

ALASKA WEST CAMP

KANEKTOK RIVER, ALASKA



The Fly Shop

TACKLE & OUTFITTING GUIDE

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Trip Questionnaire: Please click on the link below. This will take you to an electronic questionnaire form that we ask you to complete and submit to The Fly Shop. Please be sure to click the **“Submit”** button at the end of the form. The information provided will help us -- and the outfitter best coordinate your trip. THANK YOU! Click [HERE](#)

Fishing the Kanektok River is one of the ultimate fishing and wilderness experiences in North America. From its remote headwaters deep within the Ahklun Mountains, the Kanektok begins its journey towards the Bering Sea. It's the spawning ground for all five species of Pacific salmon, and home to exotic Arctic grayling, sea run Dolly Varden, Arctic char, and the magnificent leopard rainbow.

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Communications:

Wi-Fi is available in the dining room and lounge - bandwidth is limited, it's good for checking your email but poor for uploading large electronic files. Staff members at Alaska West do have cell phones with nationwide plans that guests can use for emergencies. If you need constant cell communication while in camp, it is possible to purchase a sim card from the local provider GCI while you're in Anchorage. Alaska West does not have sim cards for purchase in camp.

Liquor:

Your travels to the Kanektok Camp takes you close to the native village of Quinhagak, which is "dry" (no alcohol) by law. The lodge cannot legally sell alcohol, and it is not legal for guests to bring in their own on the charter flight. So, Alaska West is a dry camp.

Medical Facilities:

- There is an extensive first aid kit in camp.
- The village of Quinhagak has a clinic and nurse.
- Bethel has a complete hospital and planes available for evacuation.
- Anchorage has state of the art hospitals and medical professionals.

Travel Cash:

As a guideline we recommend that each guest travel with approximately \$700-\$1,000 for staff and guide gratuities, etc. The camp is able to accept credit cards, but asks that you bring cash for tips.

Gratuities:

We recommend staff and guide gratuities of approximately 10-15% of your package price. Tips are pooled – you'll want to give yours to the camp manager at the end of the week for distribution to the entire staff.



Bringing Home Salmon:

Alaska West is happy to filet and freeze a 40# box of salmon for you to take home, if you like...they will also sometimes smoke a fish, if you would like. They do not keep King salmon.

Fishing Licenses:

Fishing licenses are not included. You'll need to purchase your Alaska fishing license ahead of time online at: <http://www.admin.adfg.state.ak.us/license/>. In Alaska you must always carry your fishing license and personal identification with you while on the water.

Weather:

With the Bering Sea to the west, and the Gulf of Alaska to the south, the one factor that is constant is change. While moisture laden coastal air envelops the lower reaches of the Kanektok, crisp inland air drifts through the mountain valleys. June has the longest days of the year, and you may change your clothing layers several times during the day. In July you can be fishing in a light long sleeve shirt, relying on sunscreen to protect your face. Late August may have the first fall weather, with the tundra turning fall colors. Bring several high tech layers, a top quality outer shell, a good pair of waders, and wading boots that you love.

The River:

The Kanektok is approximately 75 miles long and located in southwest Alaska. Beginning in the Ahklun Mountains with headwaters in Kagati and Pegati Lakes, it flows westward into the Bering Sea at the village of Quinhagak. Most of the river is located within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the last seventeen miles belong to the Quinhagak Village Corporation. The upper half of the river runs over a rocky bed surrounded by high bluffs and spectacular mountains, and the lower half twists and turns through a low gradient coastal plain, surrounded by alder and willows in a bed of gravel. The course of the lower river is constantly changing as the gravel banks erode, exposing the alder and willow root structures which make for perfect rainbow trout habitat.

The last quarter of the river is perfect for swinging flies from gravel bars, providing excellent king salmon fishing. The river runs clear green and remains typically clear with rainfall.

The Fishing:

Anglers headed to Alaska West Camp to fly fish for rainbow trout, king salmon, chum salmon, silver salmon, Dolly Varden or grayling will find the gear and techniques similar to that used for these species elsewhere in Alaska. As always, there is no substitute for quality equipment, the value of which is immediately apparent upon hooking into your first wild Alaskan gamefish!

Alaska West has a limited number of loaner rods, reels, lines, flies, waders and wading boots for guests to use at no additional charge. They are intended mostly as emergency back-ups should anglers need them, though with forward notice they are happy to supply gear for those needing it. As a general rule, you'll need to bring all your own fishing and personal equipment with you to the camp.

King Salmon

King salmon are the largest pacific salmon to target with a fly. They average 15 to 25 pounds, with trophy specimens in the 40-pound class.



Single-Handed Fly Rods:

For anglers using a single-handed rod, consider a 9' or 9' 6" graphite rod designed to cast a 9 or 10-weight fly line. Sage, Winston, and Scott produce high quality rods, built to cast sinking lines and fight fish large, powerful fish.

Single-Handed Fly Reels:

A high quality, machined single-action fly reel with a superior drag system is what to look for in a fly reel capable of handling powerful king salmon. Reels should be filled with a minimum of 150 yards of 20 or 30 lb. high-visibility backing. Hatch, Ross, Hardy, Abel and Galvan reels are an excellent choice.

Fly Lines for Single-Handed Rods:

The proper selection of fly lines is critical to your success and will get your fly in the best location in water column. Scientific Anglers, Airflo and Rio make excellent sinking lines for the various situations you will encounter. High on the list would be Scientific Anglers 25' Sonar Sinking Tips, in both a 200-grain and a 250-grain sizes.

Two-Handed Fly Rods:

Two-handed Spey rods are very effective when fishing for king and chum salmon. Their advantage lies in their ability to cover a lot of water very efficiently while maintaining amazing line control, given the 13 to 15 foot rod lengths. Scott, Echo, Sage and Winston each produce excellent two-handed rods.

When considering a two-handed rod, don't automatically go for the longest and strongest rod on the market. Get together with a casting and rod expert, and test several different weights, lengths and manufacturers until you find the rod that best fits your casting style, as well as the type of water and lines and flies you will be fishing.

Two-Handed Fly Reels:

Fly reels should be of high quality and capable of holding at least 150 yards of 30-pound backing. Saltwater models are a good choice, as they are built to stand up to screaming runs with smooth, reliable drag systems. Outside palming rims are nice when a fish is in close. Quality reels include those made by Hardy, Galvan, Hatch, and Ross.

Fly Lines for Two-Handed Fly Rods:

The majority of the time you will find kings near the bottom of the water column. This type of water calls for fast sinking lines that get down in a hurry. A good assortment of 25-30 foot shooting heads is useful and should include sink rates I – VIII, or tungsten T-10 – T-18. Ten to twelve feet of T-14 is the most commonly used sink tip during the king salmon run. For running/shooting lines either mono or factory running lines work the best behind shooting heads and should be no lighter than 25 pounds in strength. Scientific Anglers, Rio, and Airflo are great choices in quality lines.

Below is what we feel are the most suitable Spey lines for fishing Alaska. This will serve as a general guideline that anyone with any questions about equipment should follow. If you are uncertain which line you should select to properly match your rod, do not hesitate to contact us.

Skagit style lines are basically shortened, condensed shooting heads developed in the Pacific North West by a group of anglers looking for a way to cast sinking tip lines and large weighted flies long



distances, with a very short compact casting stroke. These lines have become very popular with steelhead and pacific salmon anglers due to the fact that they are easy for both the expert and novice to cast, and extremely useful in situations where room for a back cast is limited. These lines also work very well for people who prefer to fish shorter 12'-13'6 foot rods.

Leaders & Tippet:

In place of tapered leaders you will want to bring fresh spools of 12 lb., 15 lb., and 20 lb. Maxima Ultra Green tippet. Most guides forego tapered leaders altogether in favor of straight lengths of Maxima tippet.

King Salmon Flies:

Flies used are standard attractor patterns tied on stout hooks, sizes 4 to 2/0. Your flies should vary from heavily weighted to non-weighted. Colors should range from black, to orange, pink, purple, blue, red, chartreuse, or any combination thereof. A large weighted black streamer can be deadly. Large egg-patterns like large Glo-Bugs, King Caviar, and Egg/Sperm flies and the Egg-sucking Leech (black/purple) tied on a long shank stout hook work well.

- Bjorn's Super Prawns ("popsicle", chartreuse, pink, purple, orange crush), #1/0
- Paul Miller's Spey Prawn (hot orange, chartreuse, pink), #1/0
- Hareball Leeches (fuchsia, orange, pink/purple), #1/0
- King Caviar, #1/0
- Egg Sucking Leech, #2
- Sili Legs Intruder, #1/0
- River Rat Tube
- Stu's Metal Tube, fuchsia
- Starlite Leech (purple with red head), #2

Silver & Chum Salmon

Fly Rods:

Single-handed rods are perfect for silvers and chums, as casting distance is not typically critical, but actively stripping the flies back in can be. The chum fishing is largely swing fishing or dead-drift presenting, and the single hand rods are perfect for this. We recommend a 7 or 8-weight graphite rod, 9' or 9' 6" in length. Sage, Winston, and Scott produce high quality rods, and The Fly Shop Signature rods are an excellent choice at a modest price.

Fly Reels:

A high quality, single-action fly reel with rim-control feature is what to look for in a fly reel appropriate to handle ocean-bright silvers and chums. The reel should be equipped with a smooth, reliable drag system. Reels should be filled with a minimum of 150 yards of 20 lb. high-visibility backing. Hatch, Ross, Hardy, Abel and Galvan reels are an excellent choice.

Fly Lines:

The proper collection of fly lines is critical to your success and will get your fly in the right location in the water column for these two salmon species. You need two lines to effectively fish a variety of rivers.



Floating Line:

Scientific Anglers makes one of the best, the Freshwater Titan Taper. When conditions are right a floating line can really come into play; either fishing a weighted wet fly just under the surface, or skating a Pink Pollywog across the surface.

10' – 15' Sink-Tip:

This can be an important line for covering varying water levels on the river. A Type III is a perfect sink rate. We highly recommend the Scientific Anglers Sonar Sink tip.

Leaders & Tippet:

In place of tapered leaders, you will want to bring fresh spools of 12 lb., 15 lb., and 20 lb. Maxima Ultra Green tippet. Most guides forego tapered leaders altogether in favor of straight lengths of Maxima tippet.

Silver Salmon & Chum Salmon Flies:

The Bristol Bay silver and chum fishery is a typical Alaska summer run scenario – big, chrome-bright fish in the 8-15 pound range flooding into the rivers with cold water temperatures. The fish are aggressive to the fly and screaming hot when hooked, and silvers are often as aggressive to a surface popper as to a weighted streamer fished mid-depth. Traditionally-tied flies should be on hook sizes from 4 - 1/0. Egg-Sucking leeches should be full and long, up to 4 inches in length. Flies should be tied full with lots of flash in varying colors and color combinations. Don't be afraid to tie and throw larger flies for these fish - they love 'em.

- Foam Top Wog – our favorite surface pattern
- Hareball Leeches (fuchsia, bubblegum, orange/chartreuse, pink/orange, purple) – one of the best streamer patterns for Kanektok silvers
- Egg Sucking Leech variations using marabou or rabbit strip in black & purple
- Popsicle, size 1/0
- Stu's Tiger Tail Turbo Tube
- Sili Legs Intruder #1/0 pink/purple
- Starlight Leech #2 (purple with red head, or all pink)

Rainbow Trout, Dolly Varden, & Grayling

Rainbow trout are one of the most sought after gamefish to target with a fly in Alaska. Kanektok rainbows average 16 to 24 inches, with trophy specimens pushing the 30-inch class. Sea run Dolly Varden are prolific in the river, averaging 16 to 24 inches, and it is not unusual to land dozens in a day. Grayling are beautiful fish – iconic to Alaskan rivers – and popular as they are often willing to take dry flies.

Single-Handed Fly Rods:

Alaskan rainbows and Dolly Varden are best fished with a 9' graphite rod designed to cast a 6 or 7 weight fly line. A 4 or 5 weight rod is perfect for fishing dries for grayling. Sage, Winston, and Scott produce high quality rods, and The Fly Shop Signature rods are an excellent choice at a modest price.



Single-Handed Fly Reels:

A high quality, single-action fly reel with rim-control feature is what to look for in a fly reel appropriate to handle the feisty Alaskan rainbow trout and Dolly Varden. The reel should be equipped with a smooth, reliable drag system. Reels should be filled with a minimum of 100 yards of 20 lb. high-visibility backing. Hatch, Ross, Hardy, Abel and Galvan reels are excellent choices.

Fly Lines For Single-Handed Rods:

Traveling with a high quality floating line is always a good choice, and Scientific Anglers' Freshwater Titan Taper is the perfect line for throwing air resistant mouse patterns and heavy streamers.

Rainbow Trout, Dolly Varden & Grayling Flies:

The Kanektok is an amazing trout fishery, with aggressive rainbows that are normally willing to eat a skated mouse or swung streamer all season long, as well as egg beads during the salmon spawn in late July and August. At that same time, Dolly Varden are feeding on salmon eggs and will sometimes eat a white or pink flesh streamer, as well. Grayling can normally be coaxed to the surface to eat a dry fly, and love to take subsurface nymphs.

- Mr. Hankey Mouse #4 and #6
- Articulated Hood Rat #4
- Dali Lama streamer #2-#6 – either olive/white or black/white works extremely well.
- Starlite Leech #2 – black/red
- Fish Skullpin Bunny #4 - olive
- Articulated Flesh streamer #6 - white
- Skin n' Bones #6
- Missing Link dry fly #14
- Gold Bead PT's #12
- Sculpzilla #4 – natural

Leaders & Tippet for Trout:

A selection of 9' tapered leaders in nylon and fluorocarbon, with tippets in 0x – 3x should handle most situations. Be sure to bring a few spools of tippet material to make adjustments meeting current conditions. It is also recommended to bring some lead removable split shot, in sizes 3/0 and 7; a few of your favorite strike indicators for fishing egg beads in late July and August; and some dry fly floatant for fishing dries to grayling. Some guides will like you to have some Maxima Ultragreen tippet, too, in 6, 8, 10, and 12 pound sizes, from which they will construct a leader for you.

WHAT TO PACK

Alaska West is located in remote bush Alaska. You can purchase certain items in the village store, but the selection and availability is very limited. Tobacco products, batteries and fishing gear should be purchased in advanced of your trip. Use Anchorage as your last supply stop. For your convenience fishing licenses can be purchased in camp or online. We recommend traveling with water-repellant luggage with soft sides. Always have your rain gear near or at the top of your bags for easy access.



Weight is CRITICAL in the bush plane environment. Trans Northern has strict baggage limits, allowing 50 pounds of checked luggage, and one carry-on of 10 pounds...everyone's luggage will be weighed before being put on the plane. As well, for those wanting to bring home a box of salmon at trips end, you will be allowed up to an additional 40 pounds for this. Absolutely no hard suitcases, avoid HUGE duffel bags, and rod tubes must not exceed five feet. Keep in mind that two medium-sized duffels are much easier to pack into a small plane than one large one.

Weather in Alaska is very unpredictable. No matter when you visit, be prepared for highs in the 70's and lows in the 40s. July is typically the warmest month, with cooler temperatures in June, August and September. Always be prepared for rain and wind. No Alaskan goes anywhere without good rain gear.

Camp clothing should be casual and comfortable. Remember to keep all important medications separate from your luggage. Because we are exposed to the elements even around camp, warmth and dryness should be considered in all clothing choices. We recommend layering your clothing for warmth and versatility.

Statewide: Anglers are reminded that effective January 1, 2012, footgear with absorbent felt or other fibrous material on the soles are prohibited while sport fishing in the fresh waters of Alaska.

****Please do not wear felt soled wading boots in Alaska this summer****

Alaska West Packing List

In Camp Gear:

- Jeans
- Long & short sleeved shirts
- Sweater
- Socks
- Underwear
- Casual footwear
- Rain coat & pants
- Toiletry kit
- Shower footwear
- Head lamp
- Books or games
- Alarm clock
- Fly tying vise & tools

On the River Gear:

- Fleece tops & bottoms
- Polypropylene long underwear tops &
- bottoms
- Down vest or jacket



- Warm socks, several pairs
- Warm hat and gloves
- Rainwear – breathable Gore-Tex jacket
- Wading boots – felt soles are not allowed in AK
- Polarized sunglasses
- Camera with extra memory card & batteries
- Sun block & bug repellent
- Head net/Buff or bandanna
- Day dry bag for camera and layer clothing

You are also free to contact us with specific equipment and trip preparation questions at 800.669.3474 or travel@theflyshop.com. We are extremely familiar with the techniques and equipment needed to best take advantage of the fishing opportunities on the Kanektok.

Contact Numbers

If there is an emergency, guests at the camp can be notified by phone. Just dial the camp's number at (907) 556-8146 and leave a message with the answering party, or on the machine. The camp can also call out, in case of emergencies, if necessary. To reach the lodge's stateside office, call (800) 344-3628.

The Fly Shop (800) 669-3474 | (530-222-3355 | travel@theflyshop.com)