

Weekly Fishing News

Cordova, Alaska

September 23, 2015



Ibeck Creek Darwin Award Contestants

The banks weren't very crowded Tuesday afternoon, but apparently these guys figured that the best place to fish was from the bridge. Don't do this. Fishing from the bridge is illegal because of the traffic hazard – two wide trucks and two fishermen could add up to a bloody mess. They couldn't get their bait down to the bottom from that angle anyway and just ended up feeding the Dolly Varden.

Coho Salmon and Dolly Varden are still Running Strong

Termination dust on the mountains and the equinox has come and gone. So, if you still need some coho for canning or for the freezer, you'd best get out and get them. There are still bright fish coming in from the ocean. The ones I caught last Sunday all had sea lice on them, and the flesh was a nice red – not that pale orange color they get when they've been hanging out in fresh water too long.

A commercial fisherman told me that these cold fall days are the best time to smoke coho. The humidity is relatively low, so the salmon strips dry more easily. I've never had too much luck with coho, but I'm thinking of trying to get a couple more this evening to give it a try.

Also, most of the bright fish coming in now are females so they'll be full of big eggs – just right for caviar. Don't waste those eggs ! A former Tsiu River guide says he just used a spoon to scrape the eggs from the membrane. Soak them in a saturated salt brine with a splash of Liquid Smoke for 3-5 minutes, rinse, serve on a cracker with cream cheese, and you'll have a tasty, elegant snack.



Ibeck Creek: Skunks and Roses For a guy that pretentiously tells you where and how to fish, I have to confess that I had the most miserable day of fishing a man can have without personal injury, sea sickness, or breaking equipment.

Andy Morse told me that the coho just aren't biting when the water is so clear and the sun is bright and directly overhead. But I was fishing Ibeck on the brightest blue sky Saturday afternoon ever, and seriously skunked I was. Schools of coho were sitting 10 feet in front of me and refused to budge, even as I dangled a fly on their noses. Like a bunch of aquatic ostriches, they figured that if they didn't move, no one could see them. Other fish were hiding deep in the brush along the collapsed banks, and I lost half a dozen flies trying to coax them out of there.

To make it worse, yesterday, a woman said she did real well on Ibeck over the weekend. Well, maybe she got out of bed before noon, used lures, or just knows what she's doing. Next time I'll listen to Andy and fish early in the morning or maybe in the evening if we keep getting this cursed sunny weather.

Alaganik Slough: Forgiveness from the Fish Gods and Sweet Redemption



Sunday afternoon in my preferred house of worship ... OK, heck with the extended metaphor ... I finally caught some fish, darn it. Andy Benson, who used to be a local fish addict around here, gave me this lure, but it sat unused in my tackle box while I foolishly fiddled with flies. It works. Good. Real good. Hammered copper Colorado blade with emerald faceted beads. The wire is pretty bent now – it saw a lot of action.

It was slow at first, but schools of bright coho came up with the tide. Folks were limiting at the boat ramp area, with a peak about 3 hours before the high tide listed in the tide book. I'd give that a try or maybe earlier if there is a big tide. A few fish are around at low tides, but you have to work hard.

I saw some fish being taken in the upper Alaganik. Try the picnic area at Mile 22 of the Copper River Highway. A smaller slough joins Alaganik there and forms a backwater where fish can rest out of the current. A few guys said the fish at the culverts are looking pretty old – takes them awhile to come up from Alaganik with this low water. I'd just fish the main channel of Alaganik for bright ones.

Eyak River: The Great Unknown Sorry, couldn't find anyone to interrogate. There were a 1/2 dozen trailers parked at the boat ramp, so somebody thinks there are fish. The water is dropping and has a touch of color, so the coho shouldn't be too spooky like they are at Ibeck. Bright ones should be coming up from the ocean with the tides if you fish a few miles downstream.

Power Creek: *Dolly Deluxe* For a change of pace, put on some light tackle and head for Power Creek. An out-of-towner who likes the milder taste of Dolly Varden said he got a limit (10) of 16- to 20-inch Dollies on Monday. These fatties are great for smoking – almost like black cod, but firmer. They're also scrappy fighters that twist and roll. Try beads or barbless single hook lures or flies. Power Creek is closed to salmon fishing, so you could get a spawning coho that will need to be released. So, avoid areas where you see spawning salmon. Dollies will hang in faster water where salmon don't spawn.

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