



# Seward Area

## Overview

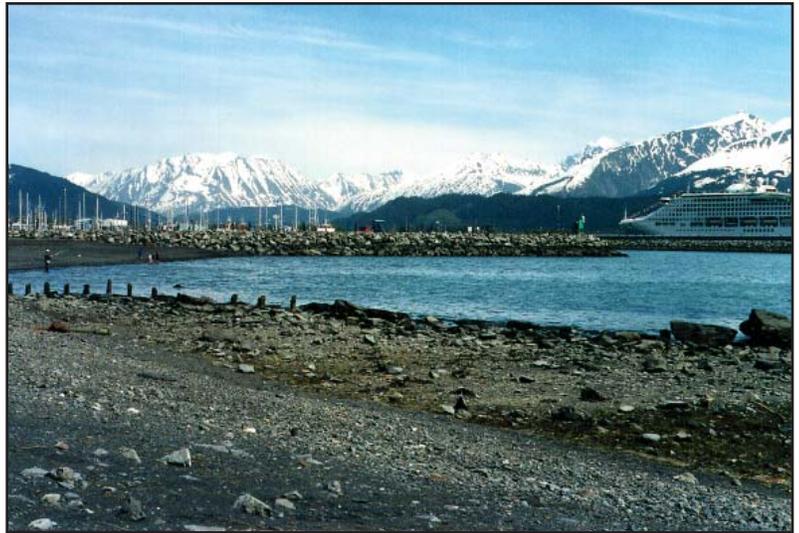
The Seward and North Gulf Coast area is located in the southeastern portion of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula. Here you'll find spectacular scenery and many opportunities to fish, camp, and view Alaska's wildlife. Many Seward area recreation opportunities are easily reached from the Seward Highway, a National Scenic Byway extending 127 miles from Seward to Anchorage. Seward (pop. 2,000) 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 U.S. Kenai Fjords National Park and the U.S. Chugach National Forest. Most anglers fish salt waters for silver (coho), king (chinook), and pink (humpy) salmon, as well as halibut, lingcod, and various species of rockfish. A few red (sockeye) and chum (dog) salmon are also harvested. King and red salmon in Resurrection Bay are primarily 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.

## Management of Alaska's sport 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 Dept. of Public Safety, State Troopers' Bureau of



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

Wildlife Enforcement. The ADF&G office in Anchorage is the management office for the Resurrection Bay - North Gulf Coast area.

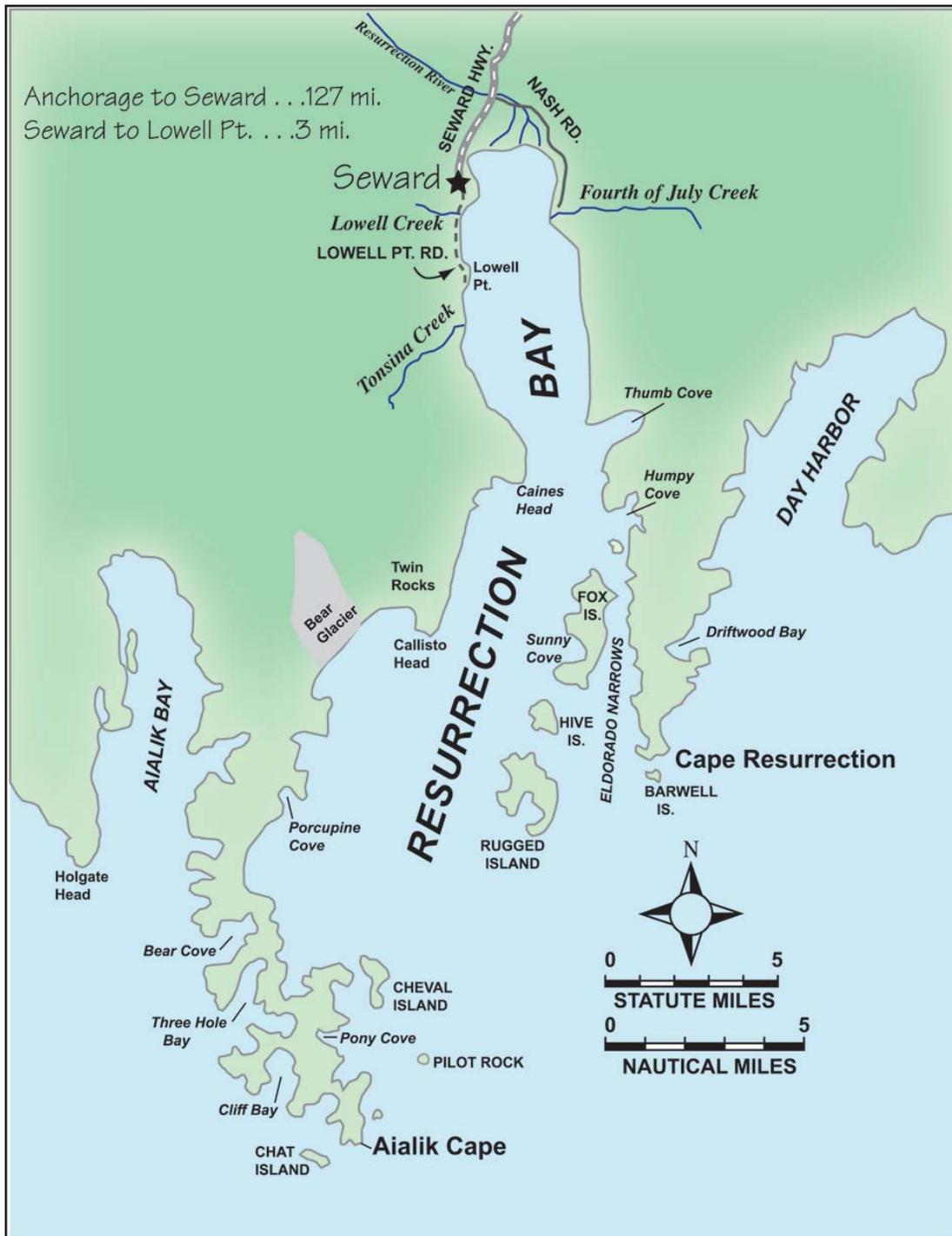
At times the Division issues in-season regulatory changes, called Emergency Orders, primarily in response to under- or over-abundance of fish. Emergency Orders are sent to radio stations, newspapers, and television stations, and posted on our web site at [www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us](http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us)

We also maintain a hot line recording at (907) 267-2502. Or you can contact the Anchorage Sport Fish Information Center at (907) 267-2218.

## Fishing regulations

Regulations are often different for each water you fish. Please read the two "North Gulf Coast" sections (fresh water and salt water) 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.sf.adfg.state.ak.us](http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us)

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



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

For accurate topographical maps, visit the U.S. Geological Survey's map web site at <http://store.usgs.com>

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

Marine weather can change from flat calm to large swells in minutes. Stay up to date by visiting the National Weather Service's Alaska regional web site at <http://www.arh.noaa.gov>

The Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources' Office of Boating Safety also has many resources, including boat registration information and an on-line chart viewer at [www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/boating](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/boating), or (907) 269-8705.



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 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526; 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) 907-465-6077, (TDD) 907-465-3646, or (FAX) 907-465-6078.

Be sure you have your sport fishing license or ADF&G Permanent ID Card in your possession. Also, anglers need to purchase a king salmon stamp to fish for king salmon (exceptions are listed in the regulation booklet).

Licenses and stamps can be purchased at most grocery stores and tackle shops or on-line at [www.admin.adfg.state.ak.us/license](http://www.admin.adfg.state.ak.us/license)

### “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.”

Only under certain conditions can anglers can give someone their fish, and sport-caught fish can never be sold, bartered or traded. 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.

### Gaffs

A gaff may not be used to puncture any fish intended to be released.

## Hotels, charter boats, sightseeing

There’s lots to do in the Seward area. The Seward Chamber of Commerce maintains an excellent web site at [www.sewardak.org](http://www.sewardak.org). Be sure to check here for accommodations, fishing charters, and boat and gear rentals, or call (907) 224-8051.

Seward is also one of the best places to explore the U.S. Kenai Fjords National Park, with whales, puffins, tidewater glaciers, historical sites, bear viewing, hiking, kayaking, and much more. For more information, visit their web site at [www.nps.gov/kefj](http://www.nps.gov/kefj).

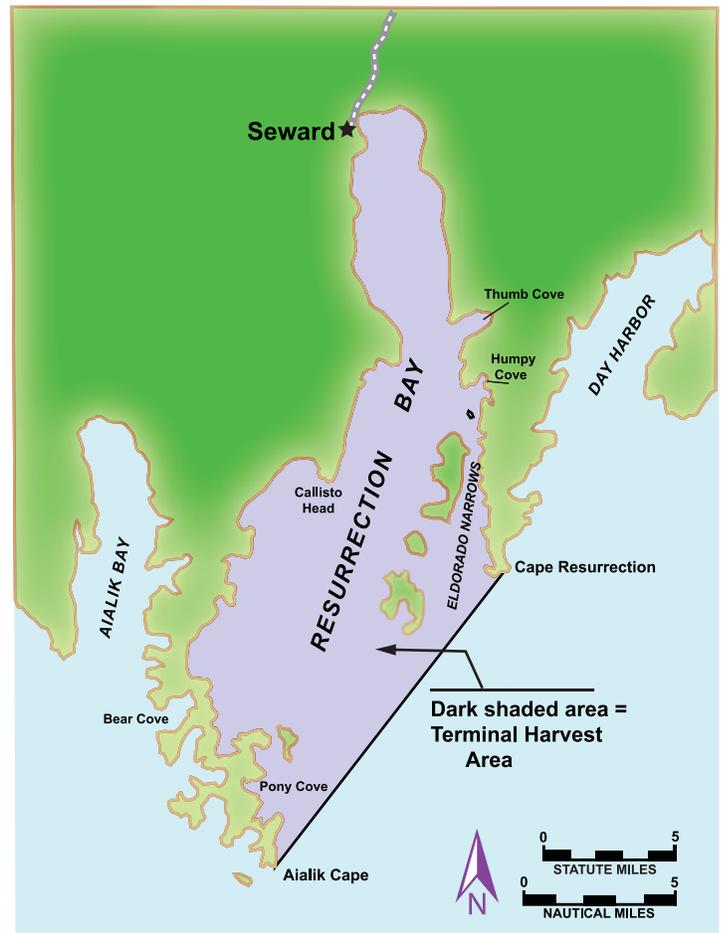
Much of the land north of Seward is the U.S. Forest Service’s Chugach National Forest, over 5.5 million acres of wildlife viewing, berry picking, back country camping and hiking, rafting, and more. The Seward Ranger District web site is [www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/pages\\_district/seward.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/pages_district/seward.html) or (907) 224-3374.

### Camping areas

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

For information about federal campgrounds, visit [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov). State campground information can be found on the Alaska State Parks web site at [www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks). And the Seward Chamber of Commerce is a good contact for private campground information.

Along the Seward beaches there are undeveloped camping and parking areas, with public rest rooms and



*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.*

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.

## Fishing access

Most fishing effort takes place from private and charter boats that troll in the bay, or head east toward Prince William Sound and Montague Island to anchor up for halibut.

However, the city of Seward offers plentiful shoreline surf casting access off its beaches. The three main access sites are 1) just south of the small boat launch, 2) about 100 yards south of that at the culverts of the Seward Lagoon outflow, and 3) the mouth of Lowell Creek, which is the waterfall on the southern edge of town.

Anglers also fish from the breakwater walls near the small boat harbor (but you must yield to boat traffic); from the beaches from small boat launch to the Alaska Sea Life Center; along the breakwater wall on the road to Lowell Point, from the shingle beaches at Lowell Point, and off



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

Nash Road, near the Fourth of July Creek area.

Most surf casters start fishing 2-3 hours before the high tide and fish through the high tide.

There's only one freshwater stream that is open to fishing for salmon, and that's a special section of the Resurrection Creek drainage. All other freshwater streams and drainages are closed year round to salmon fishing.

## Fish identification

There's a salmon and rockfish identification guide in the regulation booklet, and there are commercially available fish identification guides available. Kings and silvers are often hard to tell apart. King salmon have a black mouth and gum line, while silvers have a light grey or white gum line. If you are uncertain about your fish, it's best to let it go, since some fish, especially rockfish and lingcod, have conservative bag limits.

## Resurrection Bay king salmon

In addition to a fishing license, most anglers also need a king salmon stamp, even in salt waters. Check the license section of the regulation booklet, or call ADF&G before going fishing.

King salmon headed for Seward are primarily the result of hatchery stockings at Lowell Creek and the Seward Lagoon. Every year about 210,000 king salmon smolt are released into Resurrection Bay at two sites to begin the salt water phase of their life cycle. Anglers harvest about 3,800 - 4,800 kings annually.

These king salmon return from mid-May through June, with the peak around June 15. 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.

About 2/3 of the king salmon are taken by anglers fishing from private and charter boats, while the remaining 1/3 are harvested by shore anglers. Boat anglers typically troll with flashers and lures or flashers and small herring. Most shore-caught fish are snagged, which IS legal in Resurrection Bay salt waters. Other shore anglers catch their fish by casting large spinners or spoons, or by suspending bait under a bobber.

## "Feeder" Kings

A small number of private and charter boats also troll year-round for "winter" or "feeder" kings, which are king salmon that have not matured enough to spawn. Success is highly dependent on the weather, which can get very rough in winter.

## Silver salmon

Resurrection Bay supports one of the largest salt water silver (coho) salmon sport fisheries in the Pacific Northwest. Total harvests range from 9,700 to 135,500 per year, with over 80% harvested by private and charter boats.

ADF&G has stocked silver salmon in Resurrection Bay waters since the early 1960s, in order to stabilize and increase the numbers of silver salmon available to sport anglers. The stocking program, conducted in cooperation with the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA), and the Seward Chamber of Commerce releases an average of 743,000 silver salmon smolt at the Lowell Creek waterfall and in Seward Lagoon, and an additional 400,000 silver salmon fry into Bear Lake.

Anglers fishing in North Gulf Coast waters also catch hatchery silvers bound for Prince William Sound.

## Run timing

The Bay's silver salmon enthusiasts have about 8-12 weeks to pursue this species, which usually weigh from 6-20 pounds. Silver salmon begin to enter the outer areas of Resurrection Bay the last week of June, with fishing continuing through mid-September.

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 Cal-

listo 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 late August until late September along the beaches near the Lowell Creek waterfall, the Seward Lagoon outfall, and near the Seward Small Boat Harbor. Silvers usually do not hit the beach in fishable numbers until late August, and peak in the middle of September.

### Stream fishing for silvers

Resurrection Bay also has small runs of wild silver salmon that return to the Bay’s tributary streams in October, but please remember that with one exception, the fresh waters of the Resurrection Bay area are closed to salmon fishing.

The exception is the Resurrection River downstream of the Seward Highway and Nash Road. There’s a fall fishery for silver salmon in these fresh waters, using unbaited single hooks, such as streamer flies or single hook Pixees. Silvers are typically in the Resurrection River from late August through October.

### Salt Water Methods

Trolling herring on dual single hooks is popular, with 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 12 - 36 inches above the lure or bait. “Mooching,” or drifting bait with the tides, 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 Derby has been an ongoing event for more than 50 years and offers prizes to successful anglers in a



*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!*

number of categories. You can find the dates and rules on the Seward Chamber of Commerce’s web site at [www.sewardak.org](http://www.sewardak.org)

### Pink salmon

Pink (humpy) 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. This species has a two-year life cycle, and are most abundant on even-numbered years (2006, 2008, etc.). Resurrection Bay pinks weigh 3-12 pounds, and provide good action on light tackle from early July through early September. The 1996-2005 sport harvest averaged 4,300 pink salmon.

### Red salmon

Historically, there have been very few wild red (sock-eye) salmon in Resurrection Bay, and thus they have not contributed significantly to the sport fishery. The CIAA stocks Bear Lake with varying numbers of juvenile red salmon in order 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 ranging from 1,100 - 3,800 fish per year. Boat anglers are finding success by trolling with a small flasher above a fly, a bare red hook, or cut herring.

### Chum salmon

In Resurrection Bay chum (dog) salmon typically spawn in the same streams or intertidal areas favored by

pink salmon. Unlike pinks, however, 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. The 1996-2005 average chum harvest in Resurrection Bay was about 800 fish.

## 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. Many charter boats operating out of Seward chase these fish well into the Prince William Sound waters in Port Bainbridge and around Montague Island. Good catches of halibut are available to anglers starting in May as these fish migrate from deeper overwintering and spawning areas, through September when they return to deeper waters. Very few halibut are taken from the waters near immediately near Seward. Average harvest from 1996-2005 was 35,224 fish, split between charter boat and private boat anglers.

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.

## 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: if it moves, and they can fit it in their mouth, they will try to eat it. Lingcod can grow to over 60 pounds and 5 feet long.

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, therefore 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 a swim 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. The average lingcod harvest from 1996-2005 is estimated to be 3,877 fish, with over 50% taken by charter boat anglers.

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.

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 (mid-water) or demersal (bottom-dwelling).

Pelagic species travel in schools 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.

Demersal rockfish are typically found singly or in pairs on or near the bottom, near rocky reefs or pinnacles. They are usually brightly colored and vividly marked. The most commonly caught species include yelloweye rockfish (or “red snapper”), quillback, canary, China, copper, silver-gray, 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.

Also, rockfish do not have a vented swim bladder, which just about assures that a rockfish pulled up from over 65 feet will die from embolism and other decompression injuries. If a swim bladder is punctured, and the fish released, infection is likely to occur, and the fish will die anyway.

As a result of their unique biology, all Pacific rockfishes are highly susceptible to overharvest. Regulations are very conservative, and fisheries managers also ask that you limit your harvest of these fish to what you will actually consume. The best way to minimize catching rockfish is to avoid rockfish habitat while targeting other species.

Anglers targeting rockfish and their tasty white fillets 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 John-

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

## Sharks

Three species of sharks are occasionally caught in the North Gulf Coast: salmon shark, spiny dogfish, and Pacific sleeper shark. Pacific sleeper sharks have inedible flesh that may be poisonous, and are rarely kept. Salmon sharks and spiny dogfish are both slow-growing, late-to-mature species. They give birth to live young, called “pups.” Average litter size for salmon sharks is five pups, while spiny dogfish give birth to an average seven pups. It’s thought that the maximum age for salmon sharks is 25, while dogfish can live to be more than 80 years old.

Because of this slow reproduction cycle and their long lives, sharks are extremely vulnerable to overharvesting.

Salmon sharks are a fairly large fish. In the Gulf of Alaska, average size of 72 sampled individuals was 7.3 feet long. These fish require specialized knowledge to successfully catch and land. Salmon sharks have an abrasive skin, and the tendency to roll when caught, wrapping themselves tightly in fishing line before breaking off. Sharks are currently targeted by a few specialized charter companies in Seward. The average shark harvest (for all species) is 173 per year.

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 or release a shark.

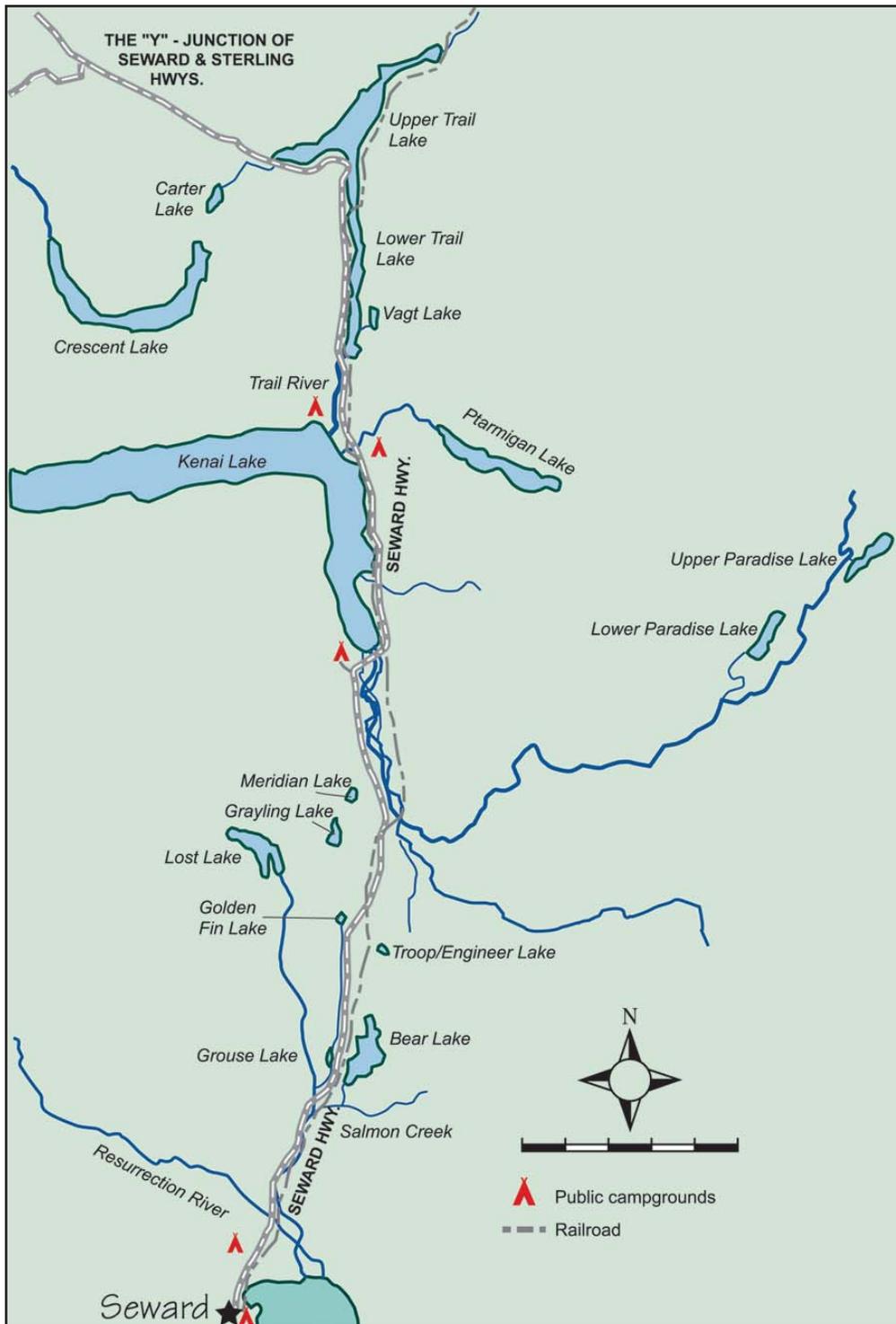
## Shellfish

An Alaska-resident-only shrimp pot fishery is open from April 15 through September 15 in a selected North Gulf Coast area. A permit is required. The area open is from Aialik Cape west to Gore Point.

Non-residents may not participate in this shrimp pot fishery, but they can drop shrimp pots in Prince William Sound.

Due to low population levels, all crabbing is currently closed year-round in Resurrection Bay, the North Gulf Coast, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound. The closest crabbing is out of Kodiak.

You may find the occasional butter clam or steamer clam, but in general, there is little clamming available in this area. Most beach areas seem to be too small or too rocky to support large populations of any species of clam. Your best bet is to head to Clam Gulch or Ninilchik off the Sterling Highway, on the way to Homer.



Seward area freshwater fishing and public camping areas.

## Dolly Varden

Resurrection Bay supports a fair population of “anadromous” or sea-run Dolly Varden. These fish are available to saltwater anglers in May as they migrate out of over-wintering and spawning areas, and again in late August through September as fish return to freshwater over-wintering areas.

The average saltwater harvest from 1996-2005 was 513 fish, split between shore and private boat anglers.

Popular sites include the mouth of Tonsina Creek and the Lowell Point area.

## Freshwater fishing

The eastern Kenai Peninsula—from the junction of the Seward and Sterling highways south to Seward—offers both stream and lake fishing.

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 but one stream, and in all lakes of the Resurrection Bay area (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 U.S. Forest Service 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*

**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 trail head 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. 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 U.S. Forest Service,

the lake now provides excellent rainbow trout fishing. *“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 U.S. Forest Service. *“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*

## 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 red (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 red and silver salmon smolt emigrating from Bear Lake in the spring, and red 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 operated by the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association is located in Moose Pass, near Upper Trail Lake. It is here that the Bear Lake silver salmon begin their life cycle before their release into Bear Lake. For more information, call (907) 288-3688.

Resurrection Bay Area Recreational Fisheries		
Location	Species	Period Available
Resurrection Bay	Silver Salmon	Late June to mid-September
	King Salmon	Late May through June ("feeder" kings available all year)
	Pink Salmon	Even-numbered years, August through mid-September
	Red Salmon	Late May through July
	Chum Salmon	July through early August
	Halibut	April through October
	Rockfish	April through October
	Lingcod	Resurrection Bay is closed to lingcod sport fishing year-round. Outside Resurrection Bay, lingcod are available July - October.
Area Streams	Dolly Varden	May, late-July through August 1
	Silver salmon	Late August through early October - open only in one stream
Area Lakes	Dolly Varden	Mid-June through Mid-April 1
	Rainbow Trout	Mid-June through Mid-April
	Dolly Varden	Entire year
	Rainbow Trout	Entire year 2
	Grayling	Entire year 2
	Lake Trout	Entire year
<p>1. Fishing for sea-run Dolly Varden is best in spring and fall.</p> <p>2. Before fishing anywhere in Alaska, remember to consult a current copy of the regulations.</p>		

For information about camping, accommodations, fishing guides, and other visitor services, contact the agencies listed in this brochure, or the Alaska Travel Industry Association at 2600 Cordova Street, Suite 201, Anchorage, Alaska, 99503  
 Web: [www.travelalaska.com](http://www.travelalaska.com) E-mail: [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 Information Center

(907) 267-2218

M-F 8am - 5 pm

Except on state & federal holidays

[www.state.ak.us/adfg](http://www.state.ak.us/adfg) Click on Sport Fish, then Southcentral Region ©ADF&G April 2007