



# Trip Planner

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# ALASKA WEST



## Our Location

Where in the world is Alaska West?

Alaska West operates a fixed base tent lodge located in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, 5 miles upriver from the Alaska Native village of Quinhagak, on the banks of the Kanektok River in far western Alaska along the coast of the Bering Sea.

So where in the heck is that? Quinhagak is a coastal community located in the southernmost reaches of Kuskokwim Bay. It is 425 miles WSW from Anchorage, 75 miles due South of the hub village of Bethel and 190 miles WNW from Dillingham. We are right in the middle of nowhere.

The Togiak National Wildlife Refuge encompasses over 4 million acres of lands that the US government deemed appropriate to manage by the objectives set forth in the National Wildlife Refuge system's directive to, among other things, conserve fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity. Its northern border is the Yukon Delta National Wilderness Refuge. Its Eastern border is the Wood Tikchik Lakes and Wood Tikchik State Park. The southern border is Bristol Bay and the western border runs 50 miles inland of Goodnews and Platinum until it bisects the Kuskokwim Bay coastline. Several villages fall within the refuge's boundaries including Eek, Quinhagak, Platinum, Goodnews, Manokotak and Togiak. The refuge is mainly comprised of coastal flats, river flood plains and high tundra plains. Two mountain ranges run through the refuge-- the Kilbuck range and the Ahklun range. Both are heavily eroded by ice, wind and water, and their highest peaks are less than 4,500 feet high.

The area is habitat to over 48 mammal species, 31 land-bound including caribou, wolves, moose, brown and black bear, foxes, beaver, muskrats, minks, river otters, voles and porcupines. 17 marine mammals live in the refuge including sea lions, walruses and whales. Three main river drainages host all five species of pacific salmon, rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, arctic grayling, arctic char and pike. Over 200 bird species nest in the refuge including golden and bald eagles, peregrine falcons, murre, numerous species of waterfowl and shorebirds. Willow and cottonwood make up the scrub forests along the riverbanks and the tundra is flush with lichen, berries, dwarf trees and grasses.

From the river the world looks lush with a short forest of spindly trees, bushes and grasses, but gain 15 feet of elevation and look out over the treetops and the view is a vast flat tundra plain pocked with an uncountable number of ponds and lakes, that runs every direction until it crashes into the sea, bumps into a mountain or drops into a river's path.





## Travel Logistics

Alaska West is fairly remote, so getting to our facility takes several steps. We think you'll agree that the effort is worth it!

### Charter Flight:

Here are the legs of the trip--

1. Take TransNorthern Charter flight to Quinhagak, AK
2. Take a short boat ride from Quinhagak to our facility on the river

Inbound Charter: Depart Anchorage 10:00 AM Arrive Quinhagak 11:30-12:00  
Outbound Charter: Depart Quinhagak 12:30 PM Arrive Anchorage 2:00-2:30 PM

### Commercial Flights:

1. Fly on Alaska Airlines from Anchorage to Bethel, Alaska
2. Fly a regional carrier from Bethel to Quinhagak
3. Take a short boat ride from Quinhagak to our facility on the river

### **Flying to Bethel**

Tickets on Alaska Airlines should be purchased through any normal air travel channel. Our changeover day is Friday. Connecting with our Bethel-Quinhagak flights requires that you book specific flights on Alaska Airlines. Your reservations should be made to connect to the following flights on Friday:

Inbound flight on Friday: Alaska Airlines Flight 43  
Departs Anchorage: 12:12 PM / Arrives Bethel: 1:29 PM

Outbound flight a week later: Alaska Airlines Flight 44  
Departs Bethel: 2:15 PM / Arrives Anchorage: 3:25 PM

### **Bethel to Quinhagak**

We fly between Bethel and Quinhagak using several different regional carriers. **You do not need to make a reservation for this flight**—Alaska West will contact the carrier to make the reservation for you. The price for the round-trip ticket is \$240. This fee is not included in the price of your Alaska West trip, and **you will be required to pay this \$240 fee in Bethel**. The flight is 25 – 35 minutes long and covers a wide, flat stretch of coastal tundra.

### **Quinhagak to Alaska West**

When you arrive in Quinhagak, you will be met on the airstrip by representatives from Alaska West. You will board a jet boat for the 25 minute ride upriver to our facility. Be sure to pack your raingear in an accessible spot—if it's raining you'll want it for the ride upriver.

Guests will typically arrive at Alaska West between 4:00 and 5:00pm on Friday. This does not allow time for fishing on your arrival day, but it provides a great opportunity to unpack, relax, get your gear rigged



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and enjoy an extended happy hour. Please remember that travel in bush Alaska requires flexibility and that a variety of factors, including weather, may impact your travel and therefore your arrival time.

If you have special scheduling needs and require flights at different times or on different days, please call us at 800-344-3628 for additional travel options.

## Staying in Anchorage

If your travel requires you to stay over in Anchorage, the following hotels are popular with our anglers:

Courtyard Anchorage Airport 4901 Spenard Road 907-245-0322 Reservations: 800-314-0782	Courtyard by Marriott is moderately priced and conveniently located close to the airport with free shuttle service. Ask for the lodge discount when making your reservations.
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Millennium Alaskan Hotel 4800 Spenard Road 907-243-2300	The Millennium is moderately priced. It is on the shore of Lake Hood and certain rooms have beautiful views of the largest seaplane base in the world. There is a fun bar and a decent restaurant. The hotel is close to the airport and offers shuttle service.
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Puffin Inn 4400 Spenard Road 907-243-4044	The Puffin has economy prices, includes no frills, is close to the airport and has a shuttle. The hotel is located on Spenard Road within walking distance of the Millennium.
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For information on the many other hotels as well as things to do or see (and places to eat!) while you're in Anchorage, please visit the [Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau website](#).





## Our Facility

We call our facility a 'tent lodge'. It is made up of a combination of permanent and semi-permanent structures, and is designed to combine comfortable living, eating and lounging areas with a location right on top of a phenomenal river.

### Dining Tent

The dining tent is a spacious 24'x 60' heated structure with wood floors and is always kept neat and clean. Our kitchen has the state of the art equipment such as gas ranges, convection oven, microwave, refrigerators and freezers. Please contact the Alaska West office in Anchorage with any questions or concerns regarding specific dietary requirements.

### Lounge Tent

The lounge is great place to relax after a full day of fishing. This large heated tent is furnished with comfortable chairs and tables. At your disposal are a refrigerator with cool soda, juices and mixers, poker chips with cards, board games, dart board, magazines, books, map board, telephone, satellite television and an online camp computer. We also have a fly tying bench with a limited supply of fly tying materials and vises. Serious tiers are advised to bring their own vise and tools.

### Drying Tent

After returning from your day's fishing adventure this tent serves as a place for you to hang your wet waders, coats, boots and anything else you don't want wet or dirty in your sleeping quarters. This tent's heater is lit every night to ensure that your things are nice and dry by morning.

### Gazebo/Viewing Deck

This split-level wood structure is located close to the dining and lounge tents and has a great river view. The bottom area is open aired and enclosed with fine mesh bug screen. This is a great place to sit and enjoy the midnight sun without being bothered by our little biting buddies. Directly above is the viewing deck. You will be surprised how being up just ten feet changes your view. Bring your camera-- the sunsets can be breathtaking!

### Showers and Restrooms/Outhouses:

Our showers have hot and cold running water with a sink basin and chair. They are cleaned daily. Our restrooms are indeed outhouses. They too are cleaned daily and they are strategically located near your tent cabin.

### Tent Cabins/Sleeping Quarters:

Your heated tent cabin is furnished with two single beds with full bedding and pillow, clean shower linen, nightstand, hang-down bug net, lantern, carpeted floor and clothes hangers. Our housekeeping staff will come through daily to make beds, empty trash and tidy up to ensure your new home stays neat and clean.





## **Fishing Program**

Our typical day starts at 7:00 AM with a buffet-style breakfast. At this time fixings are put out for you build yourself a custom-made lunch. You may also request a shore lunch—a lunch of fresh-caught fish and trimmings cooked for you, by your guide, right on the shore of the river! If you choose to have shore lunch it is best requested the night before so your guide can get prepared in advance. Shore lunch adds about 20 minutes of cooking time to your lunch break.

Your guide and boat will be ready to leave the beach at 8:00 AM and will be at your service until 6:00 PM, when all boats are due back to camp. This is a long day of fishing! Appetizers are put out at 6:30 and dinner is served at 7:30.

Our boats are 16 to 18 foot flat-bottomed john boats and are powered by 40 HP jet pumps. They are equipped with bow and stern anchors, two swivel seats and life jackets. A cooler is on board to store lunches and drinks.

Our jet boats are used in several different ways. While fishing for salmon you might fish from the boat. Anchoring up and swinging or stripping flies can be very effective. Back trolling plugs or spin 'n' glos for kings is deadly. Fishing for trout can be done from our boats as well. Both seats are removed, your guide rows you down river 'drift boat style' and you cast while floating. This method is a wonderful way to see the river and cover water.

While fishing from the boat is fun, most anglers also choose to fish from the wader-friendly gravel bars. This is where the jet boat shines! We can also run over very shallow water and get you to many small side channels that can be hiked up and fished from shore with your guide.

## **Electrical Devices**

Due to our remote location, we have a limited supply of electricity. Please rely on battery-powered devices. Electricity for recharging batteries is available in our lounge tent during daytime hours.

## **Taking Fish Home**

Alaska West adheres to all state fishing regulations, including catch and release on all rainbow trout. We are happy to offer our anglers the opportunity to take home fresh frozen, vacuum-packed fillets of salmon. In an effort to apply reason to our use of this resource we restrict each angler to 50 pounds of salmon fillets per week, a limit below that set by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Fifty pounds is a lot of salmon!





## Gratuities

For anglers who feel that they have received good service, tipping is customary at Alaska West. Our tips are all pooled and divided evenly between everyone who contributes to your experience during the week, including guides, housekeeping staff, kitchen staff and maintenance crew. We are often asked for a guideline on tipping, so we let anglers know that our average tip per angler for a week of fishing is \$450. We encourage you to tip at a level that you feel is consistent with the service that you received. Tips are collected at the end of your week. **Alaska West strongly prefers cash for tips**, but credit cards are also accepted.

## Alcohol Policy

The village of Quinhagak is 'dry'. This means that it is illegal to possess alcohol within city limits. Violators of this tribal law face fines and/or embarrassment. At Alaska West we do not provide alcohol to our anglers. We respect local residents' alcohol issues and advise interested persons to call our office at 800 344-3628 for more information on this sensitive issue.



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## Packing List

Alaska West is located in remote bush Alaska. You can purchase certain items in the village store, but the selection and availability is very limited. Tobacco products, film, batteries and fishing gear should be purchased in advanced of your trip. Use Anchorage as your last supply stop. For your convenience fishing licenses can be purchased in camp. We recommend water-repellant luggage with soft sides. Always have your rain gear near or at the top for easy access.

Weather in Alaska is very unpredictable. No matter when you visit, be prepared for highs in the 70s and lows in the 40s. July is typically the warmest month, with cooler temperatures in June and August. Always be prepared for rain and wind. No Alaskan goes anywhere without good rain gear.

Camp clothing should be casual and comfortable. Remember to keep all important medications separate from your luggage. Because we are exposed to the elements even around camp, warmth and dryness should be considered in all clothing choices. We recommend layering your clothing for warmth and versatility.

In-Camp Gear	On-River Gear
√ Item	√ Item
Jeans	Fleece tops and bottoms to wear under waders
Long-sleeved shirts	Polypropylene long underwear
Sweater	Sweater
Socks	Vest or warm jacket to wear under rain gear or waders
Underwear	Warm socks – several pairs
Casual shoes	Warm, waterproof and lucky fishing hat
Waterproof footwear	Warm fishing gloves
Light weight jacket	Rainwear - Gore-Tex and other breathables are best
Rain coat and pants	Waders - Gore-Tex and other breathables are best
Shoes for wet and dry weather	Wading Boots - please no studs as they damage our boats
Toiletries	Polarized sun glasses
Shower sandals	Camera
Battery powered reading light	Film or memory cards and extra batteries
Books or games	Sun block
Alarm clock	Bug repellent
Fly tying vise and tools	Head net
	Bag for carrying your gear on boat—dry bags are best





## Tackle Recommendations

Alaska West supplies all leader material, terminal tackle and flies for your use, all at no charge. A limited number of fly and gear outfits are available as loaners. Please call if we can help outfit you for your trip.

### Fly Tackle

#### King Salmon

Fly Rods: 10 weight to 12 weight rods are recommended, with 9 weight being on the light side. In most cases the line and flies are heavy so high modulus good quality rods are best. Spey or two handed rods are also a popular alternative because of their power and line control capabilities.

Reels: We recommend very durable reels with a strong disc type drag and a large spool capacity of at least 200 yards of 30 pound backing.

Lines: 100 to 500 grain, fast to extra fast shooting heads, and sink tips of 15 to 30 feet are all very common. Versatility is important. An interchangeable shooting head system is a good way to address varied water conditions.

Leaders: Leader should be abrasion resistant monofilament of 15 to 20 pound strength.

#### Pink Salmon (Humpy)

Fly Rods: 6 to 7 weight fly rods work best.

Reels: To match rod, with light to medium drag system.

Lines: Floating lines are most commonly used. In some situations, slow sinking 5 to 13 foot tips may be used.

Leaders: 6 to 10 pound monofilament.

#### Chum Salmon

Fly Rods: We recommend 7 weight to 9 weight quality rods with actions that are well suited for casting in windy conditions.

Reels: Durable reels with a medium to strong disc drag are necessary. Spool capacity should be at least 150 yards of 20 pound backing.

Lines: A floating line along with at least one sink tip is usually best. Sink tips should be 5 feet to 15 feet with a medium to fast sink rate.

Leaders: 10 to 15 pound monofilament.





### **Sockeye Salmon (Red)**

Fly Rods: 6 weight to 8 weight.

Reels: Durable reel with strong drag to match rod.

Lines: Floating lines.

Leaders: 10 to 15 pound monofilament.

### **Silver Salmon**

Fly Rods: We recommend 7 weight to 9 weight quality rods with actions that are well suited for casting in windy conditions.

Reels: Durable reels with a medium to strong disc drag are necessary. Spool capacity should be at least 150 yards of 20 pound backing.

Lines: A floating line along with at least one sink tip is usually best. Sink tips should be 5 feet to 15 feet with a medium to fast sink rate.

Leaders: 10 to 15 pound monofilament.

### **Rainbow Trout**

Fly Rods: 6 to 7 weight high quality, fast action rods capable of casting mouse patterns and split shot, and dealing with the occasional rouge salmon that will strike your trout fly. Drift fishing can be snag intensive so be prepared to use a little heavier leader for trout than most people are accustomed to. Rainbows on the Kanektok can range from 12 to 30 plus inches!

Reels: To match rod with medium to strong drag.

Lines: Floating lines with 120 yards of backing are most common. Strike indicators are also very effective.

Leaders: 8 to 12 pound leaders.

### **Dolly Varden**

Fly Rods: 4 weight to 6 weight medium to fast action rods capable of casting split shot with a strike indicator, and dealing with the occasional big rainbow or sockeye.

Reels: Good quality reel and drag that matches rod.

Lines: Floating lines are best.

Leaders: Up to 12 feet of 6 to 10 pound test.



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## **Grayling**

Fly rods: Here's your chance to use that 3 weight! 3 to 5 weight soft to medium to fast action.

Reels: Quality reels that match rod. Light drag is fine.

Lines: Floating lines.

Leaders: Longer leaders up to 12 feet. 10 pound butt section with a 6 to 8 pound tippet.

## **Conventional Tackle**

### **King Salmon**

Rods: We recommend 20 to 40 pound line rated casting rods with a sensitive tip, to read plug action and detect subtle strikes. Spinning rods can be used with the same basic specifications.

Reels: Casting or level wind reels are superior for fighting big fish for many reasons and are highly recommended. Line capacity should be at least 200 yards of 20 pound monofilament. Spinning reels must have an extremely strong drag and large line capacity.

Line: High quality, low diameter monofilament line with high abrasion resistance is best. 20 pound break strength is average.

### **Pink Salmon**

Rods: Light weight spinning rods rated to match 6 to 10 pound monofilament are recommended.

Reels: To match rod.

Line: 6 to 10 pound monofilament.

### **Chum, Sockeye and Silver Salmon**

Rods: We recommend medium-weight spinning or casting rods, rated for 10 to 20 pound monofilament line.

Reels: To match with at least 200 yards of line.

Line: 10 to 20 pound monofilament.



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## Suggested Fly Patterns

Alaska West provides flies to our anglers free of charge, but if you decide you'd tie or bring your own, here are some recommendations, by species. Fly recipes are available on our web site at [www.alaskawest.com](http://www.alaskawest.com).

### King Salmon

Bjorn Super Prawn  
Skagit Minnow

Mother of All Leeches  
Hare-ball Leech

Kilowatt  
Fat Freddy

### Chum Salmon

Mother of All Leeches  
Hare-ball Leech

Kilowatt  
Starlight, PF Salmon, Egg Sucking Leech

### Sockeye Salmon

Any sparse pattern tied on a #2 heavy wire straight eyed unweighted hook, including nymphs and small streamers. Color is not critical-- straight eyed hook is.

### Pink Salmon

Mother of All Leeches  
Hare-ball Leech

Kilowatt  
Starlight, PF Salmon, Egg Sucking Leech

### Silver Salmon

Mother of All Leeches  
Hare-ball Leech  
Starlight, PF Salmon, Egg Sucking Leech

Kilowatt  
Topwater Popper or 'Wog

### Rainbow Trout

Flesh Fly  
Cotton candy

Sculpin  
Mice

Egg patterns  
Leeches

### Dolly Varden

Egg patterns

Cotton candy

### Arctic Grayling

Leeches  
Egg patterns

Cotton candy  
Dry Flies

\*\*Descriptions of flies on following page.



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Bjorn Super Prawn – Marabou streamer tied on a size 2/0 streamer hook in chartreuse, pink, purple, black, orange or any combination of these colors. This fly is not weighted.

Cotton candy – Roe fly tied with a chenille body and glow bug yarn wing and tail. This is a weighted fly tied on size 4 to 8 streamer hooks.

Dry flies – Various selection of dry flies size 10 to 18 including Adams, humpies, black gnats and olive stoneflies.

Egg patterns – Plastic beads in 6 to 10 millimeter diameter in various colors of pink to orange.

Fat Freddy – Glow bug yarn puff ball tied on a 3/0 octopus hook. This fly can be weighted.

Flesh Fly – Bunny strip weighted streamer to imitated salmon flesh. White and ginger are the most common colors tied on size 4 and smaller long shank streamer hooks. Jig heads and barbell eyes are popular. Articulated variations utilize an octopus style hook and are very effective.

Hare-ball Leech – Bunny strip streamer tied on a #2 streamer hook in chartreuse, purple, pink, orange and black or any combination of these colors. This fly is tied with lead eyes for weight.

Kilowatt – Bunny strip streamer tied on a #2 down turned jig hook in chartreuse, purple, pink, orange and black or any combination of these colors. This fly is tied with lead eyes for weight.

Leeches – Various streamer leech patterns in olive, brown, purple, white and black in sizes 2 to 8.

Mice – Any mouse pattern works great, whether hair or foam size 2 to 6.

Mother of All Leeches – Articulated rabbit strip streamer tied on a 2/0 octopus style hook, in chartreuse, purple, pink, orange and black or any combination of these colors. This fly is tied incorporating a jig or cone head.

Sculpin – Brown and olive wool head rabbit strip sculpin pattern weighted on 2 to 6 hooks.

Skagit Minnow – Articulated marabou streamer tied on a 2/0 octopus style hook, in chartreuse, purple, pink, orange and black or any combination of these colors. This fly is not weighted.

Starlight, PF Salmon, Egg Sucking Leech – Hackle wrapped, chenille bodied and marabou tailed leech patterns tied on a #2 streamer or jig hook in chartreuse, purple, pink, orange, white and black or any combination of these colors. Almost all leeches are tied with jig heads or barbell eyes for weight

Topwater Popper or Wog – Any popper or surface fly, including bass bugs or saltwater poppers, which will make a commotion or popping action on the surface of the water when the fly is stripped. These flies can be articulated or not and use a variety of hook styles in size 2. Pink is the most common color.





## Contact Information

Email: [info@alaskawest.com](mailto:info@alaskawest.com)

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Year Round: Anchorage Office  
Phone: 800-344-3628

Mailing Address:  
Alaska West Sportfishing  
200 West 34<sup>th</sup> Ave, PMB 1170  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Summer Season: Bush Location near Quinhagak (early June – early September)  
Phone: 907-556-8146

Alaska West camp address - SUMMER SHIPPING ONLY  
Alaska West  
P. O. Box 129  
Quinhagak, AK 99655

*During our summer season, allow two weeks for mail to arrive (it is forwarded to our facility in the bush).*

