



Best Easter ever for South-west salmon

Recfishwest today praised the announcement by Minister for Fisheries, Jon Ford, to implement a closure for the commercial salmon fishing industry over Easter.

Following years of lobbying by Recfishwest, the Minister for Fisheries has approved a closure from Good Friday to Easter Monday from Cape Naturaliste to the Old Dunsborough boat ramp.

Good numbers of salmon have been reported along the south-west area. However, salmon fishers should not expect salmon in the metropolitan area in the numbers that were seen last year due to a stronger Leeuwin Current.

“Fishing for Australian salmon in the south-west is one of the most highly valued recreational fisheries in this state. Although we would have liked the closure to extend from Cape Leeuwin to include the entire south-west coast, this is an important first step and one that should see a hassle free salmon fishery near Dunsborough.” Recfishwest Executive Director, Frank Prokop said.

The recreational sector has consistently lobbied for changes to the existing fishery arrangements over Easter where commercial fishers could net a school of salmon that anglers had waited for days to appear.

“It has been the efforts of Recfishwest, backed up by support from people such as Rusty Ellis and local members that has been an important consideration in getting this closure implemented in time for the 2007 Easter season.” Mr Prokop said.

“Recfishwest understands that commercial fishers may be impacted upon as a result of this change, but we have also consistently lobbied for the continuation of a buy-back of salmon entitlements on the south-west as the best long term solution to conflict in the area.” Mr Prokop said.

Mr Prokop asked all recreational fishers to respect the activities of commercial salmon fishermen, but to be aware that the fisheries laws did not give commercial fishers the right to fish over the top of any recreational fisher.

Through the efforts of Recfishwest, 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 Rottneest Island.

“We are pleased with the Minister’s decision which will help ensure a successful and enjoyable Easter weekend in the South-west to the benefit of the tourism industry and many small businesses.” Mr Prokop said.

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