Welcome to the Chilkoot River Valley. For more than two thousand years humans have shared the Chilkoot River Valley with salmon, brown bears and eagles. It’s important to realize that wild bears are and can be dangerous. A passive bear, especially a sow with cubs, is not a guarantee of safety.

Remember: Bears come here to fish, too. When bear activity is at its peak (summer and fall), both bears and anglers compete for the same resources. Every human visit has an impact on bears and their habitat. Some bears are seen by multiple fishermen, causing potentially cumulative stress. Be aware of the lasting effects of your fishing experience on bears.

For your safety and the bear’s safety, please learn and follow the basic guidelines in this brochure when fishing around wild bears. You can be a good example for others while fishing around wild bears in their natural habitat.

Failure to follow the guidelines can lead to the destruction of a bear. It is very important that we all respect the Chilkoot River and the wildlife that live here.

Remember that your actions make a difference. Please help us protect this special place and its inhabitants.
**Do Not Crowd the Bears**

Give bears plenty of room and the right of way

Some bears are more tolerant than others, but every bear has a "personal space"-the distance within which a bear feels threatened. If you stay within that zone, a bear may react aggressively. Special caution should be taken around both sows with cubs and cubs themselves.

RELEVANT ALASKA STATE LAW:

IT IS ILLEGAL TO HARASS WILDLIFE

(5 AAC92.080)

**If you see bears AVOID THEM!**

If a bear approaches your area from a distance, try to move away. NEVER run away from a bear. Running can provoke a bear’s natural hunting and chasing instinct. Since they can run faster than 30 mph (50 km/hr), you have no chance of outrunning them. If a bear is a good ways off, and coming in your general direction, moving away at a normal pace can often avoid bad bear contact. The minimum recommended safe distance from any bear is 50 yards, and from a sow with cubs 100 yards. When you leave, take all your fish and equipment with you. If you leave fish or equipment behind, a bear will begin to associate fishing activity with an easy meal, and will become more dangerous to people. Open tackle boxes left behind becomes a curiosity which can be just as dangerous as fish left behind.

**Actions to Take When a Bear Approaches**

If a bear approaches while you are fishing, stop fishing

When you are fishing and you see a bear, and if the bear approaches you, avoid actions that interfere with bear movement or foraging activities. If the bear continues to approach, stop fishing and move away. If you have a fish on your line, don't let it splash. Splashing fish attract bears. If that's not possible, cut your line. A bear quickly learns to associate anglers and/or the splashing of a fish in play with an easy meal and can take away your fish in seconds. Never let a bear take anything away from you. Never feed or toss fish to a bear. If a bear learns to can obtain fish just by approaching fishermen, it will return for more.

**Do not tempt the Bears**

Bears have an amazing sense of smell, and will home in on your location if they smell fish or blood. You need to keep your area clean. When you catch a fish you intend to harvest, immediately kill and clean your fish, then bleed it IN THE WATER. If you filet your fish, chop up the remains into small pieces and toss them into fast moving water. Bleeding into the water reduces the chance that blood on rocks or streambanks will put out the scent of FISH FEAST, attracting hungry bears from the entire area right to your spot. After cleaning your fish IMMEDIATELY take it to an airtight cooler that is inside a secured vehicle.

RELEVANT ALASKA STATE LAWS:

· IT IS ILLEGAL TO ATTRACT BEARS WITH FOOD OR GARBAGE EITHER INTENTIONALLY OR NEGLIGENTLY (5 AAC92.410)

· IT IS ILLEGAL TO FEED BEARS (5 AAC92.230)

**Do Not Feed the Bears**

Bears are always looking for something to eat. Bears have only about six months to build up fat reserves for their long winter hibernation. Do not let them learn that your fish, human food or garbage is an easy meal. All fish, food, beverages, garbage and any other odorous items must be attended at all times. Unattended fish, food, coolers and other belongings WILL attract bears. Remember, while you are fishing your attention is on fishing so it is better not to bring any food with you to where you are fishing. SECURE ALL FOOD INSIDE YOUR VEHICLE in an airtight cooler. A bear that has learned that humans are a good source of food may become dangerous to people in the park and in local communities outside the park. In most cases such bears must eventually be destroyed.

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