

# Alaska



# Sport Fishing

Guide



*Locations • Run Timing • Gear • Species • Trip Planning Tips*

.....  
Your Comprehensive Guide to Sport Fishing in Alaska

# Exploring Alaska's Vast Sport Fishing Opportunities

Alaska is a world-renowned sport fishing destination. Anglers from all over the world come to Alaska seeking an unforgettable fishing experience. The overall size and scale of Alaska can be daunting for anglers due to its massive size. But, amazing sport fishing opportunities can be easily found along Alaska's road system, and several air and boat transport services operate in the state providing access to more remote locations. This booklet is intended to address commonly asked questions about sport fishing in Alaska. More detailed information can be obtained by contacting Alaska Department of Fish and Game staff at the appropriate office in the area you plan to fish.

Sport fishing in Alaska is often an experience best shared by friends and families. In this publication you'll notice the brand, "wefishak." We encourage you to experience sport fishing together. Whether it's on a chartered vessel targeting salt water species or on the banks of a river or lake, the real trophy is often not what swims beneath the surface as much as what happens when people fish, together.

We hope you enjoy your Alaska angling experience.

**wefishak**



And share your story  
using #wefishak

— Take the —

# Five Salmon

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## *Family Challenge*

**The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Five Salmon Family certificate program provides recognition to angling families who catch and document the five species of Pacific salmon commonly found in Alaska.**

*Certification in the program requires all salmon must be legally caught in Alaskan waters (fresh or salt water) open to the public and in compliance with current ADF&G sport fishing regulations.*



*Learn more at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)*



# Sport Fishing in Alaska:

Alaska is a **BIG** state.

*Over 375 Million Acres of land.*

Good sport fishing isn't hard to find in Alaska. A sport angler's greatest challenge can be deciding where to get started. From an angler's perspective, Alaska is enormous; fishing it all would require one to cast across over a million acres of streams, lakes and water-lapped shorelines every day for a full year. Think of it as the old anglers' quandary – so much water, so many fish, so little time – but on a wilder, grander scale.



**Southwest**

**There are 5 species of Pacific salmon native to the fresh waters of Alaska.**

- Chinook (King) Salmon • Sockeye (Red) Salmon • Pink (Humpy) Salmon
- Coho (Silver) Salmon • Chum (Dog) Salmon

In-season fish counts are posted daily online at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

# *Size, Scale, Timing & Location*



- Over 12,000 rivers
- 3,000,000 lakes
- 6,640 miles of coastline

There are four separate sport fish regulation summary books for Alaska covering the Northern, Southcentral, Southwest and Southeast areas.

**Southeast**

## **No matter where you are in Alaska Stay Bear Aware**

- Don't surprise bears at close range - Make noise when walking in areas bears might be.
- Never run from a bear. Talk to bears in a loud, firm voice and do not make any sudden movements.
- Never approach a bear - especially a sow with cubs.



# Planning your trip



## Choosing a Location

Many sport fish anglers choose to use Alaska's road-system to access rivers, lakes and coastal locations. While the road-system is somewhat limited, anglers can find exceptional fisheries close to most cities and towns. The road-system also offers access to trail systems that offer anglers the opportunity to access more out-of-the-way fishing locations. Air and boat charter services operate in most towns in the state and provide access to remote fisheries. Of equal importance when determining where you plan to fish is when you plan to fish. Timing is key. This brochure provides basic run-timing information on a variety of salt and fresh water species.

## Sport Fishing Licenses

- A sport fishing license is required for any non-resident 16 years of age or older and for any Alaska resident 18 years of age or older.
- Those who plan to target king salmon will need a King Salmon stamp.
- Licenses and stamps can be purchased at: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/Store/>.



## Know Before You Go: Check for Emergency Orders

Emergency Orders (EOs) are changes to in-season regulation. In many cases EOs are required because there are either more or fewer fish than expected, and there is biological conservation concern. EOs are posted on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game website at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov). EOs are also announced in newspapers, by radio, and are recorded on ADF&G hotlines. You can also sign up online to receive EOs and news releases by e-mail.



# Preparing for the Elements



## Weather in Alaska is anything but predictable.

*Weather patterns in Alaska are anything but predictable. Preparing for the elements will ensure your personal comfort and safety while experiencing Alaska's superb sport fisheries. In June and July, weather across the state can range from cool summer days with temperatures dropping into the 40s or 50s to warm days with temperatures reaching in the upper 80s.*

### Clothing and Personal Items

- Rainwear
- Warm Under Layers
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Light jacket
- Sunscreen/Lip balm
- Backpack (waterproof)
- Bug repellent
- Dry bag
- Camera
- Cell phone
- Toiletries

### Fishing Gear and Tackle

- Sport Fish license/stamp
- Rods and Reels
- Waders (No felt soled boots)
- Fishing jacket or vest
- Hook removal device
- Flies (dry and wet)
- Weights and hooks
- Lures/plugs
- Fly boxes or tackle box
- Lifevest
- Bear spray
- Fillet knife

*These are simply suggested items. Be sure to pack any other items you may need to stay safe and comfortable while sport fishing. There are several locations in most towns in Alaska where select items can be purchased. More remote areas offer limited resources.*

## **NO FELT SOLED WADING BOOTS**

Felt soled wading boots are prohibited while sport fishing in the fresh waters of Alaska.



# Northern

Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim Drainage (including the Tanana River), and Upper Copper/Upper Susitna River Drainage



## Regional ADF&G Offices:

Fairbanks: 907.459.7207

Glennallen: 907.822.3309

Delta Junction: 907.895.4632





\* Peak Times | — Species Present

Tanana ~~~~~ Fresh Water												
Species	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
King Salmon							****					
Chum Salmon							*****	*		*****		
Coho Salmon									*****			
Arctic Char							*****	*****	*****			
Sheefish						*****	*****	*****	*****			
Rainbow Trout						*****	*****	*****	*****			
Grayling					*****	*****	*****	*****	*****			
Whitefish					*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****		
Burbot	****				****					*****	*****	*****
Lake Trout												
Northern Pike												

# Additional Information

Fairbanks CVB Visitor Information Center  
 101 Dunkel St., Fairbanks, AK 99701  
 907.456.5774, or 800.327.5774  
 email: info@explorefairbanks.com

Alaska Public Lands Information Center  
 101 Dunkel St., Ste 110, Fairbanks, AK 99701  
 907.459.3730  
 email: fair\_interpretation@nps.gov

Alaska Public Lands Information Center  
 PO Box 359, Tok, AK 99780  
 907.883.5667

Nome Convention and Visitor Bureau  
 PO Box 240, Nome, AK 99762  
 907.443.6555

Delta Junction Visitor Information Center  
 PO Box 987, Delta Junction, AK 99737  
 907.895.5063  
 email: deltacc@deltachamber.org

Greater Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce  
 PO Box 469, Glennallen, AK 99588  
 907.822.5555 email: chamber@cvineternet.net

## **Northern Region ~ Arctic/Yukon, Kuskokwim, Tanana, and Upper Copper/Upper Susitna drainages**

Interior Alaska, the Far North, and Western Alaska are a mosaic of boreal forests, tundra, muskeg, lakes, and glacial and clear water streams. The rugged Brooks Range separates the North Slope from the Interior, while the Alaska Range and the Wrangell Mountains, to the south, rim the Upper Susitna and Upper Copper rivers. Denali National Park, Wrangell St. Elias National Park, and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge are just a few of the federal lands of the region.

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### **Communities**

Fairbanks, Alaska's second largest city is in the heart of Interior Alaska. Other Interior communities are: Delta Junction, Nenana, Tok, and Eagle. Bethel is the hub of Western Alaska, and Barrow is America's farthest north city, followed by Kotzebue and Nome. Many other small bush communities exist throughout the region.

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### **Angling Opportunities**

The waters of Interior, Western, and Northern Alaska are home to Arctic grayling, northern pike, burbot, Dolly Varden, lake trout, Arctic char and sheefish. Rainbow trout inhabit tributaries of the lower Kuskokwim and Upper Copper/Upper Susitna rivers and stocked landlocked lakes of the Interior. Salmon fishing is seasonal and very time/location specific. Fishing doesn't end when northern Alaska freezes over; ice fishing is a popular winter activity for residents and visitors alike.

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### **Services**

Much of the Interior's road system offers full services, but facilities are scarce along some roads. Check your map and highway guide book before beginning a road trip. Distances between towns are greater than you might expect. Campgrounds, hotels, guides, and outfitter services are available in the region's larger communities.

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### **Weather/What to Wear**

Long summer days warm the Interior to average temperatures in the high 60s, often climbing to the 70s, 80s, and sometimes 90s. Dress for mild summer days in the Interior, but prepare for occasional dips into the 40s and 50s. For Northern and Western Alaska, dress in layers along with good outerwear.





# Southcentral

Kenai Peninsula, Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound,  
Resurrection Bay, Anchorage, Mat-Su



## Regional ADF&G Offices:


Anchorage: 907.267.2218


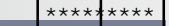
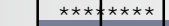
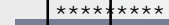

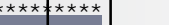

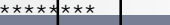




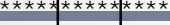
Palmer: 907.746.6300


Soldotna: 907.262.9368



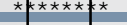
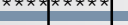



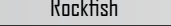

Homer: 907.235.8191







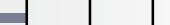


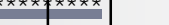



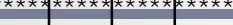
\* Peak Times |  Species Present

Kenai Peninsula  Fresh Water												
Species	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
King Salmon						*****	*****					
Sockeye Salmon							*****	*****				
Coho Salmon								*****	*****			
Pink Salmon								*****	*****			
Steelhead										*****	*****	
Rainbow Trout						*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	
Grayling							*****	*****	*****	*****		
Dolly Varden/Char						*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	
Lake Trout		*****	*****	*****	*****						*****	*****

\* Peak Times |  Species Present

Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, Resurrection Bay  Salt Water												
Species	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
King Salmon	*****	*****				*****	*****					*****
Sockeye Salmon					*****	*****						
Coho Salmon						*****	*****					
Pink Salmon						*****	*****					
Halibut							*****	*****				
Rockfish												
Lingcod												

\* Peak Times |  Species Present

Anchorage, Mat-Su, West Cook Inlet  Fresh Water												
Species	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
King Salmon						*****	*****					
Sockeye Salmon						*****	*****					
Coho Salmon								*****	*****			
Pink Salmon								*****	*****			
Dolly Varden/Char									*****	*****		
Rainbow Trout						*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	
Grayling							*****	*****	*****	*****		

## **Kenai/Cook Inlet/Anchorage/Mat-Su/Susitna**

More than half of Alaska's residents live in this area. Southcentral Alaska is an outdoor enthusiast's dream. The area abounds with lakes, rivers, mountains, and of course ample sport fishing opportunities. The region also has the best-developed road system in the state. In this region, energetic travelers find an open road leading toward endless adventures.

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### **Communities**

Anchorage is Alaska's most populated city. Cook Inlet lies at its doorstep and the Chugach Mountains rise from its back yard. Other towns in the region include Kenai, Soldotna, Homer, Eagle River/Chugiak, Palmer and Wasilla. Smaller communities such as Cooper Landing and Girdwood are present as well.

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### **Angling Opportunities**

Several world-class streams are within a short distance drive from Anchorage. Ship Creek in Anchorage offers exceptional king and coho salmon fishing. The Kenai River – Alaska's most popular sport fishery – can be reached within a few hours drive south of Anchorage. Anglers target salt water species from the ports of Whittier, Seward, Ninilchik, Anchor Point and Homer. Always be sure to check local sport fishing regulations before heading out to fish.

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### **Services**

Full services are available throughout the region. Air and boat charter services are available to many remote areas.

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### **Access**

Anchorage is the hub of the region, providing access to rental cars, campers, guide services, charter flights and outfitters. Great fishing spots can be found within Anchorage city limits and can also be within a 100 mile drive north or south.

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### **Weather/What to Wear**

July temperatures typically range from the 60s along the coast to the 70s and 80s inland. Precipitation levels are low throughout the region in summer, but bring rain gear just in case. Wear layers for the occasional cool day and carry a light waterproof jacket.



## Prince William Sound/North Gulf Coast

Exceptional salt water fishing opportunities await in Prince William Sound and Resurrection Bay (part of the North Gulf Coast). Halibut, lingcod, rockfish and all five species of salmon can be targeted in these waters. Popular Prince William Sound (PWS) fishing ports and communities include Valdez and Cordova, located on the east side of PWS and Whittier, located on the west side of PWS. Seward, located just over 100 miles south of Anchorage is the gateway to Resurrection Bay and the North Gulf Coast.

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### Communities

Valdez, Seward and Whittier can be reached by road from Anchorage or Fairbanks or from roads that link to the Alaska Highway. Cordova is only accessible by air or boat. Scheduled air service is available to Cordova. The state ferry system connects Whittier, Valdez and Cordova. Charter and outfitter services are available at these ports.

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### Angling Opportunities

Resurrection Bay and Prince William Sound offer limited shore fishing opportunities. Most shore fishing is done closer to ports/communities. There are remote fresh water fishing opportunities throughout Prince William Sound.

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### Services

Most towns have hotels accommodations. Campgrounds are located throughout the area and a limited number of U.S. Forest Service cabins can be rented in the Chugach National Forest. Air charters offer travel to remote areas and charter boat and guide services are widely available.

# Additional Information

**Seward Chamber of Commerce**  
P.O. Box 749, Seward AK 99664  
907.224.8051  
email: [visitseward@seward.net](mailto:visitseward@seward.net)

**Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
P.O. Box 1603, Valdez, AK 99686  
907.835.4636

**Homer Chamber of Commerce**  
201 Sterling Highway, Homer, AK 99603  
907.235.7740  
[www.homer.alaska.org](http://www.homer.alaska.org)

**Kenai Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
11471 Kenai Spur Highway, Kenai, AK 99611  
907.283.1991



# Southeast

## Alaska's Inside Passage



### Regional ADF&G Offices:

Juneau/Douglas: 907.465.4270

Sitka: 907.747.5355

Yakutat: 907.784.3222

Ketchikan: 907.225.2859

Haines: 907.766.3638

Petersburg: 907.772.5231

Craig: 907.826.2498







# Additional Information

**Haines Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
P.O. Box 530, 122 Second Ave.  
Haines, AK 99827  
907.766.2234 or 800.458.3579  
email: [hcvb@haines.ak.us](mailto:hcvb@haines.ak.us)

**Petersburg Visitor Information Center**  
P.O. Box 649, Petersburg, AK 99833  
(907) 772-4636  
[visitorinfo@alaskan.com](mailto:visitorinfo@alaskan.com)

**Juneau Visitor Information Center**  
800 Glacier Ave., Suite 201  
Juneau, AK 99801  
907.586.2201 or 888.581.2201  
email: [info@traveljuneau.com](mailto:info@traveljuneau.com)

**Sitka Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
104 Lake St., Sitka, AK 99835  
907.747.8604 or 800.557.4852  
email: [scvb@sitka.org](mailto:scvb@sitka.org)

**Wrangell Chamber of Commerce**  
P.O. Box 49, 107 Stikine Ave.,  
Wrangell, AK 99929  
(907) 874-3901  
[cini@wrangellchamber.org](mailto:cini@wrangellchamber.org)

**Southeast Alaska Discovery Center**  
50 Main St., Ketchikan, AK 99901  
(907) 228-6220  
[travisamasonbushman@fs.fed.us](mailto:travisamasonbushman@fs.fed.us)

**Skagway Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
P.O. Box 1029, Skagway, AK 99840  
907.983.2854 or 888.762.1898  
email: [skagwayinfo@gmail.com](mailto:skagwayinfo@gmail.com)

**Ketchikan Visitors Bureau**  
50 Front St., Suite 203  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
907.225.6166 or 800.770.3300  
email: [info@visit-ketchikan.com](mailto:info@visit-ketchikan.com)



## **Southeast Alaska/Yakutat**

Southeast, or the “panhandle” as it is called in Alaska, is noted for its fjords, mountains, maritime climate, old-growth spruce and hemlock forests, glaciers, and fishing. Southeast includes over 1,000 islands strung just offshore west of the mainland. The Tongass National Forest and the icy Glacier Bay National Park are just two of the federally designated areas found in Southeast.

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### **Communities**

Quaint waterfront towns and Tlingit and Haida villages dot the region. The largest city is Juneau, Alaska’s capital. Other major communities are Sitka, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Wrangell, Haines, Skagway, Craig, and Klawock.

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### **Angling Opportunities**

Marine and freshwater sport fishing opportunities abound. Southeast Alaska is a place where the sport angler can stay busy fishing year-round for wild trout, all five species of Pacific salmon, halibut, lingcod, rockfish and a variety of other species. Opportunities for both freshwater and saltwater shoreline fishing for salmon exist near most towns and cities. There are over 330 streams that support pristine runs of wild steelhead. The Situk River (Yakutat) has the state’s largest run of steelhead averaging over 7,000 steelhead/year and also supports runs of all five species of Pacific salmon, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden.

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### **Services**

Full services and established charter boat and guide services are available in larger communities. Air charter services provide excellent access to remote areas. There are U.S. Forest Service cabins throughout the region available for rent.

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### **Weather/What to Wear**

An average of over 90 inches of rain falls on Southeast-Yakutat annually. Summer temperatures average 55°F. Waterproof jackets and pants are recommended. Wear several layers of light clothing for warmth. Mosquito repellent should be considered a necessity for any fishing trip to Southeast Alaska.



# Southwest

Bristol Bay, Kodiak Island, Alaska Peninsula  
and the Aleutian Islands



## Regional ADF&G Offices:

Dillingham: 907.842.2427

Kodiak: 907.486.1880

\* Peak Times | — Species Present

Bristol Bay/Kodiak											Fresh Water	
Species	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
King Salmon							****					
Sockeye Salmon						*****						
Coho Salmon							*****					
Pink Salmon							****					
Steelhead	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****					*****		
Rainbow Trout								*****				
Northern Pike												
Dolly Varden/Char					*****			*****	*****			

\* Peak Times | — Species Present

Bristol Bay/Kodiak											Salt Water	
Species	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
King Salmon						*****	*****	*****				
Sockeye Salmon						*****						
Coho Salmon							*****	*****	*****			
Pink Salmon							****					
Halibut												
Dolly Varden						*****	*****	*****				

**Southwest Alaska offers adventurous anglers a chance to find some truly remote fishing locations.**

Local knowledge can be the key to a successful fishing trip. Anglers who are unfamiliar with the area can use charter or guide services. Contact the local Chamber of Commerce or Visitors Bureau in the area you plan to fish for a list of guides, charter boat operators and lodges.







## Southwest Alaska



## Additional Information

Kodiak Island Convention and Visitors Bureau  
100 Marine Way, Suite 200, Kodiak, AK 99615  
907.486.4782 or 800.789.4782  
email: [visit@kodiak.org](mailto:visit@kodiak.org)

Dillingham Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 348, Dillingham, AK 99576  
907.842.5115  
email: [info@dillinghamak.com](mailto:info@dillinghamak.com)

[www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)

## **Bristol Bay/Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands/Kodiak Island**

Southwest Alaska is an angler's paradise. This region offers world-class sport fishing opportunities. Terrain varies from the grasslands of the Aleutian Islands to the deep lakes and rivers of the Bristol Bay and Lake Iliamna areas. Other attractions include Katmai National Park and Preserve and McNeil River State Game Sanctuary.

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### **Communities**

Several remote communities exist throughout Southwest Alaska. Towns such as Kodiak, Dillingham, Unalaska, Dutch Harbor and King Salmon offer accommodations as well as flight and boating services.

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### **Angling Opportunities**

From trophy rainbow trout to tremendous annual returns of all five species of Pacific salmon, the Southwest has it all. Some sport fisheries are road-accessible from local communities – others require boat or airplane access.

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### **Services**

Fly-in lodges dot the Bristol Bay area. Most services can be found in larger towns; fly-in charters and outfitters are widely available. Kodiak is a town with full services.

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### **Access**

There are no connecting roads into this region. Scheduled and charter air service runs from Anchorage. State ferries operate year-round to Kodiak from Seward and Homer; limited seasonal ferry service is available from Kodiak to communities along the Aleutian chain.

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### **Weather/What to Wear**

Weather in this region can be unpredictable. Anglers should be prepared for anything. It is quite rainy in Kodiak and the Aleutians, and average July temperatures are in the low 60s. Good rain gear is essential. Layer for warmth.



# wefishak



[www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)



These opportunities  
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Federal Aid in Sport Fish  
Restoration.

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