



Planning a Fishing Trip in Alaska

What does Alaska have to offer?

Alaska has unlimited opportunities for both freshwater and saltwater fishing adventures in some of the most challenging and spectacular country anywhere. However, Alaska's enormous size can make planning a trip a difficult task. The following tips will help you plan a fishing trip that suits your tastes and means. **Please note:** this leaflet is not a substitute for the Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary, published by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game each year. All anglers are responsible for knowing and following the current year's regulations.

Sport Fishing Licenses and Regulations

A sport fishing license is required for each calendar year and must be in your possession. Licenses can be purchased at most sporting good stores in Alaska, by mail, (the ADF&G Licensing Section, 1255 W. 8th St., P.O. Box 25525, Juneau, AK 99802-5525) or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov. Ask for copies of the current year's Sport Fishing Regulations when you purchase your licenses: there are separate booklets for different regions of the state. **Please note:** The regulations can be extremely complex! Ask the vendor or staff from the Department of Fish & Game for assistance in reading and understanding the regulations. Be sure to read the information under "Methods & Means" and "Statewide Provisions".

Sport Fishing Licenses and Fees

The following licenses are available (fees are subject to change):

Resident sport fishing	\$24
Resident sport fishing and hunting	\$48
Resident sport fishing, hunting, and trapping	\$62

Non-resident 1-day	\$20
Non-resident 3-day	\$35
Non-resident 7-day	\$55
Non-resident 14-day	\$80
Non-resident annual	\$145

Military sport fishing license	\$24
Military sport fishing/small game hunting license	\$48

For king (chinook) salmon you must also purchase and have in possession a King Salmon Tag (anglers under age 16 do not need a king salmon tag but may need a free harvest record card):

Resident tag	\$10
Non-resident 1-day tag	\$10
Non-resident 3-day tag	\$20
Non-resident 7-day tag	\$30
Non-resident 14-day tag	\$50
Non-resident annual tag	\$100
Military king salmon tag	\$20

Emergency Orders

In addition to the regulations, the Department of Fish & Game may at any time issue emergency orders that open or close the season, change the limits, or make other changes in the regulations for a given fishery. Contact the Department of Fish & Game for current information.

Where to Fish?

Alaska has relatively few highways. If you plan on roadside fishing, be prepared to share your fishing spots with others! In addition to natural populations of fish in clear water streams, rivers, and lakes, there are many stocked lakes. Silty, glacial rivers generally provide poor sport fishing.



Fly fishing on the banks of the Kenai River in hopes of a good day's catch.

You may wish to charter a boat or aircraft to reach less accessible fishing areas or contract with a guide or outfitter. The fees charged generally reflect the level of services offered, which can range from simple drop-off and pick-up service, to luxury resorts with meals, equipment, and personal guide provided. There are no licensing or training standards for sport fishing guides so the quality can vary. A reputable guide will not hesitate to provide names of clients for references. For names and outfitters check the *Official State Vacation Planner*, local visitor bureaus, or the advertisements in fishing and outdoor sports magazines.

Looking for Trophy Fish?

The Kenai Peninsula is world-famous for its enormous king salmon. Anglers stand shoulder-to-shoulder along the banks while boats crows the river waters. The

fishing regulations for this area are extremely complex and emergency orders that open or close different fisheries are issued several times each season. Check first with the Department of Fish & Game office in Soldotna (phone 907-262-2737). If you hire a Kenai River or Kachemak Bay fishing guide they must have a permit to operate. For a list of these permitted guides write to Alaska State Parks, P.O. Box 1247, Soldotna, AK 99667 or call (907) 262-5581.

The Alaska Peninsula is famous for its trophy trout and grayling fishing. Popular areas include Lake Clark, Lake Iliamna, Becharof and Ugashik Lakes, and Wood River-Tikchik Lakes. Interior Alaska's vast wetlands are known for their lunker northern pike, sometimes exceeding 30 pounds, while arctic char and sheefish come from arctic Alaska, especially the rivers and streams flowing from the central and western Brooks Range. Cutthroat and lake trout are also native to Alaska.

Alaska has limitless saltwater fishing opportunities for salmon, halibut, Dolly Varden, steelhead, and rockfish. The Kenai Peninsula, especially Kachemak Bay, the Prince William Sound area, and southeast Alaska (the "Panhandle") all offer excellent saltwater fishing areas. Popular jump-off points include the towns of Homer, Seward, Valdez, Juneau, Ketchikan, and other Southeastern towns.

When is the best time to fish?

Not all fish species are available all year. Different species of salmon arrive in the rivers to spawn at different times. In southcentral and interior Alaska, king (chinook) salmon usually begin their upriver run in June, followed by reds (sockeyes) in July, chums (dogs) in August, and silvers (cohos) from August to October. But timing and abundance vary greatly from region to region. A good source of information for species occurrence and timing is an Alaska Department of Fish & Game publication, the *Alaska Sport Fishing Guide*, which has comprehensive information on access points and facilities for both fresh and saltwater fishing, statewide.

Catch and Release:

Please read all catch-and-release information provided. In northern waters, especially the Arctic, fish grow very slowly and take many years to mature. Fish populations can be depleted very quickly. Don't play fish to exhaustion, keep them in the water, and handle them gently upon release so that they have a good chance of survival. Some areas are designated catch-and-release only, including sections of the Kenai River. **In the Fairbanks area, the Chena River and its tributaries, Piledriver Slough, and the Delta-Clearwater River are closed to the possession of grayling: only catch-and-release is allowed.**

Personal Use Dip Net Fisheries

Personal use dip-net fisheries for salmon on the Copper and Kenai Rivers are only open to Alaska residents. Non-residents, even family members, may not participate.

Special Precautions:

BEARS: Black and brown (grizzly) bears inhabit most of Alaska. Read all bear safety information provided and follow the proper procedures for camping and hiking in bear country to reduce the chances of a confrontation. Firearms are not allowed in some parks: check with the managing

agency before you go. A red pepper-based aerosol spray that is highly effective in repelling bear is available in many sporting goods stores in Alaska. **NOTE: it should be enclosed in a sealed container or several plastic bags during transport.** If a bear approaches while you are fishing, **stop fishing and back away. If a bear chases a fish that you have on the line, cut the line.** Clean your catch at once and throw the entrails into deep water. Carry your fish back to your campsite in a container: keep fish some off of your clothes and belongings.

WATER SAFETY: Wear an approved life jacket at all times, especially if you are fishing from a boat or near fast and turbulent water, and remember, it won't help you if it isn't fastened! Alaska's waters are extremely cold and can immobilize you in a matter of minutes. If you wear hip-waders, keep them unbuckled—you must be able to kick them off quickly if they fill with water in a fast-moving river.

PRIVATE PROPERTY: Much of Alaska's backcountry contains mining claims, private lands, trapping cabins, and fish camps. Respect all private property and avoid disturbing such sites, even if they look abandoned. The owners depend on the shelter and supplies during certain seasons. It is against the law to remove artifacts or otherwise disturb any archeological or historic sites, including old cabins and their contents.



Additional Information

Alaska Public Lands Information Centers (APLIC) are located in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Tok and Ketchikan. For information on public lands recreation in these regions, contact them

Fairbanks (Interior Alaska)

Alaska Public Lands Information Center
101 Dunkel St. Suite 110
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: (907) 459-3730

Anchorage (Southcentral Alaska)

Alaska Public Lands Information Center
605 West 4th Ave, #105
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 271-2737

Tok (Alaska Highway)

Alaska Public Lands Information Center
P.O. Box 359
Tok, Alaska 99780
Phone: (907) 883-5667

Ketchikan (Southeast Alaska)

Southeast Alaska Discovery Center
50 Main Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901
Phone: (907) 228-6234

24-Hour Recorded Sport Fishing Information:

Southeast Alaska:

Juneau: 465-4116
Haines: 766-2625
Ketchikan: 225-0475

Interior Alaska:

Fairbanks: 459-7385

Southcentral Alaska:

Anchorage: 267-2510
Homer: 235-6930
Kodiak: 486-5176
Palmer: 746-6300
Soldotna: 262-2737

For specific questions regarding fishing or regulations, contact an **Alaska Department of Fish and Game** office:

Anchorage

333 Raspberry Rd.
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 267-2218

Bethel

570 4th Ave.
PO Box 1467
Bethel, AK 99559
(907) 543-1677 (summer only)

Fairbanks

1300 College Rd.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 459-7207

Glenallen

186.3 Glenn Highway
PO Box 47
Glenallen, AK 99588
(907) 822-3309

Juneau

PO Box 115525
Juneau, AK 99811
(907) 465-4180

Nome

103 E. Front St.
PO Box 1148
(907) 443-5893

Soldotna

43961 Kalifornsky Beach Rd. Suite B
Soldotna, AK 99669
(907) 262-2737