

**Tags** from 1B

elk tags and 51 percent of deer tags had been reported for hunts with a Jan. 31 reporting deadline. ODFW will be sending reminder postcards to hunters who haven't reported yet later this month.

"The information hunters provide is needed to evaluate hunting seasons and tag numbers," said ODFW Game Program Manager Tom Thornton. "We really appreci-

ate hunters taking a few minutes of their time to complete the report."

ODFW used to get this data through phone surveys but these became more difficult and expensive as hunters moved or screened their calls.

The mandatory reporting program was put in place in 2007 so these calls could be phased out.

A penalty of \$25 was added four years ago because even after several years promoting the program and providing

incentives to report, only about 40 percent of tags were being reported on time.

This rate was too low for ODFW to even use the data.

After the penalty was implemented for 2012 tags, rates jumped to 80 percent or more. This has allowed ODFW to phase out its big game survey phone calls.

The funds generated by penalty fees are being used to increase Oregon State Police patrol and enforcement of winter range closures in Oregon.

These closures help deer, elk and other wildlife survive the winter by limiting disturbances from people.

As an incentive to report on time, hunters that do are entered into a drawing to win a special big game tag.

ODFW selects three names each year and the winners can choose a deer, elk or pronghorn tag.

Hunters who win may hunt an expanded hunt area and extended season, similar to auction and raffle tags that

hunters can pay thousands for.

One of this year's winners, Brent Quick of Springfield, chose an elk tag and took a bull in Wenaha Unit.

"It was one of my top five best days, to kill my first elk with good friends," he said. "I now have 330 pounds of elk in my freezer to feed a family of five, pretty cool."

For more information, visit [www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/reporting/index.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/reporting/index.asp).

**Fishing** from 1B

available and opportunities should improve on through January as conditions improve.

All the usual techniques such as side drifting, float fishing, and pulling plugs or divers and bait, should be effective.

Anglers are reminded that fall Chinook season is closed.

**YAQUINA RIVER:**  
*Steelhead*

The Yaquina River is open for hatchery winter steelhead. Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

**COOS COUNTY LAKES/PONDS:** *Trout*

Rainbow trout were stocked in **Upper Empire, Bradley, Saunders, Powers and Butterfield** lakes in October. Fishing for these stocked fish has slowed down. Coos County lakes and ponds will not be stocked again until the spring.

**COOS RIVER BASIN:**  
*Dungeness crab, bay clams, rockfish, steelhead*

Trout fishing in streams is closed until May 22.

A few steelhead have been caught the past few weeks in the **West Fork Millicoma, East Fork Millicoma, and South Fork Coos** rivers.

The West Fork Millicoma was the only river in the basin that was fishable over the past weekend.

Anglers are drifting eggs or corkies along the stream bottom or using a jig suspended

under a bobber. Anglers fishing the South Fork Coos River above Dellwood will need a permit from Weyerhaeuser, which they can pick up at the Dellwood office.

In the Coos Basin 1 additional hatchery steelhead may be retained per day for a total aggregate of 3 adult fish harvested daily.

Anglers have been catching a few rockfish and surfperch along the jetties and submerged rock piles. Fishing for rockfish in the bay has been spotty. The marine fish daily bag limit for bottom fish (rockfish) is 7 fish and a separate daily limit for lingcod (2).

The 7 fish marine bag limit will remain in place, with these adjustments for 2017: Create a sub-bag limit of 6 black rockfish, remove the sub-bag limit for canary rockfish, add China/quillback/copper rockfishes to the sub-bag limit with blue/Deacon rockfish and change the limit from 3 to 4.

Finally remove the 10-inch minimum size for kelp greenling.

Retention of cabezon is not allowed until July 1.

Recreational crabbing is now open in all Oregon waters. Crabbing was decent over the weekend in Coos Bay.

Crabbing from a boat has been better than crabbing from the dock but dock crabbers are picking up a few legal crabs.

Recreational harvest of bay clams remains open along the entire Oregon coast. Clamming is excellent during

low tides near Charleston, off Cape Arago Highway, and Clam Island.

There are also good places to dig clams even on positive low tides in Coos Bay.

Recreational harvest of razor clams and mussels is closed from the entire Oregon coast due to elevated levels of domoic acid.

This includes all beaches and all bays. Before any shellfish harvest trip, make sure to check the Oregon Department of Agriculture website for any updates.

**COQUILLE RIVER BASIN:**  
*Crab, steelhead, salmon*

Trout fishing in streams is closed until May 22.

Steelhead anglers have reported catching a few steelhead in the North Fork Coquille at LaVerne Park and the South Fork Coquille rivers. Anglers have had success drifting eggs or corkies.

Recreational crabbing is now open in all Oregon waters.

Crabbing is very slow in the lower Coquille River due to the large amounts of freshwater coming downstream.

**TENMILE BASIN:** *Trout, bass, yellow perch, steelhead*

Trout fishing in the streams of the Tenmile Basin are now closed until May 22. Trout fishing in Tenmile Lakes is open all year.

A few steelhead have been reported in Tenmile Creek.

Anglers will have success plunking near the acclimation sites or fishing a jig under a bobber. Eel Creek is now open to steelhead fishing.

Largemouth bass fishing has slowed down over the past few weeks. Anglers are catching bass near structure or on the deep end of the weed lines using jigs or rubber worms.

Fishing for yellow perch has picked up in Tenmile Lakes. Anglers have been catching a few yellow perch measuring 14 to 15-inches long.

Worms fished near the lake bottom work very well for catching yellow perch. Anglers

should fish in water depths of 15 feet or deeper to consistently find the bigger yellow perch.

**UMPQUA RIVER, SOUTH:**  
*Steelhead*

The South Umpqua is open to winter steelhead fishing, upstream to Jackson Creek.

Only adipose fin-clipped steelhead may be retained.

Steelhead are being caught up to Canyonville and anglers are hooking into a few. Fishing may slow with cooler temperatures.

**WINCHESTER BAY:**  
*Bottomfish, perch*

Fishing for bottom fish in the Triangle and South jetty has been successful.

**PACIFIC OCEAN AND BEACHES:** *Bottomfish, surf perch, crab*

Recreational crabbing is now open in all Oregon waters.

Bottom fishing has been good when the ocean conditions allow.

Recreational harvest of razor clams is closed on the entire Oregon coast due to elevated levels of domoic acid. Harvest of mussels is open on the entire Oregon Coast. Before any shellfish harvest trip, make sure to check the Oregon Department of Agriculture website for any updates.

Surf perch fishing was decent this past weekend. Surf perch anglers will do the best fishing with sand shrimp when ocean swells are small.

• **Ocean salmon**

The ocean recreational salmon fishery off Oregon is currently closed. Please stay tuned for updates on the 2017 seasons. Details, including regulations, and more information on ocean salmon seasons.

• **Bottom Fishing**

New bag and sub-bag limits for 2017: To stay within Federal allocations, and try to provide for year-round fishing opportunities, there are some changes to daily bag limits. Canary rockfish has been declared rebuilt and is now

part of the 7 fish marine bag limit (no sub-bag limit).

Black rockfish will have a sub-bag limit of 6 fish (out of the 7 fish daily bag, no more than 6 may be black rockfish).

There is a 4 fish sub-bag limit for blue/Deacon, China, copper, and quillback rockfish combined (out of the 7 fish marine bag, no more than 4 may be these species combined). The daily bag limit for lingcod remains at 2 fish and flatfish species, other than Pacific halibut, remains at 25 fish.

• **Reminder:** the Cabezon season is closed; it will reopen July 1.

• **Pacific halibut**

The 2017 quota for Pacific halibut will be determined in early this month. ODFW staff-recommended season dates will be available in mid-February.

• **SHELLFISH**

Call the ODA shellfish safety hotline at 1-800-448-2474 for the most current information about shellfish safety closures before harvesting. Additional information is available from ODA's Food Safety Program at 503-986-4720 or the ODA shellfish closures website.

• **Mussels**

The recreational harvest of mussels is open coastwide.

• **Razor clams**

NOTICE: Razor clams are closed along the entire Oregon coast due to elevated levels of domoic acid. This includes all beaches and bays.

• **Bay clams**

Bay clamming is open along the entire Oregon Coast from the Columbia River to the California border.

Check the ODFW Shellfish website for where and when to harvest your favorite bivalves. Updated maps on where to clam.

• **Crab**

Crabbing is open in the ocean and all bays. Crabbing in Coos Bay has been good.

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