

Youngs Bay area reopened for salmon and steelhead fishing

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has announced that salmon and steelhead fishing reopened in Youngs Bay, Youngs River and the Klaskanine River (including the North and South Forks) on Wednesday, October 31, and will remain open through the rest of 2012.

Fishery managers decided to reopen these fisheries because area hatcheries have now met their brood stock objectives for chinook salmon. These fisheries closed October 13 due to poor hatchery returns

resulting from low water conditions.

Under permanent rules for these areas, anglers are now permitted to retain up to two adult fin-clipped salmon/steelhead in combination, plus up to five fin-clipped jack salmon per day.

For more information, refer to ODFW's 2012 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations or visit ODFW's regulation update page on the Internet at www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/reg_changes/index.asp.

West Coast salmon discussed in Virginia courtroom recently

by Chris Thomas, Oregon News Service

The week of October 22, a federal court in Virginia was asked to overturn a decision that has major impacts on Northwest salmon and steelhead. In four western states, including Oregon, the National Marine Fisheries Service recommends buffers around salmon streams of at least 500 feet where certain pesticides cannot be sprayed.

However, Dow Chemical and two other manufacturers are fighting the decision, saying buffers are not necessary and will cost them business. Steve Mashuda, an Earthjustice attorney representing wildlife advocates in the case, says the feds had discussed banning these pesticides altogether, "But after studying it some more, they came to a compromise position, in some ways, that said 'As long as we're not spraying them directly next to the salmon streams and we have a no-spray buffer along those streams, they can still be used. That will minimize the amount that's making its way into the water.'"

Mashuda says the chemicals, called organophosphates, are lethal to the fish even in low concentrations, but are still widely used on farms. The case is being heard in Virginia because that is the closest appeals court to the Fisheries Service headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The other states where the no-spray buffers would apply

around salmon streams are California, Idaho and Washington. An interesting twist to this case is that these buffer zones are not currently being enforced. Mashuda says environmental groups have their own separate battle going with the Environmental Protection Agency about that, "In some ways, it's slightly ironic that Dow is suing about these protections, because they're essentially right now written only on paper. They do not exist out there on the landscape. We have a whole other piece of litigation that's designed to try and get these protections implemented."

The chemicals are chlorpyrifos, malathion and diazinon,
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Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer, General Manager,
West Oregon Electric Cooperative



Residential Rates Rising in Northwest

We are not alone. Northwest residential electric rates indeed are on the rise, confirms a new report from Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee, (PNUCC). The committee's survey of 26 Northwest utilities – collectively representing about 80 percent of regional load – showed all but one with higher residential electric rates since 2007, and most greater than 10 percent cumulatively. Although each utility's situation is unique, PNUCC reported frequent mentions of common themes underlying the increases – volatile wholesale power prices, demand changes, new resources, infrastructure improvements, and regulatory/policy requirements such as renewables portfolio standards.

"What is clear, regardless of whether you are a utility that buys most of its power from BPA, a utility that has added a gas-fired generating plant in recent years, a utility that has an aggressive conservation program, or a system that sells large quantities of power into the wholesale market, costs and rates are going up," concluded PNUCC. The regional utility association said it undertook the study "to test the conventional wisdom" about rising electric rates, and to discern key influences. It gathered information from public as well as published sources, later verified and elaborated on by utility staffers. PNUCC's sample incorporated all six Northwest investor-owned utilities, the largest public-power utilities, and a few smaller ones throughout the region.

"The most important thing is to see the range and the direction," PNUCC Deputy Director Shauna McReynolds. "The really important fact is that customers have seen changes in rates, and it's safe to say it's all on the increase." There were a lot of rate increases over the past three

years: 12 increases in 2009, 16 in 2010, and 18 in 2011. To date in 2012, the 27 utilities have had 14 rate increases. The vast majority of annual rate changes, up or down, have been in the single digits; only seven of the entire six-year period are in double digits. Ten utilities showed cumulative increases from 2007-2012 that were below 10 percent. Nine utilities were in the 10.3-17.7-percent range for that period, while three were in the 20s, two others were in the 30s, and one was 49.2 percent. "The changes in utility rates shown...do not reflect utilities' actual residential rates (cents per kWh), nor are they an indication of a utility's rates in relation to other utilities," said the report. "Therefore, some systems that experienced significant percentage increases may still have low rates relative to others." It also said Northwest residential rates "remain some of the lowest in the nation." U.S. Energy Information Administration data for 2011 shows all four Northwest states are well below the national average residential price for full-service electric providers of 11.6 cents/kWh. Idaho's 7.87 cents/kWh and Washington's 8.28 cents were the two lowest. Oregon (9.54 cents) and Montana (9.75 cents) are among the lowest 15.

While emphasizing differing circumstances of utilities – in resources, rate designs, market roles, power demand, regulatory policies and other local situations – the PNUCC report said several themes were apparent in rate influences. "The drivers are really important," said McReynolds. "Whether it's a policy decision or a business decision or a change to meet customers' needs, there are implications to those actions to rates, and they're not always what you think they will be."

One of the drivers is reduced wholesale powermarket prices, which reduces revenues for sellers. "With less revenue to offset costs, rates go up," said the report. Reynolds said utilities can find themselves helped or harmed by power-market circumstances, depending on the situation.

Power demand is another significant rate influence, PNUCC said. Recently, load reductions
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Pet of the Month

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Angel is a long-haired calico cat, who was a stray taken in by a good Samaritan. They thought about keeping her but decided she would do best finding her forever home through the shelter. We do not have any past history on her. She is currently being showcased at Natures Pet in Portland, please call 503-360-1244 for more information..

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