

Welcome to sport fishing in the Petersburg/ Wrangell area

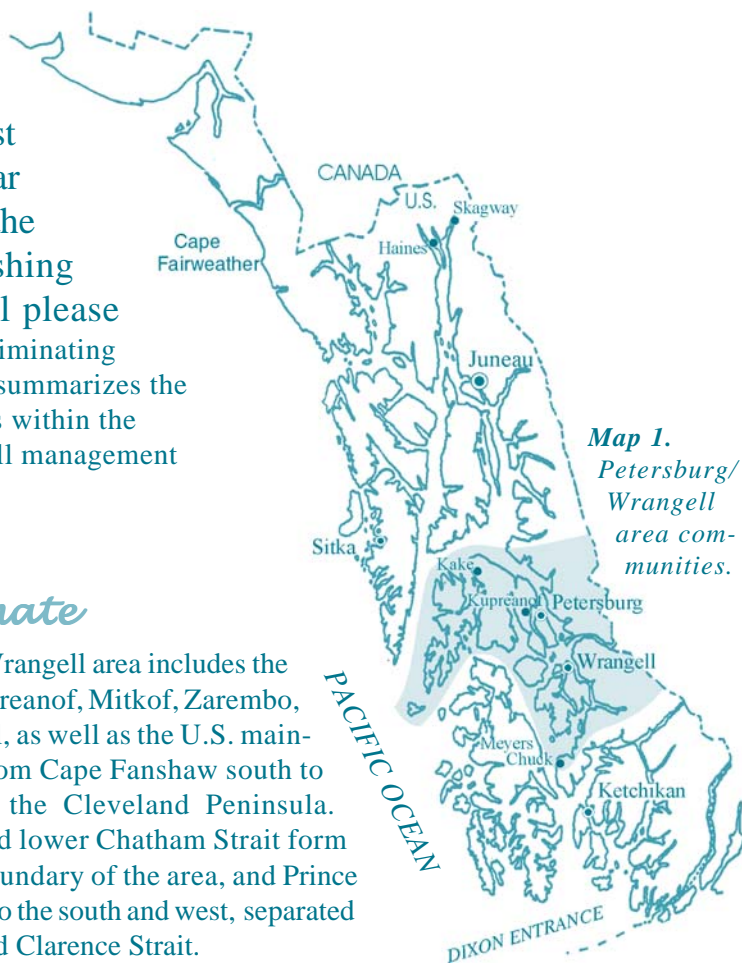


Sport fishing here in Southeast Alaska is popular recreation, and the array of sportfishing opportunity will please even the most discriminating angler. This guide summarizes the main sport fisheries within the Petersburg/Wrangell management area.

Geography and Climate

The Petersburg/Wrangell area includes the islands of Kuiu, Kupreanof, Mitkof, Zarembo, Etolin and Wrangell, as well as the U.S. mainland to the east—from Cape Fanshaw south to Meyers Chuck on the Cleveland Peninsula. Frederick Sound and lower Chatham Strait form the northwestern boundary of the area, and Prince of Wales Island lies to the south and west, separated by Sumner Strait and Clarence Strait.

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*Map 1.
Petersburg/
Wrangell
area com-
munities.*



The “Devil’s Thumb” at sunset—viewed from Mitkof Island, Southeast Alaska.

Most of the area lies within the Tongass National Forest boundary and is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Remaining land is owned by state and local governments and the private sector. Kake Tribal Corporation owns the largest blocks of private land in the area.

Forested mountains as high as 5,000 feet and vast areas of open muskeg are the prevailing landscape. Evergreens dominate the forest—Sitka spruce, western hemlock, western redcedar and Alaska-cedar. Coastal areas are rocky and rugged, and small islands dot the waterways. The outer islands form a protective barrier for the inside waters against the open ocean.

Dozens of small streams and lakes are scattered throughout the area, and the 330-mile-long Stikine River flows out of British Columbia and empties into Eastern Passage just six miles north of Wrangell.

The area is lightly populated, with about 3,000 residents each in Petersburg and Wrangell, 665 in Kake, 50 in Meyers Chuck, and 50 in Kupreanof.

Summary of Petersburg/Wrangell area transportation services



	Gas	Groceries	Float plane service	State ferry service	Jet airline	Wheel plane service	Marine pump station	Boat ramp	RV park	RV pump station
<i>Petersburg</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<i>Wrangell</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<i>Kupreanof</i>			•			•				
<i>Kake</i>	•	•	•	•		•		•		
<i>Meyers Chuck</i>	•	•	•			•				

Access to Petersburg/Wrangell area communities



The Petersburg/Wrangell area is served by the Alaska Marine Highway (state ferry system), commercial jet, and smaller, propeller-powered aircraft. The state ferry is a dependable mode of travel regardless of weather, and you can also transport your auto, truck, boat, or recreational vehicle. You cannot reach the area from outside by road, but there are small road systems within each community.

By Air. . .

Alaska Airlines provides daily jet service, and several air taxi and air charter companies offer daily wheeled or float plane flights into the Petersburg/Wrangell area from Ketchikan. Contact Alaska Airlines or local air charter operators at:

Alaska Airlines
Reservations and Information
(800) 252-7522 (ALASKAAIR)
Website: www.alaskaair.com

Kupreanof Flying Service
P.O. Box 768
Petersburg, AK 99833
(907) 772-3396

Pacific Wing Air Charters
P.O. Box 1560 A
Petersburg, AK 99833
(907) 772-9258

Sunrise Aviation Inc.
P.O. Box 432
Wrangell, AK 99929
(907) 874-2319

Temsco Helicopters, Inc.
Box 829
Petersburg, AK 99833
(907) 772-4780

By Water . . .

The Alaska Marine Highway maintains year-round ferry service between Petersburg, Wrangell and Kake. All ferries have lounges, solariums, and dining rooms and/or cafeterias. The summer months can be busy, but there is almost always space for walk-on passengers. Those wishing to bring a vehicle or stay in a cabin should reserve early to get specific dates. Visit the AMHS website: www.alaska.gov/ferry or get information by mail, phone or fax, at:

Alaska Marine Highway
6858 Glacier Highway
Juneau, AK 99801-7909
USA

1-800-642-0066 toll-free in U.S.
(907) 277-4829 in Anchorage
(907) 465-3941 in Juneau
(907) 277-4829 (fax)

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By Land . . .

Local road systems consist of a few paved roads near Petersburg and Wrangell, and various primary and secondary gravel roads developed for logging access and transport, which vary greatly in width, surface condition, and maintenance:

ON WRANGELL ISLAND, a paved road extends south from Wrangell along the Zimovia Highway to Pat Creek, and north of Wrangell to the airport. Over 100 miles of gravel roads lead to various locations on Wrangell Island. These roads receive little or no wintertime maintenance.

THE CITY OF PETERSBURG is located on Mitkof Island, 40 air miles northwest of Wrangell. A paved road runs 22 miles south of Petersburg on the Mitkof Highway and 2 miles north of town to the airport and the Sandy Beach area. Connecting to the paved road at varying distances from town are 200 miles of logging spurs. Travelling these gravel spurs requires caution: they vary in width and surface condition and are *not* maintained during winter months. Anyone who plans to use these roads should check locally for current road conditions.

THE COMMUNITY OF KAKE—about 50 air miles west of Petersburg on Kupreanof Island, can be reached by float plane or ferry from Petersburg. The Kake road system consists of 5 miles of gravel road connected to approximately 150 miles of logging access roads. The roads in Kake vary in condition and are maintained only

seasonally. Travellers should check locally for current road conditions.

THE VILLAGE OF MEYERS CHUCK lies at the northwestern tip of Cleveland Peninsula, about 50 miles south of Wrangell. This roadless community is reached only by floatplane or boat—within the local area, access is by trails or skiff.

THE CITY OF KUPREANOF, located directly across Wrangell Narrows from Petersburg on Kupreanof Island, has no road system. Access is limited to small skiff or float plane.

The other road systems in the Petersburg/Wrangell area are on Kuiu and Zarembo Islands. **ON KUIU ISLAND**, the road system consists of 200 miles or more of logging road, accessible primarily from Rowan Bay. These vary in quality and are used mainly by local residents and logging outfits working in the area. **THE ZAREMBO ISLAND** road system is even more primitive, comprising 100 miles or more of logging road with limited maintenance, and is used only by barged-in vehicles. Visitors to Kuiu and Zarembo should consider accessing these islands by air charter or larger boat.

Facilities in the Petersburg/Wrangell area

There are hospitals in Petersburg and in Wrangell, and a paramedic is available in Kake. Medically trained personnel, facilities, and pharmacy supplies are limited in the other outlying communities.

U.S. Forest Service Public Use Cabins



The U.S. Forest Service maintains 42 cabins for public use in the Petersburg/Wrangell area. The cabins typically accommodate 4 to 6 people. Most are in remote areas, where access is limited to floatplane, boat, or trail. Many are adjacent to lakes, with skiffs available. Sport fishing is handy near 29 of these cabins (see maps and tables on pages 20–25).

A series of USFS road maps for the Petersburg/Wrangell area is indispensable if you plan much road travel and are unfamiliar with the road system. To purchase USFS road maps, make cabin reservations, or get more information, contact the local USFS office.

To make cabin reservations on the Internet, go to: www.ReserveUSA.com/cabins/

To contact local USFS offices, call or write:

Wrangell Ranger District
P. O. Box 51
Wrangell, AK 99929
(907) 874-2323

Petersburg Ranger District
P. O. Box 1328
Petersburg, AK 99833
(907) 772-3871

Lodging and Car/Boat Rental

In addition to USFS cabins, there are sport fishing lodges, small motels, and bed-and-breakfast establishments in the area. Some communities have public or private campgrounds and cabin rentals. Shoemaker Bay RV Park in Wrangell (Wrangell Parks and Recreation) is open to public use.

Car and boat rentals are also available in several communities. You can find more information at the Division of Sport Fish office in Ketchikan, or by contacting one of

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these offices near your intended destination:

Wrangell Chamber of Commerce
P. O. Box 49
Wrangell, AK 99829
1-(800) 367-9745

Petersburg Chamber of Commerce
P. O. Box 649
Petersburg, AK 99833
(907) 772-3646

City of Kake
P. O. Box 500
Kake, AK 99830
(907) 785-3804

Most property in northern Southeast Alaska is federal or state land, and public access is encouraged. However, some waters are bounded by private property on which public use is permitted by the landowner.

State and National Parks

Whether you are sport fishing or enjoying other recreational pursuits in the Petersburg/Wrangell area, you will be visiting one of the most scenic areas in the world. You will want, and need information to help make the most of your trip. Below are principal contacts for further information.

State parks and attractions:

Alaska State Parks
400 W. Willoughby
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-4563

Tongass National Forest/Admiralty Island National Monument:

U.S. Forest Service
Public Information Center
101 Egan Dr.
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-8751

Other tourist attractions and related information:

Alaska State Division of Tourism
P. O. Box 110801
Juneau, AK 99811-0801
(907) 465-2010



Petersburg, Alaska

photo by Mark Schwan

Comfort and Safety

Weather throughout the area is very unpredictable, and if it's not raining, you can be sure that it will be before long. Good rain gear and boots are a must. Short boots are fine for some areas or for use with rain gear; however, hip boots and/or chest-waders are preferable for most shore-based fisheries. If you are camping, be sure to take along an abundance of rain-fly material.

Excellent populations of mosquitoes, white-sox, no-see-ums, and flies inhabit the area and can be depended upon to give you trouble if you do not have a good supply of insect repellent. Different brands of repellent may be needed to deter various insects. Insect-proof tents are practically a necessity, and head nets are needed in some areas.

Pick calm weather for boating. Tidal movement is extreme and must be considered when navigating narrow channels or beaching or anchoring boats. Boats smaller than 14-foot seaworthy skiffs are not recommended for saltwater use. Local marine charts are excellent navigational aids which display hazardous shallow and rocky areas. Visit the

Alaska Boating Safety Program website for required equipment: www.alaskaboatingsafety.org

Brown and black bears are common throughout Southeast Alaska. Seeing one of these magnificent animals can be a memorable part of one's trip; however, bears should be avoided whenever possible. The danger associated with bears is generally overrated, but bears are definitely unpredictable—and encounters should never be taken lightly. In some areas, brown bears frequent favorite sport fishing locations and, on occasion, steal fish from anglers. When in bear habitat: (1) make noise so as not to surprise one; (2) do not keep food stored in or near your tent; (3) keep a *very* clean camp; and (4) do *not* camp on a game trail or alongside a stream full of spawning fish.

Common sense is the best bear protection available, but many people carry a firearm for additional protection; large caliber rifles of at least .30-06 ballistics or shotguns with slugs or buckshot are recommended. Familiarity with firearm operation is absolutely essential, as a bear can travel 50 feet in a second.

