



### **2019 South Coast Chinook Salmon Sport Fishing - Background**

The BC tidal waters fishing season began with the new licence year on April 1, 2019. As is the case each year, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) announced regulations for several recreationally harvested species. As you may know, the measures implemented to address Fraser River Chinook conservation concerns were unusually restrictive and limited retention of Chinook in the south coast. To be clear, there have been no fishing closures. While these are unusual measures, regulations are announced and implemented every season. The 2019 Chinook restrictions apply to certain parts of the coast and for a portion of the season.

There have been stories in the media that have linked Chinook salmon to the health of Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW). Measures to address issues effecting SRKW have been announced and with a few exceptions and small areas, the access to salmon and Chinook are not impacted. While concerns remain about SRKW food security, the Fraser River Chinook measures are not linked to this issue. DFO confirmed this by making separate announcements regarding Fraser River Chinook and then for SRKW.

The measures announced on April 16, 2019 were neither a closure for recreational Chinook salmon fishing nor what should be considered a new normal. It is important that general enquiries about sport fishing are encouraged to be in touch with local operators so that they may explain the regulations that are in place. As in previous years, rather than get into the details of the sport fishing regulations, it is recommended that the message is that fishing is open and the fishing experiences available for visitors to BC and locals alike are expected to be exceptional.

From a provincial perspective, expectations for this season are high and many locations have the same regulations in place as in previous years.

### **Fishing BC's Strategy – Public Outreach**

It has been our objective to position BC's fishing tourism product as focused on the fishing experience rather than based solely on the quality or quantity of harvest.

*"We offer the most diverse fishing experiences and opportunities anywhere. The most beautiful, pristine and abundant environment are paired with the best support for anglers' needs and desires all in one place."*

Our focus will be to promote angler's connection to the land, water, and wildlife while showing the excellent fishing opportunities available. Our strategy focuses heavily on storytelling and the human element of the fishing experience. The combination of spending quality time with friends and family while enjoying the hospitality of small communities, resorts and guides are key motivators for booking a fishing vacation.

The following summarizes the Fishing BC provincial campaign and how it intends to market and promote fishing experiences in tidal waters on the BC coast:

- **Focus on storytelling and highlight the experience of sharing quality time on the water.**
- **When featuring the act of catching a fish that will be released, particularly salmon, appropriate fish handling practices will be depicted; i.e. minimal evidence of contact and air exposure and appropriate use of release tools. If the fish is retained, photos will portray one fish (per angler) rather than a boat load or dock full of fish.**
- **Where possible, marketing and promotional materials will show diversity of catch including rock fish, ling cod, halibut, other pacific salmon species, crabs or prawns.**
- **Comments or concerns about "closures" should receive response that fishing in BC is open and that measures in place are restrictions only, area based, and not all season long.**
- **Encourage enquiry to local operators. Guides and resorts will all offer services and experiences that work within the constraints of time and area-based Chinook restrictions.**