

KARLUK RIVER

Access & Use Information

Located on the southwest end of Kodiak Island approximately one hour by air from the city of Kodiak, the Karluk River area provides excellent opportunities for fishing, hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and other wilderness activities.

The Karluk River is 22 miles long. Though all but the lower 8 miles of the river are located within the boundary of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge (KNWR), all of the lands adjacent to the river and most of the land surrounding Karluk Lagoon are privately owned. Public use trail and site easements have been reserved at intervals along the river to provide reasonable access to the remaining public land and major waterways. In addition, Koniag, Inc., and Karluk Tribal Council, the owners of most of the lands adjacent to the river, have implemented permit programs to allow the use of their lands along the river.

This brochure will attempt to answer questions regarding access to, and use of, private and public land, and assist the visitor in planning a trip to the Karluk River. The map provided on the opposite side of this brochure depicts the land ownership pattern and the location of public use easements. The map inset provides additional details for visitors beginning or ending their trip at Karluk Village.

No matter where you go or how long you stay, we hope you have a safe and memorable trip. Please remember to be a courteous camper by packing out your waste and, if possible, leaving this beautiful area in better shape than when you arrived.

Questions and Answers

Q. "Do I need to get permission from the landowners before I begin my trip?" **A.** Yes, if you plan to cross, enter, or use private land. Where you intend to begin and end your trip, as well as the length of time you want to spend in a particular area, will determine what land use permits are required. As previously mentioned, there are public use easements available at various locations along the river for anyone to use, but they are limited in number, and there are restrictions on uses.

Q. "What type of restrictions are there on the use of these easements?" **A.** The easements exist only to provide access across privately owned lands to reach public lands or major waterways. No hunting or fishing from or on an easement is permitted. There are two types of easements: site easements (marked as a triangle on the map and described as a campsite), and trail easements (marked with bold dashed lines on the map). Site easements may be used for temporary (up to 24 hrs) camping, loading, or unloading; and vehicular parking, including boats and aircraft where appropriate. Trail easements are 25 feet wide and may be used for travel by foot, dogsled, animals, snowmobiles, two and three-wheel vehicles, and small all-terrain vehicles under 3,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight. Camping is not allowed on trail easements. There is no access from trail easements to the river except at one of the designated site easements. If you are on the river and wish to go on the land for any reason, you may do so only at a site easement unless you have permission from the landowner.

Q. "How do I find these easements?" **A.** Easements shown on the map are described below in the Easement Descriptions section. Whenever possible, a GPS (Global Positioning System) reading has also been provided. Each easement should be identified by a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) marker, unless the marker has been destroyed by bears. If a marker is not present, easements may be found by the use of landmarks such as islands, stream mouths, etc., or the presence of well worn trails and other signs of use. It is your responsibility to make sure you are located on the easement. For additional information on the location of easements, you may contact the KNWR or BLM. Their addresses and phone numbers are listed elsewhere in this brochure.

Q. "How often can I use the same easement?" **A.** There is no explicit restriction on the number of times an easement may be used. However, the reservation of easements was designed to allow for the logical progression of travelers from one location to the next when moving up- and down-river.

Q. "Do I need a land use permit or permission for crossing or using private lands?" **A.** Yes, a permit or prior permission from the owner or the owner's designee is required anytime the visitor wishes to enter, cross or use private land, except at designated easements. Use of private land, including travel across the land without obtaining prior permission, may be trespass.

Q. "Whom do I contact for a land use permit for private lands?" **A.** The map on the back side of this brochure enables you to determine the appropriate upland owner. Some landowners, such as Koniag, Inc., issue permits for recreational use of their lands. Such uses include fishing, camping, and sometimes hunting. For current information on the uses permitted and the cost of a permit, contact the owners at the addresses listed below:

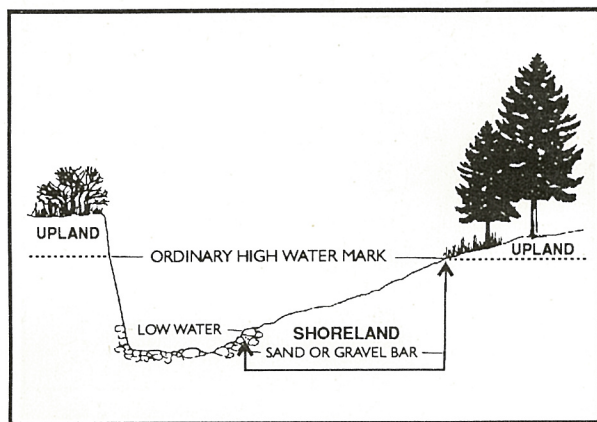
Koniag, Inc. 4300 B Street, Suite 407 Anchorage, AK 99503 (907) 561-2668	Karluk Tribal Council Box 22 Karluk, AK 99608 (907) 241-2218
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Q. "May I travel by boat or canoe on the water without obtaining a land use permit?" **A.** Yes. Under state law, the public has the right to use and have access to the Karluk River. The water is available for public use for the purpose of fishing, boating, and other activities. However, any overnight camping or use of the uplands for any purpose, except at designated public use easements, requires the permission of the upland owner.

Q. "May I stand in the river (below the Ordinary High Water Mark) without getting a land use permit?"

A. This is currently an open question. It is the state's position that under state law, members of the public may touch the bed of the river below ordinary high water to the extent reasonably necessary to pull a boat across riffles or across obstructions, and to fish. However, Koniag, Inc., has stated that it considers such activity without a permit to be trespass.

Until the legal issues discussed above are resolved, the state cannot assure the public that a private owner would not pursue a trespass action against them if they stand in the river without a permit.



The "Ordinary High Water Mark"

The Ordinary High Water Mark can usually be identified by the vegetation line along the bank or shore, or by other distinctive signs. It is defined as the mark along the bank or shore where the presence and action of water are so common and usual as to leave a natural line impressed on the bank or shore. That line may be indicated by erosion, shelving, changes in soil characteristics, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other distinctive physical characteristics.

Run Timing for Salmon & Steelhead

Run timing for adult salmon returning to freshwater to spawn will impact angling success. Approximate run timing for the Karluk River:

King Salmon	Peak run June 1 - July 10
Red Salmon	June 10 - August 1
Pink Salmon	July 20 - August 20
Silver Salmon	Mid August - September
Steelhead	Mid to late October

General Sport Fishing Information

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game sponsors the Sport Fish Information Line at (907) 486-5176. The line is updated weekly May to October.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game publishes sport fishing regulations for the Karluk River in the Sport Fishing Regulations Summary for Kodiak Island and Southwest Alaska. To obtain a copy of these regulations contact:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game, Kodiak Office
211 Mission Road
Kodiak, AK 99615 phone (907) 486-1880

Field Tips

Be advised that you are in bear country. In most cases, bears are not a threat, but they deserve your respect and attention. Before travelling in bear country, pick up the brochure "Bear Facts" from any Department of Fish and Game office. There are two key regulations regarding human/bear interactions in Alaska. The first prohibits feeding bears or leaving garbage that attracts them (5 AAC 92.230). The other sets the guidelines for taking bear in defense of your life and property (5 AAC 92.410). State law allows a bear to be shot in self-defense if: (1) you did not provoke the attack by an unreasonable invasion of the bear's habitat; (2) the problem was not caused by negligent storage of food, garbage, or other attractive nuisance; and (3) there is no alternative. If a bear is killed, the hide and skull must be salvaged, and the incident must be immediately reported to the authorities.

It is recommended that river visitors carry suitable containers to dispose of human waste, since there are no facilities along the river.

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge

Many trail easements along the Karluk River access public lands within the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge is responsible for managing all lands and easements within its boundary

For information regarding Refuge regulations or easements, contact:

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
1390 Buskin River Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615 phone (907) 487-2600

Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management manages all other easements. For information on easements outside the Refuge boundary, contact:

Bureau Of Land Management
Anchorage District Office
6881 Abbott Loop Road
Anchorage, AK 99507 phone (907) 267-1248

Department of Natural Resources

For additional public use information contact:

Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Division of Land / Navigability Section
3601 C Street Suite 980
Anchorage, AK 99503-5937 phone (907) 269-8525
<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/land/nav.htm>

Easement Descriptions*

The following easements are shown on the map:

1. An existing trail running easterly from the village of Karluk along the north side of Karluk Lagoon to the shore of the Karluk River. (25-foot trail) (EIN 7)
2. A campsite on the north shore of Karluk Lagoon. (two and one-half acre site on record) (EIN 6) (GPS: 57° 33.878' N / 154° 23.951' W)
3. An unimproved trail running southerly from the Karluk River to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 34)
4. An unimproved trail running southeasterly from the Karluk River near the mouth of Shasta Creek to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 33)
5. A campsite on an island in the Karluk River. (site encompassing entire island on record) (EIN 30) (GPS 57° 34.538' N / 154° 14.897' W)
6. A campsite on the left bank of the river at the Karluk River portage. (one-acre site) (EIN 13b) (GPS 57° 32.185' N / 154° 9.517' W)
7. A campsite on the right bank of the river at the Karluk River portage. (one-acre site) (EIN 13a)
8. An existing trail running southwesterly from the west side of the Karluk River portage at easement #6 to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 47)
9. An existing trail from the head of Larsen Bay westerly to the Karluk River. (25-foot trail) (EIN 12)
10. An unimproved trail running northerly from the head of Larsen Bay to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 11)
11. An unimproved trail running southeasterly from the head of Larsen Bay to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 9)
12. An unimproved trail running southeasterly from Larsen Bay to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 8)
13. A one-half acre site and twenty-five foot trail. (LAS AA007120)
14. An unimproved trail running southwesterly from the left bank of the Karluk River to public lands. (25-Foot trail) (EIN 43)
15. An unimproved trail from easement #7 at the Karluk River portage southerly along the right bank of the Karluk River to the outlet of Karluk Lake at easement #17. (25-foot trail) (EIN 17)
16. A campsite on the northwest shore of Karluk Lake and the left bank of the Karluk River. (one-acre site) (EIN 20) GPS 57° 26.365' N / 154° 6.679' W)
17. A campsite on the northwest shore of Karluk Lake and the right bank of the Karluk River. (one-acre site) (EIN 21) (GPS 57° 26.473' N / 154° 6.466' W)
18. An unimproved trail along the north shore of Karluk Lake from the outlet of the lake at easement #17 to the mouth of Moraine Creek. (25-foot trail) (EIN 40)
19. An unimproved trail running northeasterly from Karluk Lake at easement #20 to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 37)
20. A campsite on the shore of Karluk Lake at the mouth of Moraine Creek. (one-acre site) (EIN 39)
21. An unimproved trail running westerly from the outlet of Karluk Lake at easement #16 to public lands. (25-foot trail) (EIN 18)

*For the official record descriptions of the easements described above, contact BLM.

