



Central Kenai Peninsula Fishing Report 6-18-2014



Kenai River

We are a week in to the trout and salmon fishing season on the Kenai River after opening on June 11! Opening week fishing has seen a fair amount of action, and great weather! As a reminder, trout hanging in shallow water (under 3 feet or so) are likely still in spawn mode. They will aggressively protect the spawn beds while still spawning, and anglers should work to avoid fishing the shallow water and spawn areas to allow these fish to peacefully spawn.



The motor restriction through the Swan Sanctuary was lifted as of 6/14/14. Reminder- King Salmon fishing remains closed on the Kenai for the remainder of the month of June. Also, make sure to review the Southcentral Alaska fishing regulations for the area as some of the regulations have changed!

Middle Kenai

All reports are that trout fishing on the Middle River (Skilak Lake to Bings) has been good with post-spawn trout hanging in deeper water and feeding on leeches, smolt, and sculpin. Hint: swing your fly all the way through the drift and let it hang for a few seconds before picking up to cast again!



Flesh flies and the occasional washed bead have been fishing decently as well. Trout will also readily bite hot shots being back-trolled from a boat. This method can be very productive, just remember to switch to single hooks and take great care when landing & releasing your fish.

A strong early run of sockeye "red" salmon has made fishing productive in many areas of the Middle

River as well the past week, but that is expected to slow down until the second run of fish picks up in July.

Upper Kenai

Reports from the Upper River (Kenai Lake to Skilak Lake) are that fishing has been variable for sockeye and for trout. Sockeye fishing has been fairly consistent on the Upper Kenai- but becoming more variable: great at times and slow at others.



The Russian River is fishing well; with a surge of fish already well up the Russian. Sockeye are pushing through the river in large spurts, just be sure to stake out a good spot to pick them off on their way upstream. Anywhere from the Russian River falls to the ferry/confluence area has provided great action over the past week.

Trout fishing has been a little more sporadic. Fishing the usual beads and flesh patterns between Sportsmans Landing and Jim’s Landing can be productive, as can swinging streamers into deeper pockets of water.

A note of caution- low water conditions at the take out at Jim’s Landing make it a little more challenging to land a boat as their isn’t much of an eddy there at this point. Be prudent when landing your boat- slow down and be prepared- or next stop Canyon and Skilak Lake!

Kasilof River

Decent numbers of Kings are being caught out of drift boats, and experienced bank fishermen are having some luck as well. Swinging a fly through likely holding water (especially tail-outs) will give you a great chance of inducing a strike from an aggressive and territorial King Salmon. Sockeye salmon are also pushing through the Kasilof in catch-able numbers. There is some pretty consistent sockeye fishing to be had in the upper reaches, but down at the Crooked Creek Campground anglers are finding the most success a couple hours before the high tide.

The first run of Kings will be around for another week or so, and the second run of Kings will follow them, trickling in by early July, peaking towards the second half of the month. Second run Kings are possible to be caught from shore, but with larger sized fish and increased flows, you're better off to be fishing from a boat. Sockeye will continue to be caught throughout June and July. Watch the run charts on the ADF&G website in order to time your efforts most effectively.



Summary

An often overlooked aspect of this amazing area are the mountain lakes- a moderate hike can put you into some of the most beautiful country imaginable, and the fishing can be spectacular as well! Juneau Lake, Crescent Lake, Fuller Lake, and Carter Lake are some of the local favorites. The fish on these lakes (mostly grayling and rainbows) are far from shy, so dry flies, small leech patterns, and various nymphs should produce well!

No matter what your favorite species or method might be there's a fishery out there right now that will produce for you.... so go get after it! Best wishes for tight lines and a fun safe time on the water!

Fishing report compiled by Brendyn Shiflea of Pretty Fly For a White Guy with in river action reports and pictures submitted by guides Lee Keuper of Alaska's Angling Addiction, Mark Wackler of Fishology Alaska, and Kyle Kolodziejski of Keen Eye Anglers. All are current or past board members of the Kenai Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

