Anglers Enjoying Prime Salmon Fishing as Hunters Scope The Field

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

Posted on : August 1, 2012 at 5:54 am

Olympia, WA - Washingtonians are reeling in chinook and coho salmon off the coast, pulling up pots full of crab in Puget Sound, and casting for trout in alpine lakes on both sides of the Cascades. Summer fisheries are in full swing, providing some of the best fishing opportunities of the year. A prime example is the Buoy 10 chinook salmon season, which runs Aug. 1 through Sept. 3 at the mouth of the Columbia River. A big run of 655,000 fall chinook is expected to return to the river this year, with expectations that anglers will catch about 14,000 of them by Labor Day - most of them between Buoy 10 near the mouth of the river and Rocky Point, 16 miles upstream.Anglers fishing at Buoy 10 may also retain marked, hatchery-reared coho salmon or steelhead as part of their two-fish daily catch limit. "Buoy 10 is a very popular fishery, drawing tens of thousands of anglers every year," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Fishing tends to start out slow, then accelerates quickly through the month of August."

Meanwhile, thousands of chinook salmon continue to move into Puget Sound from the ocean, lighting up fisheries from Sekiu to Kingston. "August is prime time for chinook in Puget Sound," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW’s Puget Sound salmon manager. "This is go time."Rather catch shellfish? Crab fishing is open throughout the month in most areas of Puget Sound, the exception being Sub-Area 7 North which opens for crabbing Aug. 16. In all open areas, crab fishing is allowed Thursday through Monday each week. The daily catch limit is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches.See the WDFW website at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/ for more information on these and other fisheries open around the state.For hunters, general seasons for black bear open Aug. 1 in some areas of the state and Aug. 15 in others. Hunters are allowed two bear during the general season, but only one bear can be taken in eastern Washington.