Chinook Policy Reversed, Again

Local News

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Starting Labor Day, anglers fishing off the Washington coast can again catch and keep one chinook salmon per day as part of their daily catch limit.Fishery managers for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) approved the change a week after announcing that anglers would be required to release any chinook salmon they catch in coastal waters.
Pat Pattillo, salmon policy coordinator for WDFW, said updated harvest data show that ocean catch rates slowed enough prior to the chinook closure on Monday (Aug. 29) to allow anglers to resume catching chinook salmon Sept. 5. "When we announced the chinook closure, harvest rates were at record levels," Pattillo said. "Since then, the catch has slowed substantially and we’re confident that we can keep the fishery open through the end of the season."

As of Aug. 28, coastwide catch totals for the sport fishery had reached 91 percent of the annual 30,100-fish chinook quota, and 59 percent of the 67,200-fish coho quota, Pattillo said.Ocean salmon fisheries are currently scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 2 (Westport), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay), and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco). All four areas are open for salmon fishing seven days a week.Anglers fishing in all ocean areas can currently catch up to two marked, hatchery coho salmon per day, and those fishing in marine areas 3 and 4 can also catch one additional pink salmon per day. Starting on Labor Day, they will again be able to substitute a chinook salmon for one coho salmon in their daily catch.
Additional information on the ocean fishery, including minimum-size limits, is available in WDFW’s Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet, posted online at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations .