

# Fishing Journal

Information For The Serious Angler

by John Martinis

July 2014

## Fishing Dates

**Puget Sound Salmon  
Opens July 1  
Release Chinook  
Areas 9 & 10**

**Puget Sound Chinook  
Opens July 16  
Areas 9 & 10**

**San Juan Chinook  
Opens July 1**

**Puget Sound Crab  
Opens July 3  
Thursdays-Mondays**

**San Juan Crab  
Area 7 South  
Opens July 17  
Thursdays-Mondays**

**Baker Lake Sockeye  
Opens July 10  
3 Sockeye Limit**

**Neah Bay Chinook  
Open June 14-July 31  
West of Tatoosh  
Hatchery or Wild  
7,000 Chinook Quota**

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## This Issue

San Juan Chinook pg 1  
San Juan Sockeye pg 2  
Puget Sound Salmon pg 3  
Cooking Dungeness Crab pg 4  
Neah Bay Chinook pg 4  
Neah Bay Charters pg 4  
Sekiu Chinook pg 4  
Baker Lake Sockeye pg 4

## Coho Seminar

My Next seminar will be September 19 at Bayside Marine @ 7PM

## “Digital Chinook Derby”

The Digital Salmon Derby is Free. Just send me your Area 9 Chinook Picture

Once again John's Sporting Goods & Gibbs Tackle will be sponsoring: “Digital Chinook Fishing Derby”. The derby will be based entirely on Chinook that are caught in Marine Area 9 starting July 16, 2014-until the Chinook closing date of Area 9. Take a photo of your Chinook and send it to: [customerservice@johnssportinggoods.com](mailto:customerservice@johnssportinggoods.com).

The winning fish will be determined by the quality of the picture not the size of the fish. I will post all the pictures on John's Sporting Goods Facebook. There will be daily prizes.

The picture must be taken on the water in a boat. The picture must be submitted the day it was caught. Your first and last name, time, date and the exact spot the

fish was caught must be included with the photo. You must also include a brief description of the fishing tackle you were using.

The employees' of John's Sporting Goods will judge the Digital Photos. Prizes will include a \$500 shopping spree at John's Sporting Goods and flashers from Gibbs Delta Tackle.

## San Juan Chinook July 1, 2014

At last, summer Chinook season is finally getting underway and it all starts in the San Juan Islands. If you read the rules carefully, you will notice that you can keep hatchery and wild Chinook. Plus, there is a bonus limit of two additional Sockeye. I don't believe that you'll be catching any Sockeye in Rosario Strait, but I do believe that you will have a really good chance of hooking up with some very nice Chinook. I highly recommend fishing Rosario Straits July 1 through July 15. After July 15, I would start fishing on the west side of San Juan Island for Chinook, Coho and Sockeye.

Area 7 Salmon Rule: July 1-31. Daily limit 2 salmon only one Chinook (Hatchery or Wild), release wild Coho, plus 2 additional Sockeye. See closure areas on pages 110-111, (rule book).

Take a look at your tide book, because the tides are going to dictate where you want to be fishing on that particular day. If you are new to the San Juan's, it is pretty easy to spend a lot of time spinning your wheels by not getting in

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any quality fishing time because you are fishing in an area that does not produce Chinook on a particular tide.

Let me simplify things for you by giving you some key fishing areas and the correct times to fish these areas:

## July 1-15

**Thatcher Pass**/Outgoing Tide

**Eagle Bluff**/North End of Cypress/Incoming Tide

**Lopez Flats**/Either Tide

**Tide Point**/Outgoing Tide

**Reef Point**/Outgoing Tide

## July 16-August 16

**Eagle Point**/West Side of San Juan Island/Outgoing Tide

**Pile Point**/West Side of San Juan Island/Outgoing

Chinook in the San Juan's are mostly feeding on candlefish. Bring the appropriate gear to mimic a candlefish. I would suggest a **Coho Killer White Lightning** spoon or a **Goldstar Needlefish Squid NG142R**. When I was at Sitka with Tom Nelson in June, we hammered the Chinook, on White Lightning Coho Killers. The salmon we were catching were coughing up loads of fresh candlefish. Once we discovered what the fish were feeding on, we put on the Coho Killer spoons and it proved to be an instant success story. Suffice to say, matching the hatch is not just a saying, it is a useful tool that puts fish in the box.

Fishing in Rosario Straits is very similar to fishing Chinook in Puget Sound. You'll find Chinook feeding close to the bottom in 90 to a 100 feet of water. I cannot emphasize enough that fishing within five feet of the bottom is just so important! These fish have plenty to eat close to the bottom where they are feeding, they do not have to go out of their way to chase

your Coho killer spoon 15 to 20 feet above the bottom. I have found that this is best way to correctly let out the right amount of downrigger cable: let the downrigger ball out until it hits the bottom and then retrieve two or three feet of cable. By the time the downrigger ball drifts back with the current you will be at the correct depth. Most of the good Chinook fishing areas in Rosaria Straits have sandy bottoms, so there is no fear of losing a downrigger ball.

Once July 16 rolls around, the best Chinook fishing is going to be on the west side of San Juan Island. Fishing on the west side of San Juan Island for Chinook is completely different than fishing in Rosario Strait. No longer do you have to fish close to the bottom. Most of the fishing is done at 60 to 90 feet, even though you might be in 100 to 250 feet of water. On the west side of San Juan Island you are strictly fishing for suspended fish.

## San Juan Island Sockeye

Forecasted return for the Fraser River Sockeye: a forecast report which revealed that the return could be as high as 70 million but it's likely the return will be somewhere between 20-40 million.

By now, I'm sure that you have read all the hoopla about the enormous Sockeye run that is headed for the Fraser River. A good chunk of these fish pass by the west side of San Juan Island before they head to the river. This provides an excellent sports fishing opportunity.

If you plan on catching these Fraser River Sockeye on your regular Chinook or Coho gear, it's not going to

happen. To catch Sockeye in saltwater, it takes very specialized fishing tackle to draw strikes from these plankton eating salmon. One of the best rigs is a series of rotating flasher blades that are linked together. Click on this link to see an example of the **Delta Tackle Flashlines**. On the end of the Flashlines you can connect a downrigger release. I should have the Flashline Rigs at John's Sporting Goods by the first week of July.

There are a couple different ways to rig for Sockeye. A simple way is to tie a small **pink squid (Goldstar F15)** with a 2/0 hook to the end of your fishing line and to fish the squid 24-36 inches behind the Flashline. You can also use the same pink squid 24-27 inches behind a **Pink Haze Hot Spot UV flasher** or a **red flasher**. You would also connect this flasher rig to the release that is attached to the Flashline. I would recommend fishing the flasher/squid rig ten feet behind the Flashline.

If you want to create a lot of bling and flash, I would tie a dummy flasher with 5 feet of leader line to a downrigger ball. This flasher would be used entirely for flash and not for fishing. This would act as an attraction that would bring Sockeye over to your flasher that is rigged with a pink squid.

The correct trolling speed for Sockeye is 1.7-2.0 mph.

I would expect to see large schools Sockeye off the west side of San Juan Island around mid-July. There are two ways to identify if Sockeye are present: you will see these fish jumping and landing on their sides or you will see large schools of salmon on your fishfinder.

A good piece of advice would be this: if are going to be serious about

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catching Sockeye, you have to have everything rigged with sockeye tackle and going Sockeye speed.

**Places to fish for  
San Juan Sockeye:  
San Juan Sockeye Map**

## Puget Sound

### Salmon

**Areas 9 & 10**

**Open July 1**

**Chinook July 16**

There is one caveat to the July 1, salmon opening day in Areas 9 and 10, release Chinook. That's okay, because for 15 days we can be out on the water fishing for Coho while we hone our skills for catching a Chinook.

Here's what I recommend: for the first 15 days of July I would fish the very Outer Bar of Possession or I would fish at Jeff Head for Coho. These Coho will be Puget Sound resident salmon that average 2 to 5 pounds. These Coho are not much in the size department but it gives us an opportunity to be out on the water.

Fishing for Puget Sound Coho I would recommend this rig: **A Gibbs Red Racer flasher** rigged with a Goldstar Coho killer spoon. Colors of Coho Killer spoons that will be effective are: **White Lightening** and any of the spoons that have some nickel flash with UV. I would also try spoons without a flasher. If you can find these Coho on the surface at daylight most often you can catch them without the use of a flasher. Give that a try with some light tackle.

At daylight you will find these Coho from 30 to 60 feet deep. However, you will be in depths that exceed 150 feet

deep. As the daylight hits the water incrementally increase your depth at a rate of 10 ft./hour.

Remember that the trolling speed for Coho are much greater than they are for Chinook. Keep your speed at least 3.0-3.5 mph and greater.

## July 16 Chinook

The Area 9 and 10 Chinook opening on July 16 is the granddaddy of all fishing anywhere in the Puget Sound area. I would expect that the Chinook fishing is going to be quite substantial considering how good the ocean fishing is at this time. All the indicators point to one of the most robust Chinook seasons in quite a few years. Last year the Chinook fishing in Puget Sound was hitting on all cylinders, there's a good chance that the Chinook fishing this season will exceed what we experienced last year.

When the season opens for Chinook on July 16, this will be the heart of the good Chinook fishing. Don't wait for the reports, get out of the water and get your lines wet. If the season is as good as the predictions, expect the season to last 10 to 15 days. That doesn't give you much time to think about it.

Here's what you need for tackle: **Gibbs Red Racer Flasher 11" UVGRMJRS, Goldstar Kingfisher Pro 3.5 #964 (Green Spatter/Red Stripe), Kingfisher Pro 3.5 #683 (White Lightening), Goldstar Kingfisher Pro 3.5 #675 (Cookie n Cream)**. I had Silver Horde rig these spoons with good quality Mustad stainless steel hooks with swivels on the hooks. I have found that these spoons that are rigged in this fashion have the very best hooking ability and the hooks do not rust or break.

The tides for July 16, are absolutely

ideal. You will be able to fish three complete tidal cycles, starting in the morning with a 8:08AM High Tide (Edmonds/Seattle Tides). If you want to stay local I would fish at **Pilot Point** through that 8 o'clock high tide. After the high tide I would go straight to the west side of Possession Bar and stay at the Bar through the low tide at 2:26 PM.

**Mid Channel Bank** at Port Townsend has been the #1 place to fish for Chinook in Puget Sound the past two seasons. The tides are perfect for opening day. There is a low tide at 1:29 PM at Port Townsend. If you are planning to fish Mid Channel Bank on July 16, I would head right there in the morning without any stops on the way.

Chinook fishing in Puget Sound goes like this: it's all about fishing close to the bottom. If you are fishing Chinook in Puget Sound you cannot have an irrational fear of hanging a downrigger ball up to the bottom. If you do, you are going to catch less fish. It's just that simple!

When I fish Mid Channel Bank, at trolling speed, I measure how far is to reach the bottom with my downrigger. In other words, let the downrigger ball out until it hits the bottom and bring it back just a couple of feet. The tide is so swift at Mid Channel Bank, the current drives the bait to within a few feet of the bottom. Common sense tells you, the closer you are to the bait, the closer you will be to a salmon that's willing to bite on your spoon or herring that is trying to imitate the real live thing. It is important that you are presenting spoons or bait right in front of the salmon. Make it easy for the salmon to grab your gear/bait in the midst of other baitfish.

The best depths to fish for Chinook at either Possession Bar or Mid Channel

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Bank: 90-120 feet.

## Cooking Dungeness Crab

### Puget Dungeness Crab Opens July 3

You've just had a successful day of crabbing in Puget Sound, now you are at home with a limit of crab (5 Dungeness). What do you do?

The worst thing you can do is to start boiling a pot of water on the stove inside the house. If you do, it will be the first and last time you boil crab inside your house. They stink!

The best place to cook crab is outside on a burner or on a propane grill.

In a large pan of water: add garlic powder and salt to the water. Bring the water to a boil. I like to boil my crab whole and clean them after they are cooked.

Put the crab into the boiling water, bring the water back to a boil and boil the crab for 15 minutes. Take the crab out of the boiling water after they are cooked and immerse them in cold water or ice until they are cool. Then clean the crab.

Here is a video on [Cleaning Dungeness Crab](#).

Here is [Cooking and Cleaning Dungeness Crab](#) literature from the WDFW.

## Neah Bay Chinook

Chinook fishing is red hot at Neah Bay and will continue to be so until the 7,000

Chinook quota is attained. I expect that the quota will not be reached for some time because there is not many recreational anglers fishing out of Neah Bay at this time. The best fishing is out in the ocean at either Blue Dot or Umatilla Reef. Be prepared to fish 300-350 deep. I would recommend a reel filled with 30lb braided line and a downrigger with 400-500 of cable or braid. Expect to catch Chinook from 15 to 30lbs and as an added bonus, you can keep either hatchery or wild Chinook.

**Neah Bay Contacts**  
**Excel Charter**  
**Tom Burlingame**

**Jambo's Charter**  
**Mike Jamboretz**

**Place to Stay**  
**Inn at Neah Bay**

## Sekiu Chinook

Sekiu opens on July 1 for salmon. Release wild Chinook and Wild Coho. Sekiu is a great place to fish if you do not like to fish in the ocean. Fishing should be good right from the start. This is the perfect place to fish for the small and large boat angler. Fishing is close to shore and not too far away from the dock and most often you do not need to fish very deep. Be equipped with the same gear that we fish with in Puget Sound: Gibbs UV Red Racer Flashers with a Kingfisher 3.5 Spoon. Spoon colors that I recommend are: White Lightening and Green Spatter with a Red stripe.

## Dungeness Crab Opens July 3

What a great way to spend the 4th of July. Crabbing on Puget Sound. This

is a wonderful family activity. If you do not have a boat and want to participate in this fun sport, I have two recommendations: The fishing Pier at Mukilteo and the fishing Pier at Kayak County Park. If you are a small boater: I would recommend launching your boat at Mukilteo Light House Park and crab near the Mukilteo Oil Docks. Remember that you can only keep 6 1/4 male Dungeness crab and the limit is 5.

## Baker Lake??

As of June 29, Sockeye returning to the Skagit River has been a bit anemic. Let's hope that the picture changes in the next week to 10 days so that we have a Sockeye fishery in Baker Lake this year.

If the sockeye run does materialize, this is what I recommend using: A #0 or #1 Nickel Dodger with the red hook 12 to 14 inches behind the dodger. Tie the 2/0 red hook with 20-25lb monofilament leader material. Some anglers are successful with adding a Macks Red or Pink Smiley Blade on top of the red hook with the red #6 bead separating the blade from the hook. Another variation would be adding a pink squid over the hook and then adding a red bead and then the Smiley Blade above the red hook. [Click here to see a selection of Sockeye Tackle.](#)

The trolling speed for Sockeye is real slow: 1.5-1.7 mph.

You'll find sockeye near the surface at daylight and most often this is when the best bite will occur. As the sunlight gets on the water, the fish will drop down 10 ft./hour. At 8 AM will find Sockeye from 30 to 60 feet.

Here is some [WDFW Baker Lake information, map and directions.](#)

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