

The Weekly Fishing News

August 26, 2019

Cordova

Alaska

Another week of coho salmon sport fishing has unfolded for us here in Cordova. Some overcast days and even a little rain have been added to the mix, but overall water conditions are still low for this time of year.

Below: A beautiful evening fishing trip down the Eyak River



More fish are moving up into the Eyak system and fishing has been hot for the anglers who find the right group of fish in the right spot. Spotting fish is only half the battle though. Light conditions and lure/fly color choice seem to be having a big effect on fish in this clear water. If you're casting to visible fish without attracting their attention, don't be afraid to switch up your presentation and show them something different. Persistence is the name of the game right now. I was lucky enough to see a fellow angler last Tuesday get the rare "first cast" bite in a hole near Mountain slough and cheered him on to landing his first chrome-bright coho of the day. Not all splashes and rolls you see in the river right now are cohos though. There are still lots of pink salmon scattered around, especially on shallower bends and sandy runs. Pinks are fun to catch on light tackle, but by this point in the season they are well into their spawning phase and better left alone.

Please remember, any coho salmon taken out of the water must be counted as part of your daily bag limit! That's something to think about before you slide that little 5-pounder up onto the beach. If you plan to release a fish, try working it up into shallow water where you can get a hold of the tail to control it, or better yet use a dip net. If you want that hero shot (and sometimes we all do) cradle the fish's belly in the one hand and hold just in front of the tail with the other to gently lift the fish to the water's surface. Keeping your hands away from the gills will give the fish a better chance of surviving to spawn and it keeps your fingers from getting sliced on the surprisingly sharp teeth and gill rakers.



Above: Carefully hold a salmon with your hands out of its gills if you plan on releasing it.

The action on Alaganik Slough seems to be heating up as well. Anglers working from the boat launch on the Alaganik Road and upstream along the fisherman's trail have been connecting with cohos in the 5 to 10-pound range with good regularity. Alaganik Slough is tidally influenced more than a mile upstream of the boat launch, so check the tide book before you go. Fishing on a rising tide is good for bringing new fish up but can also cause problems for anglers. That little side slough you waded through to get out to your fishing hole may only be knee deep water at low tide but could be over your waders when you're trying to get back across a few hour later.

I haven't had any reports coming in about people catching fish in 18-mile creek or at 20-mile/ Goose Meadows yet. The low water conditions across the whole Copper River Delta will likely delay salmon working up into the smaller creeks and slough a bit later than normal.

Good Luck and I'll see you on the water!

--Dan

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