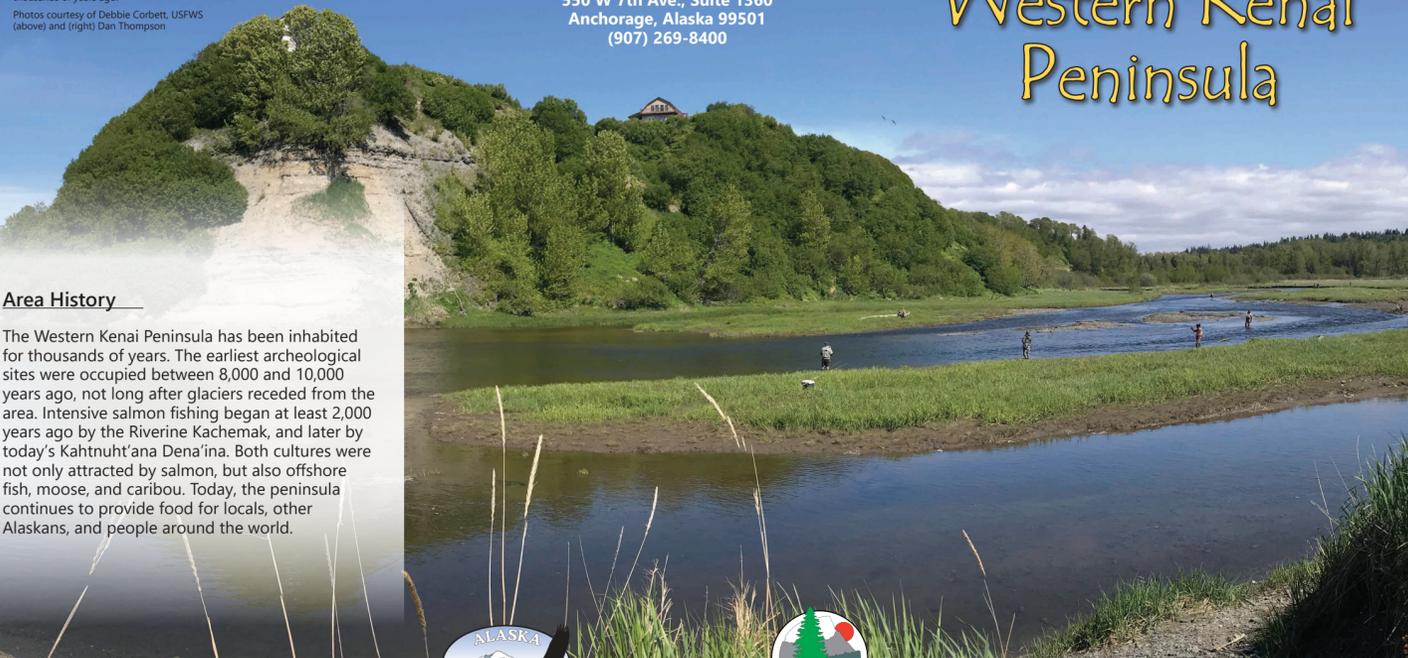


### Area History

The Western Kenai Peninsula has been inhabited for thousands of years. The earliest archeological sites were occupied between 8,000 and 10,000 years ago, not long after glaciers receded from the area. Intensive salmon fishing began at least 2,000 years ago by the Riverine Kachemak, and later by today's Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina. Both cultures were not only attracted by salmon, but also offshore fish, moose, and caribou. Today, the peninsula continues to provide food for locals, other Alaskans, and people around the world.



Archaeologists search for artifacts to uncover the history of the people who lived here thousands of years ago. Photos courtesy of Debbie Corbett, USFWS (above) and (right) Dan Thompson



www.alaskastateparks.org



# Western Kenai Peninsula

Alaska State Parks along the

Welcome to



For more information:

Kenai/Prince William Sound Area  
Headquarters and Ranger Station  
Morgans Landing State Recreation Area  
(907) 262-5581

Kenai River Special Management Area  
P.O. Box 1247  
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

DNR Public Information Center  
550 W 7th Ave., Suite 1360  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 269-8400

### Land Acknowledgment

#### Dena'inaq Etena Ch'tiyux\*

(You are walking on Dena'ina Land.)

The Kenai Peninsula is known to the Indigenous Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina as *Yaghanen*,\* or "the good land." Alaska State Parks acknowledges that these facilities are located within traditional *Dena'ina etena*, Dena'ina homeland.

\*Outer Cook Inlet Dena'ina Language



Photo courtesy of Sheryl Maree Reilly

### Fishing Along the Kenai Peninsula

Cook Inlet and its tributaries offer an abundance of options for anglers. Bank fishing, shore-based fishing, drifting, catch-and-release, dipnetting, and guided fishing are just a few of the opportunities available.

#### Know Before You Go

Fishing regulations may change annually or by emergency order at any time in the season. Check for regulation updates before fishing at [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov).

- Complete your harvest records immediately for chinook/king salmon.
- Designated riverbanks are seasonally closed in order to conserve sensitive riparian habitat for fish and wildlife.



Halibut fishing, Deep Creek SRA

### Fishing the Rivers and Lakes

Fish of the same species can differ in color depending on when and where they are caught. Salmon are difficult to identify by color alone (especially when spawning). If you're not sure—the tail can tell the tale.



King  
(*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*)

**King (chinook):** Black mouth and gums. Blue-grey back with small irregular spots and silvery sides. Small black spots across the tail. **Silver (coho):** Black mouth with white gums. Blue-green back with small black spots and silvery sides. Small black spots on the upper lobe of the tail. **Reds (sockeye):** Dark blue back with no spots and silvery sides. No spots on tail.



Silver  
(*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)

Red  
(*Oncorhynchus nerka*)

**Steelhead/Rainbow Trout:** Although they differ in life cycle, color, shape, and appearance, steelhead and rainbow trout are the same species. Steelhead migrate like salmon while rainbow are full-time river residents. They can be positively identified by the 8-12 rays in the anal fin, a mouth that does not extend past the back of the eye, and a lack of teeth at the base of the tongue.



Steelhead / Rainbow Trout  
(*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)

**Dolly Varden, Arctic Grayling, and Arctic Char** are other Kenai Peninsula fresh-water favorites.



Dolly Varden  
(*Salvelinus malma*)

### Stop the Spread of Invasive Species

Invasive species can come from aquatic (water) or terrestrial (land) environments. Help stop the spread of invasive species by thoroughly cleaning your boots, boats, trailers, ATVs, skids, bikes, and paws after an activity on land or water.

- Boaters and pilots know to properly CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY before and after heading out.
- Anglers know NOT TO INTRODUCE new species and REPORT invasives when found.
- Hikers, bikers, ATVs, and even pets know to CLEAN TREADS AND PAWS before and after visiting recreation areas.

<https://alaskainvasives.org/> or <https://dnra.alaska.gov/eg/akpmc/invasives> Home area: <https://www.homeswcd.org> Kenai area: <https://kenaisolalwater.org>

### Ride on Designated Roads-Trails-Areas

Nationally, ATV/ORV users, snowmachiners, boaters, and other recreators have come together to create the five TREAD principles to keep impacts of wheels, boots, and boats in their tracks!

Responsible recreation is in your hands. Learn how to tread lightly on land and water with tips for many types of recreation: <https://treadlightly.org/learn/recreation-tips/>



### Think TREAD!

**D: Do Your Part.** By modeling appropriate behavior, leaving the area better than you found it, disposing of waste properly, minimizing the use of fire, avoiding the spread of invasive species, and actively repairing degraded areas.

**A: Avoid Sensitive Areas.** such as meadows, lake shores, beach grasses, wetlands, and streams. Wet soil is more susceptible to damage. Riding along the coast and beside river and stream beds causes erosion and habitat destruction.

**E: Educate Yourself.** prior to your trip by obtaining travel maps and regulations from public agencies.

**R: Respect the Rights of Others.** so they can enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed.

**T: Travel Responsibly.** on land by staying on designated roads and trails, go over, not around, obstacles to avoid widening trails. Cross streams only at designated fords. Cross and reduce risk of injury from flying debris and reduce risk of injury from flying debris. Never operate an ATV or ride as a passenger without a quality motorcycle helmet, and proper safety equipment.

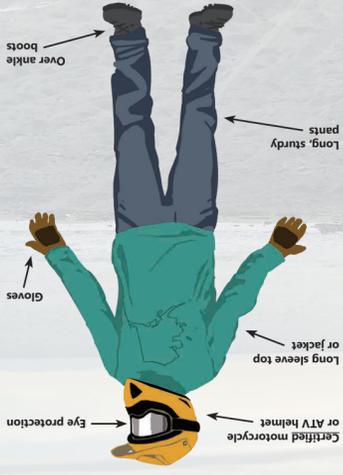


### ATV Safety

For all outdoor activities, proper equipment and clothing enhance the experience.

ATV riding requires protection for head, eyes, hands, and feet. Complete protection is not possible. Knowing what to wear and how to wear it can make you feel more comfortable and reduce risk of injury from flying debris and reduce risk of injury from flying debris. Never operate an ATV or ride as a passenger without a quality motorcycle helmet, and proper safety equipment.

### Safety Equipment



### ATV TRAILRIDER PRO-TIPS

1. Always wear protective gear and a DOT certified helmet.  
2. Take care when riding on public roads.  
3. Operating any motorized vehicle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is a violation and subject to a D.U.I. conviction.  
4. Never carry a passenger on a single-rider vehicle.  
5. Ride on ATV that's right for your size and age.  
6. Children under 14 must be supervised while operating ATVs. It's the law!  
7. Proper instruction and practice are important. ATVs can be hazardous to operate.

### ATV TRAILRIDER PRO-TIPS

Learning how to ride your ATV properly is important and fun!

### Are You Ready to Roll?

**Avoid Conflict:** From June 15 to August 20, expect to find beach set-netters operating between Point Possession and Ninihchik. They have permits to fish the shores of East Cook Inlet and many also have leased beach inholdings. Conflicts arise most often around the Kenai and Kaslof rivers due to the higher number of visitors to those areas.

**Remember the "R" in TREAD principles:** respect set-netters and their equipment. Avoidance is the best practice, but an alternative is to slow your speed and safely pass – giving them a wide berth. Never ride over a slack line or equipment.

**Take the High Ground:** Set-netters have good advice for those in vehicles on the beach. They see a number of vehicles every season get lost to the rising tides – so heed their sage words. Be cautious when traveling at low tide and never ride in the mudflats.

**Another caution:** Set-nets are dynamic and can become elevated and pulled taut with the changing tides. The ropes can be hard to see. Keep your eyes forward and travel at safe speeds. Popular areas can have equipment every 500 feet. Riding into set-net equipment can cause serious harm, as well as loss of equipment for everyone. Remain alert and take home a win!



Photo courtesy of Zane Gerlach



For more information, visit <https://atvsafety.org/>

### Don't TREAD on Fragile Grasses:

- Only get on and off the beach at designated access points.
- Drive (including ATVs) just below the high tide mark.



Dune grass, Kachemak Bay State Park

Sand dunes provide natural coastal protection against storm surges and high waves. Sand dunes provide natural coastal protection against storm surges and high waves, preventing or reducing coastal flooding and structural damage.

Dune grasses and sedges are the first plants to take root when sand dunes are forming. By anchoring sand and cutting winds, dune grass creates a place where plants can grow more easily. Their roots (rhizome mats) can run deep beneath the sand, serving to knit a dune together.

Vegetated areas along the shore provide valuable habitat for shorebirds and other waterfowl.

### Erosion is a Wipe Out

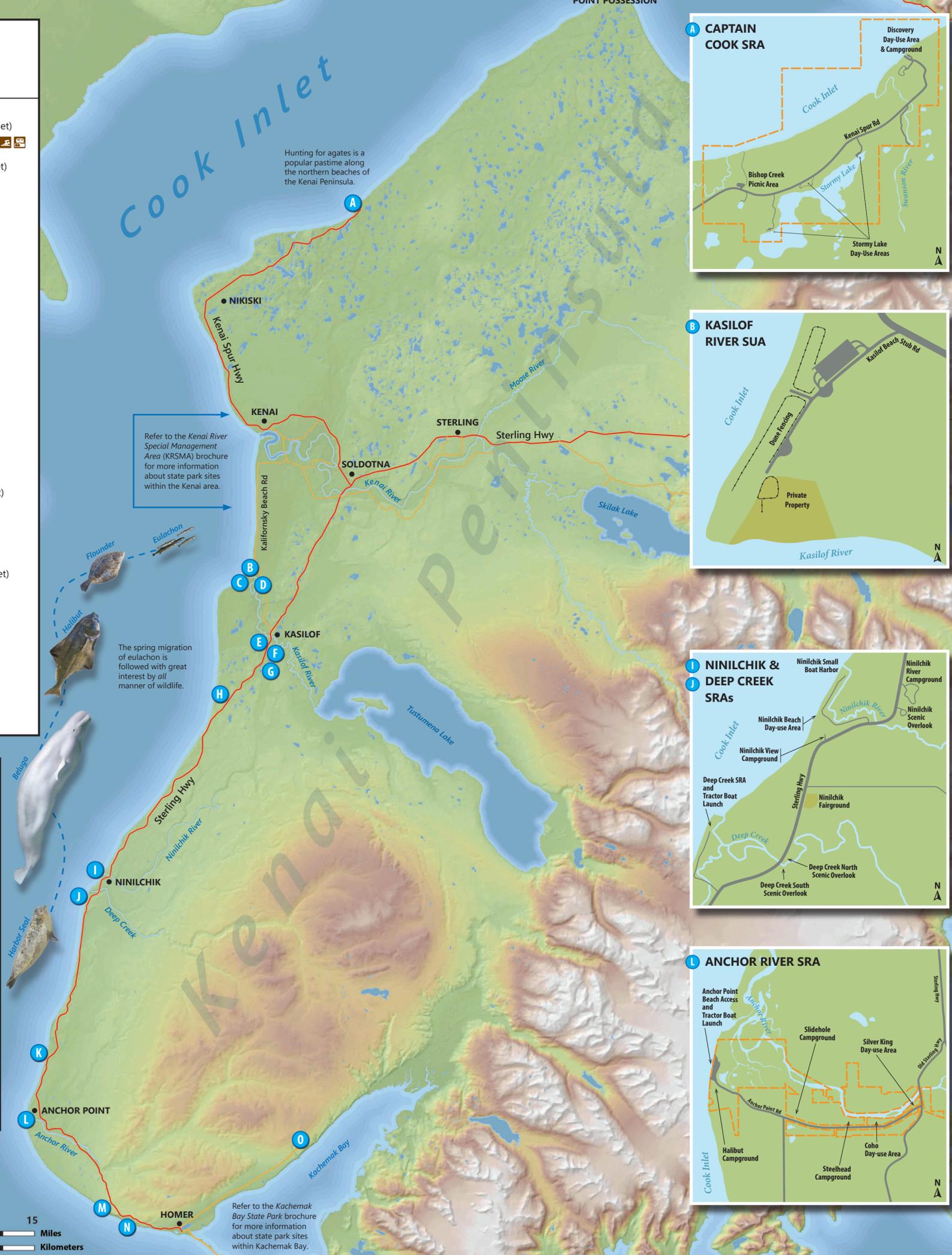
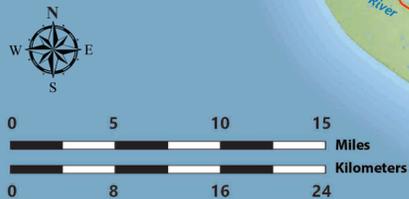
Erosion can wipe out the landscapes you're enjoying today and erode your chances of returning to your favorite spots. Please stick to designated access areas!

**WESTERN KENAI PENINSULA COAST: AMENITIES**

- A** Captain Cook SRA (see inset)
- B** Kasilof River SUA (see inset)
- C** Kasilof River SRS
- D** Old Kasilof Landing SRS
- E** Crooked Creek SRA
- F** Upper Kasilof River SRA
- G** Johnson Lake SRA
- H** Clam Gulch SRA
- I** Ninilchik SRA (see inset)
- J** Deep Creek SRA (see inset)
- K** Stariski SRS
- L** Anchor River SRA (see inset)
- M** Diamond Creek SRA
- N** Baycrest Overlook
- O** Eveline SRA

**LEGEND**

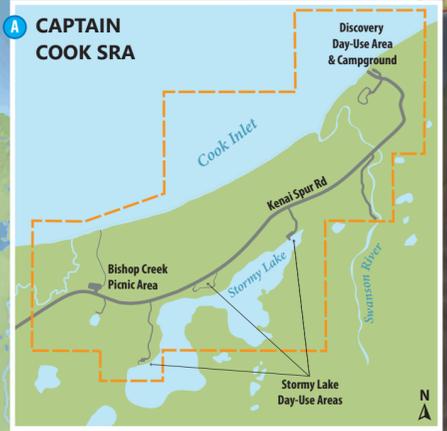
- ATV
- Boat Launch
- Restrooms
- Camping
- Picnicking
- Fishing
- Drinking Water
- Scenic View
- RV Dump Station
- Swimming
- Take-out
- Highway
- Road
- Park Boundary



Refer to the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) brochure for more information about state park sites within the Kenai area.

The spring migration of eulachon is followed with great interest by all manner of wildlife.

Refer to the Kachemak Bay State Park brochure for more information about state park sites within Kachemak Bay.



**Winds of Change**

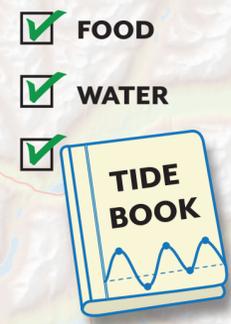
Whether traveling on fresh or salt water, be aware of changes to wind, tide, and weather. Cook Inlet and larger lakes are subject to sudden high winds and rapidly growing waves. Be prepared!

**Tidal Awareness**

Best laid plans can go astray by simply not planning for tidal variations. In some areas, tides and rivers dictate a successful crossing. Plan to navigate the tides, give yourself extra time, and know when to turn back. Always share your travel itinerary and be willing to alter your plans to remain safe.

**Time & Tide**

Add a tide book to your critical equipment list and don't leave home without it.



Fat-tire bike riding, Homer Spit

**Cook-to-KBay Beach Trail**

Join us in working with communities, associations, and local businesses to formalize a primary route and access points for this new beach trail (with a few work-arounds over bridges and hazardous areas).

The roughly 130-mile trail from Captain Cook SRA to Kachemak Bay State Park is passable by bike if you have the keen know-how and plan accordingly. Be mindful of tides, river-crossings, changing weather, winds, wildlife, and setnetters!

With many access points, you have the freedom to start or stop the journey wherever you like, either tackling the trail in one go or over a few visits.

TEAM UP! There are public facilities, including many on this map, for stops and stay-overs along the way. Non-bikers can share in the journey by coordinating to meet up with bikers by setting up camp and prepping meals at important stops along the way!

**RESCUE READY**

Always wear a life jacket when in an open boat or on an open deck.

Carry emergency communication and distress signaling devices on your person.

Attach the engine cut-off device when underway.

Equip the boat with at least one means of reboarding.

File a float plan and find more information at: [PledgeToLiveAK.org](http://PledgeToLiveAK.org).

*Make them promise.*

For boating regulations and educational resources, visit: [AlaskaBoatingSafety.org](http://AlaskaBoatingSafety.org).



**Boating Safety**

No one expects boating emergencies, but they happen – always be prepared. Most boating fatalities involve a capsized or a fall overboard. Without a life jacket, even the best swimmers are at high risk of drowning due to cold water immersion. The first and most important step in surviving a boating emergency is to ALWAYS wear a life jacket.

**Life Jackets Save Lives!**

Both state and federal laws require that a life jacket for every person onboard be readily accessible. Children under the age of 13 must wear a life jacket at all times when in an open boat or on deck.

**Save it for the Shore**

Alcohol use is a leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. Please boat responsibly and save the drinking until you're safely back on shore.

