



Recfishwest Praises Increase to Minimum Legal Size Limit for Wilson Inlet Pink Snapper

Recfishwest today praised the announcement by Minister for Fisheries, Jon Ford, to increase the minimum legal size limit for pink snapper in Wilson Inlet.

The Minister for Fisheries has approved an increase in the legal minimum size for pink snapper in the Wilson Inlet from 280 mm to 410 mm by mid 2007. This creates a uniform minimum legal size limit for pink snapper across the South Coast and West Coast Regions.

Fisheries research suggests that pink snapper are slow growing, live in excess of 25 years and reach sexual maturity at around 400 mm. "The increase will provide a significant boost for oceanic snapper stocks where Wilson Inlet is an important nursery for juvenile pink snapper along the South Coast." Recfishwest Executive Director, Frank Prokop said.

The recreational sector expressed its strong support (67%) for an increase to the Wilson Inlet minimum legal size of pink snapper in 2005 South Coast Recreational Fishing Review, but it was not implemented.

"It has been the coordination of local support by Mr Robert Robinson and local member for Albany, Peter Watson that has been an important consideration in getting this regulation changed at this time." Mr Prokop said.

Mr Robinson was responsible for collecting 1700 signatures of concerned local residents and visitors to outline the strong community support for the change.

"Recfishwest understands that some fishers in the Wilson Inlet may be impacted upon as a result of this change in the size limit, but a biologically based size limit is in the best long term interest of the fishery." Mr Prokop said.

Recreational fishers have been the driving force behind a number of successful management measures for the protection of fish stocks such as the Cockburn Sound and Shark Bay pink snapper closures and protection of blue groper at Rottnest Island.

"This is another example of where recreational fishers have proactively endorsed tighter restrictions on a fishery to ensure its sustainability in the future." Mr Prokop said.

"We are pleased with the Minister's decision which will help ensure a sustainable resource on the South Coast." Mr Prokop said.

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