

Anglers in Cordova enjoyed plenty of sun and above-average coho (silver) salmon fishing conditions this last weekend. Now the big question is: What is in store for the upcoming week? Well, the National Weather Service is calling for rain, but don't despair, Alaska Fish and Game Sport Fish Biologist Sam Hochhalter predicts that the increased water flows will bring even more silvers into local waterways. Here is the scoop on the most popular streams:



Ibeck: Ibeck Creek is this season's "honey hole," producing limits for local and visiting anglers alike. Based on aerial fish count surveys, Hochhalter reports an estimated 7,700 adult coho up Ibeck right now, about 13% more spawning salmon than average. With clear water and an above average return, it is no wonder that so many anglers are finding success on this beautiful creek. What is working? Well there is no denying that roe is deadly on silver salmon; however, that doesn't mean you can't catch fish with flies or hardware. Try a fly with dumbbell eyes and a rabbit "zonker" strip tail; the salmon will often hit these patterns as they are dropping between strips. Another tip: sometimes it is crucial to sink your fly to the bottom as salmon seem more likely to strike things that are "in their faces." When fishing hardware, consider throwing a black spinner or spoon on a dark, cloudy day. Don't be afraid to dig in the recesses of your tackle box and mix it up as these fish are seeing lots of lures these days.

If you are planning on releasing your catch, use artificial lures, not roe, and keep the fish in the water at all times. If you do keep your catch, try to clean or fillet your fish on site so that essential nutrients stay in the ecosystem. Throw the carcass and all the entrails back into deep, swift water; don't leave these scraps on shore where they will attract bears.

Also, please use caution when driving and walking on the Copper River Highway near Ibeck Creek!

Eyak: Last week's rain storm left Eyak River high and off-color, convincing most shore-bound anglers to try their luck at nearby Ibeck Creek. That said, those lucky folks with boat access are still catching fish downstream. Local fisherman Brian (pictured right) caught this nice silver in Eyak River recently. Brian was using a #6 orange Pixee. Nice fish!

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Alaganik: Pulses of dime-bright coho salmon are moving up Alaganik Slough; however local anglers have mixed reports on the quality of the fishing, leaving me to assume that timing is crucial. Try fishing several hours before or after high tide and remember that high tide in this slough is about two hours later than the time listed in the Cordova tide table. If the water is off-color, try a Pixee, a Vibrax, or another lure that creates a lot of fish-attracting vibration. If you are doing more fishing than catching, try moving up- or down- stream in search of a pulse of salmon. A longtime local angler shared that he has been catching fish where clear-water tributaries and sloughs are flowing into the more off-color mainstem. He also recommends trying Wiggle Warts or other diving plugs.

Fleming Lagoon: There are still plenty of silvers returning to this terminal harvest fishery located at "Hippie Cove" on the north end of town. With early morning high tides this week, look for bright silvers entering freshwater overnight. First light will be a great time to fish the lagoon this week. Perhaps the hottest tip of the week- Alaska Fish and Game Sportfish Biologist Brittany Blain reports good fishing in the saltwater near the mouth of Fleming Creek. While high tide is usually best, Blain shared that anglers have been catching silvers in the salt during medium tide conditions as well.



Photo of the Week: (Photo by Jason Dunham)

This beautiful Dolly Varden (pictured left) put up a good tussle on light fly tackle. As autumn progresses, these char (cousins of trout and salmon) will take on brilliant spawning colors. Just like salmon, Dolly Varden are "anadromous," which means they can go to saltwater to feed, but they must return to freshwater to spawn. Unlike salmon, Dollies feed aggressively in freshwater and they can return to spawn multiple times. Some anglers

are disappointed to catch Dolly Varden instead of the larger silver salmon, but please treat these sportfish with respect and release them gently.

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