



Central Kenai Peninsula Fishing Report 9-15-2015

Many anglers see late September as their last chance to get out on the river, catch a few fish, and enjoy the mighty Kenai before winter plants a firm grip on the area. For others this is mid-season. While temperatures can be challenging, the late fall and early winter can often produce fantastic fishing! Silver Salmon continue to pour into the Kenai well into October and even November, and the trout are feasting before winter. Get some quality gear, layer up and you're set!

Kasilof River

The Kasilof is having a banner year for Silvers, and although the river closed to bait fishing on September 16th, the fish are still there. And the best part about it is that the crowds are gone! For those interested in catching Silvers on a fly rod now is prime time to do that on the Kasilof. You'll have the river to yourself and stripping flies through the slow water can produce fantastic results, especially early in the morning.

Middle & Lower Kenai

Silver salmon continue to make their way into the lower stretches of the Kenai River on a daily basis. Sometimes fishing is quick and easy, and other days you've got to spend a little bit of time, but fish have consistently been around since the second run of silvers began in early September. The usual tactics of bait and kwikfish are always great ways to land a few silvers, but the underrated and underutilized method of fly casting with big bright leeches and stripping them through slack water holes can be really fun and rewarding as well. Don't be afraid to give it a try!

When the lower Kenai experiences good fishing for a handful of days or so, the Middle Kenai usually follows suit just a few days later, but this September hasn't always played out that way. Despite good Silver fishing on the lower for the entire month, the Middle Kenai has been very unpredictable and inconsistent. Some days the Silvers seem to be there and biting well, while other days it feels like they have just vanished. There is a lot of water and a lot of good fishing holes on the Middle Kenai, so if you don't find Silvers in your usual spots don't be afraid to explore a bit because moving around can pay off big time some days. And the same hint about casting flies for Silvers on the lower river holds true for the rest of the Kenai as well!

As many of you know, the Middle Kenai is also a popular and productive Rainbow Trout and Dolly Varden fishery. Despite its growing popularity throughout the fall season, there are plenty of fish to go around. Early in September the trout were spread out from Soldotna to Skilak Lake, but over the last couple weeks they have concentrated themselves to the 5 mile or so stretch below Skilak Lake. There are still some Sockeye and even a few Kings spawning in this area, so the bead bite is fast and furious! As always, consider what's spawning & when. That will help you predict the size and color of the natural eggs on the riverbed. Here's another hint – don't leave your flesh flies at home! Even when the Trout are heavily on a bead bite, some of the larger fish won't pass up an opportunity to grab a big hunk of flesh that comes drifting by. You may not catch as many fish throughout the day on flesh flies during this time of year, but the average size is likely to be impressive!

Upper Kenai

The Upper Kenai bead show is on! The salmon are spawning and dying off, and the trout are feasting. Bead up and get out there! The water levels have been changing with the Snow River glacial dam release and some recent rain, but fishing has been pretty darn good!

And the coho are out and about- strip those big leeches in and get ready!

Summary

Fall is in the air- frost, fog and leaves are falling. But the fishing is still strong! Get the right gear and get out there!

Fishing report compiled by Brendyn Shiflea of Pretty Fly For a White Guy with in river action reports and pictures submitted by guides Lee Kuepper of Alaska's Angling Addiction, Mark Wackler of Fishology Alaska, and Brian Kaferstein of Alaska Wildland Adventures. However, Brian has been unavailable, so his report is not included in this one. All are current board members of the Kenai Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

