

Ocean Salmon season opens this weekend along the California coast

June 5, 2025



Salmon anglers, grab your gear! After two years of closure, the recreational ocean salmon fishery will open statewide for two days on June 7-8, 2025.

While forecasts of ocean abundance for Sacramento and Klamath fall Chinook are lower than average in 2025, anglers may still have a good chance of successfully catching salmon given strong returns of other California Chinook stocks last fall.

“We’re looking forward to hearing reports from anglers returning with salmon this weekend. Hopefully there will be smiles on faces after a day on the water and fresh fish for summer barbeques,” said California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Program Manager Marci Yaremko.

In response to low overall chinook abundance and the need to minimize take of certain stocks of concern, CDFW will limit total recreational Chinook harvest in 2025 by implementing statewide harvest guidelines in each of the summer and fall seasons and managing the catch limits in-season. A statewide 7,000 Chinook

salmon summer harvest guideline is in place for a series of potential short seasons scheduled between June and August. If the harvest guideline is not reached in the June 7-8 opening weekend, the summer season will reopen statewide July 5-6, July 31-August 3, and August 25-31, or until the harvest guideline is reached.

The fall fishery will reopen in some regions under a separate 7,500 Chinook salmon harvest guideline. The San Francisco Subarea (Point Reyes, 37°59'44" N Latitude, to Pigeon Point, 37°11' N Latitude) is scheduled to open September 4-7, September 29-30, October 1-5, and October 27-31. The Monterey Subarea (Pigeon Point, 37°11' N Latitude, to Point Sur, 36°18' N Latitude) is scheduled to open September 4-7, and September 29-30. The scheduled fall season dates will close once the 7,500 Chinook fall harvest guideline is reached.

Given the 2-year ocean salmon fishery closure and the short duration of this fishing period, angler participation is expected to be high. Anglers should prepare for crowds and long wait times at public launch ramps and marinas and consider travel, parking, and launch ramp conditions when finalizing plans. CDFW reminds anglers to prepare their gear and test equipment ahead of time, and to check marine forecasts, ocean conditions, and regulations before hitting the water.

CDFW appreciates anglers' cooperation with dockside monitoring activities over the 2-day season. Field staff will meet vessels returning to launch and dock sites to collect catch and effort information and coded wire tag data that is essential to managing California's salmon fisheries. CDFW will be collecting heads from salmon with a clipped adipose fin, which contain coded wire tags that have information about the salmon's hatchery of origin, release strategy, brood year, and run type. Anglers should be aware they are required by law to relinquish the head of any adipose fin-clipped salmon upon request by a CDFW representative, per California Code of Regulations Title 14, section 1.73.

The minimum size limit is 20 inches total length. The daily bag limit is two Chinook salmon per day. No more than two daily bag limits may be possessed when on land. On a vessel in ocean waters, no person shall possess or bring ashore more than one daily bag limit. All salmon must be brought ashore prior to the end of any open season. Retention of coho (silver salmon) is prohibited in all ocean fisheries off California; information on how to distinguish coho from Chinook salmon can be found [here](#). While salmon fishing north of Point Conception, anglers are required to use barbless hooks, and once salmon are aboard, barbed hooks may not be used to target other species. Anglers are encouraged to visit the Ocean Salmon Project's webpage for details and complete regulatory information, or call the Ocean Salmon Regulations Hotline at (800)-662-9825. Federal Regulations for ocean salmon fisheries were published in 90 Federal Register 20810 on May 16, 2025, and went into effect May 16, 2025.

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