

\$10.00

ALASKA ON YOUR OWN

RESOURCES GUIDE

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Based on the experience of 100 days in Alaska during the summer of 1996

Books and Reference Materials for Alaska

Maps and Travel Guides

- Alaska Milepost - available at major bookstores or from Vernon Publications (800-726-4707) - A must have resource if you are going to drive to Alaska or spend much time driving the Alaska road system
- Alaska Gazetteer - available in Anchorage at most bookstores (Sam's Wholesale Club has best price) or from DeLorme Mapping (207-865-4171) - Contains detailed topographic maps of entire state

Flyfishing Reference Materials

- Flyfishing Alaska by Tony Route (Johnson Books)
- Flies for Alaska, A Guide to Buying and Tying by Tony Route (Johnson Books)
- The Kenai River Journal by Tony Route (Amato Press; 503-653-8108)
The above 3 books by Anchorage sportswriter Tony Route provide a good foundation of knowledge for flyfishing in Alaska. They are available in many flyfishing catalogs. Watch for Tony's new book on flyfishing on the Alaska Road system due out soon.
- Alaska Angler Fishing Annual by Chris Batin (907-455-8000) - Good information on road accessible fishing and a variety of sport fishing techniques.
- Flyfisherman Magazine (800-435-9610) - has published various articles on Alaska over past several years
- The Angling Report Newsletter (305-670-1918) - publishes regular article features and subscriber trip reports on Alaska. Their web site at www.AnglingReport.com has an online index of articles and subscriber reports.

Public Information, Facilities and Regulations Guides

- Alaska Visitors Guide by Anchorage Daily News (907-271-2737) - Good listing of businesses, attractions and facilities for entire state.
- Anchorage Visitors Guide by Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau (907-276-4118) - Good listing of business and attractions around Anchorage.
- Alaska-Official State Map and Campground Guide; Available from Anchorage Public Lands Information Center (907-271-2737) - Lists all campgrounds maintained by Alaska State Parks System, BLM, USFWS, NPS and USFS.
- Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations; Available from Alaska Department of Fish and Game (907-465-4180) - Alaska has very complex fishing regulations. A must have source of information for fishing in Alaska.

Other Reference Materials - You'll want a variety of these type books, depending on your interests. Here's a few we found helpful :

- Adventuring in Alaska, by Peggy Wayburn (Sierra Club Books) - Information on fishing and non-fishing adventures throughout the state.
- Field Guide to Field Identification, Birds of North America by Chandler S. Robbins, Bertel Bruun & Herbert Zim (Golden Books)
- The Native People of Alaska by Steve J. Langdon (Greatland Graphics) - Lots of interesting native culture in Alaska that this book addresses nicely.

River Skills Training for Float Trips - Offered in two courses, River Skill I and River Skills II. Each course is 3 days and 2 nights of on-river training conducted in the spring of each year in Moab, Utah. Cost is about \$150/per person, which includes meals and outfitting for float trip. Highly recommended for those who plan to take floats on water rated Class III and higher who do not have previous experience in whitewater rafting.

- Canyonlands Field Institute, Moab, Utah. 1-800-860-5262 or 1-801-259-7750

Alaska Gear Checklist

Fishing Gear

- Flyrods w/cases for transportation
 - 9-10wt for kings & large silvers
 - 8-9 wt for large reds, chums & silvers
 - 7-8 wt for streamers to trout and for pinks, chums and reds
 - 5-6 wt for dry fly fishing to grayling and drifting eggs to trout
- Reels w/good drags for above rods
- Lines (on extra spools or looped)
 - Floating for all rods
 - Medium sink tips for 7-8wt
 - Medium and fast sink tip for 9-10wt
- Neoprene waders w/boots
- Wading belt
- Wading staff
- Wader patch kit
- Field fly tying kit w/materials
- Vest or chest pack
- Needle nose pliers
- Hemostats
- Nippers
- Floatant
- Split shot (assorted)
- Strike indicator
- Tippet (25lb, 15lb, 0X-5X)
- Net
- Float tube and fins (optional for lake fishing)

Flies

- Grayling - Small dries, attractors and streamers
- Trout & dolly varden - Egg patterns, flesh flies, egg sucking leaches, zonkers, mouse
- Red Salmon - sparsely tied salmon flies
- Silver Salmon - Flash flies, hering patterns
- King Salmon - Big, flashy flies, Char egg leach

Camping Gear

- Tent w/ rain fly
- Ground cloth
- Tent stakes (metal)
- Tent stake mallet (gravel bars)
- Sleeping bag
- Ground pad
- Mesh cook tent
- Water filter
- Pillows
- Tarp
- Ropes (2@50' min)
- Food in secure containers
- Camp stools or chairs
- Backpack
- Campstove w/fuel
- Camp cook kit (pans, plates, utensils, cups, etc)
- Small axe or saw
- Camp shovel (optional)
- Trash bags and ziplock bags

Clothing

- Polypropylene shorts and T (no cotton)
- Polypropylene long underwear (mid-weight tops and bottoms)
- Synthetic shirt or pullover top
- Fleece pants and jacket
- Polypropylene sock liners
- Polypropylene socks (mid-weight and heavy)
- Waterproof hiking boots
- Lightweight rain suit (top and bottom)
- Storm rain jacket w/hood
- Ball cap or fishing hat
- Fleece Hat
- Fingerless gloves
- Bug head net (must have)
- Full bug suit (optional but recommended)
- Bear bell

General

- Polarized glasses (w/strap)
- First aid kit
- Lighters and waterproof matches
- Water bottles
- Trip maps
- Compass
- Field Tool Kit
- Pocket knife
- Duct tape
- Emergency energy food
- Towel
- Toothbrush and paste
- Biodegradable soap
- Hand and body lotion
- Bug repellent and coils
- Flashlight (won't need much)
- Camera (in dry case w/plenty of film)
- Extra batteries (flashlight and camera)
- Binoculars
- Reference Materials (see list)
- Cash, credit cards
- Plane tickets and itinerary

Float Trip

- Inflatable Raft or Cataraft Pontoons
- Rowing Frame
- Oars (3)
- Coolers and gear boxes
- Boat and gear straps
- Personal Floatation Devices (1 per person)
- Pump
- Boat patch kit
- Ropes (2@50')
- Dry bags
- Topographic maps of river
- Hypothermia kit
- Emergency signal kit

Anchorage Resources

Transportation

- Alaska Airlines (800-426-0333)

Accommodations

- Centennial Camper Park (907-333-9711) - Public campground w/ sites for tents and RV's without hookups. Has restroom and showers for \$13 per night
- RV Parks are limited and expensive in Anchorage. We liked Ship Creek Landing (907-277-0877,downtown@3rd&Ingra; \$27/night!)
- Try Susitna Place (907-272-4141) beautiful little B&B located right downtown with a great deck overlooking Cook Inlet. Very reasonable at \$65 per night

Groceries and Supplies

- Wal-Mart (907-563-5900; on Benson at Denali)
- Sam's Wholesale Club (907-522-2333; 8801 Old Seward Hwy)
- Fred Meyer (at Northern Lights and Seward Highway)
- Eagle Hardware (907-563-0391)

Camping Gear and Outdoors Clothing

- REI (907-272-4565; 1200 Northern Lights)
- Gary King (907-272-5401; 202 E Northern Lights)
- Barney's Sports Chalet (907-561-5242) (on Northern Lights)

Raft Rentals

- Wild Alaska Rivers (907-344-9453; 1840 Int'l Airport) - Rents rafts and catarafts for float trips. Good source for local info about floats around the Anchorage area. Rafts rent for \$400-\$500/wk.

RV Rentals

- Sourdough RV Rental (907-563-3268; 1840 Int'l Airport) - Adjacent to Wild Alaska Rivers. A 22' Class C sleeps 2-4 people and rents for about \$200 per day.
- There are lots of companies that rents RV's in Anchorage. Check the Milepost or Anchorage Visitors Guide for other sources and shop around for best prices.

Air Taxi Services - Most provide flight services as well as outfitting with boats, camping gear rental and remote cabins, depending on your needs.

- Alaska Air Taxi (907-243-3944) - Jack Barber, Owner
- Ketchum Air (800-433-9114 or 907-243-5525)
- Rust's Flying Service (800-594-2299 or 907-243-1595)

Maps

- The Maps Place (907-274-6277, 113 W. Northern Lights) - Large supply of USGS topo maps for most of Alaska. Call ahead to insure supply of maps for very remote areas.
- USGS Western Distribution Center (1-800-USA-MAPS)

Anchorage Resources (con't)

Local Contacts

- Anchorage Visitor Center (907-274-3531 or 276-3200; downtown at 1600 A St.)
- Anchorage Chamber of Commerce (907-272-2401)
- Alaska Public Lands Info Center (907-271-2737; downtown at 605 W 4th)
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (907-349-4687)

Fly Shops

- Mountain View Sports (907-563-8600; 3838 Old Seward Highway) - We preferred the service and broader selection at this shop.
- McCaffee's Fly Shop (907-344-1617, 750 W Dimond Blvd) - Has more high-end flyfishing gear and some nice flies, but was less helpful.

Costs

- Standard round trip airfare from San Antonio to Anchorage in 1996 was about \$800. For a better price try taking a discount carrier to Salt Lake or Seattle and then taking Alaska Air from there to Anchorage (\$550 to \$600 in 1996).
- Camping runs from \$13 to \$27 per night; Rooms are \$60 to \$100 per night
- Fishing Licenses are \$30 for 14 day and \$50 for season. King salmon stamps are \$35

General Info

- From the Anchorage Airport, you can locate many of the retail businesses listed by taking Int'l Airport to Minnesota. Take Minnesota north to Benson. Go east on Benson and you will find a large retail district on Benson and Northern Lights, which run as one way streets running east and west parallel to each other.
- The best shopping for souvenirs and native crafts is at Saturday Market, an open air market held each Saturday, downtown, between C & E streets on 3rd. Wal-Mart has a broad selection and good prices on general Alaska souvenirs.
- You can buy a State Park Annual Pass for \$100 which allows you to camp at all Alaska State Parks for the entire season. A great deal if you plan to camp in Alaska for several weeks.
- You can get information on visiting Denali Nat'l Park at 907-683-2294. Denali is about a 3 hour drive from Anchorage. It can be quite crowded so it is best to call ahead for reservations and information

Kenai Peninsula Fishing Opportunities

Kenai River between Kenai Lake and Skilak Lake (near Coopers Landing, AK)

Fish Available

- Red Salmon (early June thru early August)
- Rainbow trout and dolly varden (best mid-July through fall)
- King salmon (early June thru mid-July but scarce in this section of the river)
- Silver salmon (some available late July-Sept)

Walk-in access

- Russian River Ferry (very crowded during salmon run)
- Jim's Landing
- Kenai Princess Lodge and RV Park has private access that is typically uncrowded.
- Several trails in area lead to river and lakes - see Kenai area maps

Float trips

- Put in at Kenai River Bridge and take out at Russian River access or at Jim's Landing. Takes 3-5 hours plus wade fishing time.
- Put in at Jim's Landing and float to take out on Skilak Lake. Float is through isolated canyon section of river that has low traffic. Moderate rapids will be encountered and take-out requires crossing of Skilak Lake. Makes a long day or a good overnight trip.
- No local shuttle services available. Can usually get a ride with other floaters at Jim's Landing or locals say it is safe to hitchhike from Jim's Landing to the Kenai River bridge.

Fly Shop

- Alaska Troutfitters, Curt Trout guide (907-595-1212; in Coopers Landing) - Also rents drift boats and rafts. The Kenai is big and glacially silted. You can't see fish well and it is hard to know where to fish. I highly recommend you get a guide for at least one day on the Kenai.

Local Contact

- Kenai Refuge Manager, Soldotna (907-262-7021)

Accommodations

- Kenai Princess Lodge and RV Park (800-426-0500 or 907-595-1425 - great deal for RV's)
- Gwin's Lodge (907-595-1266; in Coopers Landing) - makes a great hamburger
- Russian Campgrounds - Will be crowded and possibly full during red salmon runs

Other Attractions

- Glacier and sea life cruise out of Seward, about 1 hour from Coopers Landing. Cost is about \$100 per person. Kenai Fjords Tours (800-478-8068)

Costs

- Transportation from Anchorage - Car rental plus 100 miles each way
- Fishing License - \$35 14 day, \$50 season
- Accommodations - \$12/day camping. \$50-\$150 lodging

Russian River

(Near Coopers Landing, AK)

General Information

- Clear water tributary to the Kenai. Serves as spawning grounds for prolific runs of Red salmon.
- During the peak of the run the Russian will be very crowded. Late in the run the Russian offers an opportunity to site fish for rainbow trout, some quite large.

Walk-in access

- Russian River Campground. Walk upstream to falls or downstream to confluence with Kenai.

Fish Available

- Red Salmon (early June-July)
- Rainbow trout (same season as Kenai)

Other Attractions

- Walk to Russian River falls to see salmon jumping up falls to reach spawning grounds.
- Rental cabins (3) available on Russian Lakes Trail at \$20 per night.

Kasilof River

(Just south of Soldotna, AK)

Fish Available

- King Salmon (early-June thru mid-July)
- Red Salmon (mid-June thru July)

Walk-in access

- At Crooked Creek Recreation Site.

Good Float

- Put in at the bridge where the highway crosses the Kasilof and take out at Coho Cove - Takes about 3 hours. Will get you away from the crowds but we found the fish concentrations to be much higher near public access at confluence of Kasilof and Crooked Creek.

Fly Shop

- Ken's Tackle Shop (907-262-6870; Soldotna) - Check with them for shuttle on Kasilof float

Places to Stay

- Crooked Creek Campground
- Accommodations are available in Soldotna
- Easy day trip from accommodations near Coopers Landing

Costs

- About same as for Kenai River

Other Flyfishing Opportunities on Kenai Peninsula

Rivers to Fish

- Ninilchick
- Deep Creek
- Anchor River

DALTON HIGHWAY

"The Haul Road"

Driving Information

- From Anchorage take Parks Highway 250 miles to Fairbanks.
- Then take the Elliot Highway 100 miles to start of Dalton Highway
- Well maintained gravel road with frequent large truck traffic
- Good fishing starts about 60 miles up highway after crossing the Yukon River.
- 175 miles from start of highway to Coldfoot, which has the only services until end of road.
- 250 miles from Coldfoot to Deadhorse, on Arctic Ocean. Access to Arctic Ocean is by private tour only (907-451-0097)

Accommodations

- Coldfoot has rooms (907-678-5201)
- Several campgrounds along road (miles 60, 115, 136, 180, 275 286; Marion Creek at mile 180 is very nice)
- Deadhorse (907-659-2449)

Fish Available - Fish and times they are available varies depending on the river. Consult a more complete angling guide to the Dalton Hwy for specific info.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| ➤ Chinook (king) salmon | ➤ Chum salmon | ➤ Dolly varden |
| ➤ Arctic Grayling (prolific in most waters all season) | ➤ Rainbow trout | ➤ Northern Pike |
| ➤ Arctic Char (Reportedly some real trophies) | ➤ Burbot | ➤ Whitefish |
| ➤ Sheefish (A rare opportunity to catch these along the road) | | |

Waters to Fish

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| ➤ Ray River | ➤ Kanuti River | ➤ Fish Creek | ➤ Prospect Creek |
| ➤ Jim River | ➤ Koyukuk River | ➤ Dietrich River | ➤ Atigun River |
| ➤ Galbraith Lake | ➤ Horizon Lake | ➤ Sagavanirktok River | |

Local Contact

- Bureau of Land Management, Arctic District (907-474-2301)

Costs

- Transportation - Car rental plus 700 miles (one way) from Anchorage to Prudhoe Bay.
- Accommodations - \$10/night camping; \$90-\$120 per night at Coldfoot or Deadhorse

Attractions

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| ➤ Alaska Pipeline | ➤ Yukon River | ➤ Arctic Circle | ➤ Brooks Range |
| ➤ Atigun Pass | ➤ Last Spruce Tree | ➤ Arctic Tundra | ➤ Arctic Ocean |

Helpful Info

- Our fishing plans were ruined by unusually large amounts of rain, which caused the rivers to rise and be off color. Check on weather conditions north of the Yukon River valley before embarking on a trip that is primarily focused on the fishing opportunities.
- Some of the best resource materials for fishing the Dalton Highway are published by Chris Batin of The Alaska Angler. In addition to his publications, he offers custom telephone consulting services (\$30/15min) on the Dalton and other Alaska locations.
- Tony Route published an article on flyfishing The Haul Road Western Flyfishing, June 1996 issue.
- Several float fishing opportunities exist on the rivers along the road system. In particular, check out the Koyukuk and the Dietrich. Check at Coldfoot about possible help with vehicle shuttles.

KODIAK ISLAND

General Info

- Kodiak has best fishing along the road system in Alaska.
- Salmon in large numbers along the rivers crossed by the road from Kodiak to Chiniak.
- Extremely salmon can be caught where the river mouths dump into the bays.
- Relatively uncrowded either right at or a short walk from the bridge crossings.
- The best fishing is late in the season (September).
- In addition to fishing, Kodiak is a beautiful place to camp and tour.
- Won't see Kodiak bears along road system. Will require fly-out.
- Due to southern location, warmer climate and shorter days than on Alaska mainland

Transportation

- Alaska State Ferry (800-526-6731) from Homer to Kodiak (12hrs)
- Alaska Airlines (800-426-0333) ➤ Kodiak Car Rental (907-487-2272)

Fish Available

- Red Salmon (mid June to mid Aug) ➤ Silver Salmon (mid Aug to mid Oct)
- Pink Salmon (mid July to mid Sept) ➤ Chum Salmon (mid July to mid Oct)
- Dolly varden (all season) ➤ King Salmon (early June to mid July) - Mostly fly out
- Rainbow trout (all season) - some stocked lakes and a few wild but scattered

Areas to Fish

- Pasagshak Bay - highly recommended for silvers ➤ Buskin River State Park
- American River ➤ Russian River

Accommodations

- Ft. Abercrombie State Park (907-486-6339) - highly recommended
- Buskin River State Park
- Public Use Cabins available thru Kodiak Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Center (907-487-2600)
\$20 per night but require fly-out or boat to access
- Several guest rooms and B&B's in Kodiak - Contact Chamber of Commerce
- Check out the Safeway for great prepared foods - convenient if you camp at Ft. Abercrombie

Local Contacts

- Kodiak Chamber of Commerce (907-486-5557) ➤ Kodiak Fish and Game (907-486-1880)

Fly Shops

- Macks (907-486-2928) - Best for flyfishing ➤ Cy's Sport Shop (907-486-3900)

Other Attractions

- Ft. Abercrombie - great place to hike, watch whales and sea birds. Take a tide pool walk at low tide to see incredible sea life.
- Several museums in the town of Kodiak.
- Sea kayak tours - Contact Wavetamer Kayaking (907-486-2604; \$50-125 pp)

Costs

- Transportation - Car rental plus 250 miles from Anchorage. Ferry costs \$50 per person plus about \$200 for average vehicle.
- Accommodations - \$10 per day camping. \$65-\$125 per day for rooms.

GULKANA RIVER

General Information

- 50 mile float on a designated Wild and Scenic River.
- Takes 3 full days to float, plus fishing time.
- Located between Denali Highway junction and Glenallen, AK, along the Richardson Highway.
- If you don't wish to float the river, there are two trails (Middle Fork and Haggard Creek) which can be used for hike-in (5 miles) or ATV access.

Fish Available

- Red Salmon (mid June to mid July)
- King Salmon (late June to mid July)
- Arctic Grayling (all season)
- Rainbow Trout (all season)

Float Information

- Put-in on Paxson Lake at Paxson Lake Campground. Row 3 miles to mouth of Gulkana River.
- Float includes a 1/4 mile portage and a long stretch of Class III rapids.
- There are several established campsites along the river.
- Take out at Sourdough Campground.
- Can get shuttle from Sourdough Roadhouse

Local Contact

- BLM, Glenallen District Office (907-822-3217)

Accommodations

- Paxson Lake NFS Campground
- Sourdough Campground
- Paxson Lodge (907-822-3330) - has restaurant
- Sourdough Roadhouse

Costs

- Transportation - Car rental plus 250 miles from Anchorage
- Camping \$11 per day; Lodging \$60-\$80 per day. No charge for camping on float trip.
- Shuttle \$30
- Raft rental \$400/wk

Helpful Info

- Recommend full bug suit with head net, in addition to repellent, as mosquitoes can be quite prolific at campsites. A small mesh tent for cooking can make sitting around camp much more comfortable.
- Pack light as portage at Canyon Rapids is highly recommended. Allow plenty of time for carrying gear over 1/4 mile established trail with some elevation change.
- Floated by up to 2,000 people per year. Avoid weekends to avoid crowds. We saw no other people on a mid-June weekday float.

TALCHULITNA RIVER FLOAT TRIP

Transportation

- From Anchorage, take Alaska Air Taxi (907-243-3944) flight about 45 minutes to put-in.

Float Information

- Put-in at Judd Lake (5-7 day float) or mid-point (3-5 day float).
- Several Class II+ and III- rapids on float. Must line boat through one short canyon section.
- At low water levels you may have to drag your boat over shallow areas and put-in at Judd Lake is not recommended.
- Good camping on gravel bars
- Take-out on Skwetna River several miles below confluence with Tal

Fish Available

- Red Salmon (mid-June thru July)
- Silver Salmon (late July - August)
- Pink Salmon (July thru August)
- Arctic grayling
- King Salmon (early June thru mid-July)
- Chum Salmon (early July-August)
- Rainbow trout and dolly varden

Local Contacts

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (907-349-4687)

Map Info

- USGS topographic maps numbered - Tyonek C-5, C-4, D-4

Costs

- Transportation - \$750 for float plane from Anchorage.
- Gear Rental - \$400 for raft; About \$100 per person for camping and cooking gear

Helpful Info

- Lots of bear sightings but no in-camp encounters
- Large concentrations of fish at confluence of Talchulitna Creek, Friday Creek, Thursday Creek and Skwetna River. Allow plenty of time to fish these areas.

GOODNEWS RIVER FLOAT TRIP

Transportation

- From Anchorage take Alaska Airlines (800-426-0333) or Penn Air (907-243-2323) to Dillingham.
- From Dillingham use Freshwater Adventures (907-243-7676 winter or 907-842-5060 summer) to put-in at Kukaktlim Lake and pick-up at Goodnews Village.

Float Info

- Put-in at Kukaktlim Lake for 6-8 day float to Goodnews Bay
- Easy float with only a few small rapids
- Fish counting weir at lower end of float requires passage or portage
- Take out at Goodnews Village on Bering Sea. Can have Eskimo villager meet you at Goodnews confluence and tow raft out with motorboat to avoid having to row across flat water.

Fish Available

- Red Salmon
- Pink Salmon
- Silver Salmon
- Arctic grayling
- King Salmon
- Chum Salmon
- Rainbow trout and dolly varden
- Arctic char

Local Contacts

- Togaik Wildlife Refuge Managers Rob McDonald or Mark Lisac (907-842-1063)

Map Info

- USGS topographic maps numbered - Goodnews Bay B-4, B-5, B-6, B-7, A-7

Other Attractions

- Goodnews Village is native Eskimo community which is rich with culture. Consider an overnight stay in the village.
- Dan Schouten, Goodnews villager, has unique collection of native artifacts and also has room for overnight rental. (907-967-8727)
- Look up Goodnews villager Anna Beavers for unique Yupik Eskimo crafts

Costs

- Airfare from Anchorage to Dillingham - \$350 per person, round trip
- Overnight stay in Dillingham - \$75 per night at Wild Good B&B (907-842-4052) or camp at Freshwater Adventures hanger for free.
- Air taxi service by Freshwater Adventures - \$1,250 round trip for 1,100 lbs people and gear
- Freshwater Adventures can provide raft and equipment rentals (\$300-\$400/wk during prime times but may throw in for free during non-prime times)
- Tow out into Goodnews Bay - \$100 (Freshwater Adventures will arrange)

Helpful Info

- Be sure to put onto Kukaktlim lake early in day. Fishing at mouth of lake is spectacular. No camping near lake and first gravel bars suitable for camping are 3 to 4 hour float downstream.
- Fishing best at creek and river confluences. Allow time or camp near those shown on topo maps to maximize fishing success.
- Bristol Bay lodge has outcamp on Middle Fork of Goodnews about 2/3 way down the float.