

April Showers Brought May Fishing Seasons for Halibut, Shrimp and Lingcod **Local News**

Posted by: David Haviland

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - May is a month when new fishing opportunities start popping open like tackle boxes at first light. Lingcod and shrimp in Puget Sound. Halibut there and off the coast. Spring chinook salmon in the Chehalis River and in some areas of the Columbia Basin. State shellfish managers also plan to announce two razor clam digs this month. When they do, the details will be available on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) website at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/>. With so many new options, anglers can find themselves facing some tough choices about how to spend their time on the water, said Kirt Hughes, a WDFW fishery manager based in Montesano. "I know a lot of people who start the day digging razor clams or setting shrimp pots and then spend the afternoon fishing for trout on a lake," Hughes said. "I've done it myself plenty of times." While every fishery has its fans, none draw bigger crowds than the lowland lakes trout-fishing season, which opened throughout the state on the last Saturday in April. Several hundred thousand anglers traditionally turn out for that event and most continue to fish for trout during the six-month season. For catch rates at nearly 100 Washington lakes on opening day, see the news release on the department's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/news/may0113a/>.

To prepare for that day, WDFW planted millions of trout ranging from 11-inch "catchables" to 11-pound broodstock. Now the tanker trucks are rolling again, delivering more fish to Washington lakes. "We stock lakes with trout for the whole season, not just opening day," said Chris Donley, WDFW Inland Fish Program manager. "Trout fishing should be highly productive in lowland lakes through June, and then again in September. In higher-elevation lakes, fishing should be good right through the summer." For most anglers, a valid 2013-14 fishing license is required to fish in Washington state. The exception is young people under age 15, who fish for free. Licenses and permits are available online (<https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/>), by phone (1-866-246-9453) and from sporting goods stores and other retail license dealers around the state. A list of license vendors is available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/vendors/> and from local WDFW offices. For more information about fishing seasons, hunting and other outdoor activities available this month, see the detailed region-by-region **Weekender Reports** on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/weekender/>. These reports are updated throughout the month for changes in fishing rules and other developments throughout the state.