

Edmonds' salmon fishing season expected to be a good one

By Bob McChesney, Executive Director, the Port of Edmonds

One of the great joys of living here on Puget Sound is access to the water. For many, that means fishing.

On Thursday, July 16, the summer salmon season opens in the waters off Edmonds. Starting then, local fishermen can catch two per day, including Chinook (a.k.a. Kings). There are some restrictions set by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, so no one should go out without knowing the rules.

There are two fishing areas that are easily accessed from Edmonds. Area 9 starts just south of the marina, at Edwards Point, and runs north, encompassing all of Possession Sound and Admiralty Inlet. Area 10 runs south from Edwards Point to the north tip of Vashon Island. The catch limits are similar for both areas.

At a recent meeting, the Port Commission heard from John Hjort, a representative of the North of Falcon Process—the group that sets season and catch recommendations for our area. He gave an optimistic view of the summer's salmon fishing outlook, saying that there will be more fishing in the area than has been available since 1990.

Hjort says that the experts are predicting “there will be quite a few fish back—mainly pinks and Coho.” There will also be a longer Chinook season, with fishermen allowed to keep Chinook until the quota has been filled in both Areas 9 and 10. Also this year, he said, fishermen will be allowed to keep wild Coho in Areas 9 and 10, and the limit will be two Coho and two pink salmon per person.

This is the time of year when the Port's boat launcher becomes especially busy. With the opening of the Chinook season the launcher will be open at 6:00 AM. Often during similar

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good fishing seasons the early morning waiting line for the launcher has been the equivalent of two or three blocks long. People who would like to get an early start can come down the night before, launch and—for a small fee—leave their boat in guest moorage for an early morning departure.

The Port fuel dock will also open at 6:00 AM and remain open until 6:30 PM. The launcher closes a half hour later, at 7:00 PM. Bud's Bait is open early as well.

By all accounts, this is shaping up to be a good summer fishing season, and undoubtedly a busy one, too. With a 1-1/2 month Chinook season and 5 million pink salmon expected to return this year, Edmonds backyard barbecues, grills and dinner tables are likely to be busy, happy places.

Good luck.

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