

The fishing has been pretty successful the past week according to reports of anglers across the Delta. Every time I drive by Ibeck I see lines of bright silver fish on the banks behind the eager anglers.

For many anglers the fishing has been slow and steady. Many report success with a #4 spinner, especially the hot pink ones. Though with the recent rains, roe is helping catch the elusive coho as the rivers cloud up with increased sediment.

This week there were also reports of some solid fish in Alaganik. Some good size males and even larger females were reported by a dedicated angler. There have also been sightings of coho up some of the spawning streams. So if you want to avoid the crowds at Ibeck all you have to do is get out and hike to find some fish and some quiet.

Last night I was given the opportunity to practice my catch and release skills. Now don't get me wrong, I like to keep fish. I was trying to keep fish. But you can only keep three, and I tend to prefer larger fish to "jacks" (as small salmon are commonly referred to). From the reports I've been hearing and my own experience there have been a number of these beautiful little guys in both Ibeck and Alaganik.

A reminder for all you anglers looking to fill your freezer and your jars with coho: It is against the law to remove from the water fish you are not going to keep. To get a fish off your hook while in the water, first start with getting it close to shore. It is better not to play the fish to exhaustion, but to bring quickly. I will have a friend hold the rod while I grasp the fish just behind the head and before the tail. Then I will have my partner back the hook out of the fish's mouth with a pair of pliers. A net is an easy way to do this on your own or with a helper too!

If I am on my own I will kneel in the water with the fish between my knees, use one hand to hold the head firmly and the other to get the hook out. Hold the fish for a moment and make sure it is able to stay upright and swim okay. If necessary you may need to conduct "fish resuscitation" by moving the fish back and forth through the water to force water, and thus oxygen, over their gills.

Now if a fish is deeply hooked or bleeding I will keep it, even if it is a small guy (a whole grilled salmon is pretty impressive and tasty anyway).



With that let me toss out a recipe for a whole grilled salmon. I'm looking forward to the next "jack" I catch now:

### Grilled Lemon Salmon

Number of servings will depend on the size of fish, but it should run about half a pound whole weight per a person.

#### Ingredients:

One whole cleaned and scaled "jack" coho (headed is optional)

Olive Oil – or similar

Salt and Pepper

3 lemons - sliced

1 yellow onion - sliced



Preheat your grill. I used a two-zone method where I place charcoal on only one half of the grill; this is accomplished on a gas grill by turning off one burner after the grill is hot and clean. Meanwhile, take your salmon and make deep cuts every two inches all the way down the fish. Rub your fish inside and out with olive oil and season well with salt and pepper. Place slices of lemon and onion inside of the body cavity. Add additional half slices to the slits in the sides of the fish.

Put the fish on a piece of aluminum foil and place on the grill without the coals or the lit burner under it. Cook the fish about 15 minutes a side, using the foil to flip halfway, at approximately 400 degrees.

Tips: This can also be done in the oven on a broiler pan. Fresh or dried herbs, especially dill, would make a great addition to this meal. Cooking fish at this temperature will take about 10 minutes per an inch of thickness, so don't be afraid to try a bigger fish too.

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