



Seward Area

Overview

The Seward area is located in the southeastern portion of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula. Here you'll find spectacular scenery and many opportunities to fish, camp, and view Alaska's wildlife. Many Seward area recreation opportunities are easily reached from the Seward Highway, a National Scenic Byway extending 127 miles from Seward to Anchorage. Seward (pop. 4000) may also be reached via railroad, air, or bus from Anchorage, or by the Alaska Marine ferry transportation system.

Seward sits at the head of Resurrection Bay, surrounded by the Kenai Fjords National Park and the Chugach National Forest. Most anglers fish salt waters for coho (silver), king (chinook), and pink (humpy) salmon, as well as halibut, lingcod, and various species of rockfish. A few sockeye (red) and chum (dog) salmon are also harvested. King and red salmon in Resurrection Bay are hatchery stocks, while silvers are both wild and hatchery stocks.

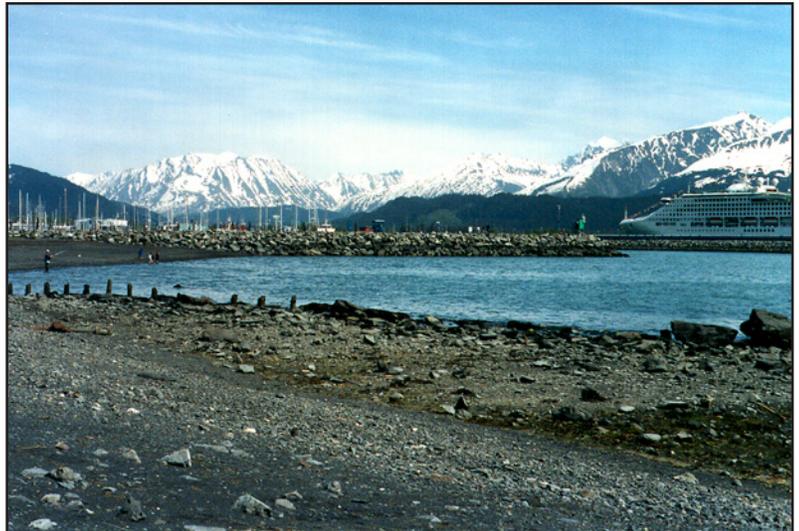
A few area freshwater lakes have stocked or wild rainbow trout populations and wild Dolly Varden, lake trout, and Arctic grayling. All fresh waters in the Seward area are closed year-round to salmon fishing.

Questions? Just call or go on-line!

From May to August, a Resurrection Bay fishery hotline is updated weekly by the Anchorage ADF&G office, (907) 267-2501. The weekly fishing reports and news releases are also available on the web, or call the Southcentral Region Sport Fish Information Center at (907) 267-2218.

Weekly fishing reports, fish stocking updates, maps to stocked lakes, and more can be found on the Division of Sport Fish web site: www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/Region2/html/r2home.stm.

For opening dates, daily limits, regulations, and special tackle restrictions, consult the Southcentral Alaska regulation booklet.



The Seward beach immediately south of the small boat launch. The City of Seward maintains two large beachfront camping areas, including one tent-only camping area. The city also offers ample parking near popular shore fishing sites.

Accommodations and area attractions

The Seward Chamber of Commerce maintains an excellent website at www.seward.net/chamber. Be sure to check here for accommodations; charters; kayak, boat, bike and gear rentals; and tourist information, or call (907) 224-8051.

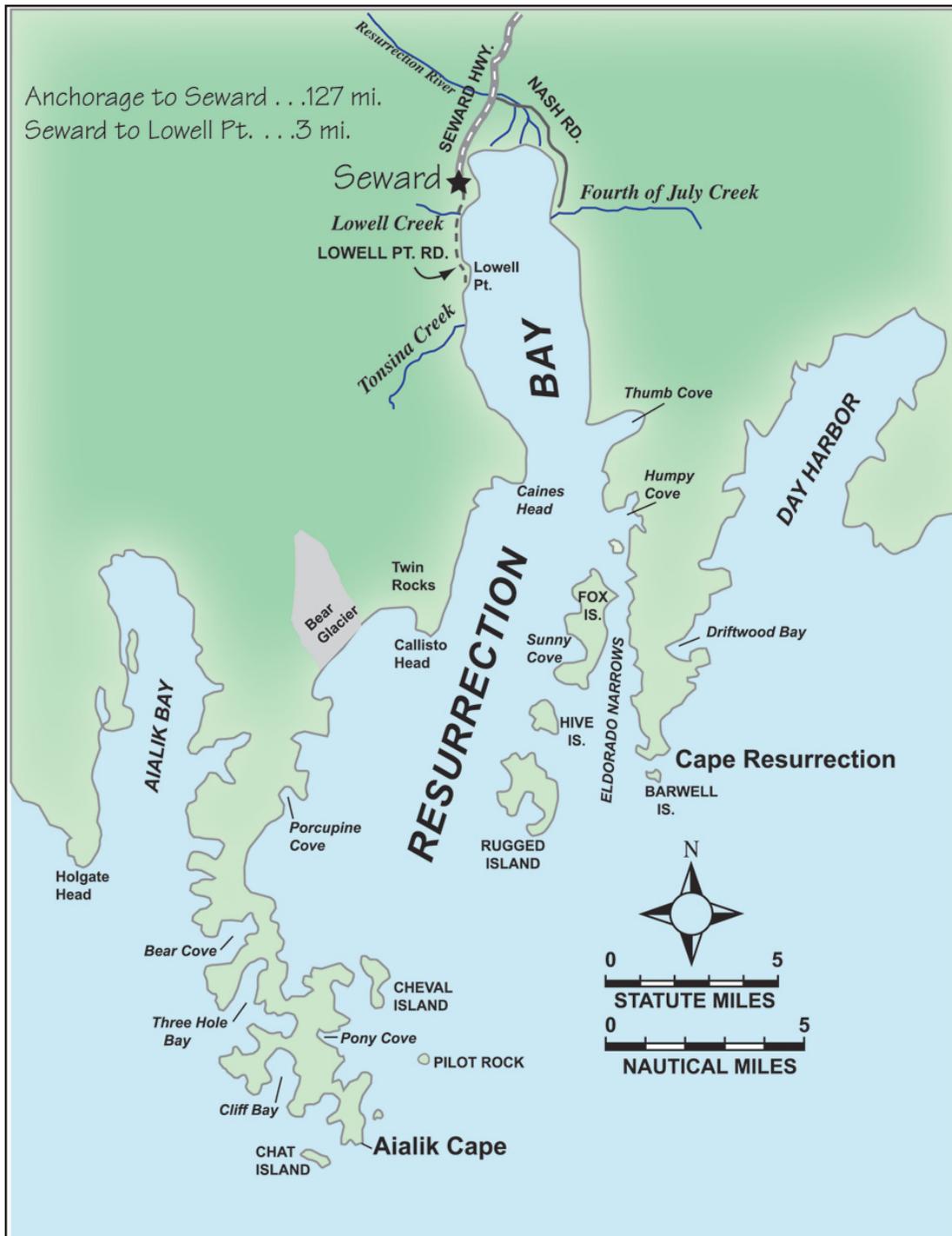
Also check out the Kenai Fjords National Park website at www.nps.gov/kefj, and the Chugach National Forest website at www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach for helpful visitor information.

Fishing regulations

Fishing regulations are different for each area you fish, so before you head out, check the "North Gulf Coast" salt water and fresh water sections of the Southcentral Alaska regulation booklet, available free of charge at most sport fishing license vendors and sporting goods stores.

The regulations are posted at www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/statewide/html/scregs.stm

Also, in response to conservation needs, the Department of Fish and Game may change some regulations at



General map of the Resurrection Bay area. **Not to scale.**

For accurate topographical maps, visit the U.S. Geological Survey's map website at <http://mapping.usgs.gov>, or their business partner, topozone.com

For accurate nautical charts, visit the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's chart website at <http://chartmaker.ncd.noaa.gov>



These opportunities funded in part by Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game administers all programs and activities free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, or disability. The department administers all programs and activities in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire further information please write to ADF&G, P.O. Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802-5526; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 300 Webb, Arlington, VA 22203; or O.E.O., U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington DC 20240.

For information on alternative formats for this and other department publications, please contact the department ADA Coordinator at (voice) 907-465-4120, (TDD) 907-465-3646, or (FAX) 907-465-2440.

any time through Emergency Orders, which are publicized through our website as well as newspaper, radio, and TV news releases.

Shore fishing access

Resurrection Bay shore anglers concentrate in three areas. The first is the sandy cove just south of the small boat launch (pictured on page 1). Second is about 100 yards south of that at the culverts marking the Seward Lagoon outflow. And the third is the mouth of Lowell Creek, which is the waterfall on the southern edge of town.

Anglers also fish along the breakwaters near the Small Boat Harbor (but you must yield to boat traffic); along the public beach from the sandy cove to the Alaska Sea Life Center; and from the shingle beaches south of Lowell Point; and near the Fourth of July Creek area.

The best time to fish from shore is generally 1-2 hours before the high tide and through the high tide. Some anglers prefer fishing at extreme low tide, thinking there's less water and more fish.

Resurrection Bay king salmon

King salmon headed for Seward are the result of hatchery stockings at Lowell Creek and the Seward Lagoon. Every year 200,000 - 300,000 king salmon smolt are released into Resurrection Bay at two sites to begin the salt water phase of their life cycle. Anglers harvest about 2,500 - 4,200 kings annually.

Adult hatchery king salmon return from mid-May through June, with the peak around June 15. Sport fishing occurs at all tide levels, but anglers have the best success starts about 1 hour before high tide. King salmon return at different ages. Some, called "jacks," return after only one year in salt waters. These fish weigh only 1-2 pounds and are almost always males. Others return after two years at about 5-15 pounds. Most of these are also males. The majority of Seward kings, however, return after three and four years at sea at a weight of 25-45 pounds.

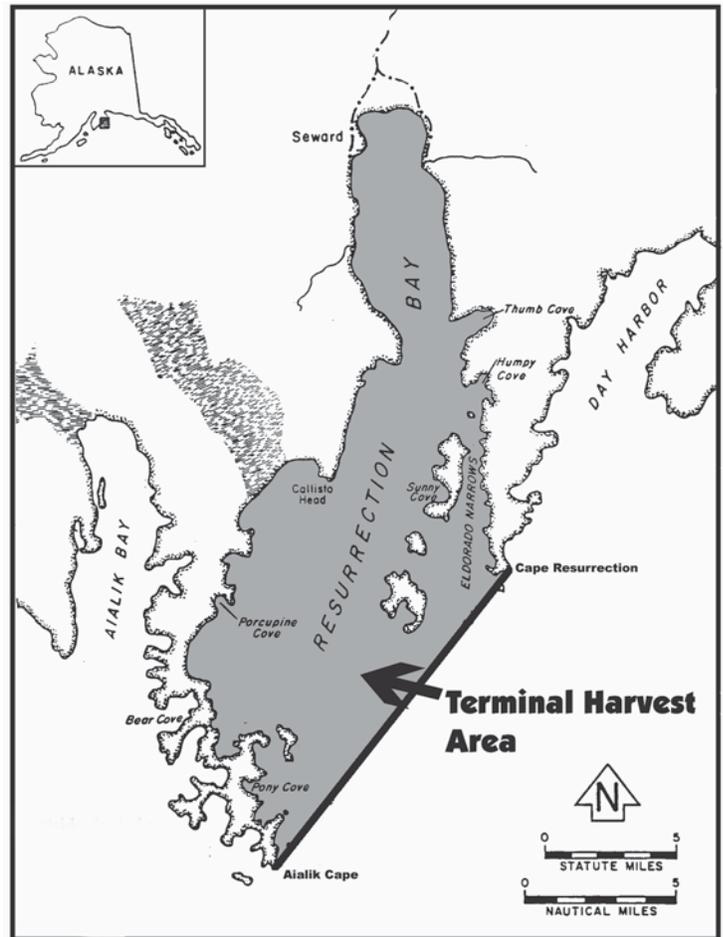
King salmon are taken by both shore and boat anglers. Most fish harvested by shore anglers are snagged, which is legal in Resurrection Bay salt waters, but many anglers also use larger lures, spoons, and herring under a bobber.

"Feeder" Kings

Resurrection Bay boat anglers also catch immature "feeder" kings year-round. These "youngsters" come from both hatchery fish stocked into Resurrection Bay and from parent streams outside Resurrection Bay.

Feeder kings are usually caught while trolling for silvers from early July through August at Eldorado Narrows, Aialik Cape, and the Rugged Island area.

Some anglers have difficulties telling king salmon from silver salmon, especially when caught in salt waters. King



Seward sits at the head of Resurrection Bay, which is a "Terminal Harvest Area." Special bag limits apply inside the Terminal Harvest Area, so check the regulation booklet before heading out to fish.

salmon have a black mouth and gum line, while silvers have a light grey or white gum line. In order to target or keep a king salmon, most anglers will need a king salmon stamp in addition to their sport fishing license.

Silver salmon

Wild silver salmon spawn in the Bay's tributary streams in October. After spawning, the adult fish die, leaving their eggs to hatch the following spring. The newly hatched salmon fry remain in fresh waters that summer and following winter. In the spring of their second or third years, the young fish, now called smolt, migrate to salt water. They remain in marine waters about 14 months before returning to fresh water as adults to spawn. Because Resurrection Bay streams experience severe flooding from time to time, wild stocks have been and will continue to be extremely variable. Wild silver salmon return earlier than their hatchery cousins, typically in early to mid-July through mid-August.

Stocked silver salmon

ADF&G has stocked silver salmon in Resurrection Bay



A successful king salmon angler leaving the Lowell Creek fishing area, about 1 hour before high tide.

waters since the early 1960s, in order to stabilize and increase the numbers of silver salmon available to sport anglers. This stocking program is conducted in cooperation with the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA).

Adult hatchery salmon return to a weir on Bear Creek. Some of the fertilized eggs of these fish are taken to the Trail Lakes Hatchery, and some are taken to the Elmendorf state hatchery. Trail Lakes hatchery fry are then returned to Bear Lake, where they stay for a year before migrating to salt water. Elmendorf hatchery fish are released as smolt into Seward Lagoon and at Lowell Creek.

In addition, the Seward Chamber of Commerce uses monies from the Seward Silver Salmon Derby to “buy” up to an additional 250,000 coho salmon smolt from CIAA. These fish are released into Bear Creek downstream of the Bear Creek weir.

Run timing

The Bay’s silver salmon enthusiasts have about 8-10 weeks to pursue this species, which usually weigh from 6-20 pounds. Silver salmon begin to enter the outer areas of Resurrection Bay the first week of July, with fishing continuing through mid-September. Shore anglers start casting in early August and continue through early October.

“Silver salmon” and “Resurrection Bay” are synonymous to many anglers. From 1997-2001, anglers harvested 79,800 silvers a year, with 7,000-10,000 taken by shore anglers.

Where to fish

Popular spots for early season silvers in the outer areas of the Bay include Cheval Island as well as Pony, Agnes, Porcupine, and Bulldog coves. Further in, boats also have

success at Rugged Island and in Eldorado Narrows. A growing number of boat anglers have had excellent success in waters east and west outside of Resurrection Bay during July in recent years. As the season progresses, the silvers move toward the head of the Bay with Callisto Head, Caines Head, Lowell Point, Spring Creek, Humpy and Thumb coves, and offshore of the “sawdust pile at the head of Resurrection Bay” being popular fishing areas. It is not uncommon to see over 600 boats actively pursuing silvers in Resurrection Bay during August.

Shore anglers concentrate their efforts from early August until mid-September along the beaches near the Seward Lagoon outfall, at the Lowell Creek waterfall, near the Seward Small Boat Harbor, and at the mouth of Spring Creek. Silvers usually do not hit the beach in fishable numbers until the mid- to late August, and peak the end of the first week of September.

Methods

Trolling herring on dual single hooks is a popular method. The preferred depth for fishing can be highly variable, depending on the availability of feed. Experimenting at various depths is advisable. Use a trolling sinker, or a diving rig such as a “pink lady” to reach the desired depth. Downriggers with very heavy weights have also become widely used to fish at deeper depths. Many anglers also attach a flasher or other type of visual attractant 12” to 36” above the herring. If you prefer a lure, rig as if you were fishing bait and substitute the lure for the herring. As an alternative to trolling, “mooching” has also become popular. Use shrimp pattern flies or cut herring with a 6- to 10 oz. banana weight rigged above the leader and fish as if you were jigging. This method works best to depths of 40 feet and can be very successful when silver salmon are abundant.

Those who fish from shore generally prefer lures. A variety of spoons and spinners such as Vibrax™ and Pixees™ consistently produce good results. Anglers have also been successful fishing cut herring at all depths or using a bobber close to shore areas. Snagging is legal in Resurrection Bay salt water and becomes the harvest method of choice for many anglers late in the season, especially off the beach.

Seward Silver Salmon Derby

The largest number of silver salmon anglers are found on the waters of Resurrection Bay during the annual Seward Silver Salmon Derby. The Derby has been an ongoing event for more than 30 years and offers prizes to successful anglers in a number of categories.

During this brief but intense fishing period, about half of the Bay’s annual silver salmon catch is harvested. Studies have found that over half of the silvers harvested during the Derby come from hatchery stockings. You can find

the dates and rules on the Seward Chamber of Commerce's web site at www.seward.net/chamber

Pink salmon

Pink salmon are the smallest of the Pacific salmon, with most fish weighing 3-6 pounds. They are also known as "humpback" or "humpies" because of the pronounced hump which develops on the back of the males before spawning.

Pink salmon are known to spawn in 12 tributaries to Resurrection Bay. Most of these fish spawn within a few miles of the ocean, and spawning within a river's intertidal zone is not uncommon. Spawning usually occurs in August and early September. The eggs hatch in late winter and the small fish (alevin) swim up and out of the gravel in early spring. Pink salmon alevin do not stay in fresh water, but migrate almost immediately to the ocean. Here they spend only one winter prior to returning to their parent stream the following year. This species is therefore known as a "two-year" fish, which has the shortest life cycle of any Pacific salmon.

In Resurrection Bay, even years (2004, 2006, etc.) usually return the greatest numbers of fish to both sport and commercial fishers.

The 1992-2001 sport harvest averages 4,000 pink salmon. Pinks provide good action on light tackle and are available from early July through early September. Although most pink salmon are taken from boats trolling herring or lures, shore anglers also catch many of these fish on smaller, bright spinners. Popular areas for shore fishing include the Lowell Creek waterfall and the beaches near Spring Creek.

Red salmon

Historically, there have been very few wild sockeye salmon in Resurrection Bay, and thus they have not contributed significantly to the sport fishery. Since 1990, the CIAA has implemented a sockeye salmon stocking program in Bear Lake, with the goal of producing enough adults to support a commercial seine fishery in June.

Most Resurrection Bay red salmon are snagged by shore anglers rather than caught on conventional tackle, with harvests averaging around 1,200 fish per year. The Seward Lagoon culverts and the mouth of the Resurrection River are some places to try. Boat anglers are finding success by trolling with a small flasher above a fly, a bare red hook, or cut herring.

Although most Resurrection Bay red salmon are headed for Bear Lake, they are likely to be present in other areas.



The Seward Lagoon outfall culverts about 2 hours before high tide. Hip boots or chest waders are recommended. The rocks are very slippery. Bring extra tackle: this area has lots of snags!

Fresh waters draining into Resurrection Bay are closed year-round to all salmon fishing!

Chum salmon

Chum, or "dog" salmon, have the largest range of the Pacific salmon. Runs are established in streams a long way above the Arctic Circle, and as far south as southern California.

In Resurrection Bay they typically spawn in the same streams favored by pink salmon. Chums will also use intertidal areas to spawn. Their fry then migrate to salt water shortly after emerging from the gravel in early spring. Unlike pinks, chum salmon remain in salt water from one to five years before returning to their natal streams.

In Resurrection Bay, chum salmon return to the spawning streams from early July through early August. Spawning typically occurs from late July through August. They are generally available to the sport angler from late June through July. Similar to sockeye salmon, chum salmon don't bite well in salt water on conventional tackle. Only a few hundred of these fish are caught annually, with most being snagged in salt waters.

Halibut

Pacific halibut are most often found on or near the bottom, over sand or gravel beds. While halibut have been recorded to depths of 3,600 feet, most are caught at depths of 90 to 500 feet. Although a few halibut over 350 pounds have been caught in or near Resurrection Bay, fish in the 10-35 pound range are more common. Most sport-caught halibut are taken from the southern portion of Resurrection Bay and waters further from port. Relatively very few halibut are taken from the upper reaches of the Bay.

Halibut can weigh up to several hundred pounds, so most anglers use a stout 5-7 foot rod equipped with a level-wind, star-drag reel capable of holding up to 300 yards of 30-80 pound test line. Large 4/0-12/0 jigs or circle hooks baited with octopus, salmon heads, or whole or cut herring are typical. 24-32 oz. of weight is needed to hold the bait on the bottom, depending on the depth, speed of the current, and the tides. Although drifting is popular, anchoring is also effective because the bait creates a scent trail in the current that attracts fish.

The best time to fish for halibut is just before, during, and after slack tide, since this is the easiest time to keep the bait on the bottom. Halibut are available inside Resurrection Bay, but fishing is best outside the Bay at Cape Resurrection, Chiswell Islands, and the waters from Day Harbor east to Montague Island.

Lingcod

Lingcod belong to a family of fish called Hexagrammids or “greenlings.” Like halibut, this species is usually found on or near the bottom, most often over rocky reefs in areas of strong currents. While recorded to depths of over 1,000 feet, lingcod are most often caught at depths from 30 to 300 feet. These fish are an extremely aggressive predator, and can grow to over 60 pounds and 5 feet.

Lingcod have a unique life history. In Alaskan waters, lingcod gather for spawning from late December through early January, with peak spawning from February through April. Eggs are deposited in nests on rocky reefs buffeted by wave action or tidal currents. After the eggs are fertilized, the female lingcod leaves for deeper waters, and the males guard the nests. Male lingcod will remain on the nest until the eggs hatch.

Egg development generally takes 7-12 weeks. Studies have suggested that some nests were still being guarded near Resurrection Bay through late June. During this entire 6-month period, lingcod are extremely aggressive. They will bite at anything and everything, and are therefore very vulnerable to harvest. Unguarded eggs are quickly devoured by predators. Successful incubation requires the presence of a male to guard the nest.

After hatching, larval lingcod float at the whims of the ocean current until they develop into fish about 3 inches long, when they settle in near shore areas and begin to eat smaller fish. At first, growth is rapid, but it still takes 5 to 9 years for lingcod to become sexually mature. Adult lingcod are voracious, eating almost anything that comes their way, including other lingcod. Male lingcod grow more slowly than females, and most fish over 44 inches long are females.

Lingcod fishing closed inside Resurrection Bay

Lingcod populations near Seward are depressed, there-

fore regulations are in place to allow these depressed stocks to rebuild. Resurrection Bay north of a line from Cape Aialik to Cape Resurrection is closed year-round to lingcod fishing, including catch-and-release.

If you unintentionally hook a lingcod in closed waters, or during a closed season, you can carefully release that fish. Lingcod, unlike rockfish, do not have an air bladder and can be released alive with a high rate of survival.

Methods outside Resurrection Bay

Most anglers targeting lingcod use a medium stout rod and level-wind reel loaded with 200-400 yards of 30-80 pound test line with a 12-18 inch leader made of wire or heavy monofilament fishing line.

Many anglers prefer to use the heavier weight line and leader, since it's possible to hook into a large halibut while fishing for lingcod. Terminal tackle usually consists of silvery lures or jigs aggressively “bounced” on or near the bottom. Many anglers also use bait, such as herring, attached to a size 5 or 6 J-hook. Lingcod may not be gaffed.

The best fishing for lingcod is found in offshore waters near rocks and other underwater structures from Cape Resurrection east to Montague Island.

Rockfish

Rockfish are common along the coastal waters near Seward. Common names for the more popular types include red snapper and black sea bass. Rockfish are easily recognized by their stout bodies, bony heads, large eyes, and sharp fin spines. These spines can be mildly poisonous. Although 34 species of rockfish are known to live in Southcentral Alaskan waters, only about a dozen species are usually taken in sport fisheries. These species are classified for regulatory purposes as either pelagic (rhymes with “magic”) or non-pelagic.

Pelagic species travel in schools throughout all depths of water, and are most often found near rocky reefs or pinnacles. Pelagic species are usually uniformly gray, black or brownish in color, and include black, dusky, and yellowtail rockfish. Black and dusky rockfish are commonly called “black sea bass.”

Non-pelagic species of rockfish are typically found on or near the bottom, near rocky reefs or pinnacles. They are usually brightly colored and vividly marked. The most commonly caught non-pelagic species include yelloweye rockfish (or “red snapper”), quillback, canary, China, copper, silvergray, and tiger rockfishes.

Life cycle

Compared to most fishes, rockfish grow slowly and live a very long time. Many do not reach sexual maturity until age 15 or older, and some can live over 100 years. Rather than laying and fertilizing eggs in the open waters, like most fish, rockfish mate internally, then give “birth” to as

many as 2.5 million tiny larvae. Survival of these larvae is usually very poor, depending on predation levels and ocean conditions. Because of the high mortality of larval rockfish, relatively few offspring reach adulthood. As a result of this unique life history, all Pacific rockfishes are highly susceptible to overharvest. Because these fishes are very long lived, they may never recover from overharvest.

Given their vulnerability and the consequences of overharvest, managers ask that you limit your catch of these fish to what you will actually consume. Catch-and-release fishing for rockfish is discouraged because rockfish possess an air bladder that expands when the fish is brought to the surface. When brought from depths below 50 feet, the expanding air bladder will push the fish's stomach out of its mouth. In addition, internal organs and eyes may be injured from decompression as the fish is brought to the surface. These fish are most often unable to re-submerge and will die when released. Do not puncture the protruding stomach and/or air bladder, thinking that this will allow the fish to re-submerge—this essentially guarantees that the fish will die by infection of internal organs. The best way to minimize catching rockfish is to avoid rockfish habitat while targeting other species.

Rockfishes commonly eat shrimp, crabs, and jellyfish, as well as numerous crustaceans and other small fishes. Anglers targeting rockfish use a medium stout rod and level-wind reel loaded with 200-400 yards of 30-80 pound test line. Some anglers use lighter gear to enhance the fishing experience. Commonly used terminal tackle includes silvery lures or jigs aggressively jigged to attract nearby fish. Use of herring or shrimp as bait also works well. Pelagic rockfish can also be caught on fly-fishing gear.

Popular rockfish areas outside the Bay include Johnstone Bay, Cape Aialik, and the Chiswell Islands. Areas inside Resurrection Bay possess fewer rockfish than less frequented areas outside the Bay.

Sharks

Salmon sharks are the most commonly caught large sharks in Alaska, and in Resurrection Bay are often found in August. Unfortunately, very little is known about salmon sharks. We do know that they are a long lived “top-of-the-line” predator closely related to the great white shark. Female salmon sharks do not reproduce until they are 9-10 years old, giving birth to 1-4 “pups” every other year. They are believed to live as long as 20 years or more. Because of this slow reproduction cycle and their long lives, sharks are extremely vulnerable to overharvesting.

These aggressive fish are typically 7 feet long and 300 pounds. Combine their large size with a swimming speed in excess of 30 mph and it is easy to see why shark fishing requires special gear and tactics. Salmon sharks are cur-

rently targeted by a few specialized charter companies in Seward.

In 1997, the Alaska Board of Fisheries passed special statewide regulations aimed at protecting all shark species, including salmon sharks, Pacific sleeper sharks, and spiny dogfish. Please read the salt water sections of your regulation booklet before you keep a shark.

Dolly Varden

Resurrection Bay also supports a fair population of “anadromous” or sea-run Dolly Varden. These fish enter fresh water in the fall to spawn and then overwinter in several area lakes. In the spring, they return to salt water where they are available to the recreational angler. Popular sites include the mouth of Tonsina Creek and the Lowell Point area. This species is available for about a month, from early July through early August. Most of the Dolly Varden caught in the Bay are 10" - 12", with a few exceeding 24". Relatively small, flashy lures are preferred by most anglers, but some Dollies are caught by fishing bait off the bottom.

Bottomfish Research

There are several Resurrection Bay research projects aimed at bottomfish. ADF&G routinely collects data from halibut, rockfish, lingcod, and shark carcasses to determine the age, size, and sex of harvested fish. Researchers have also marked lingcod, rockfish, and salmon sharks near Seward with tags. If you catch and retain a tagged fish, please record the date and capture location, your name, address and phone number, and return this information and the tag to the ADF&G Sport Groundfish Program, 3298 Douglas Street, Homer, AK 99603.

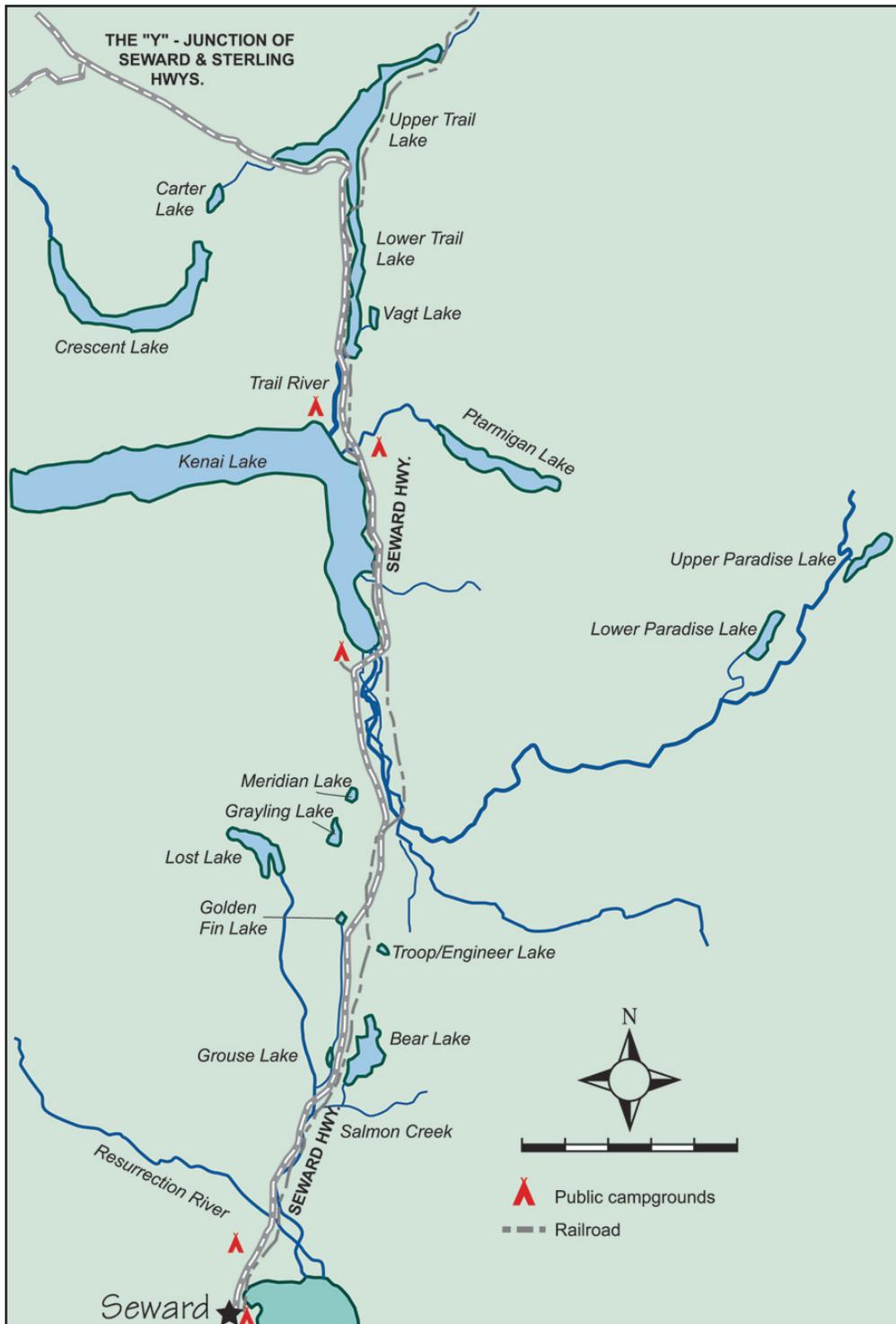
If you decide to release the fish, please just give us the tag number along with date and location of capture and your contact information.

This information and research can be used to detect changes in bottomfish populations, help define fish movement and migration characteristics and assist with the management of these important marine species.

“Party” Fishing

Party fishing, such as when anglers “pool” their harvest to achieve a “boat limit,” is illegal. A fish belongs to the person who originally hooked it. Under Alaska law, once your daily bag limit is reached, you cannot harvest more fish “for the boat.”

Under certain conditions, anglers can give (but not sell, barter, or trade) someone their fish. Check the regulation booklet for the rules on giving away fish. Once an angler gives away his/her bag limit, he/she may not harvest additional fish of that species on the same day.



Seward area freshwater fishing and public camping areas.

Road-accessible freshwater fishing

The eastern Kenai Peninsula—from the junction of the Seward and Sterling highways south to Seward—offers both stream and lake fishing. Most land adjacent to Resurrection Bay streams is privately owned. Anglers should obtain permission before accessing streams.

Anglers can find lake trout, Arctic grayling, rainbow trout, and Dolly Varden. These lakes and streams are either near the Seward Highway or can be reached by U.S.

Forest Service trails. Sport fishing regulations for these streams and lakes can be found in one of three sections of the Southcentral Alaska regulation booklet, depending on which way the streams flow: “Resurrection Bay Fresh Water Drainages,” “Drainages of the Kenai Peninsula,” or “Drainages of Kenai Lake.” **Remember that salmon fishing is prohibited in all streams and lakes that flow into Resurrection Bay (south of Mile 12 Seward Highway).**

Salmon Creek: The Seward Highway crosses Salmon Creek at Mile 5.9. This stream contains anadromous Dolly Varden which average about 10 inches. Best fishing here occurs in August. “Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations

Grouse Lake: Grouse Lake can be accessed via the Seward Highway at Mile 7.4. During the open water season the best fishing is when Dolly Varden enter (August-September) and exit (mid-May through early June) the lake. As these fish migrate in large schools, be careful not to snag or foul hook the fish. Best ice fishing at Grouse Lake is from December through early April. Try single salmon eggs or small lures. “Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations

Lost Lake: Rainbow trout were originally stocked here in 1963. This is a glacial lake 7.6 miles along a USFS trail from the Primrose Campground at Mile 17 of the Seward Highway. There is another foot trail about 8 miles long into Lost Lake at Mile 5.3 of the Seward Highway. “Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations

There is another foot trail about 8 miles long into Lost Lake at Mile 5.3 of the Seward Highway. “Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations

Golden Fin Lake: Access is at Mile 11.3 of the Seward Highway. A short (0.6 mile), steep unmarked trail leads to the lake. The lake contains a self-sustaining population of landlocked Dolly Varden, which provide good action on light tackle. These fish average about 8” in length. “Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations

Troop/Engineer Lake: At Mile 10.9 of the Seward

Hwy., an unmarked trail leaves the turnout on the east side of the highway. Continue about 1 mile east, beyond the railroad tracks, to find this lake which is stocked on odd years with rainbow trout. *“Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations*

Grayling Lake: Grayling Lake is accessed from a two-mile trail originating at Mile 13.2 of the Seward Highway. The lake contains 6”-12” grayling, which may be caught on flies or small lures. This trail continues to Meridian Lake. *“Resurrection Bay Fresh Water” regulations*

Ptarmigan Creek and Lake: Ptarmigan Creek crosses the Seward Highway at Mile 23.2 of the Seward Highway. There’s a U.S. Forest Service campground with 6 sites, and trailhead parking. Dolly Varden are available at the outlet of Ptarmigan Lake. Ptarmigan Creek supports spawning sockeye (red) and king salmon. Feel free to photograph these fish, but remember that **fishing for salmon is prohibited**. Dolly Varden fishing in the creek improves in August and early September as these fish move upstream from Kenai Lake. *“Flowing Waters of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Trail River: This river is accessed via a U.S. Forest Service campground at Mile 24.1 of the Seward Highway. The campground sits on Kenai Lake, has 64 sites and day-use picnic and parking. The lake and river have rainbow trout and Dolly Varden. A few lake trout are also taken each year. Fishing is from “ice-out” until “freeze-up,” with best fishing in spring and fall. Check regulations carefully as restrictive bag limits apply. *“Flowing Waters of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Upper and Lower Trail Lake: These two lakes parallel the Seward Highway from Mile 25.2 through Mile 32. Both lakes are glacial and contain Dolly Varden, rainbow trout, and lake trout. A public boat ramp is located at Mile 30.2 on Upper Trail Lake. Please use care when boating on all Alaskan marine and fresh waters. Check regulations carefully: restrictive bag limits apply to Dolly Varden. *“Kenai Lake and All Other Lakes of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Vagt Lake: Accessed from Mile 25.2 (Trail River), there is about a 3/4-mile walk to reach the lake. Rehabilitated in the 1970s by ADF&G and the USFS, the lake now provides excellent rainbow trout fishing. Check your regulations closely, as the lake is closed in the spring to protect spawning fish. *“Stocked Lakes of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Carter Lake: The trail, relatively steep, leading to this lake is located on the south side of the Seward Highway at Mile 33.1. Walking time to the lake is about 1.5 hours. The lake has been stocked with rainbow trout through a cooperative effort of ADF&G and the USFS. *“Stocked Lakes of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Fly-in fishing opportunities

There are several lakes between Seward and the junction of the Sterling Highway which offer fly-in fishing opportunities. These lakes may also be reached via trail, but many people prefer the convenience of fly in fishing. Call the Seward Chamber of Commerce for air charter operators.

Johnson Lake: Johnson Lake is accessed via the Johnson Pass Trail or via float plane. The lake was initially stocked in 1963 with rainbow trout from Kamloops, British Columbia. The stocking was successful and a small, self-sustaining population has been established. These fish are typically taken with fly rod. The type of fly used and the presentation of the fly can be critical to success. Please check regulations closely. *“Kenai Lake and All Other Lakes of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Bench Lake: Bench Lake is also on the Johnson Pass Trail system. The lake was originally stocked in 1967 with grayling from Crescent Lake. A self-sustaining population has been established. Use either artificial flies or small spinners for success. The outlet of the lake (Bench Creek) has been a popular area for anglers. *“Kenai Lake and All Other Lakes of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Crescent Lake: Crescent Lake may be reached via the Crescent Lake Trail, Carter Lake Trail, or by float plane. An excellent self-sustaining grayling population has developed from a 1952 stocking of 240 fish. Popular areas on the lake are the inlet and outlet. Shoreline areas also offer excellent grayling fishing. Please check regulations closely before fishing this lake, as restrictive seasons and bag limits are in effect. *“Kenai River Drainage” regulations, “Crescent Creek Exception.”*

Paradise Lakes (Upper and Lower): Upper Paradise Lake was stocked with grayling in 1963. The stocking was successful and these fish left the lake via the Snow River and made their way into Lower Paradise Lake. Grayling in both lakes average 10” to 12” in length. Lower Paradise also supports a small population of rainbow trout. Again, please check regulations before fishing. *“Kenai Lake and All Other Lakes of the Kenai Lake Drainage” regulations*

Other fishing and camping areas

There are many camping and parking areas, both public and private, for recreational anglers and their families.

Along the Seward beaches there are undeveloped camping and parking areas, with public rest rooms and pay showers available at the Harbormaster’s Office, as well as at several Seward businesses. Across the bay, on its eastern side, there is undeveloped camping and parking in the area of Fourth of July Creek.

Just outside the city limits, there are other public and privately-operated commercial campgrounds. Seward of-

fers many hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, cafes, restaurants, fishing charters, and boat rentals.

Fish viewing

Moose Creek: This small stream runs under, and follows along, the Seward Highway at Mile 32.2. There is a turnout and an informational U.S. Forest Service sign explaining the life cycle of the sockeye salmon that spawn here. These fish, which have reached this area via the Kenai and Trail rivers, are usually present in August.

Grouse Creek: This small stream follows the Seward Highway starting north of Mile 8.0, just outside of Seward. You can see spawning pinks (July-August) and silvers (September-October). There are several small turnouts available for parking.

Bear Creek Weir: Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association operates a weir on Bear Creek near the outlet of Bear Lake. This weir is used to count sockeye and silver salmon smolt emigrating from Bear Lake in the spring, and sockeye and silver salmon adults returning to the lake during the summer and fall. The weir is located at mile 0.6 Bear Lake Road, just outside Seward along the Seward Highway.

Trail Lakes Hatchery: This private, nonprofit facility is located in Moose Pass, just above Upper Trail Lake. It is here that the Bear Lake silver salmon begin their life cycle before their release into Bear Lake. Tours of the hatchery are available, call (907) 288-3688.

Resurrection Bay Area Recreational Fisheries

Location	Species	Period Available	<i>Peak is mid-way between dates given</i>
Resurrection Bay	Silver Salmon	Mid-July to mid-September	
	King Salmon	Late May through June	
	Pink Salmon	Even-numbered years, August through mid-September	
	Red Salmon	Late May through mid-August	
	Chum Salmon	July through early August	
	Halibut	April through October	
	Rockfish	April through October	
	Lingcod	<i>Resurrection Bay is closed to lingcod sport fishing year-round.</i>	
Area Streams	Dolly Varden	May, late-July through August ¹	
	Rainbow Trout	Mid-June through Mid-April ¹	
Area Lakes	Dolly Varden	Entire year	
	Rainbow Trout	Entire year ²	
	Grayling	Entire year ²	
	Lake Trout	Entire year	
1. Fishing for sea-run Dolly Varden is best in spring and fall.			
2. Before fishing anywhere in Alaska, remember to consult a current copy of the regulations.			

For information about camping, accommodations, fishing guides, and other visitor services, contact the Alaska Division of Tourism at P.O. Box 110809, Juneau, Alaska 99811 (907) 465-2012 Fax (907) 465-3767 www.dced.state.ak.us/tourism/



Recreational Fishing Series produced by

Southcentral Region

Alaska Department of Fish and Game 333 Raspberry Road
Division of Sport Fish Anchorage, Alaska 99518

www.state.ak.us/adfg Click on Sport Fish, then Southcentral Region

Sport Fish Information Center

(907) 267-2218
M-F 8am - 5 pm

Except on state & federal holidays