not produce as well if the bar is safe to fish. Biters will largely get culled from the population at the jaws and a soft incoming tide won't push too many motivated fish higher into the system. It's likely to be crowded so plan on using heavy lead to keep your baits close to the boat, preventing tangling with other anglers.

Ocean fishing for coho is now closed and chinook fishing should be poor with the exception of a few biters falling to trollers along the jetties of the north coast, particularly the Nehalem entrance. Jetties can be treacherous places to fish however so be extremely careful when recreating in these areas.

Crabbing should be good in both the estuaries and ocean. You're more likely to find crab in better condition on the bay however. Take advantage of the fresh tuna carcasses coming into port.

And speaking of tuna, they're still far offshore but close enough for those with the proper boats. Action should be excellent for the next 6 to 8 weeks. They are responding best to trolled clones and plugs right now but live bait is an excellent choice if you have the equipment.

Freshwater anglers will still be struggling for consistent results when targeting steelhead. Fish the heads of holes with broken surfaces for the best results. You may want to experiment with single eggs in the fast water. Hardware can also work good in the early morning hours.

Central & South Coast Reports – Offshore launches should be no problem over the coming weekend with ocean swells of two feet or less forecast at 17 to 20 seconds.

The recreational tuna fleet has been successful out of Newport and Depoe Bay this week. While the ocean was still not very warm, a temperature break of just a couple of degrees was enough to find fish. Trolling plugs or feathered lures has been effective for scattered albacore with some boats pitching chum to bring up a school and fishing live bait.

Trolling for coho out of central ports on the final day of the season was productive but fewer than half of those landed were fin-clipped keepers. The ocean closed to coho fishing on July 31st with the non-selective season opening September 1st and 2nd with subsequent days scheduled until the 16,000-fish quota fills.

The summer all-depth season starts Aug. 2nd then every other Friday and Saturday until fulfillment of the quota. Rockfish and lingcod catches have been good out of Newport and Depoe Bay.

Most rivers opened on Thursday, August 1st, for Chinook fishing. A few, most notably the Rogue and to a lesser degree the Umpqua, have produced fall fish but the majority won't do so until later in the year.

Boats launching out of Reedsport have had a challenge getting far enough out to find good numbers of albacore. One mid-week report put them at 70 miles from the beach for scratch fishing. Ocean crabbing out of Winchester Bay has been showing signs of improvement. Surfperch are still being caught but it has been spotty. Lower Umpqua Chinook results have picked up and with the cooler weather this week, the trend is expected to continue. The stretch below the Highway 101 bridge seems to be the best choice for Chinook fishers. High water temperatures have continued in the mainstem but so has the productive smallmouth bass fishery. Spring Chinook fishing closed on the North Umpqua on the last day of July. South Umpqua waters remain closed to salmon and steelhead fishing.

Coos Bay has yet to show any improvement for crabbing. A few Chinook are being taken but the fishery is inconsistent. Trolling or mooching on the incoming tide has been most effective.

Water temperatures in the mid-70s on the lower Rogue have kept Chinook entering the estuary kegged up, much to the delight of trollers here, who have continued to enjoy decent results. Catches have been ignited by the start of an incoming tide, often continuing through the flood and as the tide has begun to ebb. Flows at Agness are expected to stay in the 1,600 cfs range until there's a change in the weather. While the lower Rogue has little to offer, middle river steelheaders are intercepting summers as they pass upstream. A variety of bait and lures have

been effective. Sufficient numbers of summer steelhead have reached the upper Rogue for these fish to become the primary target for anglers although spring Chinook are also being caught.

Brookings remains the port from which to launch for ocean Chinook. ODFW statistics place it at the top o' the heap, providing three or more times the catches of other Oregon ports.

The Rogue above Lost Creek will be planted with hatchery trout again this week.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Deschutes steelheaders are taking a few fish with the best opportunity early mornings as the water has been too warm to fish during the day. Move upstream or down to find concentrations of fish as many stretches are devoid of summers.

The Crooked River is approaching 200 cfs as it continues to moderate in flow. It will fish well in these water conditions.

The ODFW reports that East Lake is producing excellent catches of trout. In their words, "the best trout fishing in years." All methods have been effective here recently with pink jigs taking decent numbers of kokanee averaging between 14 and 15 inches.

An ODFW bulletin issued this week reminded anglers fishing East, Paulina and Lava lakes to release rainbow trout that have no fin clip. Trout with an intact adipose fin are an aggressive, predatory specie which the agency hopes will help reduce numbers of tui chub in those impoundments.

Green Peter has been consistent for trollers and has been producing fish averaging 11 inches. One of the keys to success here is to troll with just enough forward motion to give the gear some action.

Kokanee fishing at Odell has been good at first light with the bite tapering off. Once the sun is up, stay versatile, change lures often but stick with trolling.

Wickiup was reported earlier this week as productive for trollers using hoochies but call ahead to check on the status. Fires in the area have closed some campgrounds.

Crane Prairie is producing good numbers of kokanee as well as providing a decent trout fishery. Brook trout have been taken to four pounds recently with some even larger cranebows landed.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2013

North Puget Sound

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

Anglers are reeling in chinook, pinks, and coho in North Puget Sound, where two additional marine areas open for salmon Aug. 1 and crabbing is still an option.

"We are expecting more than 6 million pinks to make their way through Puget Sound into area rivers this year," says Ryan Lothrop, Puget Sound recreational salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Anglers across the state have been catching these salmon, catch rates are improving steadily, and we expect the run to continue to build as pink salmon enter rivers like the Skagit, Green, and Snohomish by mid-to-late August."

The **Puget Sound crab fishery** is also under way in most marine areas. The exception is the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia) of Marine Area 7, which opens for crab Aug. 15. All marine areas of Puget Sound will be open for crabbing Thursday through Monday of each week only. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are closed and all crab gear must be removed from the water.

Information on the rules, including how to properly record and report catch information is available on WDFW's [crab fishing webpage](#). The page includes links to a printable "Crabbing in Puget Sound" brochure and a "Puget Sound Recreational Dungeness Crab Guide," both of which have information on crabbing regulations.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across.

Meanwhile, for those more interested in river fishing, freshwater anglers are gearing up for **salmon** openers on select rivers.

Those rivers include the following:

- **Skagit River:** Salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 from the mouth of the river to the mouth of Gilligan Creek. The Skagit opens from the mouth of Gilligan Creek to the Dalles Bridge at Concrete for salmon fishing Aug. 16. Anglers fishing those sections have a four-salmon daily limit, and no more than two can be wild coho. All chinook and chum must be released.
- **Snohomish River:** Salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 from the mouth of the river to the highway 9 bridge and on Aug. 16 from highway 9 bridge upstream to the confluence of the Skykomish and Snoqualmie rivers. There is a three-salmon daily limit, plus one additional pink salmon. Chinook and chum must be released.
- **Green River:** Salmon fishing opens Aug. 23 from the 1st Ave. South Bridge to Hwy. 99/Tukwila Intl. Blvd. Anglers fishing the Green have a daily limit of six salmon; up to three adult coho and chum (combined) may be retained. Chinook must be released.

Check the [Fish Washington pamphlet](#) for additional details on regulations for these rivers.

On North Puget Sound, anglers can fish for chinook salmon in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). Those fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. They must, however, release wild coho and chum starting Aug. 1.

Anglers should note that those fishing Marine Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet) are allowed to keep only one hatchery chinook as part of their daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon. For more information, see this [recent announcement](#) and the [Fish Washington rules pamphlet](#).

Those fishing Marine Area 10 can keep up to two hatchery chinook – marked with a clipped adipose fin – as part of a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. Wild chinook must be released. Anglers fishing marine areas 9 and 10 also must release chum salmon.

Additional rules apply to Elliot Bay and Sinclair Inlet in Marine Area 10. Anglers are advised to check the [fishing pamphlet](#) starting on page 116 for maps of these regions and for additional details on regulations.

August brings other opportunities in the region to catch and keep salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open for salmon. Anglers fishing these areas will have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, but must release chinook. Within area 8-2, Tulalip Bay at the

terminal is open Friday through noon on Mondays and allows the use of two poles for those with a two-pole endorsement.

Check the [Fish Washington rules pamphlet](#) for additional details on current salmon fishing opportunities.

Though many anglers focus on burgeoning opportunities for salmon in mid-to-late summer, August is also a great time to pursue **yellow perch, bass, bluegill** and **catfish** in lowland lakes.

"With warmer water temperatures, anglers should seek deepwater structure such as ledges and weed lines to find warmwater species during the heat of the day," says Danny Garrett, WDFW lead warmwater fisheries biologist. "In clearer lakes, such as Lake Washington, start your search for perch and bass in 15 to 20 feet of water. In shallower lakes with stained water, such as Lake Cassidy, look for fish along the weed edge in five to 10 feet of water."

Yellow perch is a species that will bite throughout the day, so perch fishing is a great way to introduce kids to the sport.

Though many **trout** fisheries have slowed with rising water temperatures, anglers in pursuit of trout or **kokanee** are still finding bountiful harvests in deeper Puget Sound lowland waters.

"Try trolling for these fishes below the thermocline with common gear such as wedding rings, woolly buggers, hoochies, and even bare hooks baited with shoepeg corn behind a dodger--usually 12 to 30 inches--at slow speeds," says WDFW trout biologist, Justin Spinelli. "Remember that kokanee, in particular, migrate vertically in the water column as they pursue invertebrates so try various depths until you find the schools."

Trout and kokanee fisheries where success has been reported recently include Lake Stevens (Snohomish County), Lake Meridian (King County), Angle Lake (King County), and American Lake (Pierce County). Anglers can identify other potential fisheries by consulting the [Statewide Hatchery Trout and Kokanee Stocking Plan](#).

To find out more about fishing for these and other species in Washington, visit the [Fish Washington website](#).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

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

The surge of summer salmon is upon us, and the smell of smoking fish is already wafting through campgrounds and neighborhoods across the region.

Along with strong numbers of **chinook** and **coho salmon** in the ocean and in protected waters, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) fisheries managers estimate 6.2 million **pink salmon** are flooding into the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound on their biannual, odd-numbered-years-only spawning run. Many of those scrappy pinks are headed for South Sound rivers.

Doug Milward, WDFW's ocean salmon manager, says Marine Areas 1-4 were very kind to salmon anglers in July. He expects the fishing to be good and perhaps even better in August. Chinook fishing has been outstanding so far this year, according to Milward.

In Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) and Marine Area 2 (Westport), anglers are allowed two adult salmon, one of which may be a chinook, but are required to release all wild coho. Almost the same daily bag limit applies in Marine Area 3 (La Push) and Marine Area 4 (Neah Bay), except anglers are allowed up to two adult chinook.

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca (marine areas 5 and 6), chinook retention opportunities come to a close on Aug. 15, but hatchery coho and pink salmon options continue into fall. Prior to Aug. 15, anglers may retain two adult salmon, two of which may be chinook, plus two pink salmon. Wild coho, chinook, and chum salmon are all subject to release during summer in marine areas 5 and 6.

The South Sound (marine areas 11-13) is host to many salmon opportunities this August, but they vary within the areas. Check your fishing regulations carefully, and go get 'em! Opportunities abound for catching and keeping coho, chinook, and pink salmon.

August 2013 is shaping up to be an epic month for the region's salmon anglers, but the opportunities aren't limited to salmon. Marine Area 1 anglers have not yet exhausted their **halibut** quota, which means it's not too late to book a charter or plan a trip to the Port of Ilwaco to fill your freezer with one of the Pacific's most prized fish.

All of Washington's major ocean ports offer good bottomfishing for **rockfish** and **lingcod**, and August is a great and usually gentle time to take to the ocean in search of these firm, white-fleshed fish.

Similarly, **albacore tuna** fishing begins to peak in August, when these sub-tropical, pelagic fish ride warm currents that have flowed delightfully close to shore in recent years. When tuna are only 25 to 50 miles offshore, charter and private boat operators lick their chops. Shorter runs to the tuna grounds mean less fuel burned and more time fighting these 50-mile-per-hour saltwater rockets.

A variety of river salmon fisheries materialize in August, including the South Sound's pink salmon rivers: the Puyallup and Nisqually. All three streams will receive large returns and will draw large crowds of anglers.

Discussions between WDFW and the Skokomish and Puyallup tribes has resulted in a plan that opens prime areas on both rivers for tribal members and the general public. Before grabbing your salmon rods, check out the news releases describing newly forged regulations for both the [Skokomish](#) and [Puyallup](#).

The region's best hatchery summer **steelhead** streams are the Humptulips and Wynoochee rivers, but summer fishing in these streams is often weather- and temperature-dependent and can be feast or famine. Still, anglers shouldn't overlook these beautiful walk-and-wade rivers. The best strategy for success is to fish high in the river system in areas that are open to fishing. Search for groups of steelhead seeking thermal refuges near springs.

For details on river fishing for salmon and steelhead, including catch and gear limitations, open waters, and allowable fishing days, always check the Washington [sport fishing rules](#) pamphlet before hitting the water.

Trout fishing remains strong in the region's deeper, cooler lakes, despite soaring summer temperatures that make trout lethargic. Lethargy or not, they still have to eat.

Trout in August feed almost exclusively early in the morning, in the evenings, and under cover of darkness. Fish don't like to move much for their meals. As such, the region's still fishers are outperforming trollers. Those still fishing baits like shrimp, nightcrawlers, salmon eggs, and dough baits are doing well, especially near springs that discharge cold water.

North of Olympia, Saint Clair Lake has been especially good to trout anglers this summer, which should continue through August. American, Clear, and Ward lakes also produce good trout fishing during August due to their depth and good water quality.

Region 6 offers some of the Washington's finest **kokanee** fishing, and it should continue to be good in August. Larry Phillips, WDFW district fish biologist, says fishing has been excellent this summer at Summit Lake, where anglers have been catching kokanee to 13 inches. Clear and Ward lakes have been good, too, for fish from 10 to 12 inches.

The popular kokanee fishery at American Lake won't produce many limits this summer, says Phillips, but the fish are large and in excellent condition. American's kokanee are averaging 14-16 inches this year, and Phillips recently received a picture of a 21.5-inch koke from the popular fishery south of Tacoma.

Bruce Bolding, WDFW's Warmwater Fish Program manager, says Region 6 is home to some very good and overlooked bass, panfish, and channel catfish angling.

"We stocked Saint Clair Lake and Lawrence Lake with **channel catfish** for the first time in the fall of 2011, but the fish should be big enough this summer to catch and fillet and have a great meal," said Bolding. "Chambers Lake was also stocked in 2011 but had been previously stocked in the 1990's, so there could be a few really big fish left. Harts Lake in Pierce County was not stocked in 2011, but still has fish from 2005."

Bolding cites eastern Pierce County's Kapowsin, Tanwax, Ohop, and Rapjon lakes as being good for panfish — especially **perch and crappie**. He adds Thurston County's Summit, Long, and Pattison lakes to the list.

For a mix of **largemouth and smallmouth bass**, he advocates the same lakes as above, as well as Kitsap County's Long and Kitsap lakes and Thurston County's Black and Hicks lakes. Munn Lake is a Thurston County selective fishery requiring catch and release and is good for bass and **bluegill**.

Southwest Washington

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

This year's **fall chinook** fishery opens Aug. 1 on the Columbia River, where a strong run of upriver brights is expected to exceed both the 10-year average and last year's return. Of the 678,000 "falls" included in the pre-season forecast, about 434,000 are projected to be upriver brights, which are expected to return in the largest numbers since record keeping began in 1964.

Those chinook salmon – along with the chance to catch **hatchery coho** and **summer steelhead** – should make August a great time to fish the lower Columbia River, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"We're definitely expecting a big angler turnout for these fisheries," Hymer said. "The fall chinook should pick up quickly through the month of August, and the upriver brights tend to keep biting as they move upriver."

Although the opener for the fall chinook will extend upriver as far as Priest Rapids Dam, most of the action during the first few weeks focuses on the popular **Buoy 10 fishery** in the lower 16 miles of the river. Fishery managers estimate that anglers will catch nearly 20,000 chinook salmon in those waters by the end of the day Sept. 1, after which the retention fishery for chinook in the Buoy 10 area will close for the remainder of September. Anglers are also expected to catch 13,000 coho in that area by the time that fishery closes at the end of the year.

The daily limit for the Buoy 10 fishery is two salmon, two hatchery steelhead, or one of each. But through Sept. 1, only one of those salmon may be a chinook (marked or unmarked). For steelhead and coho, only fish marked with a missing adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained.

Barbless hooks are required when fishing for salmon and steelhead on the mainstem Columbia River and many of its tributaries.

Additional rules for the Buoy 10 area and waters farther upriver are described in WDFW's [Fishing in Washington](#) pamphlet. Bank anglers planning to fish near the mouth of the Columbia River should be aware they will need to purchase a Discover Pass to park on State Parks property near

the North Jetty. The vehicle-access pass anglers receive with their fishing license only substitutes for a Discover Pass on WDFW lands.

By mid-to-late August, the bulk of the chinook run usually begins to move upstream with increasing numbers of coho moving in behind them. For anglers following upriver brights upstream, Hymer recommends fishing deep, between 40 and 50 feet down. For a lure, he suggests wobblers anchored with a heavy weight.

"Chinook go deep when water temperatures are high, so that's a good place to find them," Hymer said. "At the same time, anglers should take care not to drop anchor in the shipping channel. That can lead to real trouble."

Hatchery coho are expected to make a stronger showing this year, helping to round out anglers' daily limits. WDFW currently expects about 434,000 coho to return this year – three times more than last year's return and similar to the recent 10-year average. Hymer said coho salmon usually bite best at Buoy 10 on herring and spinners, and later on bait and lures in the tributaries.

Meanwhile, plenty of **hatchery steelhead** are also available for harvest, said Hymer, noting that the smaller "A-run" fish should keep biting through mid-August. By then, the larger "B-run" steelhead – many weighing in the teens – will start arriving to pick up the slack. Together, returns of both runs are expected to total 322,000 fish, on par with the recent 10-year average .

The procession of fall chinook, coho and hatchery steelhead should also provide good fishing on area tributaries for months to come, Hymer said. Like the mainstem Columbia River, most tributaries open for fall chinook Aug. 1, although those fisheries usually don't take off until September. For steelhead, Drano Lake and the Wind River are good popular spots to cast for migrating fish dipping into cooler waters.

The White Salmon River has historically been another productive dip-in fishery, but how the fish will respond after Condit Dam was breached in late 2011 remains to be seen.

Like last year, anglers will be allowed to retain up to six adult hatchery coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal.

Unlike the mainstem Columbia River, chinook retention is limited to marked hatchery fish on those river systems, except on the Klickitat and Deep rivers where unmarked chinook can also be retained. Mark-selective fisheries also will be in effect on the Wind and White Salmon rivers.

Any fall chinook and coho may be retained at Drano Lake beginning Aug. 1 and any chinook on the North Fork Lewis River beginning in October. Anglers are advised to check the [Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet](#) and any [emergency rules](#) applicable to specific waters before leaving home.

Of course, salmon and steelhead aren't the only fish available for harvest in August. **Walleye** fishing can be good in the Columbia River near Camas, as well as in The Dalles and John Day Pools. **Bass** fishing is also heating up from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam. Anglers can also retain sturgeon measuring 43 to 54 inches in The Dalles Pool until the guideline has been reached.

For **trout**, the high lakes in the Cascades offer unparalleled fishing experiences for those willing to brave the mosquitoes. Wilderness areas around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens are now accessible with the snowmelt.

A couple of drive-up lakes to check out are Council and Takhlakh Lake on the northwest side of Mt. Adams. Council was stocked July 8 with 3,000 rainbow catchable trout weighing half-a-pound each. Takhlakh was planted on June 24 with 3,000 catchables, along with 150 rainbows weighing almost 3.5 pounds each.

Eastern Washington

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

Fishing in August can sometimes be slow, due to higher daytime water and air temperatures. But anglers fishing early in the morning, late in the evening, or on days with lots of cloud cover can have success this time of year.

Randy Osborne, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) central district fish biologist in Spokane, says mixed species waters are a good bet. Anglers can find **yellow perch**, **largemouth** and **smallmouth bass**, and **crappie**, along with some trout, at Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs Lakes in southwest Spokane County, Newman, Silver, and Liberty lakes in eastern Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake (or Lake Spokane).

Osborne says some of the best **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** lakes close to Spokane are Amber, Clear, Williams, and West Medical lakes in Spokane County, and Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County. The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, but river anglers need to be aware of catch limits, gear restrictions, and other rules listed in the fishing pamphlet.

Bill Baker, WDFW northeast district fish biologist in Colville, said **kokanee** fishing should be productive in August at Loon Lake in southern Stevens County. "Most anglers there are fishing during the evening with glow hooks and other gear," he said. "But trolling during the day should also be good."

Baker notes that kokanee can also be had in a few other northeast district waters including Bead, Sullivan, and Davis lakes in Pend Oreille County and Pierre and Deep lakes in Stevens County. Deep Lake should produce 12- inch-plus kokanee.

"I've also heard anglers are catching some kokanee in the lower portion of Lake Roosevelt," Baker said. "They're also doing well on rainbows in the reservoir. **Walleye** fishing at Roosevelt has been fair, with somewhat lower success rates for most anglers compared to the last couple of years."

Baker suggests fishing for trout (rainbow, cutthroat, brook and tiger) in higher elevation lakes on U.S. Forest Service property throughout August. Davis, Ellen, Empire, and Ferry lakes are good bets in Ferry County. In Stevens County, Black, Little Twin, and Summit lakes should be good producers. In Pend Oreille County, anglers should find good fishing at Carl's, Frater, Halfmoon, Mystic, North and South Skookum, Petit, and Yokum lakes.

Glen Mendel, WDFW southeast district fish biologist in Dayton, reminds anglers that **steelhead** fishing on the Snake River is open for retention of hatchery-marked fish in August this year. Mendel notes that steelhead numbers are rapidly increasing at the Columbia and Snake River dams.

"The return of **fall chinook salmon** to the Snake is expected to be a 30 to 40 year record number this year and also very good in the mid-Columbia River region overall," Mendel said. "We are considering an opening, so anglers should watch for an announcement on our website."

WDFW Wooten Wildlife Area Manager Kari Dingman said the Tucannon River impoundments on the area are a bit "warm and green." Some folks are still fishing them, she says, but many more are fishing the river during warmer weather.

Mendel reminds river anglers and other recreationists not to build rock or log dams across rivers and streams because it prevents bull trout and other species from moving upstream and downstream. "Every year we have new rock dams in August and early September that block bull trout migration and sometimes trap and kill them," Mendel said. "Bull trout and spring chinook

are very vulnerable at this time of year in low water, sometimes in marginal water temperatures. Neither can be legally harvested or harassed.”

Northcentral Washington

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

The Wenatchee River **hatchery summer chinook salmon** fishery opens Aug. 1 from the mouth to 400 feet below Dryden Dam. Travis Maitland, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Chelan district fish biologist, notes that on Sept. 1 the fishery extends to the Icicle River Road Bridge (Hwy. 2 at Leavenworth) and runs through Sept. 30. See all the details for this fishery in the [rules pamphlet](#).

Maitland reports another Lake Wenatchee **sockeye salmon** fishery is being considered. Anglers should watch WDFW’s website for an official [emergency rule change](#).

Meanwhile, sockeye salmon fishing has picked up considerably in the Columbia River near Brewster, said Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist in Twisp. Effort has been good with catch rates of one to two fish per angler. Chinook salmon are also being caught, but in much smaller numbers.

Jateff also notes the section of the Columbia River from Wells Dam upstream to the Hwy. 173 Bridge in Brewster has been open to salmon fishing since July 16. Anglers are required to release any sockeye or **chinook** with a colored anchor (floy) tag located just below the dorsal fin. “Most of the sockeye are running smaller this year, in the 1- to 3-pound range with some larger adults up to 5 pounds,” Jateff said. “The chinook are averaging 10 to 15 pounds.”

Jateff said fishing in the Methow River is good with flows leveling out due to earlier than normal snow melt. Selective gear rules are in effect and no bait is allowed. The open area of the Methow extends from the Lower Burma Road Bridge (below the town of Methow) upstream to the Weeman Bridge (eight miles north of Winthrop). “With warmer water conditions expected during the month of August, anglers should be very careful in playing and releasing fish during that time,” Jateff said. “It’s best to play the fish as quickly as possible and to not remove it from the water.”

Jateff notes there are two sections of the Twisp and Chewuch rivers that are open to catch-and-release trout fishing. The Twisp is open from the mouth upstream to War Creek, and the Chewuch is open from the mouth upstream to Eight Mile Creek. Anglers should check the current sportfishing rules pamphlet as all of these open areas have varying closure dates. Anglers can expect resident **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** in the 8- to 16-inch range, along with **whitefish** up to 18 inches.

Jateff also says it’s a good time to fish the smaller tributaries within the Methow River drainage as river and small creek flows recede. Boulder, Falls, and Eightmile creeks are all within easy driving distance from Winthrop and provide good fishing for eastern brook trout. Daily limit is five **brook trout** in Falls and Eightmile Creeks, no minimum size and bait is allowed. In Boulder Creek the daily limit for brook trout is 10, no minimum size and bait is allowed. In the Beaver Creek drainage, anglers can retain five brook trout, no minimum size, selective gear rules required, and no bait allowed.

Southcentral Washington

(Benton, Franklin, Kittitas and Yakima counties)

Columbia and Snake River **walleye** fishing has been excellent this summer and is expected to remain strong throughout August. Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), said the best catches have come from Lake Umatilla -- the 67 miles of

the Columbia River between John Day and McNary Dams. Angling upstream of McNary for the toothy fish has also been good.

Walleye are also numerous and active during August on the Hanford Reach of the Columbia and on the lower portions of the Snake River, especially below Ice Harbor Dam. Most anglers use diving plugs, jigs, blade baits, or 'crawler harnesses to catch them.

Hoffarth reminds anglers that there is no minimum size limit and no limit on the number of walleye you can keep upstream of the Washington-Oregon border (17 miles upstream of McNary Dam). Below the state line (downstream), there is a daily limit of 10 fish, only five of which can measure over 18 inches and only one of which can be over 24 inches.

Rather fish for **smallmouth bass**? During August they swim deep, but the fishing can be good for those in-the-know. Trolling with deep-diving plugs and fine-diameter braided lines 150 to 200 feet behind the boat allows anglers to get their plugs down to the fish. Smallmouth usually run even deeper than walleye during the burning heat and gentle flows of summer.

Mid-river humps and bars from 30-45 feet in depth tend to attract large concentrations of mature smallmouth during August. Along with trolling these areas, vertical jigging with blade baits and soft-plastic jigs is also very effective. As with walleye, Hoffarth says there is no limit on the number or the size of smallmouth bass anglers can keep in the Columbia River or its tributaries above the Washington-Oregon state line. Below the state line, anglers can keep a daily limit of five smallmouth bass, only three of which can exceed 15 inches.

Anglers tend to catch both species at the same time, as well as occasional chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead. To retain salmon and adipose-fin-clipped steelhead caught accidentally while fishing for walleye or smallmouth, anglers must use barbless hooks. Starting Aug. 1, both fall chinook and coho with intact adipose fins may be retained.

Hoffarth reports **sturgeon** are still biting on the Columbia and Snake Rivers, but July 31 was the last day for retention fishing on Lake Wallula and the Snake River below Ice Harbor Dam. Lake Umatilla switched to catch-and-release-only on June 29. Sturgeon sanctuaries (located below many of the dams) remain off-limits to anglers until Aug. 1 when a catch-and-release season opens.

Fishery managers are projecting a strong run of 339,200 summer-run **steelhead** over Bonneville Dam this year, many bound for the Snake River and the mid to upper Columbia River. The Snake and areas of the Columbia opened for hatchery steelhead fishing June 16 this year, including the stretch from Bonneville to the Highway 395 bridge in Kennewick.

WDFW will open the area of the Columbia River from the Highway 395 bridge to the old Hanford town site Oct. 1, earlier if the run comes in stronger or earlier than expected. Look for announcements on the [WDFW website](#).

Steelhead fishing in southcentral Washington can be tough during summer due to sunny conditions and high water temperatures, even when large numbers of fish are moving upriver. Fishing very early in the morning or from dusk into darkness increases the odds of hooking up with these temperature-sensitive fish.

Night fishing with black or lighted plugs can be very productive and is both legal and popular above McNary Dam on Oregon's and Washington's halves of the river. A night closure is in effect below McNary on Oregon's half of the river, so anglers must remain on Washington's side of the river channel to stay legal.

Anglers can also look forward to great fishing for **fall chinook salmon** in the weeks ahead. A strong run of 677,900 is expected to return to the Columbia this year, including 432,500 "upriver brights" expected to cross McNary Dam – many headed for the Hanford Reach. Chinook should start biting at the end of August with the fishing improving and peaking in late September and early October.

Further north in Region 3, spring chinook fishing closed July 15 on the Upper Yakima River between Union Gap and Roza Dam after a strong season, said Eric Anderson, a WDFW fish biologist in Yakima.

"Catch rates for springers were highest during June and tapered off during early July," says Anderson. "Now anglers are looking ahead to the fishery for fall chinook in the Columbia River and lower Yakima."

Salmon fishing will be allowed from Sept. 1 to Oct. 22 for fall chinook in the lower Yakima in an area stretching from Prosser Dam to the river's mouth at the Highway 240 bridge in Richland. Catch rates can soar once the Yakima's waters cool enough to draw fish out of the colder water of the Columbia River, but that often doesn't occur until late September or early October. Nonetheless, throughout August, a combination of upper-Columbia summer chinook and early arriving fall chinook bound for the Hanford Reach and the Yakima River will hold at the Yakima's mouth near Bateman Island in Tri-Cities. This fishery has been popular in recent years.

Water levels have now dropped in streams flowing into the upper Yakima and Naches rivers and their tributaries, said Anderson, providing excellent fishing conditions for wild **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout**. Anglers should be sure to check the regulations for those streams and to release all salmon, bull trout, and steelhead.

In the Cascade Mountains, ice has now melted from alpine lakes, and anglers looking to beat the heat are headed for the high country. WDFW stocks many hike-in lakes around White Pass, Chinook Pass, and Snoqualmie Pass with **rainbow and cutthroat trout**; others have naturally reproducing **eastern brook trout** populations.

For more information on fishing the high lakes in south-central Washington, Anderson suggested anglers check out the [high lakes stocking list](#) for the past several years to get ideas on where to go. Hikers and anglers can check trail conditions with U.S. Forest Service offices in Naches and Cle Elum before heading out.

Anderson adds that anglers seeking boating or drive-up shore fishing opportunities will find good fishing is still available in August for planted trout at Clear and Dog Lakes in the White Pass area.

Also near White Pass, Rimrock Lake is kicking out limits of 16 **kokanee** averaging almost 10 inches. The fish are deep, but they can be found all over the lake. Very slow trolling with pop gear (gang trolls) or dodgers followed by a wedding ring spinner baited with maggots or tuna-scented shoe-peg corn is very effective. Kokanee are also available in August at Kachess, Keechelus & Cle Elum Lakes off Interstate 90, and fishing is good for both kokanee and cutthroat at Bumping Lake off Highway 410.

The daily combined trout and kokanee limit has been reduced to five fish at Cle Elum Lake in an effort to protect rebounding stocks of sockeye salmon. Since juvenile sockeye remain in the lake for two or more years before migrating to sea and are nearly indistinguishable from kokanee, reducing the kokanee bag limit reduces impacts on sensitive sockeye smolts.

Whether in Cle Elum Lake or elsewhere in the Yakima River Basin, Anderson reminds anglers that bull trout caught inadvertently while fishing for other species must be released unharmed.

"There are very stiff penalties for catching and keeping a bull trout," says Anderson.

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Random Links

2013 Fall Chinook Salmon Regs:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2013_chinook_fisheries.pdf

Cutthroat trout stage astounding rebound in the upper Rogue:

<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130726/LIFE/307260307>

Bill Monroe on Puget Sound Salmon:

http://www.oregonlive.com/sports/oregonian/bill_monroe/index.ssf/2013/07/post_85.html#incart_river

Ride the tram at Wallowa Lake for a fee or catch the view here for free:

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GOOD LUCK!