



# SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

Department of Fish and Game

## Anchorage Area Fishing Opportunities

### Anchorage Area

The Anchorage area includes all lakes and streams from Eklutna River (northern boundary) to Ingram Creek in Turnagain Arm (southern boundary).

Anchorage is unique in the sport fishing world. Anglers can catch 20- to 30-pound king salmon and 8- to 10-pound silver salmon right in town. There's also excellent fishing for rainbow trout, Dolly Varden char, and Arctic grayling in area lakes and streams.

The majority of Anchorage-area sport fishing is the result of hatchery stockings. Though many streams within the Anchorage area support natural runs of one or all of the five Pacific salmon species, most of these native runs are too small to support sport fisheries. Check your regulation book carefully, or look at the quick guide on Page 7 of this handout, since many area flowing waters are closed to salmon fishing.

### Managing Alaska's Fisheries

The Division of Sport Fish is charged with the management of Alaska's sport fisheries under the sustained yield principle, through regulations and management plans adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries. Enforcement of fishing regulations is primarily the responsibility of the Alaska Department of Public Safety, Division of Wildlife Troopers. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in Anchorage is the management office for the area. The Division occasionally issues in-season regulatory



changes, called emergency orders, primarily in response to under- or over-abundance of fish. Emergency orders are sent to the media, and posted on our Web site at [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)

We also maintain a hot line recording at (907) 267-2510. Or you can contact the Anchorage Sport Fish Information Center at (907) 267-2218.

### Regulations

Fishing regulations are often different for each water you fish. Please read the "Anchorage Bowl" section of the Southcentral Alaska regulation booklet before heading out to fish. Regulation booklets are available wherever fishing licenses are sold, and posted on the ADF&G Division of Sport Fish home page at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)

# Fishing Ship Creek

King salmon return to Ship Creek in mid- to late May, with the peak of the run in June. The majority of the Ship Creek king salmon are the result of hatchery stockings as smolt. Many people like to fish for Ship Creek salmon about two hours before high tide.

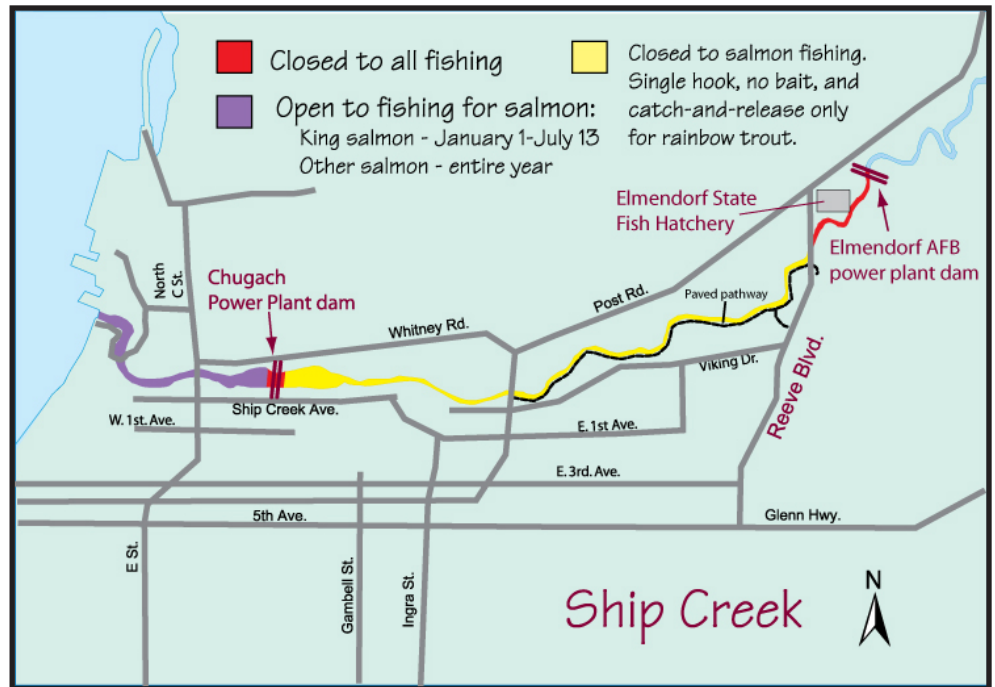
Sport anglers catch on average 6,200 Ship Creek king salmon and harvest about 3,100 annually.

A heavy-action spinning rod with 20- or 30-pound test line, or a 9- to 12-weight fly rod, is recommended to overcome the snags and current to successfully land a king salmon. Favorite tackle includes yarn flies (various colors), large spinners such as Pixees, Vibrax, Spin-n-Glos, as well as salmon roe and coho-type streamers.

Silver salmon arrive in Ship Creek in mid- to late July, with the peak in mid-August. Silvers, also called coho, aggressively strike spinners, streamer flies, and salmon roe. Many anglers suspend salmon roe under a bobber.

Like kings, the majority of the Ship Creek silver salmon are the result of hatchery smolt releases. Since the urban silver salmon stocking program began in 1993, anglers harvest on average 9,000 fish every year. The stocking level was increased in 1996, which led to a record harvest of 26,400 silver salmon in 2001.

Small harvests of naturally-produced pink and chum salmon (about 400 fish per year) also occur in



Ship Creek. Most of these fish are caught by silver salmon anglers.

A section of Ship Creek is becoming more popular with anglers who like to wade and fish for rainbow trout. This upstream section is catch-and-release only for rainbows, and is single-hook, no bait. This section of creek is not influenced by the tide. For a map, refer to the "Anchorage Bowl" section of the Southcentral Alaska regulation booklet.

## Access

On Ship Creek, the area open to salmon fishing is from its mouth upstream to a cable stretched across the creek about 100 feet downstream of the Chugach Electric power plant dam. The land along this lower section is owned by the Alaska Railroad and is in a major industrial area. Please be careful, and provide an extra level of courtesy when fishing here. Obey all parking and "No Trespassing" signs, and stay off railroad tracks and bridges. There is plenty of public parking, with fees charged in-season.

To reach the Ship Creek fishing salmon fishing area, head north on E Street through the light at Third Avenue, turn right at the three-way stop sign, and head down the hill on North C Street to the area. Foot trails are present along the north and south banks of Ship Creek.

Portions of the fishing area are very muddy, and every year several anglers get stuck and have to be rescued before the tide comes in. Be careful, and don't venture into the mud.



# Campbell Creek

The Campbell Creek greenbelt runs through the center of Anchorage, through many residential and business areas. Please respect all private property, and keep our city clean of fishing tackle and trash.

Some portions of Campbell Creek are closed to all fishing, including catch-and-release and some portions are catch-and-release only. Please read the regulation book before going fishing. This portion of Campbell Creek is not influenced by the tide.

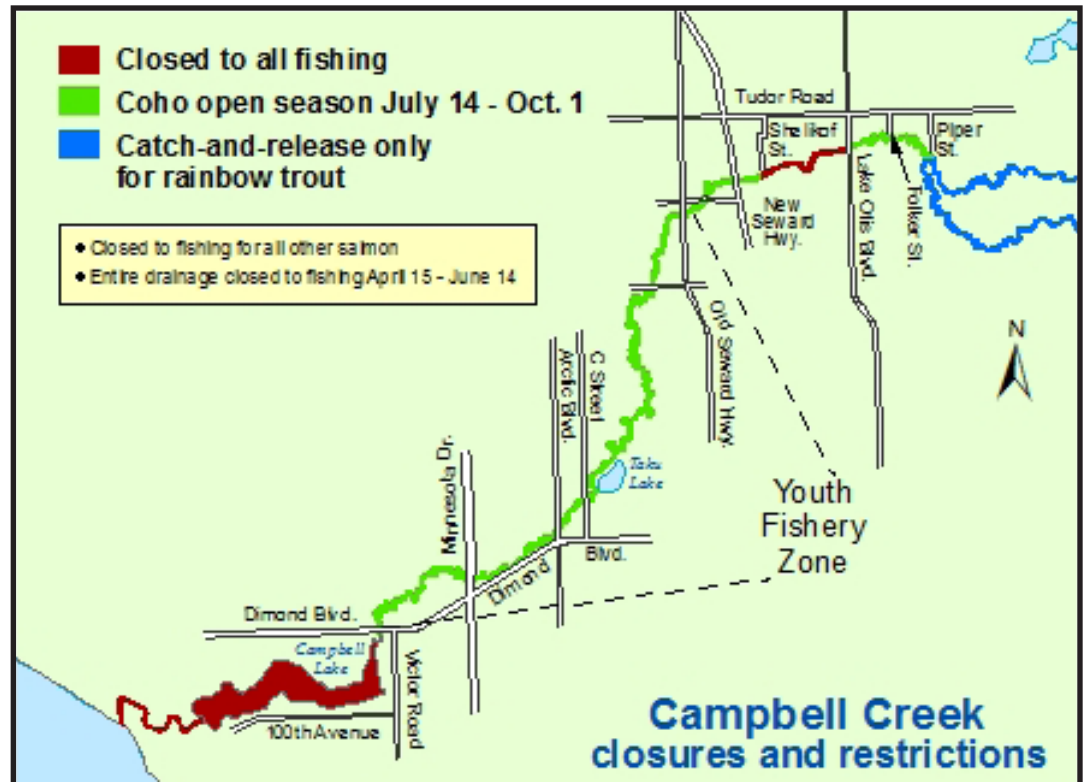
A sport fishery for hatchery silver salmon in Campbell Creek was opened in 1993. Silvers are generally in the lower reaches of the creek by season opening in late July, with the peak of the run about mid- to late August. By mid-August, fishing just downstream of the forks at Piper Street usually produces good catches. Anglers use lures, such as #4 Mepps or Pixees, sometimes sweetened with salmon eggs. About 1,500 silvers are harvested annually in this fishery.

## Kids-only king salmon fishing

In late June, Campbell Creek is the site of a kids-only fishery for king salmon. During the kids-only fishing times, only youth 15 and younger may fish in a special section of Campbell Creek. These are the only anglers who can fish for Campbell Creek kings, and this is the only time that Campbell Creek is open to king salmon fishing. Full details are in the "Anchorage Bowl" section of the Southcentral Alaska regulation booklet.

## Rainbow trout and Dolly Varden

A small population of rainbow trout and Arctic char/Dolly Varden are also available in Campbell Creek. For rainbows, try near the boardwalks at Folker Street, or downstream from the pullout on Potter Drive. For Dolly Varden, try the North Fork of Campbell Creek, upstream of Campbell Airstrip Road. This upstream area is also very popular with bears.



## Access

1. Parking area on the north side of Dimond Blvd., just west of Victor Rd., small slope to boardwalk, unimproved trails.
2. Small parking area where Victor Road terminates north of Dimond Blvd., paved path to creek.
3. Municipality of Anchorage's Taku-Campbell Lake park, at the end of 76th Avenue and King Street.
4. Small pullout to the south of Potter Drive between C Street and Old Seward Highway.
5. Boardwalks at Folker Street, just east of Lake Otis, and south off Tudor Rd., paved trails.
6. Boardwalks at Piper Street, south of Tudor, two blocks to the east past Folker Street.
7. Southern terminus of Bragaw Road, turning south off Tudor Road.

Upstream section of the North Fork of Campbell Creek. Turn south on Campbell Airstrip Road which is off Tudor Road about 1/2 mile east of Boniface Parkway. There's a parking area at mile 1.1, then walk back to the North Fork, where there are foot trails along the banks.



## Eagle River

Eagle River may present a slim opportunity for king salmon fishing, with a very small run. A portion of Eagle River is open to fishing for king salmon for four consecutive three-day weekends (Saturday, Sunday, Monday) beginning on Memorial Day weekend, and closed for the rest of the year for kings. Be sure to check the regulation booklet for the exact dates. This portion of Eagle River is not influenced by the tides.

The area open for fishing for king salmon is from Bailey Bridge on the Fort Richardson Army Post upstream to markers located in the Chugach State Park Eagle River Campground, at milepost 12 of the Glenn Highway (Hiland Road exit).

Fort Richardson lands are accessible only through the Fort Richardson guard station. Take the Arctic Valley Road exit, then turn north to enter Fort Richardson.

Anglers may also find a few silver salmon and Dolly Varden in Eagle River. The populations are very small, and may be fished according to the regulations.

## Bird Creek

This stream is located about 25 miles south of Anchorage on the Seward Highway. Parking and trail access have recently been improved, but most of the Bird Creek stream banks are very muddy, so please be careful.

All land, as well as the stream bed, upstream of the ADF&G marker about 440 yards upstream of the Seward Highway bridge is private property and anglers must obtain landowner permission before fishing this area, including fishing below the ordinary high water mark.

Many people prefer to start fishing about two hours before high tide, as measured at Anchorage.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game stocks the silvers that return to Bird Creek. Watch for silver salmon from late July through late August. Cured salmon eggs, coho flies, medium Vibrax, and Pixees work well for silvers.

About 1,100 pink salmon are harvested in Bird Creek every other year (pink salmon have a two-year lifecycle). Streamer flies and small to medium lures such as Mepps, Pixees and Vibrax spinners are all effective.

Bird Creek supports a small (fewer than 300 fish per stream) red and chum salmon harvest. These fish are usually caught by anglers fishing for silvers. Fishing for king salmon is closed year-round.

## Turnagain Arm fishing

The Twentymile and Placer rivers, and Portage, Glacier, and Ingram creeks support sport fisheries for all species except king salmon (they are closed year-round for kings). They are usually accessed at their Seward Highway bridges. Like Bird Creek, most anglers fish about two hours before high tide, as measured at Anchorage.

Several Turnagain Arm streams, including Twentymile and Placer rivers and Portage Creek, support late-run wild stock silver salmon. These runs peak in late August or early September and are usually accessed by jet boat. Check the regulation booklet: bag limits are more conservative on these wild silver salmon stocks.

The Twentymile River supports the largest Anchorage-area wild stock silver harvest of about 2,500 fish annually. Silver salmon harvests in Placer River drainage and Portage Creek are smaller (less than 500 fish each annually). The Twentymile and Placer rivers support small (fewer than 300 fish per stream) red salmon harvests, usually caught by anglers targeting silvers.

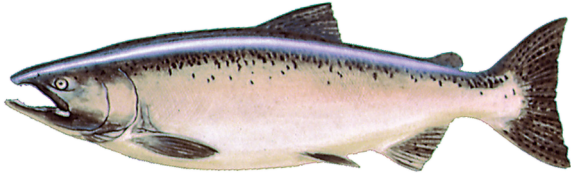
## Sixmile Creek area

Sixmile Creek is located on Elmendorf Air Force Base, and land access is restricted. Although this drainage supports the most sizeable population of red salmon in the Anchorage bowl, the run size is still small, and Sixmile Creek itself is closed to all fishing. The area open to sport fishing for salmon is the salt waters that are seaward of a steel cable stretched across the creek mouth.

Red salmon return to the mouth of Sixmile Creek from mid-July through mid-August, with peak fishing occurring around mid- to late July. Anglers use streamer flies and small spinners to harvest about 200 red salmon annually.

# About the Fish: *Identifying your catch*

**King salmon** (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*)



King, or chinook, salmon are the largest Pacific salmon, ranging from 12 to 40+ pounds, and are the first salmon available to anglers in spring. Most juvenile king salmon spend at least one year in fresh water, feeding first on plankton and then on insects, before migrating to sea. After feeding for one to five years in salt water on finfish, squid, or crustaceans, adult kings return to spawn. Adult king salmon have black spots on their back and entire tail, and teeth in a black gum line.

**Red salmon** (*Oncorhynchus nerka*)



Red, or sockeye, salmon usually spawn only in those freshwater streams that have a lake attached. Juvenile red salmon stay in the lake, feeding mainly on plankton, for one to three years before migrating to salt waters. Adults return after spending one to four years at sea. While in the ocean, red salmon feed mainly on zooplankton, although they also eat young fish in the larval stage, such as sand lance larvae. Red salmon have silver sides, blue backs, and no black spots. They average about 4-8 pounds.

**Silver salmon** (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)



Silver, or coho, salmon are spectacular fighters and are noted for their impressive runs and aerial displays

after being hooked. As juveniles, silver salmon stay in freshwater sloughs, ponds, and backwater areas, feeding primarily on insects, for one to three years before migrating to salt waters. They feed for one year in salt waters, mostly on fish such as herring and sand lance, then return to spawn. Returning adult silver salmon range from 7 to 15 pounds and are identified by their bright silver color, black spots on their back and upper lobe of their tail fin, and a black mouth with teeth in a white or gray gum line.

**Chum salmon** (*Oncorhynchus keta*)



Chum, or dog, salmon are native to several Anchorage area streams, but the runs are not very large. Soon after they emerge from the gravel, juvenile chum salmon move out to sea and feed first on zooplankton and then on crustaceans, squids, and herring and other fish. Chum salmon feed for three to four years at sea before returning to spawn.

Adult chum salmon are similar in size to silver salmon (7-15 pounds). They don't have any distinct black spots on the back or tail, being mostly silver. After reaching fresh waters, their sides become mottled with purple and green vertical bars. Just before spawning the males develop the hooked snout and very large teeth typical of Pacific salmon. Their appearance at this time partially accounts for their nickname of "dog salmon."

In the Anchorage area, run timing of chum salmon is similar to that of silver salmon and most chum salmon harvested are taken by sport anglers targeting silver salmon. Sport anglers harvest up to 300 chum salmon annually in Bird Creek. Smaller harvests (less than 150 fish per stream) also occur in Ship Creek, and Eagle and Twentymile rivers.

### Pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*)



Pinks in the Anchorage area range from 2 - 10 pounds. Almost immediately after they emerge, the juvenile fish migrate to salt waters. They spend one winter feeding in the ocean on larval forms of various sea life and small fishes before returning to spawn the next summer. This creates an “every-other-year” cycle—in the Anchorage area, the strongest pink salmon runs and availability occur on even years (2006, 2008, 2010, etc.), with the peak in mid-July through early August.

Pink salmon have large oval spots on their back and tail, a green back, and a white belly. The males develop a pronounced humped back when they reach fresh waters, hence their nickname “humpies.”

### Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)



There are very few native populations of rainbow trout in the Anchorage bowl.

Hatchery rainbow trout are the first fish to be stocked each spring. There are over 25 lakes and two streams (Campbell and Chester creeks) in the Anchorage area that are stocked with rainbows, usually just before the Memorial Day weekend, and then a second time around July 4.

Rainbow trout vary in color from silvery to dark green, with most displaying a reddish stripe along their sides and small black spots covering the entire body. Hatchery rainbow trout average 8 - 10 inches at the time of stocking. If they're not harvested, some rainbows can reach 20 inches or more.

FOR OPENING DATES, DAILY LIMITS, REGULATIONS, AND TACKLE REQUIREMENTS, CONSULT THE SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA REGULATIONS BOOKLET.

### Dolly Varden/Arctic Char (*Salvelinus malma/ alpinus*)



Dolly Varden are native to many area waters. They are available to anglers throughout the year in several streams, including Eagle and Twentymile rivers and Bird, Campbell, and Chester creeks.

Many Dolly Varden spend their entire life in fresh waters, feeding on aquatic insects and the eggs of spawning salmon, while others are anadromous, spending a portion of their lifecycle in salt waters before returning to fresh waters to spawn.

Dolly Varden are distinguished by light-colored spots on their backs, and pink to orange spots on their backs and sides. These colors become more pronounced during the fall when the Dolly Varden spawn. Hatchery-raised Arctic char, similar in appearance to Dolly Varden, are taking a more prominent role in Anchorage area lakes.

### Arctic grayling (*Thymallus arcticus*)



There are no known native populations of Arctic grayling in the Anchorage area. Fingerling-sized grayling are stocked each year in Beach Lake, where they feed on small insects and grow to catchable size. These “sailfin” fish aggressively rise to small dry flies or strike at small lures such as Mepps and Vibrax spinners.

For a nice backcountry experience right here in Anchorage, try fishing Symphony Lake for Arctic grayling. Symphony is stocked, and there is a naturally-reproducing population with fish ranging from 12 - 20 inches. This lake is located off the South Fork of Eagle River, with the trailhead off Hiland Road. The trail is about a five mile hike through beautiful country.

# ANCHORAGE AREA FISHING REFERENCE GUIDE

**O**

Open to fishing for this species, but special seasons and bag limits. Read the regulation booklet before going fishing here.

**X**

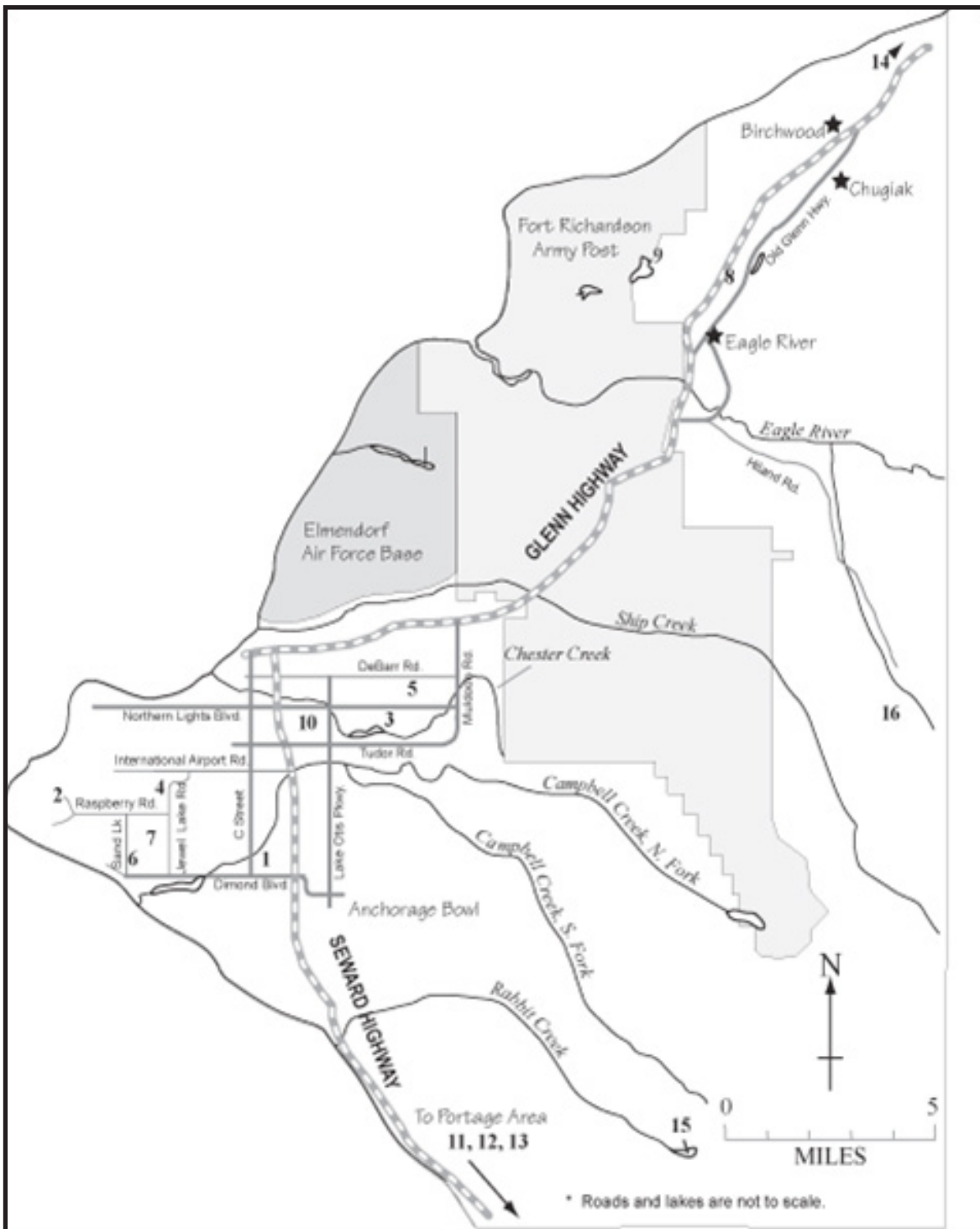
Closed year-round to all fishing for this species, including catch-and-release.

<u>THE OPEN PORTIONS OF</u>	King salmon (any size)	Other salmon (any size)	Rainbow trout & dolly varden (any size)	Bait and multiple hooks OK?
Bird Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
California Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Campbell Creek	<i>Check regs: Kids Day</i>	<i>Open for silvers</i>	<b>O</b>	<i>Check regs</i>
Chester Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Eagle River	<i>Check regs</i>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Eklutna River	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Glacier Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Indian Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Ingram Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Peters Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Placer Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Portage Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Potter Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Rabbit Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Ship Creek	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Sixmile Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Twentymile Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>
Williwaw Creek	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Y</b>

**ALWAYS CHECK THE REGULATIONS BEFORE FISHING.**

Waters listed above are governed by specific dates and harvest limits.

# Anchorage Bowl Lakes



Maps are also available online at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)



## Anchorage area

#1 Taku Campbell: New Seward Hwy./Dimond Blvd. Exit. West on Dimond 0.7 mile to King St. Right on King St. 0.4 mile to 76th Ave. Left on 76th Ave. to Municipality of Anchorage park. System contains stocked coho (silver) salmon and rainbow trout.

#2 Campbell Point Lake: New Seward Hwy./Dimond Exit. West on Dimond 3.2 miles to Jewel Lake Rd. Right on Jewel Lake Rd. 1.3 miles to Raspberry Rd. Left on Raspberry Rd. 1.9 miles to Kincaid Park. Right on gravel road at Kincaid Park Entrance 0.5 miles to lake and large parking area. Lake contains stocked coho (silver) salmon, rainbow trout, and Arctic char.

#3 APU/ University Lake: From New Seward Hwy./Tudor Rd. East on Tudor Rd. 1.6 miles to Bragaw St. Left on Bragaw St. 0.5 mile to University Drive. Right on University Dr. 0.5 mile to parking behind Grace Hall. Lake contains stocked rainbow trout.

#4 DeLong Lake: New Seward/Dimond Blvd. Exit. West on Dimond Blvd. 3.2 miles to Jewel Lk. Rd. Right on Jewel Lk. Rd. 1.7 miles to 63rd. Ave. Left on 63rd. Ave. to Municipality of Anchorage DeLong Lake Park with parking, toilets, picnic tables and handicap accessible dock. Canoes and inflatables can be launched. Lake contains stocked coho (silver) salmon, and rainbow trout.

#5 Cheney Lake: Mile 4.4 Glenn Hwy. Exit at Muldoon Rd. South on Muldoon Rd. 1.1 miles to Debarr Rd. Right on Debarr Rd. 0.9 mile to Beaver Place. Left on Beaver Place 0.6 mile to Municipality of Anchorage park, with parking, toilets, picnic tables and handicap access. Cheney Lake is surrounded by Municipality of Anchorage property, and is scheduled for stocking in spring 2009.

#6 Jewel Lake: New Seward Hwy./Dimond Exit. West on Dimond Blvd. 3.7 miles to large parking area with toilets and handicap access. Or 3.2 miles on Dimond Blvd. to Jewel Lake Rd. Right on Jewel Lk. Rd. 0.2 miles to 88th Ave. Left on 88th Ave. 0.2 miles to Municipality of Anchorage Park with parking, toilets, picnic tables, dock and handicap access. Canoes and inflatables can be launched at both access points. Lake contains stocked coho (silver) salmon, and rainbow trout.

#7 Sand Lake: New Seward/Dimond Blvd. Exit. West on Dimond Blvd. 3.7 miles to Jewel Lk. Rd. Right on Jewel Lk. Rd. 0.9 mile to trails available on north and south end of Sand Lake Elementary to Municipality of Anchorage Park currently being upgraded. Continue 0.2 mile to Caravelle Dr. Left on Caravelle Dr. 0.1 mile to foot trail on left to lake, street parking. Alternate access: From New Seward/Dimond Blvd. Exit. West on Diamond Blvd. 4.2 miles to Sand Lk. Rd. Right on Sand Lk. Rd. 0.7 mile to 80th Ave. Right on 80th Ave. 0.5 mile to canal access providing canoe access with limited parking. Majority of shoreline is privately owned. Lake contains stocked rainbow trout, grayling and Arctic char.

#8 Lower Fire Lake: Mile post 14 Glenn Hwy. North Eagle River Exit. South 0.1 mile to Old Glenn Hwy. Left at stoplight on Old Glenn Hwy. 0.5 mile to West Lake Ridge Rd. Left on West Lake Ridge Rd. 0.1 mile to unimproved access with limited parking. The majority of lake shoreline is private property. Lake contains stocked rainbow trout, Arctic grayling, and invasive northern pike.

#9 Beach Lake: Mile post 20.9 Glenn Hwy. South Birchwood exit, turn west past Chugiak High School 0.9 mile to Beach Lk. Rd. Left on Beach Lk. Rd. 2.0 miles to Beach Lake with Anchorage Parks parking, overnight camping and an unimproved boat launch. Lake contains coho (silver) salmon, rainbow trout, and grayling.

#10 Otis Lake: New Seward Hwy./36th Ave. East on 36th. Ave. 0.8 mile to Lake Otis Parkway. Left on Lake Otis Parkway 0.2 mile to Cornell Dr. Left on Cornell Dr. 0.1 mile to Carlson Park with street parking, paved trail, picnic tables and handicap access. Canoes and inflatables can be launched from the trail. Majority of shoreline is private access.

# Salmon Viewing Locations

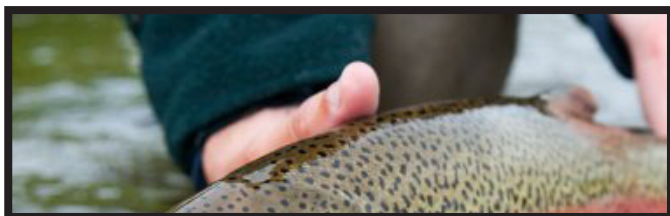
Salmon can be seen at the Chugach dam located about one mile upstream from the mouth of Ship Creek. Follow E Street north of 3rd Avenue, and watch carefully for industrial and railroad traffic. King salmon can also be viewed at Elmendorf Hatchery, on Reeve Boulevard and Post Road, approximately 2½ miles upstream from the mouth of Ship Creek.

Other sites include the Potter Marsh boardwalks just south of Anchorage off the Seward Highway; in Campbell Creek near the Folker Street boardwalks east of Lake Otis Parkway (turn south from Tudor onto Folker Street); off Campbell Airstrip Road; and in the South Fork Eagle River, off Hiland Road, between the falls and its confluence with Eagle River.

Salmon can also be seen at the Williwaw Creek viewing area in Portage Valley. Head south on the Seward Highway about 46 miles to the Portage Valley road.

## Hot Spots and Regulations

For weekly in-season lake fishing reports online, visit [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov) or phone our 24-hour hotline recording at (907) 267-2503. For more stocked lakes information and maps go to our website at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)



For information about camping, accommodations, fishing guides, and other visitor services, contact the agencies listed in this publication, or the Alaska Travel Industry Association at 2600 Cordova Street, Suite 201, Anchorage, Alaska, 99503  
web: [www.travelalaska.com](http://www.travelalaska.com) email: [info@AlaskaTIA.org](mailto:info@AlaskaTIA.org)



### RECREATIONAL FISHING SERIES PRODUCED BY:

Southcentral Region  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Sport Fish

333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99518  
Sport Fish Info. Center

(907) 267-2218  
M-F 8am - 5 pm  
Except on state & federal holidays