Anglers must release chinook salmon in the Strait, can keep pink and hatchery coho

Local News

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OLYMPIA - The recreational fishery in marine areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu and eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) will end early for hatchery chinook salmon, but anglers may continue to retain pink and hatchery coho salmon. Marine areas 5 and 6 will close to the retention of hatchery chinook salmon at the end of the day Thursday, Aug. 6, nine days earlier than scheduled. The decision to end chinook fishing early was based on conservation concerns for wild chinook, which must be released if encountered by anglers, said Pat Pattillo, salmon policy coordinator for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "With a very successful fishing season for hatchery chinook this year, anglers have caught and released more wild chinook than were forecast in the pre-season estimates," Pattillo said. "We want to make sure we meet our conservation goals and avoid impacts to wild chinook."

Although the chinook fishery is winding down, anglers can continue to fish for pink and hatchery coho, which are starting to hit their peak, Pattillo said. "The fishing for coho and pink salmon is excellent and anglers should enjoy a good season through September," Pattillo said. Salmon fishing in marine areas 5 and 6 remains open seven days a week for hatchery coho and pink salmon. The daily limit is two salmon, plus anglers may keep two additional pink salmon. All wild chinook and wild coho must be released. All chum must be released.