

[The Guide's Forecast - volume 16 issue number 47](#)

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **November 21st – November 27th, 2014**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro – With coho and chinook numbers at Bonneville further declining, the salmon fishery on the lower river is effectively over. Sturgeon anglers will likely begin to focus on the Willamette, where water temperatures are more conducive to sturgeon that are often lethargic this time of year.

The Willamette will be on a slow, steady rise in the coming week and is expected to get muddy, sturgeon fishing is really the only option.

McKenzie River fly fishers may expect fair results with nymphs in the absence of hatches.

While there are coho and summer steelhead in the North Santiam River, fishing has been slow to fair. Expect the South Santiam to get muddy.

Willamette Valley streams and rivers will be on the rise this weekend.

Northwest – Few anglers are still working the Tillamook system but chinook remain available in the bay and tidewater stretches. The west channel has finally started paying dividends to trollers with the last half of incoming, high slack and the first part of outgoing the most productive. Again, few anglers are participating and action could slow on the predicted upcoming rain freshet.

Rivers remain low and fish are more likely to be residing in the tidewater sections of the Wilson and Trask systems. Bobber and bait is the likely technique but most anglers are anxious for the next rain freshet, which is on tap for this weekend. The best late season chinook prospects are the Kilchis and Wilson Rivers.

Steelheaders are anxiously awaiting the results of the next freshet. Steelhead have already been reported on the North Fork Nehalem but recent results are not impressive. Hatchery steelhead should be available on the North Fork Nehalem, Necanicum, Wilson, Kilchis, Nestucca and Three Rivers as well as the Alsea on the north coast, following the weekend rain freshet. We're still 3 weeks away from consistent fishing however.

Crabbing should be improving on many north coast estuaries but a strong tide series this weekend, coupled with predicted high winds, may not make estuaries a friendly place to recreate.

Southwest- Offshore bottom fishing is excellent at this time of year but ocean conditions seldom allow boats to safely cross the bar.

Mussel harvesting is closed from Heceta Head near Florence south to the California border. It's advised to call the shellfish hotline at 1-800-448-2474 for the latest info before heading out to take mussels anywhere on the coast.

Coastal precipitation has caused salmon to move out of tidewater and into the river systems all up and down the Oregon coast.

Coho fishing in Siltcoos, Tahkenitch and Tenmile lakes has been fair to good for boats trolling spinners or plugs. This fishery will remain open through the last day of November.

Catch and release winter steelhead fishing is fair and improving on the mainstem Umpqua. Fishing for summer steelhead is slow on the North Umpqua.

Winter steelheading on the Coos and Coquille won't start up until December.

Trolling in Rogue Bay is wrapped up for the season although Chinook and a few winters are being taken in the lower river. Middle Rogue steelheading is fair while it's good on the upper river.

Anglers will be plunking for a while as the level and flow of the Chetco will rise with the weekend storm front.

The late Chinook run on the Elk and Sixes has been producing fish with recent rainfall.

Eastern – East side temperatures are frigid and snow has fallen in most places. Despite these conditions, a few fly fishers are taking fish on the Deschutes.

Winter trolling for lake trout has started on Lake Billy Chinook and at Crescent Lake.

SW Washington- Cowlitz River coho fishing is starting to slow and fish are turning color. Coho returns to this facility are the highest on record, dating back to 1969. Nearly 80,000 coho have returned. Winter steelhead are starting to show as well and anglers are hopeful that winter steelhead follow suit with large coho returns.

The Lewis is starting to slow for coho but chinook remain available into December.

The Klickitat is also starting to slow but still remains a strong option for coho this week. Action should taper dramatically by early December.

Columbia River Fishing Report – It's a crabbing show now and given the rough weather this week, effort was low. For the few that did brave the conditions, action was great; limit crabbing as a matter of fact. That is, if you crabbed in the right location.

The Guide's Forecast – Commercial crab gear will inundate the estuary starting around November 27th. Success rates will dramatically drop after that. High tides and a strong wind in the forecast may continue to hamper effort. Check our homepage for weather here:

<http://forecast.weather.gov/shmrn.php?mz=pzz250&syn=pzz200> with winds in excess of 15 MPH creating hazardous boating conditions that should keep most sensible crabbers at bay.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Due to its size, the Willamette River will react more slowly to the weekend downpour than smaller rivers and streams. It will be coming up and is expected to color up as well. Fish passage at the falls has all but ceased. A new, two-lane boat ramp has been completed at Milwaukie.

The McKenzie, which peaked at 7,000 cfs about a week ago, has been steadily dropping and, while still a little high, is fishable for the weekend.

Level and flows on the North Santiam are forecast to take a hit from the storm front that's scheduled to hit this weekend. It should be fine through Friday but will be rising rapidly starting on Saturday.

The ODFW issued the following advisories this week with regard to the North Santiam:

CAUTION: The section between Shelburn and Green's Bridge remains hazardous for boaters because of downed trees and multiple side channels. Better bets are the floats below Green's Bridge and above Stayton.

UPDATE: Maintenance work on the Upper Bennett Dam has been completed! The upgraded boat slide is once again available for use.

UPDATE: The gate at Green's Bridge near Jefferson has been opened and will remain open until the next seasonal closure in June 2015.

On another topic, the ODFW has announced the startup of its annual broodstock planting in are lakes. For the full story, see **Random Links**, below.

The Guide's Forecast – Rain this weekend shouldn't dampen results for sturgeon on the lower Willamette. While there have been few trying it, catches have been good with plenty of what would be considered legal-sized fish if retention were allowed and decent numbers of oversized fish to keep it entertaining. Herring, anchovy or squid are all good baits to try. One angler lost his rod and reel to a big sturgeon in the Swan Island area. Drop us a note if you happen to recover it & we'll track him down for an ID of the equipment.

Don't expect to find much in the way of hatches on the McKenzie at this time of year - it has been too cold for much insect activity. This means nymphs will be the producers. A selection that includes Hare's Ear, Prince and Posse Bugger will provide in most angler situations. Results should be fair with this strategy. Best results will come from Hendricks to Hayden.

There are a combination of coho and summer steelhead in the waters of the North Santiam and while catches have been less than impressive, the upper stretches hold the most promise. Spinners will take them as will the ubiquitous bobber and jigs which is the most popular technique here. South Santiam waters are expected to get muddy with this freshet.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas water levels have started to rise from the current 1,500 cfs and will be jumping up this weekend. Flows are predicted to top 5,500 cfs by Saturday Night.

Expect to see a rise in levels on the Sandy River as well and this just as the fishing is productive and steady.

The Guide's Forecast – Boaters drifting the Clackamas with early winter steelhead in mind are not having much success but report still seeing some large coho in the river. Improved flows got coho moving and biting this week but the freshet expected this weekend may be more than anglers hoped for. When the river is fishable, spinners, corkies and drifted yarn or roe have all been taking fish. As levels increase, coho will be moving into Eagle Creek at a pretty good clip and it's a good bet that anglers will follow.

Coho fishing has been quite good on the Sandy River with fish well distributed but more importantly, moving and biting in better flows. While the water will get considerably higher this weekend, it should continue to fish well with corkies, yarn and spinners getting bit. Bank anglers have a good shot at hookups at Dodge and Oxbow Parks as well as around the mouth of Cedar Creek but with more water in the river over the next several days, be cautious when wading.

North Coast Fishing Report – With chinook still on tap, few boaters are in pursuit. Tillamook Bay remains a fair to good option for a late season chinook as trollers starting finding success in the west channel in recent days. With so few competing, action has been good with some boats tallying 3 to 5 fish for a day's effort. Trollers working around the high tide have been most successful, trolling blue label herring on the bottom. Fish migrating through the west channel are often destined for the Trask River and it's not uncommon to find some late season action over here. Bay City and to a lesser extent, the Ghost Hole are still producing for herring trollers but with last week's weather, interest has been waning.

With district rivers low, driftboaters have not been spending much time in pursuit of fresh fish. Fresh chinook are more likely encountered in the tidewater reaches of the Wilson and Kilchis systems but an upcoming rain freshet may change all of that. The Wilson River remains the best option for tidewater fish but the freshest fish have been coming from the bay itself.

Other systems are getting little play right now but following the rain freshet, should turn on for a few different species. Steelhead have been reported in the North Fork Nehalem and at Big Creek, and are likely in the Necanicum, Wilson and Nestucca systems as well.

Bay crabbing is fair in most coastal estuaries, especially since it's been a while since a significant rain event and spawning and dying salmon are filtering their way into these reaches of the watershed. Netarts remains a good option but foul weather, like for fishers, kept most in the harbor.

There are sturgeon in Tillamook Bay but like most of the region, remains closed to catch and keep fishing.

The ocean remains insanely wild.

The Guide's Forecast – Still chinook to be had in the Tillamook district but given the volatile weather forecast, interest will likely remain low. The big tide exchange on tap, coupled with a likely bump in river levels should spur success and options for both bay trollers and river drifters. High winds however may make the lower reach of the Wilson and Kilchis the best option for motivated chinook seekers this weekend.

When rivers rise, fish will be on the move, migrating from the ocean and bay, into the lower reaches of the river. Heavy rains are likely to begin on Saturday, making this the most challenging day to catch. Oftentimes, a sharp rise in river levels shuts down any hope of good bite for anglers on the strongest part of the river-rise. When flows are high, fish will be on the move and anchor fishing is the most productive option under these conditions. Once flows peak and remain high, anchor fishing will remain a strong option but fish will begin to slow down and become more receptive to biting. Plugs will remain a good option but bounced eggs should be a good option as well. The tidewater stretches will likely produce the best results but as flows drop, the upper reaches should begin to produce better.

The Wilson will remain the top option but the Kilchis should also produce fair to good results. The Nestucca may harbor a few biters but don't count on limits from this system. For those interested in pursuing an early steelhead, in order of likely success, the North Fork Nehalem, highway 30 streams, the Necanicum, Kilchis, Wilson Nestucca and Three Rivers are all options and if the run is as large as some anticipate, could produce some fair catches for this early in the season. River anglers are likely to find some chum salmon in the mix as well.

Don't expect bay crabbing to be excellent. High winds and extreme tides will keep sane crabbers in port and crab safely buried in the sand. A minus tide series begins over the weekend but high surf and rain in the forecast won't produce much in the way of success for razor clam diggers.

Central & South Coast Reports – As good as offshore bottom fishing can be at this time of year, ocean conditions keep opportunities few and far between. Predictions for the coming week don't look optimistic. Few charters have been getting out and some have closed shop except for sight-seeing tours.

There are chances when the waves are moderate to cast for redbaited surf perch. Catches have been holding up for these tasty critters.

When boaters do catch a break in offshore conditions, this is the time of year when lingcod start moving into the shallows, preparing for the upcoming spawn in January and February.

Mussel harvesting is closed from Heceta Head near Florence south the California border. It's advised to call the shellfish hotline at 1-800-448-2474 for the latest info before heading out to take mussels anywhere on the coast.

Siuslaw Chinook anglers are taking large Chinook occasionally as is often the case in November and report plenty of coho in the system. It's getting late for Chinook here, though.

Siltcoos Lake is eons old, dating back to an earlier ice age. It has been productive recently for coho although some sorting may be required this late in the season. Tenmile and Tahkenitch are also producing coho. This fishery is scheduled to remain open through December.

Winter steelhead are being caught on the mainstem Umpqua River. This is a catch-and-release fishery, however, as steelhead must be of hatchery origin to keep here and these are not. A few steelhead are being caught on the North Umpqua but it has been fairly slow.

Steelheading will start up around the middle of December on the Coos and Coquille. Wild coho can be kept through the end of November.

Chinook fishing has really dropped off at Coos Bay following recent rains. Precipitation hasn't hurt the crabbing, though, as boats have continued to take limits or near-limits. Rock fishing has been good from the jetties as well.

Rogue Bay is predictably done for Chinook with the exception of a few lingering around the mouth of Indian Creek. Boats are taking Chinook and, occasionally, winter steelhead around Agness. Steelheading for summers is fair but steady on the middle Rogue. Plugs have been most effective. Steelheading has been quite productive on the upper Rogue as fish just keep on coming with the strong run this year. Summers are expected to provide action well into December.

The water level is on the rise at the Chetco River but won't hit a terribly high mark. It's forecast to top 6,600 cfs by this coming Sunday and drop in to the coming week. This isn't so outrageously high that plunkers won't be able to find a fish or two as long as the water isn't muddy. Cured salmon eggs are optional as Spin 'n' Glos will take fish with or without 'em.

Elk and Sixes rivers, with the late run experience here, have been productive at times but results have been irregular. A report the came in late on Wednesday this week told of crowded conditions with typical parking headaches but good fishing on the Sixes River.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Morning temperatures are in the teens and there's snow in the banks of the Deschutes at Mecca Flats, but hardcore fly anglers are out there casting nonetheless. They're being rewarded with the occasional steelhead hookup, some nice reddsides and a few whitefish.

No reports have come in regarding the Crooked River after snowfall this week. If and when it's accessible, you can bet it'll fish.

Some fishers just love the cold, ice and snow as it means lake trout fishing. Lake Billy Chinook rewarded some of these hard-core anglers this week.

Crescent Lake trollers have also been out in limited force as this is a sport that is an acquired taste for the hardy few.

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Random Links

ODFW kicks off popular brood trout stockings:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2014/november/111314b.asp>

Whoops – that's gotta Hurt!:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJz mjGTE0WE#t=227>

GOOD LUCK!