**Cold Water Kills**

Cold water immersion related drowning accounts for the majority of boating fatalities in Alaska. Cold shock response, incapacitation, and eventually immersion hypothermia all greatly increase the risk of drowning, regardless of swimming ability.

**Prepare For the Unexpected**

By law, children under the age of 13 must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket in an open boat or on the deck of a boat.

**Wearing a Life Jacket Could be the Single Most Important Factor in Surviving a Cold Water Immersion Event.**

**When a Life Jacket is Always Required**

Boats under 16 feet
- One USCG-approved Type I, II, III or V PFD for each person on board. Must be in serviceable condition. Persons under 13 must wear a PFD when in an open boat, on the deck of a boat or when waterskiing.

**Boats 16 feet to less than 26 feet**
- One USCG-approved Type IV (seat cushion or throw ring) device must be carried.

**Boats 26 feet to less than 40 feet**
- Boats less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) in length must be able to make an efficient sound signal (such as that made with a whistle or horn) to signal intentions and to signal position in periods of reduced visibility.
- Boats 39.4 feet (12 meters) or more in length must carry on board a whistle or horn.

**Boats 40 feet to less than 66 feet**
- USCG-approved night signals required between sunset and sunrise.
- USCG-approved visual distress signals for both day and night time use must be carried. Exception: boats and open sailboats not equipped with mechanical propulsion and under 26 feet in length are not required to carry day signals.

**Boats 66 feet or more**
- At least one USCG-approved B-I required for boats with inboard engines, living spaces, permanent fuel tanks or enclosed storage areas.

**Nautical Navigation**

**At the Pledge to Live website you can also**
- Check the weather, tide tables and more
- Access NOAA Nautical charts
- Use the predeparture checklist
- Check out types and uses of life jackets
- Pledge! Make a pledge to always wear your life jacket

**Never Drink and Operate a Boat**

There is NO safe threshold for drinking and operating a boat, especially on the Little Su where constant vigilance and quick reactions can make all the difference.

In Alaska, the laws that define driving while intoxicated and the penalties upon conviction apply to boat operators too.

**Lifesaving Equipment**

- For more information: Alaska Office of Boating Safety 550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1380 Anchorage, AK 99501 (907) 294-8706

**For more information:**

Alaska State Parks
Marine/Beach Area Office
7718 E. Bogard Road
Wasilla, AK 99654
(907) 745-3075

www.alaskaboating.org

**Your Guide to the Little Susitna River**

A Supplement to the Alaska Boater’s Handbook

**Little Susitna River**

The Little Susitna River is popular with all kinds of boaters and anglers and holds trout of all five species of Arctic salmon. Whatever your activity of choice, please respect the river’s unspoiled beauty.

**Navigating the Little Su**

- The International Navigation Rules on Steering and Sailing apply on the Little Su regardless of the type of vessel. Boaters must be constantly vigilant of their surroundings. All boaters at all times should:
  - Maintain a proper lookout
  - Proceed at a safe speed, so that proper and effective action to avoid collisions can be taken
  - Be prepared to depart from the ‘Rules’ if necessary to avoid a collision

The ‘Rules’ apply to all vessels, not just motorboats. For more details on the navigation rules and boating laws, see www.alaskaboating.org.
What's Around the Corner?
The Little Susitna River is one of the most popular boating areas in the Mat-Su Valley. To avoid collisions, travel at safe speeds and be extra vigilant when rounding a bend in the river—you never know who or what is just out of sight.

Smart Power Boating
A little preparation could ensure a safe return from a memorable adventure. Consider the following:

- Overloading is a major cause of capsizing and swamping
- Carry a spare means of propulsion
- Carry an anchor
- Constantly watch for logjams and floating debris
- Use the “rule of thirds” for fuel management: 1/3 to go out, 1/3 to get home, and 1/3 for reserve

These considerations are especially important if boating downstream from the Little Susitna Public Use Facility.

Tidal Influence
The Lower River is heavily influenced by tidal fluctuations, which can be extreme. Carry a tide book and consider how the tide affects:

- Anchoring
- Calculating fuel needs
- Navigating
- Calculating travel times

Camping
Many boaters enjoy two- or three-day trips, camping along the way. Gravel bars along the Upper River in Nancy Lake State Recreation Area offer a backcountry-style experience. For slightly more civilized camping, the Susitna Flats State Game Refuge offers developed backcountry campsites upstream of the Little Susitna Public Use Facility with fire rings, picnic tables, outhouses, and bear-resistant food storage containers. Primitive undeveloped campsites are also available downstream from the Public Use Facility. Camping along the river within the refuge is limited to these designated sites.

Contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to learn about fishing and refuge regulations for the Little Susitna River at www.adfg.alaska.gov

Little Susitna River
Nancy Lake State Recreation Area

The Upper River

The Lower River

Legend
- Camping
- Non-Motorized Launch
- Motorized Launch
- Restrooms
- Picnic Shelter
- Trailhead
- Public-Use Cabin
- River
- Road
- River Mile Markers

Camping
Non-Motorized Launch
Motorized Launch
Restrooms
Picnic Shelter
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Boater’s Toolbox
Go to www.alaskaboating.com to file a float plan, reference the navigation rules, check the marine weather, plan a trip, and much more.

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