

# GOODNEWS RIVER LODGE

GOODNEWS RIVER, ALASKA



TACKLE & OUTFITTING GUIDE

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**Trip Questionnaire:** Please click on the link below. This will take you 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 Goodnews River is one of the ultimate fishing and wilderness experiences in North America. Goodnews River Lodge is located just above tidewater on a remote wilderness river system in Southwest Alaska, at 59°7'17"N 161°35'9"W. Hosting strong runs of all five species of pacific salmon, the guides at Goodnews can put you on chrome bright salmon entering the river system within minutes of the lodge. The headwaters of the three forks of the Goodnews River begin deep within the protected Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. At 4,102,537 surface acres, the Togiak is the fourth largest National Wildlife Refuge in the United States. Earthquakes and volcanos were followed by glacial ice in sculpting the region, with the raw and stunning Ahklun Mountains to the north, and Bristol Bay to the south.

### **Communications:**

Please remember that GRL's remote location does not allow for the kind of communications services you may be used to at home. There is no cell service available at the Lodge other than a phone on the GCI network. Your regular cell service (Verizon, Sprint, etc.) will not be able to connect outside of major cities. Phone service is available in the Rec Tent to check in with home or office. Internet service is limited, and will probably seem slow to you, but it is usually sufficient for email communications. Please no uploading of photos or Video's you may make, no downloading of movies, etc., and no VOIP calls (Skype, FaceTime, Viber), as it will crash the system for all. As with most Alaska lodges, Goodnews River Lodge has WiFi available for clients who would like to bring their own WiFi-enabled electronic devices. It is satellite-based and not completely predictable – some days it works better than others – but generally speaking it is more than adequate to send and receive emails. There is not adequate bandwidth to support sending images or for streaming videos.

### **Firearms:**

For your own safety, firearms are not permitted. When necessary, your guide will carry a weapon and is well qualified to use it for your protection.

### **Liquor:**

The native village at Goodnews River is a dry community, so the lodge is not allowed to have or serve alcohol. If guests would like to bring a bottle of spirits or some cans of beer for their own consumption, they will need to bring it in securely stored in their checked luggage.

### **Medical Facilities:**

- There is an extensive first aid kit in camp.
- 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 - \$1,200 for staff and guide gratuities, etc. The camp does not accept credit cards.



### **Gratuities:**

We recommend staff and guide gratuities of approximately 10 - 15% of your package price. Tips are pooled and may be given to the camp manager at the end of the week for distribution to the entire staff.

### **Fishing Licenses:**

Fishing licenses are not included. We recommend purchasing 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 Goodnews, 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:**

Beginning in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, The Goodnews flows westward into the Bering Sea at the village of Goodnews. Much of the river is located within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. 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 to wash away and build up into perfect rainbow trout habitat. The last half of the river is perfect for swinging flies from gravel bars or the jetboats, providing excellent king, chum, and silver salmon fishing. The river runs clear green, and typically remains clear with rainfall.

### **The Fishing:**

Anglers headed to the Goodnews River Lodge 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!

The lodge has a great selection of loaner waders and boots, and rods and reels. If you would like to take advantage of this gear and avoid the need to bring your own, just let us know, give us your wader and boot sizing, and we will get it set up for you. All leaders and flies are provided as a part of your package rate.

## **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 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-tip lines for the various situations you will encounter. 25', 200-300 grain sink tips are normally ideal here.

### **Two-Handed Fly Rods:**

Two-handed Spey rods are very effective when fishing for kings. Their advantage is that you can cover a lot of water very efficiently, while maintaining amazing line control, given the 13 to 15 foot rod length. Scott, Winston, Echo, and Sage each produce excellent two-handed rods. 9 and 10 weight rods are typically perfect for king fishing on the Goodnews.

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:**

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.

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 tungsten T-14 – T-20 tips is perfect...or as our own Justin Miller recommends, just stick with T-14 tips and have them in all of the standard 2.5' increments, from 2.5' to 12.5'. This is normally more than enough, though you can also have us make you up a special 15' T-17 tip, if you like. For running 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. If you are uncertain which line you should select to properly match your rod, do not hesitate to contact us.

### **Leaders & Tippet:**

You will want to bring fresh spools of 12 lb., 16 lb., 20 lb., and 25# Maxima Ultra Green Tippet. Guides typically forego tapered leaders altogether in favor of straight lengths of Maxima leader. And again, the guides provide this as a part of the package, so you don't need to have it.

### **King Salmon Flies:**

Flies used are standard attractor patterns tied on stout hooks, sizes 2 to 2/0. Your flies should vary from heavily weighted to non-weighted. Colors should range from black, to orange, pink, purple, flame, red, chartreuse, or any combination thereof. The guides provide all the flies, but for those who would like to tie and bring their own, remember that they prefer the longer Intruder-style patterns. And importantly they also prefer larger hooks, no smaller than #2's, and preferably in the #1/0 to #2/0 range.

- Bjorn's Super Prawns (popsicle, chartreuse, pink, purple, orange crush), #1/0
- River Rat Tube fly
- Hareball Leeches (fuchsia, orange, pink/purple), #1/0
- Mercer's King Caviar, #1/0
- Stu's Tiger Tail Turbo Tube
- Sili Leg Intruder (aka Squidro), #2-#1/0
- Dean River Tiger #1/0
- Stu's Metal Tube, fuchsia
- Stu's Griz Turbo Tube

## **Silver & Chum Salmon**

### **Fly Rods:**

Single-handed rods are perfect for silvers, as casting distance is not typically critical, but actively stripping the flies back in can be. The chum fishing is largely swing fishing, and single hand (or double-handed) rods are perfect for this. We recommend a 7 or 8-weight graphite rod, 9' in length. Sage, Winston, and Scott produce high quality rods, and The Fly Shop's 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. 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 conditions.



**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 in slower runs, 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:**

Guides typically prefer to use leaders constructed from Maxima Ultra Green Tippet – this will all be provided for you, but if you want to bring your own, the most useful sizes are 12 lb., 16 lb., 20 lb., and 25 lb.

### **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
- Crease Fly, fire tiger or silver – another great (and easier to cast) surface pattern
- Hareball Leeches (fuchsia, bubblegum, orange/chartreuse, pink/orange, purple) – one of the best streamer patterns for Goodnews River silvers
- Egg Sucking Leech variations using marabou or rabbit strip in black & purple
- Popsicle, size 1/0
- Dalí Lama, black/white
- Sili Leg Intruder #1/0 pink/purple
- Starlite 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. Goodnews River rainbows average 16 to 22 inches, with trophy specimens even larger. Sea run Dolly Varden are prolific in the river, averaging 16 to 20 inches, and it is not unusual to land dozens in a day. Arctic 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 5 weight rod is perfect for fishing dries for grayling. Sage, Winston, and Scott produce high quality rods, and The Fly Shop's 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. backing. Hatch, Ross, Hardy, Abel and Galvan reels are excellent choices.

### **Fly Lines for Single-Handed Rods:**

Traveling with a floating line and a sink tip line is always a good choice, as conditions vary depending on the waters fished. Scientific Anglers Freshwater Titan Taper is the perfect line for throwing air resistant mouse patterns and heavy streamers, and the S.A. Sonar sink tip is tough to beat for subsurface presentations.

### **Rainbow Trout, Dolly Varden & Grayling Flies:**

The Goodnews is an excellent 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 also 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
- Mercer's Skin n' Bones #6
- Mercer's Missing Link dry fly #14
- Gold Bead PT's #12
- Morgan's Leech, black, olive, or purple/pink #4
- Sculpzilla #4 – natural

### **Leaders & Tippet for Trout:**

Guides typically prefer to use leaders constructed from Maxima Ultra Green Tippet – this will all be provided for you, but if you want to bring your own, the most useful sizes are 6 lb., 8 lb., 12 lb., and 15 lb.

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.



## Recommended Personal Items

- Raincoat with hood or rain hat--good quality Gore-Tex
- Rain pants--good quality, as above.
- Jeans or sweats for around the lodge
- Lightweight, wicking long underwear, tops and bottoms
- 2 long-sleeved fleece tops and 1 fleece bottoms
- Warm vest and heavy coat
- 3 pair Smartwool socks
- Warm Hat – Buff
- Lightweight fingerless gloves or Gore-Tex windproof
- Personal toiletries kit
- Muskol insect repellent (or headnet if you don't like repellent) and sunblock
- Waders and boots- No felt soles on boots
- Small Waterproof Boat Bag
- Polarized glasses (required for eye protection)
- Headlamp
- Fishing License through the internet at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/) this works great!!
- Travel clothes, plus camp-wear shoes

### 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\****

You are also free to contact us with specific equipment and trip preparation questions at (800) 669-3474 or [travel@theflyshop.com](mailto:travel@theflyshop.com). We are extremely familiar with the techniques and equipment needed to best take advantage of the fishing opportunities on the Goodnews.

### Emergency Phone Contact:

You can always reach the camp. The Goodnews River Lodge emergency phone contact (June – September) is (907) 967-8526 or (907) 694-5515, or you can use their other number, (989) 980-8787.

### TransNorthern Charter:

Phone: (907) 245-1879 Fax: (907) 245-1878

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