



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: Aug. 31, 2026

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ADF&G Investigates Haines Bear Mauling

(Juneau) – A Haines resident was walking a leashed dog on Mt. Riley Road in Haines early Saturday morning, Aug. 29, 2026, when she encountered a brown bear and was attacked. She was able to walk home and call 911. She sustained serious but non-life-threatening injuries and is currently receiving medical treatment in Juneau.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) biologists, an Alaska Wildlife Trooper, and Haines Police Department personnel returned to the site to conduct an investigation. The initial investigation indicates that this was consistent with a defensive response of the bear and not a predatory attack. The team discovered that food waste had been dumped near the road, which may have attracted the bear. Bear sign was evident but no bears were observed during the investigation. Samples were collected and DNA analysis will be performed by the ADF&G Gene Conservation Lab in Anchorage to verify species and sex of the animal and possibly identify the specific bear. Initial reports identified the animal as a brown bear, however that will be confirmed once the genetic analysis is complete. ADF&G is continuing to monitor reports of bear activity in Haines and work closely with Haines Police Department and Alaska Wildlife Troopers. The Haines Borough has closed the Lily Lake Trail and we recommend extra caution for those in the area.

Southeast residents are reminded to be vigilant about bear attractants. Dispose of fish carcasses and other bear attractants appropriately. Store garbage, livestock and pet food inside. Do not leave barbecues and smokers unattended and clean them after use.

ADF&G recommends the following tips when in bear country:

- Always carry a deterrent, such as bear spray or a firearm and know how to use it.
- Travel in groups and stay together on trails.
- Make noise so you don't surprise a bear. Stay alert, use your senses and look for signs of bears.
- Keep pets on leash when possible to avoid unwanted wildlife interactions.

If you surprise a bear, especially one with cubs or on a food cache, it may react in a threatened or defensive manner. The bear may be agitated and may huff, stomp, make a popping sound with its teeth, salivate, or lay its ears back against its head and charge.

- Stay calm during a bear encounter. Ready your deterrent. Stand your ground, group up with others and alert the bear by talking calmly. Don't run.
- If the bear is stationary, move away slowly while keeping your eyes on the bear.
- If the bear starts to move toward you or charges, stop and stand your ground.
- Let the bear know you are not a threat. Behaving calmly, moving slowly, and speaking in a low calm voice will help de-escalate the situation.
- If the bear continues to approach, use your deterrent when the bear is within range.

For more information from ADF&G about bear behavior and wildlife safety, including videos on what to do if you encounter a bear and bear spray demonstrations, visit:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=livingwithbears.main>

Any wildlife behaving unusually should be reported to the Douglas ADF&G office at 907-465-4265, or by using the online reporting tool:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=reportwildlifeencounter.main>

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