

BARANOF WILDERNESS LODGE

SOUTHEAST ALASKA



The Fly Shop

SPECIALIZED SUPPLEMENTAL GEAR LIST

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Baranof Wilderness Lodge Sport Fishing Tackle Supplemental (Chinook and Coho Salmon)

Anglers headed to Baranof Wilderness Lodge targeting salmon will be fishing for king salmon with conventional gear (supplied by the lodge), or silver salmon with either fly rods or conventional gear (both of which can be supplied by the lodge, or anglers should feel free to bring their own fly fishing gear, if preferred). These species are targeted exclusively in the salt. Secondly, chum and pink salmon may also be caught in the salt and in some small freshwater streams – the saltwater fishing will be with conventional tackle supplied by the lodge, and the stream fishing can be done with lodge tackle, or anglers own gear brought from home. Either way, 8 and 9 weight fly outfits are perfect for silvers, chums and pinks. As always, there is no substitute for quality equipment, the value of which is immediately apparent upon hooking into your first smoking-hot, fresh-from-the-salt chromer!

As a general rule, most people prefer to bring all their own fly fishing and personal equipment with them to the lodge, but remember the lodge has enough loaner gear for everyone, including fly and conventional rods and reels, lines, leaders, flies, slicker pants and raincoats, and Xtratuf boots for the boats.

The **Chinook Salmon** (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) is Alaska's state fish and is one of the most important sport and commercial fish native to the Pacific coast of North America. It is the largest of all Pacific salmon, with weights of individual fish commonly exceeding 30 pounds. A 126-pound Chinook salmon taken in a fish trap near Petersburg, Alaska in 1949 is the largest on record. The largest sport-caught Chinook salmon was a 97-pound fish taken in the Kenai River in 1986.

The Chinook salmon has numerous local names. In Washington and Oregon, Chinook salmon are called Chinook, while in British Columbia they are called spring salmon. Other names are quinnat, tyee, tule, blackmouth, and king.

Range:

In North America, Chinook salmon range from the Monterey Bay area of California to the Chukchi Sea area of Alaska. On the Asian coast, Chinook salmon occur from the Anadyr River area of Siberia southward to Hokkaido, Japan. In Alaska, it is abundant from the southeastern panhandle to the Yukon River. Major populations return to the Yukon, Kuskokwim, Nushagak, Susitna, Kenai, Copper, Alsek, Taku, and Stikine rivers. Important runs also occur in many smaller streams.

General Description:

Adults are distinguished by the black irregular spotting on the back and dorsal fins and on both lobes of the caudal or tail fin. Chinook salmon also have a black pigment along the gum line which gives them the name "blackmouth" in some areas.

In the ocean, the Chinook salmon is a robust, deep-bodied fish with a bluish-green coloration on the back which fades to a silvery color on the sides and white on the belly. Colors of spawning Chinook salmon in fresh water range from red to copper to almost black, depending on location and degree of maturation. Males are more deeply colored than the females and also are distinguished by their "ridgeback" condition and by their hooked nose or upper jaw. Juveniles in fresh water are recognized by well-developed parr marks which are bisected by the lateral line.



Life History:

Like all species of Pacific salmon, Chinook salmon are anadromous. They hatch in fresh water, spend part of their life in the ocean, and then spawn in fresh water. All Chinooks die after spawning. Chinook salmon may become sexually mature from their second through seventh year, and as a result, fish in any spawning run may vary greatly in size. For example, a mature 3-year-old will probably weigh less than 4 pounds, while a mature 7-year-old may exceed 50 pounds. Females tend to be older than males at maturity. In many spawning runs, males outnumber females in all but the 6- and 7-year age groups. Small Chinooks that mature after spending only one winter in the ocean are commonly referred to as "jacks" and are usually males. Alaska streams normally receive a single run of Chinook salmon in the period from May through July.

Chinook salmon often make extensive freshwater spawning migrations to reach their home streams on some of the larger river systems. Yukon River spawners bound for the extreme headwaters in Yukon Territory, Canada, will travel more than 2,000 river miles during a 60-day period. Chinook salmon do not feed during the freshwater spawning migration, so their condition deteriorates gradually during the spawning run as they use stored body materials for energy and for the development of reproductive products.

Each female deposits from 3,000 to 14,000 eggs in several gravel nests, or redds, which she excavates in relatively deep, moving water. In Alaska, the eggs usually hatch in late winter or early spring, depending on time of spawning and water temperature. The newly hatched fish, called alevins, live in the gravel for several weeks until they gradually absorb the food in the attached yolk sac. These juveniles, called fry, wiggle up through the gravel by early spring. In Alaska, most juvenile Chinook salmon remain in fresh water until the following spring when they migrate to the ocean in their second year of life. These seaward migrants are called smolts.

Juvenile Chinooks in freshwater feed on plankton, then later eat insects. In the ocean, they eat a variety of organisms including herring, pilchard, sand lance, squid, and crustaceans. Salmon grow rapidly in the ocean and often double their weight during a single summer season.

Commercial Fishery & Subsistence:

North Pacific Chinook salmon catches during the late 1970s and early 1980s averaged more than 4 million fish per year. The United States harvested the majority of the catch followed by Canada, Japan, and the USSR. Alaska's annual harvest during this period averaged about 731,000 fish per year, or about 32 percent of the North American catch. The majority of the Alaska catch is made in Southeast, Bristol Bay, and the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim areas. Fish taken commercially average about 18 pounds. The majority of the catch is made with troll gear and gillnets.

There is an excellent market for Chinook salmon because of their large size and excellent table qualities. Recent catches in Alaska have brought fishers nearly \$19 million per year.

Catches by subsistence fishers in Southwest and Southcentral areas from 1976 through 1986 have averaged approximately 90,000 Chinook salmon. Approximately 90 percent of the subsistence harvest is taken in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers.

Sport Fishery:

The Chinook salmon is perhaps the most highly prized sport fish in Alaska and is extensively fished by anglers in the Southeast and Cook Inlet areas. Trolling with rigged herring is the favored method of angling in salt water, while lures and salmon eggs are used by freshwater anglers. The sport fishing harvest of Chinook salmon is over 76,000 annually, with Cook Inlet and adjacent watersheds contributing over half of the catch.

Management:

Unlike other salmon species, Chinook salmon rear in inshore marine waters and are, therefore, available to commercial and sport fishers all year. Catches of Chinook salmon in Southeast Alaska are regulated by quotas



set under the Pacific Salmon Treaty. In other regions of Alaska, Chinook salmon fisheries are also closely managed to ensure stocks of Chinook salmon are not overharvested. - Kevin Delaney (Alaska Department of Fish & Game).

King Salmon (Chinook) Tackle

Because all the king salmon fishing at Baranof Wilderness Lodge is done in the salt with conventional tackle, it is best if guests simply rely on the lodge to provide all necessary gear. They have this fishing wired, and have top-end tackle for their anglers' use.

Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch* (Walbaum)) also called silver salmon, are found in coastal waters of Alaska from Southeast to Point Hope on the Chukchi Sea and in the Yukon River to the Alaska-Yukon border. Coho are extremely adaptable and occur in nearly all accessible bodies of fresh water, from large trans-boundary watersheds to small tributaries.

General Description:

Adults usually weigh 8 to 12 pounds and are 24 to 30 inches long, but individuals weighing over 30 pounds have been landed. Adults in salt water or newly returning to fresh water are bright silver with small black spots on the back and on the upper lobe of the caudal fin (tail). They can be distinguished from Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) by the lack of black spots on the lower lobe of the tail and by their white gums; Chinook have small black spots on both caudal lobes and they have black gums. Spawning adults of both sexes have dark backs and heads with maroon to reddish sides. The males develop a prominent hooked snout with large teeth called a kype. Juvenile coho salmon have 8 to 12 parr marks evenly distributed above and below the lateral line with the parr marks narrower than the interspaces. The adipose fin is uniformly pigmented and the anal fin has a long leading edge, usually tipped with white. The fins of juvenile coho are frequently tinted with orange.

Life History:

Coho salmon enter spawning streams from July to November, usually during periods of high runoff. Adult coho return timing reflects requirements of specific stocks. For example, in some streams with barrier falls, adults arrive in July when the water is low and the falls are passable, however in some streams, coho may wait until August or September when higher flows from fall rains allow passage into small streams not normally passable at low flows. In large rivers, adults must arrive early, as they need several weeks or months to reach headwater spawning grounds. Run timing is also regulated by water temperature at spawning grounds: where temperatures are low and eggs develop slowly, spawners return early to compensate. Conversely, where temperatures are warm, adults are late spawners. Adults hold in pools until they ripen, then move onto spawning grounds; spawning generally occurs at night. The female digs a nest, called a redd, and deposits 2,400 to 4,500 eggs. As the eggs are deposited, they are fertilized with sperm, known as milt, from the male. The eggs develop during the winter, hatch in early spring, and the embryos remain in the gravel utilizing their egg yolk until they emerge in May or June. The emergent fry occupy shallow stream margins, and, as they grow, establish territories which they defend from other salmonids. They live in ponds, lakes, and pools within streams and rivers, usually among submerged, woody debris- in quiet areas free of current- from which they dart out to seize drifting insects.

During the fall, juvenile coho may travel miles before locating off-channel habitat where they pass the winter free of floods. Some fish leave fresh water in the spring and rear in brackish estuarine ponds and then migrate back into fresh water in the fall. They spend one to three winters in streams and may spend up to five winters in lakes before migrating to the sea as smolt. Time spent at sea varies. Some males (called jacks) mature and return after only 6 months at sea at a length of about 12 inches, while most fish stay 18 months before returning as full size adults.



Little is known about the ocean migrations of coho salmon. High seas tagging shows that maturing Southeast Alaska coho move northward throughout the spring and appear to concentrate in the central Gulf of Alaska in June. They later disperse towards shore and migrate along the shoreline until they reach their stream of origin.

Commercial Fishing:

The commercial catch of coho salmon has increased significantly from low catches in the 1960's, reaching 9.5 million fish in 1994. About half the commercially harvested coho were taken in Southeast Alaska, primarily by the troll fishery.

Sport Fishing:

The coho salmon is a premier sport fish and is taken in fresh and salt water from July to September. In 2005, anglers throughout Alaska caught 1.4 million coho salmon. In salt water they are taken primarily by trolling or mooching (drifting) with herring or with flies or lures along shore. In fresh water they hit salmon eggs, flies, spoons, or spinners. Coho are spectacular fighters and the most acrobatic of the Pacific salmon. On light tackle, coho provide a thrilling and memorable fishing experience. - Text: Steve Elliott

Silver Salmon (Coho)

Silver salmon fishing at Baranof is accomplished 100% in the salt, and guests normally have their choice of targeting them with either fly or conventional tackle. If the latter, you will want to let the lodge provide all the gear, as they know exactly what is needed for their fishery. If you would like to fly fish for silvers, you have the choice of either using the lodge's gear, or bringing your own. If the latter, the following is what we suggest you bring...and keep in mind this same tackle will work perfectly for catching chums and pinks in the nearby freshwater streams, if that is something you choose to try.

Fly Rods:

Single handed rods are perfect for silvers, as casting distance is not critical, but actively stripping the flies back is important. We recommend an 8-weight graphite rod, 9' or 9' 6" in length. Generally speaking, a very fast sinking tip line is all you will need for fishing silvers in the salt. Sage, Winston, and Scott produce fine rods, and are good choices for silver salmon fishing.

Fly Reels:

A high quality, single-action (direct drive) fly reel with rim-control feature is what to look for in a fly reel appropriate to handle ocean-bright coho. The reel should be equipped with a smooth, reliable, preferably disk-drag system. Reels should be filled with a minimum of 150 yards of fresh 20 lb. high-visibility backing. Galvan, Hardy, Abel, and Hatch make excellent reels for salmon fishing.

Fly Lines:

The proper fly line to fish silvers in the saltwater at Baranof is simple – a long sinking tip. A great choice would be the Scientific Anglers 25' sink tip line, in a 250-grain size model. Alternately, a 300-grain model would also work, as would another brand with a similar length and sinking rate.

Silver Salmon Flies:

The saltwater coho fishery at Baranof takes place in some relatively shallow water near certain shorelines in specific small bays. It is a typical Alaska summer/fall-run scenario – big, chrome-bright fish in the 8-15 pound range; and these fish are aggressive to the fly and screaming hot when hooked. Unlike silvers found in freshwater rivers, these ocean predators are still actively feeding on baitfish, so the flies used will reflect this. It is not necessary to have a bunch of different patterns; and it's worth noting that these same flies will work well for the bass found in and around the kelp beds.

- Clouser Half & Half #2/0 – our favorite pattern, in either Chartreuse, or Baitfish colors



- Lefty's Deceiver #3/0 - Chartreuse
- Flashtail Clouser #2 – Olive/Pink
- Sea Habit Bucktail #2/0 - Sardine

Important Information:

Gratuities:

Gratuities are a personal thing based on service rendered, and should be based on merit. Normally, guides and staff are tipped upon departure in accordance to their effort and service. In most cases, we like to leave a gratuity with the lodge owner or manager, who will split it up among all staff appropriately. The gold standard for gratuities at a fishing lodge is 10% to 15% of the cost of the lodge, which tells the lodge staff and guides that they met or exceeded your expectations. You should feel free to leave more, or less than this, at your discretion.

Baggage Limits:

There are no strict luggage weight limits on the flights between Juneau and the lodge, and the boat ride between the lodge and Sitka, but guests are asked to please keep bags and weight to a minimum.

Luggage:

Please pack your gear in a soft-sided duffel bag - NO hockey bags or hard-sided suitcases, please.

Contact Numbers:

In the event of an emergency, you should have your office or family first contact The Fly Shop:
(800) 669-3474 | (530) 222-3555 | travel@theflyshop.com.

To contact the lodge directly, you can use owner Mike Trotter's cell phone (907)738-9039, or his email at mtrotter@flyfishalaska.com Or you can try the lodge phone, at (907) 738-3597

Ward Air Inc.

8991 Yandukin Drive
Juneau Intl. Airport
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Email: reservations@wardair.com | Phone: (907) 789-9150 | Toll Free in Alaska at (800) 478-9150

Toiletries:

Baranof Wilderness Lodge provides complimentary soap and shampoo for their guests. They also supply two clean towels and washcloths for the week.

Taking Fish Home:

Though the lodge promotes not taking home huge amounts of filets, if you would like to bring home some salmon, halibut, or bottomfish that you catch, the lodge will fillet, vacuum pack and freeze a box (50-pound maximum) of your fish to bring home. Remember you will need to pay for it as extra luggage on the airlines on the trip home.

Wi-Fi:

There is essentially no Wi-Fi *at the lodge*. Having said that, with AT&T service, guests can get great G-4 coverage, with unlimited bandwidth, for any phone device when they are out of the bay and fishing in the boats on Chatham Straights. With AT&T service, guests will also have some spotty coverage around the lodge and at a few of the cabins, but nothing that can be counted on.



Statewide:

Anglers are reminded that footgear with absorbent felt or other fibrous material on the soles are prohibited while sport fishing in the fresh waters of Alaska. ***Do not wear felt soled wading boots in AK.***