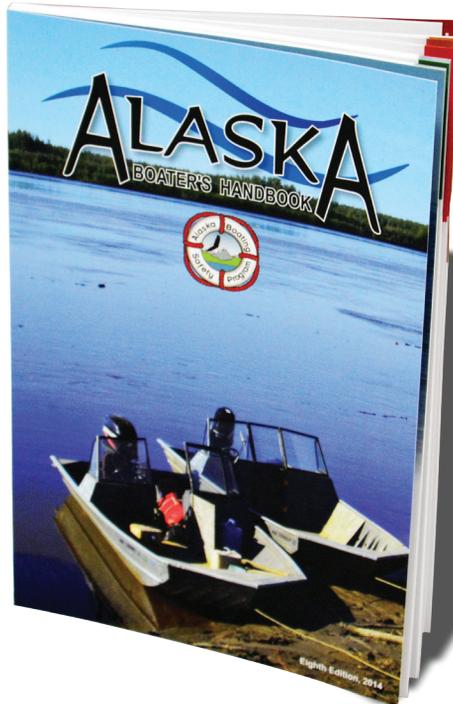


Prince William Sound

SUPPLEMENT

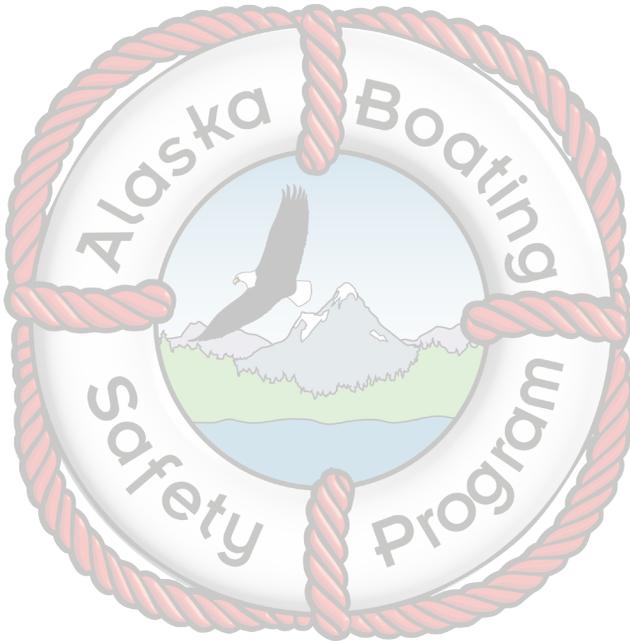
to the
Alaska Boater's Handbook

Fourth Edition, 2016



Please note; this is a supplement to the *Alaska Boater's Handbook*, which contains detailed information on boating in Alaska. The *Alaska Boater's Handbook* includes in-depth information on topics such as equipment requirements, registration requirements, boating laws, cold water survival, handling emergencies and much more.

To obtain a copy of the *Alaska Boater's Handbook*, please contact the Department of Natural Resources Public Information Center at (907) 269-8400 or <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/pic>



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LIFE JACKETS SAVE LIVES AND FAMILIES



The Alaska Boating Safety Program partners with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and many others to produce educational programs and publications that promote safe and enjoyable boating, including this 2016 edition of the *Prince William Sound Supplement to the Alaska Boater's Handbook*.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Natural Resources

DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

OFFICE OF BOATING SAFETY

550 W. Seventh Avenue, Suite 1380

Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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Dear Alaskan boater,

The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Office of Boating Safety is pleased to offer the fourth edition of the Prince William Sound Supplement to the Alaska Boater's Handbook. Within its pages you will find helpful information for your next boating voyage in Prince William Sound.

This beautiful natural playground offers many opportunities for exploration; but boating in the Sound is not without risk. Five out of six recreational boating fatalities are the result of a vessel capsize, swamping, or a fall overboard into Alaska's cold water. Even on beautiful, sunny warm days, people need to keep in mind the dangers of cold water immersion and prepare for potential weather changes resulting in severe ocean conditions. Boaters can increase the chances of survival by following these key points:

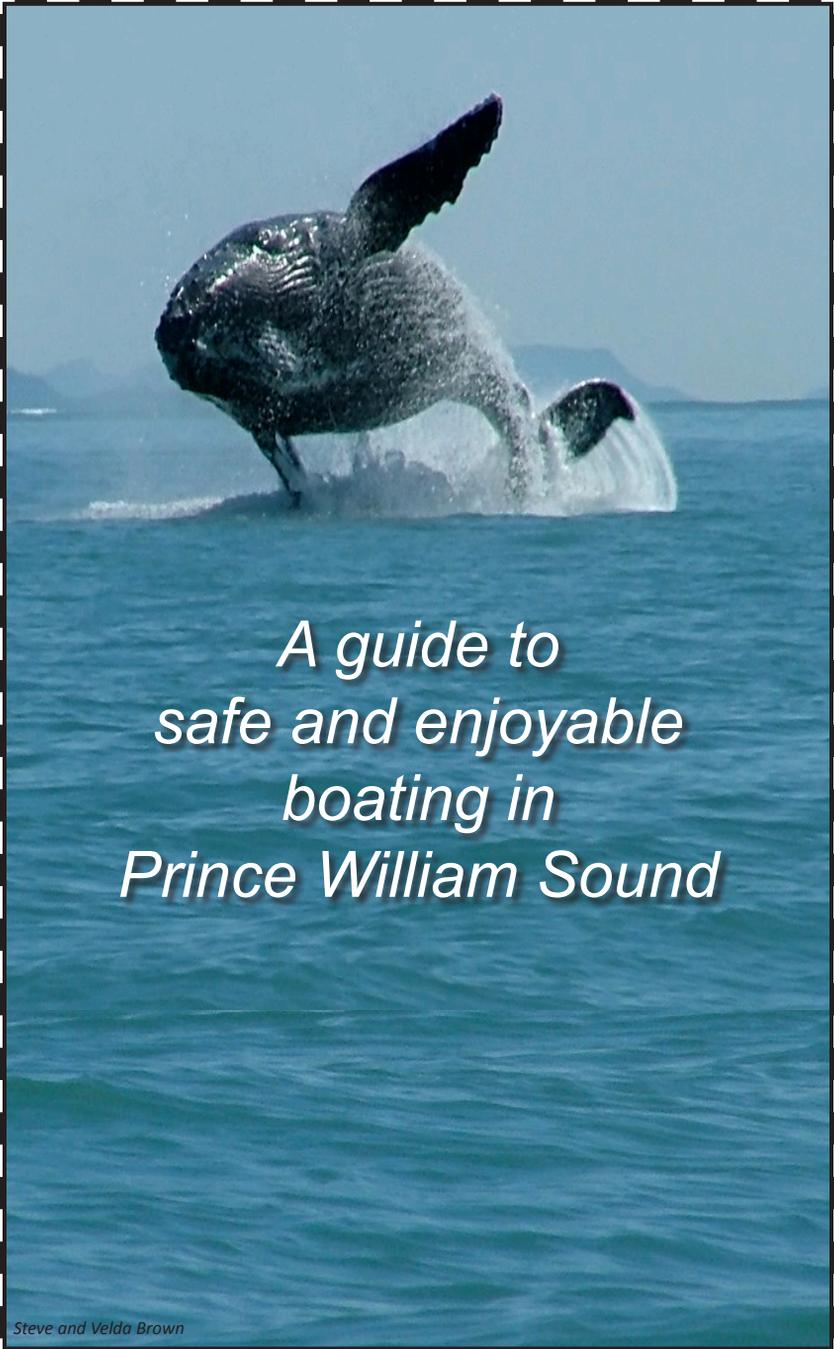
- Always wear a properly fitted life jacket, when in an open boat or on deck.
- Carry emergency communication and distress signaling devices on your person.
- Attach the engine cut-off device when underway, especially when operating solo.
- Equip the boat with at least one re-boarding device.

This publication is not intended for navigational purposes; rather, it is a supplemental tool to be used with others, such as the *Alaska Boater's Handbook*. Visit AlaskaBoatingSafety.org for additional links and information. Please share your photos and adventures with us online, Facebook (Alaska Boating Safety Program), Instagram ([alaskaboatingsafety](https://www.instagram.com/alaskaboatingsafety)), and Twitter (AK Boating Program). Prince William Sound is a paradise and Alaska State Parks wishes you an exciting and memorable boating adventure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben Ellis".

Ben Ellis
Director
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation



*A guide to
safe and enjoyable
boating in
Prince William Sound*

Steve and Velda Brown

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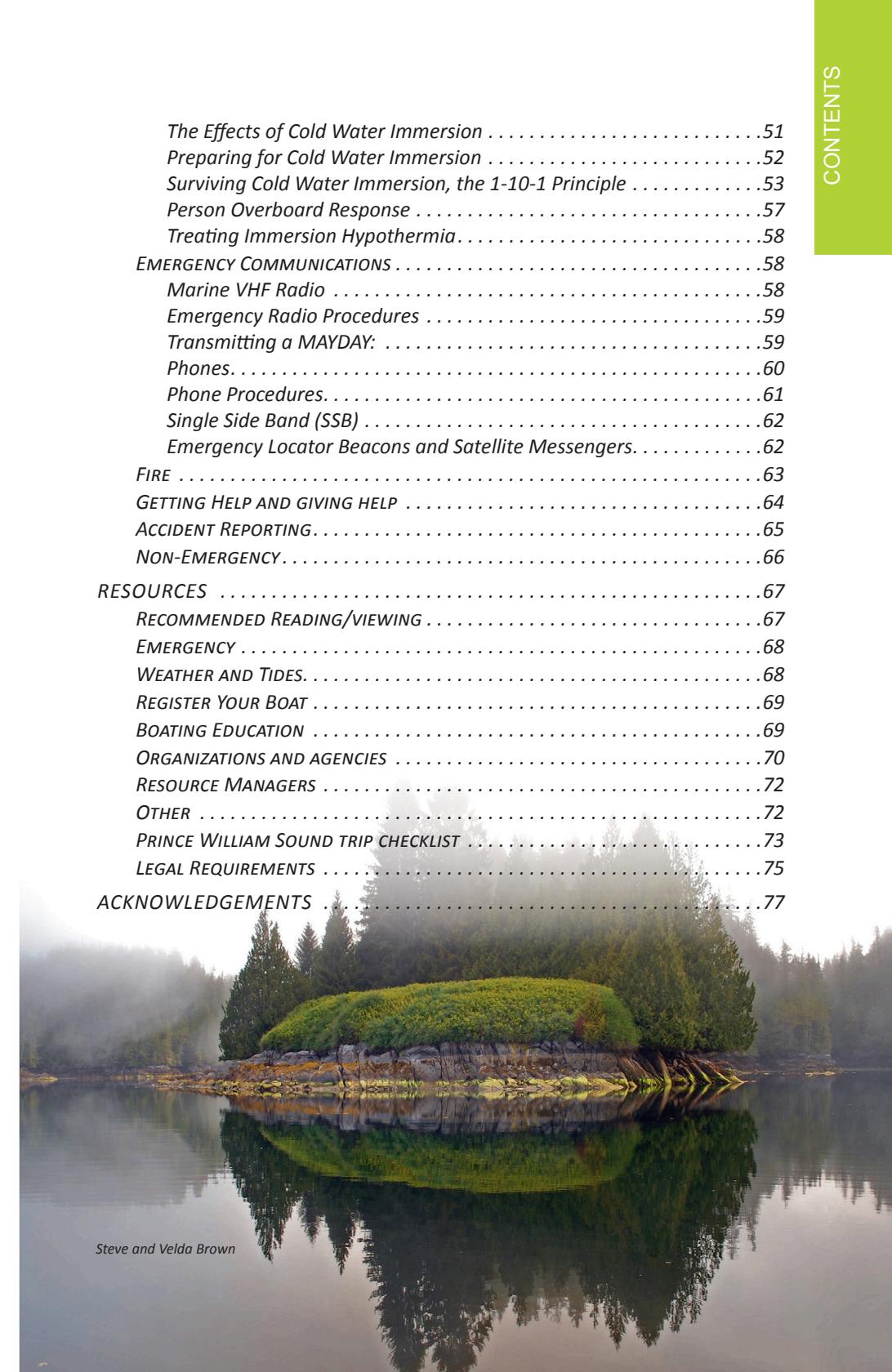
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Steve and Velda Brown

OVERVIEW OF THE SOUND

Prince William Sound spans nearly 100 miles across, from Whittier to Cordova, and another 100 miles north to south, from Harvard Arm to Montague Strait. It contains nearly 7,000 square miles of ocean, river deltas, tidal flats, forests, mountains and glaciers.

Most of the uplands of the Sound are within Chugach National Forest, predominantly a dense blanket of coastal old-growth spruce and hemlock forest, interspersed with mile-high mountains and ice fields as big as small states. Although much of the Sound is public land, numerous private holdings dot the shorelines, and many of these lands are either off limits or accessed only with prior permission from the owners. In addition, access to some public lands is restricted or prohibited to protect special cultural or biological features.

The Sound hosts an abundance of upland and marine plants and animals, with deer and bear on the mainland and the major islands, seabirds and sea otters along most of the coastline, and whales throughout. Most streams, other than those too silty from glacial flour, have trout, Dolly Varden, and salmon. Halibut, lingcod and rockfish inhabit the area, though much of the Sound is deep water. While



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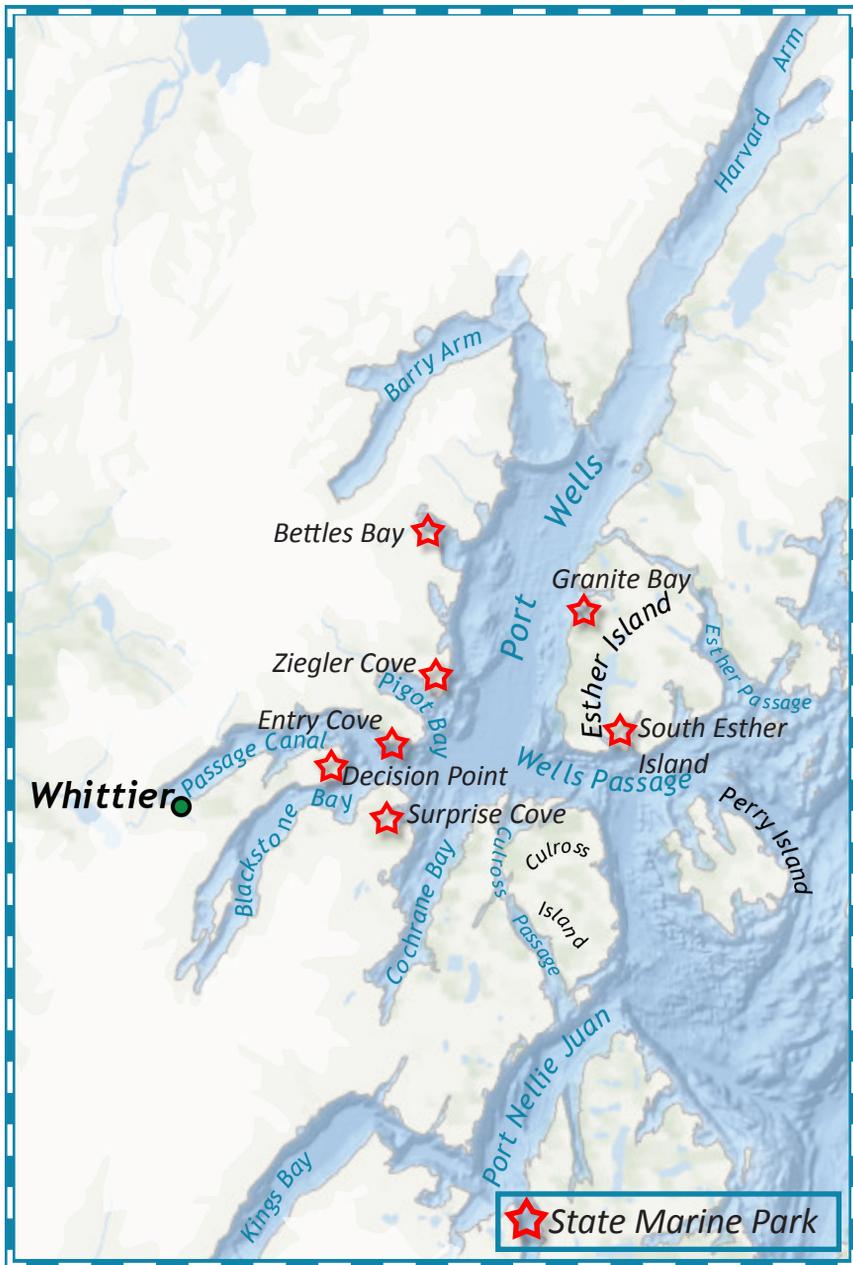
most wildlife and fish are abundant, some species are in decline, and harvest is either limited or prohibited. Be sure to check the latest Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulations for the rules pertaining to fishing and hunting.

The Sound is sparsely populated. The towns and villages of Whittier, Valdez, Tatitlek, Cordova and Chenega are each separated by miles of wilderness waterways. A handful of residents also live at a number of remote fish hatcheries and oyster farms. The total population of the Sound is fewer than 8,000. Except for Valdez, Whittier, and Cordova, there are few public boating facilities in the area.

The range of choices in the Sound is limited only by imagination and fuel capacity. From the deep fjords and glaciers of the north to the sandy ocean beaches of the southeast islands, Prince William Sound provides a wide variety of world-class boating opportunities.

In the following pages, we describe the Sound's communities and parks beginning with Whittier and traveling clockwise around the Sound.





WHITTIER

The access to Whittier by road is through the Anton Anderson tunnel. The tunnel is shared with the railroad and operates on a traffic schedule, so be sure to check departure times prior to arriving at the tunnel. For detailed information on opening times and fees, visit the tunnel web site at <http://www.dot.alaska.gov/creg/whittiertunnel/index.shtml> or call 907-472-2584.

Whittier sits on a narrow shelf of land between the Chugach Mountains and the western end of a deep glacial fjord named Passage Canal. This small town of about 300 people, about 62 miles southeast of Anchorage, was established by the U.S. Army during World War II. When the railroad from Whittier to Portage was completed in 1943, Whittier became the main transfer point for troops and supplies in southcentral Alaska.

The town has a post office, medical clinic, police and fire departments, tackle shop, small grocery store, gas station/fuel dock, hotel, several restaurants, several B&Bs, and a number of tour companies, charter boats, and kayak liveries. Available marine services include boat watch and boat tow services. No outboard motor repair currently is available. A detailed list of marine services is available at the harbormaster's office.

Whittier harbor has 330 moorage spaces for vessels up to 60' in length, some dry storage space on shore, tide grids, one launching ramp, a 25-ton marine travel lift, a 1,000-lb dock crane, electricity, fresh water (April-October), *Kids Don't Float* life jacket loaner boards, fish cleaning stations, showers, used oil collection, and a marine sewage holding tank pump out.

The harbormaster's office is open 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during the summer and 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m. in the winter. The staff monitor VHF Ch. 16 and 68. The telephone number is 907-472-2330 ext. 6 and the fax number is 907-472-2472. The harbormaster can also be reached by e-mail at harbormaster@whittieralaska.gov

The following information was provided by Whittier harbormaster's office:

- Pets must be on a leash and owners must clean up after them.
- When on harbor floats or beach areas, children under 13 should wear life jackets. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.
- The entire harbor is a no-wake zone.
- Property left on the floats more than 24 hours will be impounded.
- Vessels arriving by sea must register with the harbormaster's office within four hours.
- Vehicles and boat trailers must be removed from ramp areas immediately after launching.
- Fish cleaning is permitted at the established cleaning stations only. Conserve water by turning off faucets at the stations after use.
- Vessels are required to radio the harbormaster when entering and leaving the harbor.

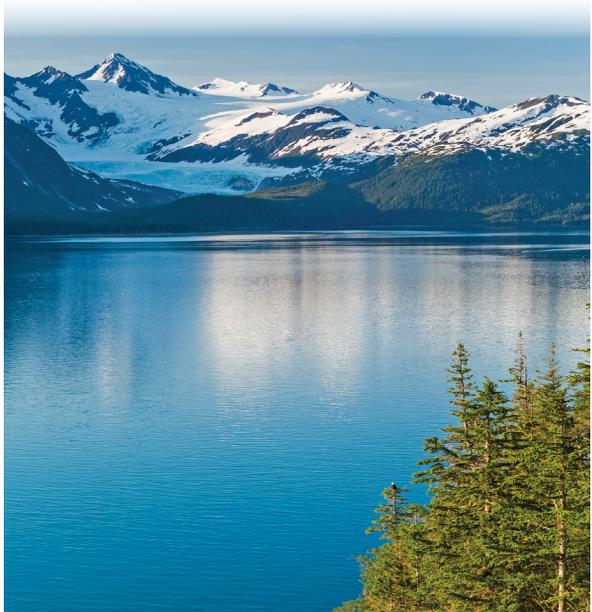


State of Alaska Michael DeYoung

- Contact the harbormaster regarding waste disposal, old batteries, etc. There is no collection point for used antifreeze, so vessel owners must take it out of Whittier.
- Garbage may only be deposited in the dumpsters at the head of each ramp.
- Boat holding tanks can be pumped out only at the station on “B” float or at the mobile pump unit.
- No oil or fuel discharge is permitted in the harbor and any sheen must be reported to the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Owners of boats moored during the winter must arrange for boat watch service.
- Filing a float plan is strongly encouraged. The harbor has float plan deposit boxes.
- Parking and camping spaces are limited. The city owns parking space for about 300 vehicles, divided among several small parking lots around town.

PASSAGE CANAL

Some boaters, with limited time or open water boating experience, may opt to stay in the Passage Canal area. A ten-mile trip along Passage Canal takes you past a large seabird rookery, several spectacular waterfalls, and breathtaking mountain scenery. If you are lucky, you may spot seals, porpoises, or even whales.



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VALDEZ

Valdez and Whittier are the two Prince William Sound communities that are accessible by road.

Valdez is located on the north side of Port Valdez in eastern Prince William Sound. A 1964 tsunami, a result of the Good Friday Earthquake that killed a number of Chugach villagers in the coastal village of Chenega, destroyed the town of Valdez as well as the harbor. The original harbor was located in “Old Town” and construction was completed in 1938. The harbor was relocated to the new town site in 1966.

If arriving via the Richardson Highway, boaters should stop by the harbor office located at 300 North Harbor Drive. All boats and trailers are required to register with the harbor office prior to mooring in the harbor. If arriving by water, boaters must then call the office on marine VHF channel 16 to request moorage. Once assigned moorage and after docking, go to the office to complete the required paperwork. If arriving by sea, note that the tanker traffic and afternoon winds could be a factor in your maneuverability within Valdez Narrows.



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The harbor office is open everyday during the summer and from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the winter. The telephone number is (907) 835-4981 and fax is (907) 835-2958. Email can be directed to svonbargen@ci.valdez.ak.us and the harbor web page may be viewed at www.ci.valdez.ak.us/index.aspx?nid=146

Valdez harbor is a full-service facility with 511 slips operated by the City of Valdez in conjunction with the State of Alaska. Available slips range in size from 20 feet to 65 feet, along with 900 feet of transient dock space. Although all slips are currently assigned to tenants, the harbor uses a hot berthing system to accommodate transient boaters throughout the season.

Valdez harbor offers a wide-range of services to vessel owners. A modern vessel maintenance yard offers environmentally appropriate work areas that capture and treat all runoff products associated with hull maintenance. There are eight 20 by 60 foot concrete work pads with power and water available for vessel owners for maintenance work. Other amenities include a tidal grid capable of handling vessels up to



120 feet in length, #5,000 and #10,000 marine cranes, an all-tide launch ramp, restrooms, used oil disposal, showers, and multiple vessel pump-out stations. Other services available in the community include two marine fuel docks, marine supply stores, commercial divers, welding, fabrication and fiberglass services; and commercial motor carriers.

TATITLEK

Tatitlek is situated on Tatitlek Narrows about 25 miles southwest of Valdez and is home to about 100 residents. The village has an airstrip and a public dock.

Currently there are no stores, marine services, restaurants, or other amenities for visitors in this community.



CORDOVA

Cordova is situated on the east side of Prince William Sound in traditional Eyak territory at the head of Orca Inlet, which Spanish explorer Don Salvador Fidalgo originally named Puerto Cordoba in 1790. The Copper River or Ahtna River, Athabascan: Ahtna, "river of the Ahtnas," Tlingit: Eekhéeni, "river of copper." The Copper River, with its famed sockeye runs, drains into the Gulf of Alaska about 25 miles east of Cordova. By 1887, two canneries were operating near Odiak Slough. Other fisheries, including razor clam fisheries, soon developed.

In 1902, Alaska developed its first commercial oil field that reportedly began production at Katalla, just 47 miles southeast of Cordova. In 1911, the Copper River and Northwestern Railway was completed, connecting the Bonanza-Kennecott Mines to the port in Cordova and the City of Cordova became the shipping port for copper mined at Kennecott Mine.

Fishing, a mainstay of the city's economy, became increasingly important after mining tapered off and the Katalla oil field was destroyed by fire in the 1930s. Today, commercial fishing is the main industry in Cordova.

Cordova is not on the road system and is accessible only by plane or boat. Jet planes fly into Merle K. "Mudhole" Smith Airport daily, and the Alaska Marine Highway System provides ferry service to Cordova, along with Whittier, Valdez, Tatitlek, and Chenega. Barge service to Cordova is year-round. If arriving by sea, boaters should note that Cordova is affected by significant tidal fluctuations and mud flats.

Boat Harbor and Moorage

Cordova's small boat harbor can accommodate approximately 700 vessels, making it one of Alaska's largest single-basin harbors. Slips range in size from 24 feet to 70 feet, and seaplane moorage is also available. There are two launch ramps and two tidal grids, a 160-foot light duty grid and a 180-foot heavy duty grid. Amenities include electricity, potable water, restrooms, showers, and fuel from the north end of the municipal dock.

The harbor office is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Office personnel stand by on VHF 16 and use VHF 68 as a working channel. Visiting boaters will need to complete a registration form and pay any

necessary fees upon arrival and should check in at the harbor. The harbormaster can be reached at (907) 424-6400, or by email at harbor@cityofcordova.net

Dock Facilities

The port includes three large docks—the municipal dock, the city dock, and the T-dock. The municipal dock is Cordova’s main commercial facility, adjacent to the Alaska Marine Highway dock. The dock’s outside face is 408 feet long with an average depth of 25 feet. The city dock is 300 feet long and is situated just outside of the entrance to the small boat harbor. This dock is used primarily for transfer of light freight and fishing gear. The T-dock is used for the moorage of the U.S. Coast Guard buoy tender Sycamore, home-ported in Cordova.

Vessel Haul-Out and Shipyard

A 150-ton marine travel lift is available to haul out boats. The shipyard provides unsheltered vessel dry-docking for maintenance and short- or long-term storage.

Boaters must make reservations and sign a haul-out agreement before



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any vessel is hauled. All requests for haul-out services must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Exceptions can be made to this requirement in an emergency, such as if a vessel is taking on water or damage to vessel requires immediate repair. Payment for lift and launch services is due in advance.

The city's goal is to operate the shipyard in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. Shipyard users are subject to rules that govern on-site work activities. These rules can be accessed at www.cityofcordova.net





CHENEGA BAY

Chenega Bay, on Evans Island, lies in the extreme southwest corner of the Sound. Chenega was established in 1984 by survivors of the 1964 earthquake-generated tsunami that destroyed the original village. This village of about 60 residents features a small boat harbor, dock, a 2500-foot runway, and a small health clinic. A fuel station sells gasoline and diesel fuel, which must be transferred to boats by hand.



Kids Don't Float Life Jacket Loaner Program

The communities of Prince William Sound are proud to participate in the *Kids Don't Float* life jacket loaner program, a cooperative effort with the State of Alaska, many agencies and local sponsors. Life jackets of varying sizes may be found at most harbors.



STATE MARINE PARKS

The State of Alaska, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, manages 14 State Marine Parks (SMP) in Prince William Sound, many with desirable anchorages and campsites. Note that the mileage approximation is a straight line for power boaters and may be much longer by kayak.

Decision Point, near the entrance of Passage Canal, on the south side, eight miles from Whittier;

Entry Cove, near the entrance of Passage Canal, on the north side, 10 miles from Whittier;

Ziegler Cove, three miles northeast of Entry Cove, on the west side of Port Wells;

Bettles Bay, nine miles northeast of Ziegler cove, also on the west side of Port Wells;

Surprise Cove, in Cochrane Bay at the south end of Port Wells, 13 miles from Whittier;

South Esther Island, Lake and Quillian bays, on the east side of Port Wells, 19 miles from Whittier;

Granite Bay, also on Esther Island, on the east side of Port Wells, about seven miles north of South Esther;

Horseshoe Bay, on Latouche Island, across Latouche Passage from the village of Chenega Bay;

Shoup Bay, six miles west of Valdez. Shoup Bay has three public use cabins for rent; McAllister Creek, Kittiwake and Moraine Creek. The first two are available all season. The Moraine Creek cabin is available to the public before May 15 and after September 1. Note: Because of the resident kittiwake colony, the upper bay is CLOSED to personal watercraft, jet boats, hovercraft, and float planes;

Sawmill Bay, 15 miles down Valdez Arm from Valdez, on the west side;

Jack Bay, also about 15 miles down Valdez Arm from Valdez, on the east side;

Canoe Passage, on Hawkins Island west of Cordova. Note that boats can enter Canoe Passage only from the north end;

Boswell Bay, on the east end of Hinchinbrook Island, 20 miles southwest of Cordova. This bay nearly goes dry at low tide;

Kayak Island, on the west side of the island, about 50 miles from Cordova.

Most State Marine Parks have sheltered anchorages and attractive surroundings. Some feature improvements include tent platforms, fire rings, outhouses and bear-proof food storage lockers.

Detailed information on State Marine Parks in Prince William Sound is available from the Alaska State Parks, Kenai Area office in Soldotna at (907) 262-5581 and

www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/units/pwssmp/smppws.htm Contact the Department of Natural Resources, Public Information Center at (907) 269-8400 for information concerning cabin use and reservations.

Chugach National Forest

Chugach National Forest, the second largest National Forest in the nation, encompasses most of the uplands of the Sound. The western part of the Sound, from Columbia Glacier, Naked and Knight Islands, down to Bainbridge, is managed by the U.S. Forest Service as a Wilderness Study Area. Leave No Trace camping is required. No cabins or other alterations to the landscape are allowed. Forest Service patrols visit camping and cabin sites, monitor use, maintain facilities, and report violations.

Chugach National Forest maintains 15 public use cabins around the Sound, five are accessible only by aircraft. Locations of those cabins accessible by boat are as follows:

Harrison Lagoon, on the west side of Port Wells, two miles north of Hobo Bay;

Port Chalmers, on the southwest side of Montague Island, about 70 miles from Whittier;

Green Island, in Montague Strait about 70 miles from Whittier;

Paulson Bay, on the west side of Cochrane Bay, 18 miles from Whittier;

Pigot Bay, at the head of Pigot Bay, 18 miles from Whittier;

Schrode Lake, near Long Bay, off Culross Passage, 25 miles from Whittier; plus a one mile hike;

Jack Bay, off Valdez Narrows, 20 miles southwest of Valdez;

Shelter Bay, on Hinchinbrook Island, about 40 miles from Cordova;

Double Bay, on the north shore of Hinchinbrook Island, 35 miles from Cordova.

Additional information on U.S. Forest Service cabins and camping is available from the Glacier Ranger District Office in Girdwood 907-783-3242. Cabin reservations are available toll-free at 877-444-6777 or online at <http://www.recreation.gov/> Due to heavy demand for cabins in the Sound, most dates are booked months in advance.



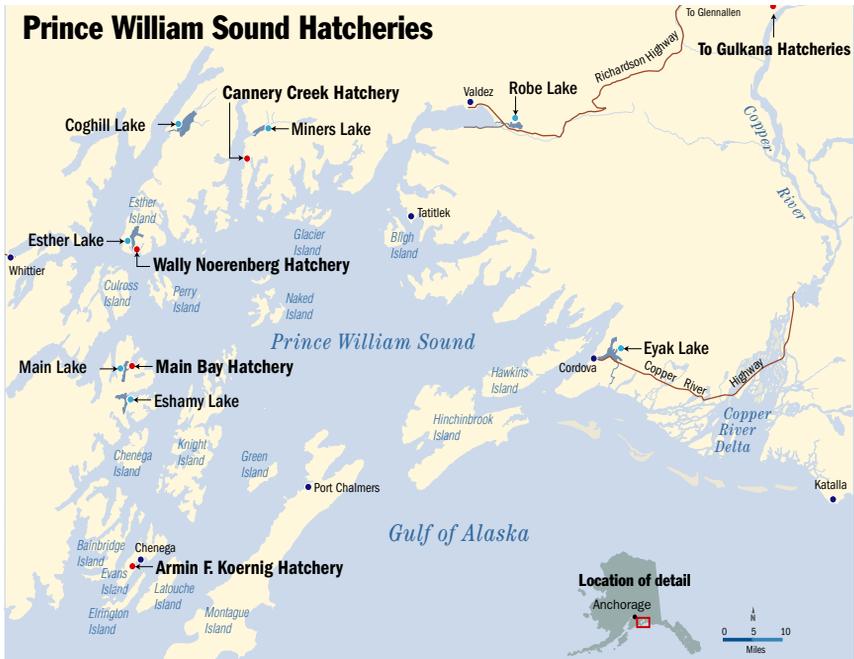
Salmon Hatcheries and Oyster Farms

Prince William Sound Aquaculture Association is a non-profit corporation supported largely by assessments on the commercial harvest and the proceeds from the sale of fish caught adjacent to the hatcheries. Commercial fishing takes place during most of the summer, and egg-taking continues into September.

There are four remote salmon hatcheries in the sound:

- Armin F. Koernig (San Juan), on Evans Island, a little southwest of Chenega Bay;
- Main Bay, on the mainland just east of Port Nellie Juan;
- Wally Noerenberg, the largest hatchery in the Sound, on the south end of Esther Island;
- Cannery Creek, on the east side of Unakwik Inlet.

When time and personnel permit, the hatcheries welcome small groups of visitors and may even provide a guided tour. To request a visit to a site, visitors should call on VHF Ch. 16, then switch to the hatchery's working frequency as requested.



Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation

HOMELAND SECURITY

All boaters have an important role in helping to keep our nation's waterways safe and secure. The following are guidelines for fulfilling this role:

- Keep your distance from all military vessels, cruise-liners, tankers, and other commercial ships.
- Do not stop or anchor beneath bridges.
- Avoid commercial port operation areas, especially those that involve military, cruise-line, or petroleum facilities.
- Never approach within 100 yards of any U.S. Naval Vessel.
- If you must operate within the 100-yard zone, all vessels must contact the U.S. Naval Vessel or the official patrol (or escort) vessel or the U.S. Coast Guard Traffic Center on marine VHF channel 16. Also, vessels restricted by their ability to maneuver may request to operate within 100 yards of a U.S. Naval Vessel in order to ensure safe passage in accordance with the Navigation Rules. Proceed slow to minimum speed if within 500 yards of these vessels and proceed as directed by the Commanding Officer of the naval or escort vessel. If within 500 yards, proceed at minimum speed which means, that which "is necessary to maintain a safe course" and may proceed as directed by the Commanding Officer of the Naval or escort vessels or the U.S. Coast Guard Traffic Center.



- Violators of the Naval Vessel Protection Zone can face up to six years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, not to mention a quick and severe response. Approaching certain other commercial vessels may also result in an immediate boarding.
- Observe and avoid all security zones and other restricted areas.
- Keep your own boat secure from theft. Never leave your boat accessible to others. Always secure and lock your boat when not on board. Power boaters should always take the ignition keys. When storing your boat for longer periods, make sure it is secure. Engines should be disabled and trailers secured.
- Keep a look out for anything that appears to be out of the ordinary.
- Make sure you have all required equipment, properly displaying your boat registration, and wearing your life jacket. By actively demonstrating your commitment to boating safety, you help reduce the demand on limited law enforcement and rescue resources and support homeland security efforts.
- If you encounter a situation that seems suspicious, report it immediately to local law enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard, or port security. Do not approach or challenge suspects. Report suspicious activity to the National Response Center 877-249-2824.



United States Coast Guard

VALDEZ SECURITY AND SAFETY ZONES

The U.S. Coast Guard has established security zones to encompass the Trans-Alaska Pipeline (TAPS) Valdez Terminal Complex, the TAPS Tank Vessels and the Valdez Narrows, Port Valdez, Alaska. The security zones are necessary to protect the Alyeska Marine Terminal and TAPS Tank Vessels from damage or injury. Vessels are prohibited from entering these security zones unless specifically authorized by the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port, Prince William Sound, Alaska.

The Valdez Marine Terminal Security Zone is marked on the north corners by yellow buoys. The southern points are Allison Creek to the east and Sawmill Spit to the west. Mariners must avoid the area delineated by the line between these points.

The Valdez Narrows Security Zone is active only when a tank vessel is in the Security Zone. Vessels may transit in the Security Zone but must stand clear whenever a tank vessel enters Valdez Narrows. The Tank Vessel Moving Security Zone is 200 yards around any tank vessel in Prince William Sound.

Alyeska Marine Terminal Security Zone, marked on the north corners by two yellow buoys 1.7 miles apart and 0.8 miles off shore from the terminal; 100 yards of any High Capacity Passenger Vessel (passenger vessels >100') or Alaska Marine Highway System vessel being escorted by the U.S. Coast Guard or local enforcement air/surface assets; Valdez Narrows Security Zone, which is active when a tank vessel is within the Narrows and requires vessels to stand clear on either side of the Valdez Narrows Tanker Optimum Track Line (center of the Narrows) whenever a tank vessel enters the Valdez Narrows. Violators of these rules are subject to a \$40,000 fine.

There are five Safety Zones within the port of Valdez:

- 1) **Valdez Marine Terminal (VMT):** vessels authorized to be within the VMT Security Zone must remain 200 yards off of any waterfront facility at the Trans-Alaska Pipeline VMT complex.
- 2) **Tank Vessels arriving/Departing VMT:** the area within 200 yards of any tank vessel maneuvering to approach or depart VMT.

3) **Ammunition Island (Valdez Container Terminal):** 1330 yards of Ammunition Island when a vessel carrying ammunition is moored there.

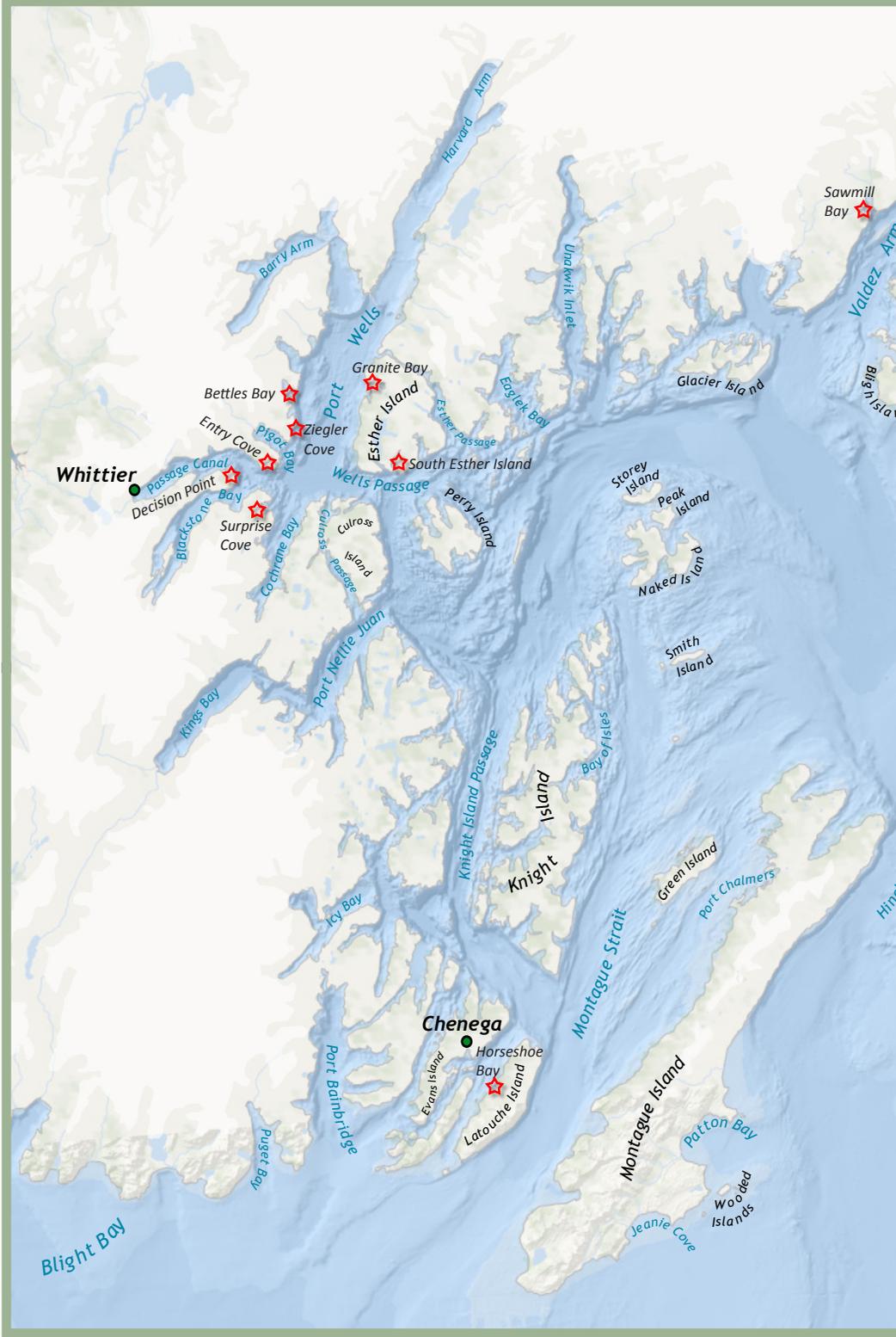
4) **Vessel Transiting to /from Ammunition Island:** 200 yards off a vessel carrying ammunition and navigating between Naked Island and Ammunition Island.

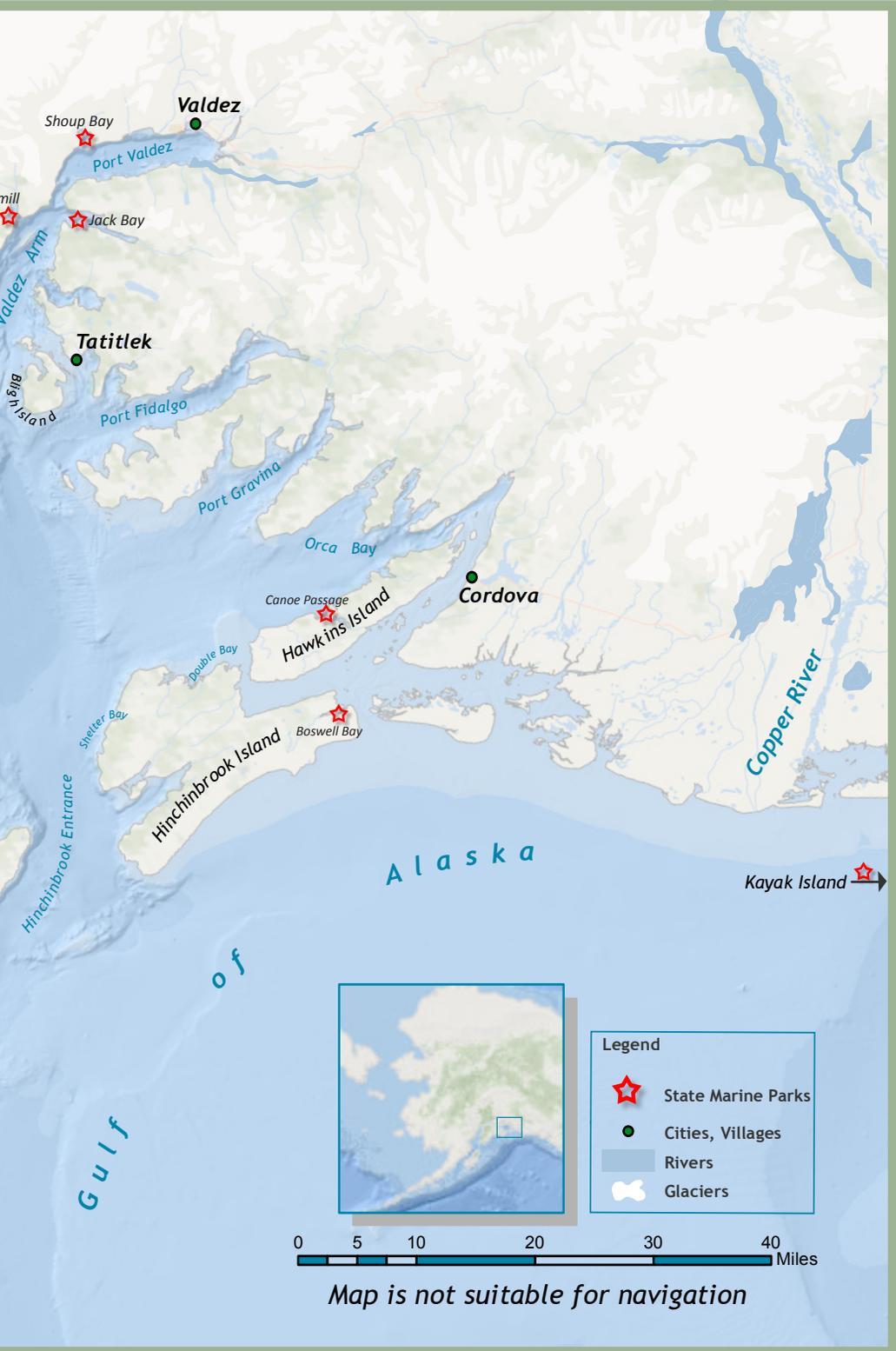
5) **Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) Port of Valdez Ferry Terminal:** the area 200 yards in all directions of the AMHS ferry dock when there is a AMHS ferry transiting within the Port of Valdez and there is a commercial salmon fishery opening within the port.



There are five Security Zones within the Port of Valdez. Photo Courtesy of Alyeska Pipeline

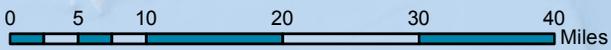
MAP—PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND





Legend

- ★ State Marine Parks
- Cities, Villages
- ▬ Rivers
- ☁ Glaciers



Map is not suitable for navigation

PREPARATION

BOATING COURSES AND OTHER INSTRUCTION

Safe and enjoyable boating depends on knowledge, skill, and thorough preparation. This is especially true in the Sound, where boaters are often a long way from help and must be as self-reliant as possible. Adequate preparation may resolve or even prevent many common boating problems and may allow boaters to assist others in trouble. The first step of self-reliance should be education.

All Prince William Sound boaters should understand state and federal boating laws, as well as fulfilling the carriage requirements (*see Resources*). Boaters should also know how to signal for help using a variety of methods, and be able to make a distress call with a marine VHF radio. It is a good idea to be certified in first aid and CPR, and know how to use a compass, determine position on a chart, and plot a course. Consider taking coastal navigation or other boating safety courses, such as those offered by the U.S. Coast Guard



Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, or the Alaska Office of Boating Safety.

Those new to powerboating should look for a basic boating course approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). Experienced boaters should also consider taking basic boating courses as a refresher. Boating laws and technologies change, and current courses contain updated information and offer a place for boaters to share experiences and local knowledge.

Personal watercraft (PWC) owners should take both basic boating and PWC courses before venturing on Prince William Sound. Operators should also be very comfortable with operating and skills, including re-boarding the boat in deep water. Even re-boarding from the rear of the boat can be difficult in rough waters if the operator is fatigued or affected by cold water immersion. Riders should be well practiced in these skills under a variety of conditions.

Besides learning boat operations, prospective Prince William Sound boaters should learn and practice essential skills in re-boarding a capsized boat in open water using a re-boarding device and practice assisted rescue. Both dry land and in-water instruction (in protected areas) are highly recommended. A capsized boat is a dangerous situation for all boat types. Then, they should practice in protected areas to build skill and confidence before heading out into the open water of the Sound.



Visit AlaskaBoatingSafety.org for upcoming skills-based training courses.

Pre-Departure Check

Boaters who plan to tow their boat on a trailer or otherwise transport their boat to Prince William Sound should do a pre-departure check before they leave home. It may be difficult or impossible to obtain forgotten items later on, and boat and equipment problems are easier to deal with in the driveway than at the launch ramp.

Every boater should develop his or her own pre-departure checklist that is specific to the type of boat and the way the boater intends to use it. The pre-departure checklist should incorporate all federal and state requirements and additional equipment and procedures appropriate to the boat and the conditions. Some items need only be checked at the start of each season or periodically, but others should be checked before each trip. Visit PledgeToLive.org for a pre-departure checklist.

All Boats

Boats on Prince William Sound must meet all state and federal requirements. Refer to the table in the *Resources* section to determine the requirements applicable to your boat. Refer to the *Alaska Boater's Handbook* for detailed information on choosing the right equipment including type of life jacket, emergency communication and distress signaling devices and other items to consider.

Once you are sure that your boat meets the legal requirements, gather other items that could save lives in an emergency and create a checklist to prepare for potential conditions and situations while boating on Prince William Sound. You may also include items that would simply improve your safety and comfort. The checklist below is an example.

Prince William Sound Checklist (Example)

- Handheld marine waterproof VHF-FM radio with DSC (cell phone coverage in Prince William Sound is limited)
- Communication devices such as an emergency locator beacon (carried on your person)
- Signaling devices such as a whistle and mirror (attached to life jacket)
- USCG-approved life jacket for each person on board, properly sized and in serviceable condition
- Engine cut-off lanyard worn by the operator
- Re-boarding device
- Auxiliary propulsion (engine, oars, paddles)
- Compass, nautical charts, chart ruler, tide tables, global positioning system (GPS)
- Manual bailing devices (even if you have an electric bilge pump)
- First aid kit
- Personal survival kit (on your person)
- Sleeping bags, small tent or tarp, and extra food (in case of an unexpected extended stay)
- Wool or synthetic clothing (in layers) including a warm hat and gloves
- Full rain gear with rain hat or hood
- Change of clothing in a waterproof bag
- Insect repellent and head net

- AM/FM radio (for weather)
- Sunglasses and sunscreen
- Food and water
- Camera
- Sneakers or rubber boots



Items to consider carrying on your person

Power Boaters

Now that you have all your gear, there are a few more things you should do before launching:

- Make sure your boat’s hull design is appropriate for coastal waters. Shallow draft, flat bottom riverboats perform poorly on the sometimes-rough open water of the Sound.
- Check the local weather and local tides.
- File a float plan and stick to it.
- Brief all passengers on the trip plan, how to start, stop, and steer the boat, the location and use of all emergency equipment, and proper clothing. Make sure everyone in your party is prepared for wet, cold weather.

Every powerboat should also have the following on board:

- At least one anchor and chain with enough anchor line for the deep waters of the Sound.
- Tools and spare parts including spark plugs, spare propeller, and a prop nut kit.
- Enough fuel for your trip plus a healthy reserve in case of deteriorating conditions, disorientation, or you need to loan fuel or tow another boat to safety. Think 1/3 out, 1/3 back, and at least 1/3 reserve. Fuel is generally unavailable in Prince William Sound.
- A water/fuel separator filter, installed between the fuel tank(s) and the engine, is highly recommended for boating in the cool and wet climate of the Sound.



SLN Photography

Personal Watercraft Operators

Safely and responsibly operated, personal watercraft (PWC) can be a great way to enjoy Prince William Sound. PWCs are considered powerboats under state and federal law, and operators must meet the same boat registration and equipment requirements (see Resources) as other powerboats. Make sure to incorporate these requirements into the pre-departure check.

Below is a list of other considerations:

- Check with local land managers for regulations; personal watercraft are restricted or prohibited in some areas.

- Prepare with the right gear. Choose synthetic long underwear, neoprene boots, neoprene or water-ski gloves, safety helmet, goggles, a dry suit or a 2-3 millimeter wet suit, and a snug fitting U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket (for its intended use). Be sure to read the life jacket label to ensure that it is suitable for PWC operation.
- Review your owner's manual. It provides important information such as load capacity and the main and reserve fuel system operations.
- Wear an engine cut-off lanyard, and ensure that it is operable. If an operator is separated from the vessel, wearing the safety lanyard cuts power to the engine automatically. Practice reboarding.



Paddlers

Choose a boat designed for coastal waters. Canoes are not recommended for Prince William Sound unless they are decked, have flotation bags installed to displace water, or both, and the paddler has extensive experience on coastal waters. A sea kayak is superior to a canoe for ocean travel due to a very low center of gravity and covered decks.

Coastal paddlers should be strong swimmers and be in good physical condition.

Before heading out on your paddling trip, consider the following “to do” list:

- Carefully choose your clothing in consideration of the air and water temperatures. Summer temperatures in coastal areas of Alaska average 40 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Wear clothing in layers and choose synthetic fabrics such as fleece, polypropylene, and nylon. Cotton clothing is inappropriate for coastal kayaking. All persons should be dressed for a capsize. Wear wet suits, dry suits, or paddling jackets with a spray skirt as appropriate.
- Carry a paddle float, paddle leash, stirrup, towing strap, a spare visual distress signal (such as a mirror), and a spare paddle in addition to the legal requirements and the other items recommended for all boaters in the Sound.
- Select a boat for each person based on experience and ability.
- Try on all life jackets before departure, to make sure that they fit properly.
- Research and prepare for local waterway and weather conditions and potential hazards, especially tidal currents, surf, fog, and wind.



- Select trip routes suited for the least experienced or least skilled participants.
- Double-check all group gear.
- Re-check weather forecast.
- Brief all party members on the route, location of pullouts, float plan, location of group gear, communications plan, and hand/paddle/whistle signals. Avoid the “day trip” mentality by being prepared with the proper gear and knowledge to stay overnight.

For more information on pre-departure preparation, please review the *Alaska Boater’s Handbook*, or online at www.alaskaboatingsafety.org. Other useful references can be found in the back of this publication.

Boater’s Toolbox

Wearing a life jacket and carrying emergency communication and distress-signaling devices are important safety tips for all boaters. Regardless of age, swimming ability or boating experience, wearing a life jacket could mean the difference between life or death. Emergency communication and distress-signaling devices can expedite a rescue and play a large role in survival. Make sure the devices you choose are suitable for the area and carry them **on your person** in case you become separated from your boat. Consult the *Alaska Boater’s Handbook* for points to consider when choosing which devices to select when boating in Prince William Sound. Have a means to re-board in the event of a capsized or fall overboard. Attach an engine cut-off switch when



operating a boat. File a detailed float plan to assist search and rescue if overdue.

PledgeToLive.org is a useful resource for the Alaskan boater. This website includes tools to check NOAA marine weather, tide tables, file an electronic float plan, review a pre-departure checklist, browse the life jacket selector tool, and much more.

Another tool is the U.S. Coast Guard mobile app. This app includes features such as: state boating information; a safety equipment checklist; free boating safety check requests; navigation rules; float plans; and calling features to report pollution or suspicious activity. When location services are enabled, users can receive the latest weather reports from the closest National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather buoys as well as report the location of a hazard on the water.

Brief all passengers. The strength of your team is only as strong as your weakest link. Everyone should know the trip plan (including the possibility of a late return). Avoid a day trip mentality, and be prepared for an overnight due to severe weather changes. Check the local weather and tides immediately before departure, and continue monitoring as conditions can quickly change.





UNDERWAY

POWER BOATERS

When underway, encourage everyone to maintain a proper lookout. Scan the water back and forth constantly for hazards such as partially submerged logs, submerged and exposed rocks, shallow areas, kayaks and other boats and even whales. This becomes especially important in situations with limited visibility such as when facing into the sun, when in fog, when in conditions with rough water, when rounding points, or when navigating narrow winding passages.

Slow down and minimize your wake when approaching paddlers, small boats, or beached boats.

Fatigue can lead to accidents. On extended cruises, rotate jobs or seating positions on the boat to maintain alertness. On small boats, change routes or speed as needed to minimize pounding and the resulting fatigue. Share tasks with others on your boat so that everyone can take an active part in the voyage.

Anchorage may be used by several boats, so be considerate and give others room. When anchoring, allow plenty of “swing room” in case the wind shifts. If you are the first in an anchorage, position your boat so that others may anchor safely there, too. Calculate the tidal range in the anchorage so that you are not stranded on a rocky shore at low tide. Respect the peace of the anchorage by refraining from playing loud music or shouting and by running generators as little as possible.

All boaters should ALWAYS carry at least one emergency communication and distress-signaling device ON THEIR PERSON.

- Communication: e.g., handheld waterproof VHF radio, emergency locator beacon, or a satellite emergency notification device
- Signaling: e.g., whistle, signal mirror, small aerial flares



COASTAL PADDLERS

Sea kayaks can be very difficult to spot under conditions with limited visibility, rough water, strong backlighting from the sun, and they do not usually appear on radar. For kayakers in these situations, it helps to stay in a “pod” instead of in a string of boats and to wave paddles if necessary to attract the attention of approaching boats. Stick close to shore unless crossing a bay or passage. Strive for high visibility. Wear bright clothing that can be seen easily by other boaters at a distance. Judging wave and wind conditions from shore is difficult.

Whenever possible, keep out of busy powerboat traffic lanes. Avoid paddling alone. In the event of a capsized, self-rescue is difficult if you are alone.

When on the beach, move your boat well above the high tide line and tie it securely. Many a paddler has returned to their boat only to discover that it floated away on a high tide or was swamped by a large boat wake breaking on the beach.

Never try to outrun bad weather. Keep a lookout for large boat wakes and wave rebound off the shoreline rocks, and coastal cliff faces.

Keep close to the shoreline and cross open water where the distance is the shortest. If bad weather suddenly appears, you can become dangerously exposed in open water with no way to get to safety.

Even the fastest sea kayakers are capable of speeds of only six mph. Avoid paddling in strong winds, fast tidal current, or heavy chop (over one foot). A 15-knot head wind will significantly increase your workload and decrease your speed.



PERSONAL WATERCRAFT OPERATORS

Personal water craft (PWC) operators should consider the effect of their wake when in the vicinity of others. Other tips for PWC operators:

- Obey regulatory markers such as No Wake zones and speed limit signs.
- Do not use alcohol, drugs including prescription drugs before or during operation.
- Avoid wake jumping.
- Avoid operating too close to popular anchorages and camping areas.
- Avoid operating in the same area for extended periods.
- Most PWC accidents are caused by collisions. It is common for operators to develop “tunnel vision,” while missing the hazards to the sides. Constantly scanning the water back and forth will help prevent this. Always look all around and behind you before turning.
- NEVER loan your PWC to an inexperienced person. Many PWC accidents involve operators who did not own the boat.



Gina Poths

LOCAL HAZARDS

PREPARE FOR HAZARDS

Two of the most common boating problems in Prince William Sound are disorientation and delays due to bad weather. Other hazards to boaters in Prince William Sound include severe tidal changes, glacial features and icebergs, other floating debris, carbon monoxide, and other boats. All of these hazards can be either avoided or managed to minimize risk with some preparation including being well educated and carrying the proper equipment.

DISORIENTATION

Getting disoriented is a real possibility in the labyrinth of islands and straits. Combined with restricted visibility due to fog and rain, it is very easy for boaters to become confused. Boaters need to carry and use good navigation equipment and a complete set of marine charts and topographic maps for the area they are in. Besides a compass and charts, navigation instruments such as a depth finder, GPS, chart plotter, and radar are highly recommended. Although a GPS alone may not keep you from getting lost, it can be very helpful if used properly. To make full use of its navigation capabilities you must be able to position yourself on a chart and understand how to plot a course. When preparing for your trip, find your intended destination on a chart and locate suitable refuges along the way in case weather worsens or trip plans change unexpectedly.



Gina Poths

BAD WEATHER

Buffeted by winds sweeping in from the Gulf of Alaska and pouring off the glaciers of the Chugach Mountains, the Sound at times experiences rough and even dangerous sea conditions. Although the weather is usually good between May and August, weather and water conditions in Prince William Sound can change quickly. Strong winds and waves as high as 12 feet can suddenly appear, particularly in exposed areas. Expect delays due to bad weather and plan for them.

If bad weather develops, find the nearest shelter and wait for weather to improve. In these cases, it is better to be on the beach wishing you were on the water, than to be on the water wishing you were on the beach. If possible, try to relay your status information to whoever you left your float plan with. Be patient; it is not worth risking your life to keep to a schedule. Some areas require particular vigilance throughout the Sound especially in bays and fjords, and specifically between Whittier and Decision Point, and at the south end of Port Wells where Blackstone Bay, Cochrane Bay, Passage Canal, and Wells Passage meet.

In the Passage Canal area, high winds and seas caused by pressure differences between Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound are common in the area between Whittier and Shotgun Cove. These conditions sometimes, though not always, diminish as you approach Trinity and Decision Point from Whittier.

The south end of Port Wells (where Blackstone Bay, Cochrane Bay, Passage Canal, and Wells Passage meet) is known for its occasionally turbulent sea conditions. Winds funnel down to Port Wells and mix with the wind and waves originating in the other bays, creating steep and multidirectional chop known as a “confused” sea. This also occurs in Blackstone and Icy Bays.

Easterly winds with a long “fetch,” can cause rough sea conditions in the relatively open Southcentral area of the Sound.

Routinely monitor the weather and the weather forecast while underway.

To get a marine weather forecast:

- Check your favorite radio station for marine weather (area 2C Prince William Sound) before leaving home.
- Go to <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/> then to “Marine;” then select Prince William Sound, Passage Canal, or Valdez.
- Call the Alaska Weather line at 1-800-472-0391 and dial 3144 for Prince William Sound or 3145 for Passage Canal.
- Call the National Weather Service in Valdez at 907-835-4505.
- Tune to 1610 on your car’s AM radio at the tunnel staging area.
- Call the Whittier Harbormaster’s office at 907-472-2330.
- Use the push-button weather box at the Whittier triangle kiosk.
- On your VHF radio, tune to WX-2 in the Whittier and Cordova areas, and WX-1 in the Valdez area for the continuous weather broadcast.
- For larger boats that carry HF-SSB radio, monitor 4125 MHz for U.S. Coast Guard and National Weather Service broadcasts.
- On your marine VHF, listen to Ch. 16 for scheduled marine broadcast announcements or call the U.S. Coast Guard in Valdez on Ch. 16 and request a weather forecast.



TIDES

Tide changes can create swift currents, particularly in narrow passages, and significant changes in vertical water levels, especially on mudflats, low angle beaches, and stream and river deltas. Also, boaters should be aware of strong tidal currents and associated tidal “rips,” especially at entrances of bays and straits and in shallow areas or restricted passages.

Tide rips are standing waves that are caused by a strong current and can create difficult sea conditions. They are usually worse when the wind blows against the current.

Make sure you carry a tide book. When anchoring, adjust your anchor line length to account for tide fluctuation. When visiting the beach, place small boats well above the high tide line and carefully secure them. At a minimum, carry your personal survival kit and some means of communication with you when on shore, even if you only intend to be on shore for a short time, in case you get separated from your boat.

SUBMERGED GLACIAL MORAINES

Prince William Sound is famous for its glaciers. Debris fields, called moraines, are features formed by glacial action. Some moraines are located just beneath the surface of the water (especially at low tide) and boats strike them every year. Power boaters need to pay special attention to charts and depth finders when in the vicinity of these features. Consult the Resources section of this book for other references of local hazards within the Sound.



The following list identifies some glacial moraine areas (not to be used for navigation):

- Barry Arm
- Pakenham Point
- Northwestern entrance to Esther Passage
- Southeastern entrance to Esther Passage
- Northwestern sector of Esther Passage
- Eaglek Bay entrances
- North side entrance to Lake Bay
- North side entrance to Hidden Bay
- North side of Applegate Island
- Crafton Island area
- Entrance to Bay of Isles
- Harrison Lagoon

ICEBERGS AND GLACIERS

Icebergs are common in several areas in the Sound and can be a hazard to boaters. Only small parts of icebergs are visible above the waterline, and submerged portions are not easily seen. When larger icebergs unexpectedly roll, they can quickly capsize or damage a nearby boat. Never attempt to climb on one. Keep watch for individual icebergs, and stay well clear of iceberg fields.

Glaciers, one of the Sound's biggest attractions, can be stunningly beautiful. However, boats should keep a safe distance; calving ice is extremely hazardous to boaters.



State of Alaska/Michael DeYoung

OTHER FLOATING DEBRIS

Fallen trees become floating hazards in the Sound. Over time, they become water soaked and do not ride as high in the water, becoming partially submerged and difficult to spot. Be particularly vigilant during high tide cycles. Trees and other floating debris (flotsam) that have accumulated on beaches can re-float during high tides.



Safe and enjoyable boating begins with everyone in an open boat or on deck wearing a life jacket.

RESPONSIBLE BOATING

For all its rugged beauty, Prince William Sound is delicate. Even unintentional acts can pollute the water, mar the land, or disturb fish and wildlife to the point that they may suffer stress, interruptions in essential activity, or even reproductive failure.

DO NOT POLLUTE

Power boaters should use oil absorbent pads in the bilge and consider an oil-sensitive pump switch to keep oil from going into the water. Even a small amount of oil on the feathers of a seabird can kill it or its developing embryo.

Take care when fueling. Keep oil absorbent pads handy to prevent fuel spills.

Federal law prohibits dumping sewage-holding tanks into the water.

Garbage, including food scraps, can choke seabirds and can attract predators to the beach nesting areas of shore birds. Bring all garbage back to town and dispose of it properly in dumpsters. Do not dump anything overboard.

Collect all discarded fishing line, which can entangle and kill birds and marine animals.

TREAD LIGHTLY

Camp on the beach or other gravel areas above the high tide line (provided that there are no active nesting areas there).

Avoid walking on muskeg and other sensitive soils and vegetation. Use developed trails when possible.

Wash at least 200 feet away from water sources. Use biodegradable soap.

Use a gas stove for cooking instead of a fire. If you must make a fire, build it only on bare gravel or rock, use only dead wood, and erase all traces of the fire afterward.

Avoid damaging live trees and plants.

Dispose of fish waste in the sea well below the low tide line.

“Naturalize” your campsite after use by dispersing any natural materials used, brushing over tracks, etc.

Leave all plants, rocks, antlers, fossils, and all cultural artifacts in place.

Keep food in airtight (and preferably bear-proof) containers, and never cook, eat, or store food in your tent or sleeping area. Use food storage lockers whenever these are available.



Steve and Velda Brown

RESPECT WILDLIFE

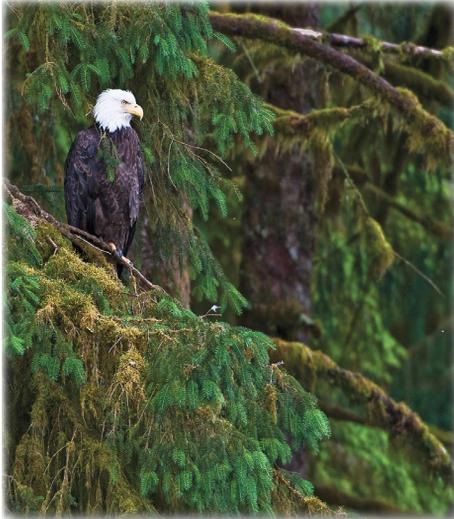
Use binoculars or spotting scopes to observe wildlife from a considerate distance. If your presence causes a change in an animal’s behavior, you are too close.

Do not chase or try to corner animals to get a photo. Never feed wildlife. Keep pets under control at all times. Respect and avoid nests, dens, and resting places. Never handle, touch, or even approach young birds or animals. They probably have not



Steve and Velda Brown

been abandoned, but only left for a short time while the mother seeks food. On beaches, avoid walking on barnacles, mussels, and other



Mark Kelley

invertebrate animals. If you turn over rocks, do it slowly and gently, and replace after looking. Avoid handling beach creatures.

Nesting bald eagles (May through August) are sensitive to noise and may abandon an active nest if disturbed.

Nesting shorebirds may withdraw from nests if humans come near, leaving eggs or chicks vulnerable to weather and predators. Often shorebirds are shy or inconspicuous, and

people may be unaware of the presence of nesting territories. Birds squawking overhead or displaying feigned “broken wing” behavior are indications that concealed nests are nearby. Stay aware, particularly on gravel or rock beaches. Beaches are particularly at a premium in Prince William Sound, because the percentage of shoreline that is gravel beach is quite low. Step carefully and leave the area if you suspect breeding birds are present.

MARINE MAMMALS

All marine mammals are federally protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Additionally, many of Alaska’s whales and Steller sea lions are federally protected under the Endangered Species Act. Sea lions, seals, and sea otters are most vulnerable to disturbance during pupping (between May and July). Forcing them into the water or preventing them from “hauling out” may cause critical energy loss, pup-mother separation, or even injury to



Steve and Velda Brown

pups. Never approach hauled-out seals or sea lions and avoid detection by sight, sound, or smell. Maintain a slow, steady parallel-to-shore course while in their vicinity. Even if no obvious disturbance is detected, approach marine mammals in the water no closer than 100 yards. Limit the time spent observing any particular animal(s) to 30 minutes.

Never herd, encircle, or corner animals between the boat and shore. Always allow them an escape route. Avoid excessive speed, or abrupt changes in speed or course, when around marine mammals.

Stay back from breaching or flipper slapping whales and from the “bubble curtains” that humpback whales emit underwater to capture food. Humpback whales navigate by sound, not sonar. If they are focused on feeding, they could unknowingly either come up underneath or down upon a boat. If approached by a whale, put the engine in neutral (keep it running) and let the animal swim past. If you need to cross the path of a whale, pass behind it.

If animals show signs of disturbance, immediately but quietly leave the area. With seals and sea lions, such signs could include behavior relative to the disturbance, herd movement toward or into the water, increased vocalization, simultaneous head-raising, or increased interaction with other animals. In whales, dolphins or porpoises, disturbance can be indicated by rapid changes in swimming direction or speed, erratic swimming patterns, tail slapping, or attempts by a female to shield her calf from the source of the disturbance.



Steve and Velda Brown

SEABIRDS

Some of Alaska's seabirds are already depleted and highly stressed, possibly due to a shortage of food. Seabird colonies are vulnerable to reproductive failure as a result of disturbance. Stay far enough away from nesting areas to avoid flushing the birds. When birds take flight in groups or waves rather than individually, they are disturbed and you are too close. Frightened birds leaving the nest can inadvertently knock their own eggs off the ledge. Even very brief absence of the parents could expose the eggs or chicks to excessive heat or cold and to predation by gulls and ravens.

Never blast horns or whistles or make other loud noises in the vicinity of seabird nests.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/Anne Morkill

Avoid running your boat through flocks of feeding or resting birds on the water. The prey ball of schooling fish, often created by diving seabirds, may be dispersed, causing loss of important time and energy for feeding.

If you walk on beaches or cliffs, be careful to avoid crushing burrowed nests and concealed nests in the grass.

Avoid visiting critical seabird nesting areas, like Jackpot, Seal, Smith, Channel, and Applegate Rocks, to minimize disturbance.

Sea ducks, including harlequins, begin molting in July, leaving them unable to fly. Displacing them from their shelter and feeding areas quickly depletes their energy reserves. If you spot sea ducks, maneuver your boat well around them instead of forcing them to move.



Leah Hagee wears her camouflage inflatable life jacket showing off her tasty Yelloweye rockfish.

EMERGENCIES

SURVIVING COLD WATER

Cold water immersion plays a significant role in the majority of Alaska’s boating fatalities. Generally accepted by researchers to be water temperatures below 68 degrees Fahrenheit, cold water is virtually all water in Alaska.

Causes of Cold Water Immersion

The following are the leading causes of cold water immersion:

Swamping and/or capsizing—due to overloading, poorly secured or shifting loads, improper boat handling in rough water, loss of power or steerage, anchoring from the stern, wrapping an anchor, mooring, or pot line around a drive unit, or taking a wave over the transom during a sudden stop.

Falling overboard—most commonly due to slipping, a loss of balance while standing or moving around the boat, striking another boat or object, sudden grounding, or when reaching for objects overboard.

Swimming to retrieve a drifting boat—a loose boat drifting away produces an almost irresistible impulse to intentionally leave a place of safety to swim after it. Don’t.

The Effects of Cold Water Immersion

Most of Alaska’s boating fatalities involve cold water immersion that, according to research, kills in several ways:

1. INITIAL REACTION—“COLD SHOCK RESPONSE”

- Within the first 1- 3 minutes
- Involuntary gasping and hyperventilation, panic and vertigo, can result in water inhalation
- Higher risk of drowning if not wearing a life jacket



2. SHORT TERM IMMERSION—“COLD INCAPACITATION”

- Within 10-30 minutes of immersion
- Localized cooling of extremities affects muscles and nerves, impairing their function
- Arms and legs become stiff and unresponsive. Activities such as swimming, re-boarding a boat, using a radio or distress signal, or holding on to a floating object becomes difficult or impossible
- Higher risk of drowning (even good swimmers) if not wearing a life jacket

3. LONG TERM IMMERSION—“IMMERSION HYPOTHERMIA”

- After at least 30 minutes of immersion, depending on factors
- Gradual cooling of the body core will occur at a rate dependent upon factors including water temperature, clothing worn, body type, physical condition and other factors
- As body core temperature falls, hypothermia symptoms will range from mild to severe, eventually unconsciousness
- Higher risk of drowning if not wearing a life jacket.



Higher risk of drowning (even good swimmers) if not wearing a life jacket

Preparing for Cold Water Immersion

Most immersion events happen quickly and unexpectedly. So, while prevention is best it is also important to be prepared. Taking these

simple steps will help ensure the best possible outcome:

- Always wear a life jacket when in an open boat or on an open deck. Trying to put your life jacket on in cold water is extremely difficult (if not impossible) and costs precious time and energy.
- Carry emergency communication and distress signaling devices **ON YOUR PERSON**. An emergency locator beacon, a small hand held VHF radio, a waterproof cell phone, a whistle, and some visual distress signals may save the day. Today's devices are smaller, lighter, and easy to carry.
- Unless the boat is designed so that a person in the water can easily get back into the boat unassisted, equip the boat with a re-boarding ladder, rope ladder, foot sling, or a swim platform.
- Carry survival suits. Make sure they are well maintained and readily accessible.
- Practice re-boarding your boat, donning survival suits quickly, signaling, transmitting MAYDAYs, recovering a person overboard, and other cold-water survival techniques described in this section. Drills are fun and build skill and confidence. In-water cold water survival classes are available at AlaskaBoatingSafety.org

Surviving Cold Water Immersion, the 1-10-1 Principle

Surviving cold water immersion depends on adequate flotation to prevent drowning, and timely self-rescue or rescue by others. Wearing a life jacket, carrying a communication and distress signaling device, the ability to swim, a controlled entry into the water, surface conditions, length of time in the water, associated injuries or medical conditions, and alcohol use can all influence the outcome.

1-10-1 is an easy way to remember what to do in the event of a sudden cold water immersion. Note: the information below does not apply to all persons in all cases.

1 Minute

The initial reaction/cold shock response stage usually passes within 1-3 minutes. Wait for effects of cold shock to subside. Understanding that this stage will soon pass may help reduce panic.

10 Minutes

Once breathing is under control, most people have at least 10 minutes to take the actions necessary for self-rescue or for obtaining rescue before incapacitation occurs. Do not waste time and energy removing shoes or clothing. Even small amounts of air trapped in clothing will provide some buoyancy and thermal protection. Perform the most important functions first:

- If not already worn, attempt to don life jackets or survival suits, and then assist others in doing so.
- Account for any other members of the party. Check around and under the boat.
- If not already deployed (and depending on the circumstances), activate emergency communication and/or distress signaling devices such as an emergency locator beacon, transmit a MAYDAY on a VHF marine radio, or call 911 on a phone. If in range of others, activate visual and sound distress signals.
- Get all persons as much out of the water as is possible. Water transfers heat much faster than air of the same temperature. For example, if the boat is not overturned, use the boat's re-boarding devices and practiced techniques to get back in. If overturned, climb on top of the hull. If separated from the boat use any other available objects to get as much of your body out of the water as possible, even if it feels colder.
- Make a plan.

The Swim/Don't Swim Decision

Staying with or near a floating boat may be the best choice, especially if the event was witnessed or emergency communication was successful. Even if capsized or swamped, a boat may offer supplemental flotation and is far easier for potential rescuers to spot than is a person in the water. Swimming in cold water can reduce in-water survival time, and the average person will lose more heat faster by swimming than by remaining still. Distances can be deceiving when on the water and safety can look closer than it really is.

Situational factors should often be considered when making the swim/don't swim decision:

- Whether or not a PFD or survival suit is worn
- Whether or not a place of safety is close (less than 800 yards away or 45 minutes swimming time based on fitness level and swimming ability, and wearing a life jacket)
- The likelihood of rescue by others (the event was witnessed or others are aware of the emergency via an emergency locator beacon, MAYDAY or other communication)
- The ability to get in or on top of the boat or other object to get out of the water
- Whether you would be abandoning a place of relative safety to try to swim
- Whether in calm or moving water (i.e. a river, or rough water)
- Physical ability and medical condition of the party members.



Swimming in open water:

Use a modified backstroke, using forearms and lower legs. Keep upper arms and elbows close to the sides of chest, upper legs close together and knees slightly bent. Move slowly and conserve energy.

If there is more than one person and they are in the “huddle” position (see next page), one person at a time may be able to propel the entire group, taking turns.

Use floating objects to pull body out of water

Swimming in rivers or other moving water:

- Point feet downstream, knees bent slightly and feet up to avoid foot entrapment.

- Maintain body at a 45-degree angle to the current, with head pointing to the bank of choice. The force of the current on the upstream side of your body will help to “ferry” you toward that bank.
- Use a modified backstroke. Use your feet, arms and legs to fend off rocks and other objects.
- If necessary be prepared to quickly flip onto your stomach and into a head-first position to scramble over “strainers” or other obstacles to keep from becoming pinned against them by the current.

1 HOUR

Even in very cold water people may have an hour or more of useful consciousness. The priority may now become slowing the rate of heat loss to extend useful consciousness and survival time.

Keep movement to a minimum. Protect areas of high heat loss (such as the head, neck, armpits, groin and the sides of the torso) as much as possible. The “Heat Escape Lessening Position” (H.E.L.P.) may be useful, *but is only possible if wearing a personal flotation device*. Hold the inner side of your arms tightly against the sides of your chest and grasp the shoulders of your PFD. Press your thighs together, cross your feet at the ankles and raise your knees as close to your chest as possible while still maintaining position in the water.

Small groups can form a tight “huddle” by intertwining arms so that bodies work together to protect high heat loss areas. Small children and injured or unconscious persons can be placed in the center of the huddle, to be supported by the group. Persons in a group should consider tying themselves together to keep from becoming separated.

Be prepared to activate visual and sound distress signals when potential rescuers are in range.



Person Overboard Response

1. Everyone don life jackets (if they are not worn already).
2. Keep eyes on the victim at all times. If possible, assign a person on the boat to serve as the lookout.
3. Throw a life jacket, Type IV life ring or seat cushion or any other floating object toward the victim. Any additional objects in the water with the person will also make them easier to see.
4. Approach the person from downwind or downstream. To avoid the risk of striking the victim with the boat, when close enough reach for the person with an oar, paddle, or other item and pull them to the boat. Or, use a Type IV throw ring or cushion with a line attached and pull the person to the boat.
5. Don't go into the water for the victim except as a last resort.
6. Direct passengers as necessary to assist and/or to balance the boat, then assist the person in getting out of the water. If pulling a victim in over the stern, all engines should be stopped.
7. Treat the victim to your level of training.



Treating Immersion Hypothermia

The goals for treating immersion hypothermia patients are:

Handling gently - Cold heart muscle and vasculature of severely hypothermic patients are vulnerable to physical exertion, jarring, or moving from a horizontal to vertical position too quickly.

Providing basic life support - as necessary.

Preventing further heat loss - Remove wet clothing, dry victims off and put them in dry clothes and a sleeping bag or blankets and vapor barrier. Shivering is good.

Securing transport - to medical care for moderately to severely hypothermic patients.

A person found unconscious in cold water, even if they appear dead, may still have a chance for survival. If the victim was known to be submerged for an hour or less (or if the time of submersion is unknown), providing basic life support to your level of training and obtaining medical help quickly could save a life. Emergency medical responders are taught “a cold water immersion victim isn’t dead until they are warm and dead.”

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Marine VHF Radio

Experienced boaters know that a marine VHF radio is one of the best tools available. On small boats without electrical systems, handheld models are a popular choice. Boaters should be proficient with their radio equipment and practice communications so that procedures become second nature.

Marine VHF radio communications are sometimes unreliable in the Sound. Although the U.S. Coast Guard has seven marine VHF repeater sites in the Sound, there are still “dead zones” where the marine VHF signal is either spotty or completely blocked. If you are having difficulty transmitting on marine VHF radio, try another location or, if you have a handheld model, try higher ground. See the brochure entitled Prince William Sound Communications published by the U.S. Coast Guard, for a

graphic illustration of marine VHF coverage in the Sound.

Vessels equipped with a marine VHF radio are required to monitor Ch. 16 at all times, but that channel can be used only for hailing or emergency broadcasts.

Emergency Radio Procedures

There are three types of emergency radio messages:

SECURITE—to notify others of bad weather or other hazards (pronounced say-cure-eh-tay).

PAN-PAN—to notify others of a very urgent situation regarding vessel or personal safety (pronounced pon-pon).

MAYDAY—to notify others when experiencing an immediate threat to life or vessel.

Transmitting a MAYDAY:

If you get a response, be prepared to give the following information:

Vessel description:

length: _____ propulsion type: _____

color: _____ registration #: _____

On-scene weather:

wind speed: _____ wind direction: _____

sea height: _____ swell direction: _____

visibility: _____ ceiling: _____

Emergency radio & survival equipment

onboard: _____

Radio frequencies available: _____

Operator's name and phone: _____

Owner's name and phone: _____

Digital Selective Calling

In addition to sending a distress call, or MAYDAY, boaters should also consider activating the red Digital Selective Calling (DSC) emergency button on their Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI)-equipped and registered radio to “alert all stations.”

- A distinctive red “DISTRESS” button is located on the DSC radio.
- VHF radios with DSC automatically send (once pushed) a DISTRESS alert with GPS coordinates to those in the immediate area who are also equipped with a DSC radio, without having to use the usual voice calling/distress channels.
- Verify the VHF radio is connected to the boat’s Global Positioning System (GPS) unit to ensure DSC is operational.
- DSC radios automatically and silently maintain a listening watch on the appropriate DSC channel (VHF 70, or 2187.5 kHz).



VHF Radio with DSC

To be able to use the DISTRESS alert function, boaters must first obtain a Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number. This nine-digit number electronically identifies a specific boat and must be programmed into the radio. MMSI numbers may be obtained, at no charge, from www.boatus.com/mmsi/

The United States Coast Guard’s Rescue 21 Digital Selective Calling Emergency Contact System is newly operational in Alaska, in addition, those in the immediate area with DSC can receive the distress signal for relay purposes.

Phones

Phones are an option for hailing assistance in an emergency. The drawback to using a phone is one-on-one communication rather than a broadcast on VHF. Two types of phones are the satellite and cellular phones. Service area, water resistance, and battery life are all considerations when choosing an emergency device. While cellular

phones have limited service in the Sound, satellite phones are an option. Other limitations include:

- In an emergency, other boaters cannot monitor the situation; you are speaking to just one person.
- The caller's location cannot be determined using radio direction finders, although some satellite phones do include GPS information.
- 911 calls from marine locations may be misdirected to police or fire departments delaying rescue response.
- The caller cannot always be contacted from rescue boats and aircraft.



Satellite Phone

Phones are an excellent supplement to, but not a replacement for a marine VHF radio. If you plan to use a phone, take the following precautions before leaving the dock:

- Make sure the battery is fully charged (and consider bringing a fully charged spare or means for recharging).
- Keep the cell phone in a waterproof bag or case that floats.
- Carry the phone on your person if there is reliable service.
- Have the U.S. Coast Guard and other appropriate phone numbers with you and make them highly visible. Consider taping numbers to the phone.



Cellular Phone

It is possible to call the U.S. Coast Guard directly by dialing *CG (*24) when there is service on a cellular phone. Alaska is the only state where *CG is still operational, however the call must be placed from an Alaskan cellular phone service provider.

Phone Procedures

In an emergency, follow these steps and give your information:

- Your phone number in case you are disconnected.
- Your name and a boat description.
- Your position/location, preferably latitude and longitude.
- Explain the nature of your problem.
- The number of people on board.

- REPEAT your cell phone number before ending your call.
- Keep as calm as possible, and speak slowly and clearly so you can be understood.

Single Side Band (SSB)

The U.S. Coast Guard can be reached by HF/SSB radio on 4125 MHz.

Emergency Locator Beacons and Satellite Messengers

Emergency locator beacons are highly effective tracking transmitters which aid in the detection and location of boats, aircraft, and people in distress. There are two main types of Emergency Locator Beacons; the COSPAS-SARSAT units, and Satellite Messengers. Not all devices operate similarly, refer to the *Alaska Boater's Handbook* for a complete description of each option as well as other features to consider.



Personal Locator Beacon



In-Reach



SPOT

CARBON MONOXIDE

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless tasteless gas formed by the incomplete combustion of hydrocarbon fuel, which can cause seizures, unconsciousness, and death. It is often called “The Silent Killer” because the body has no sensitivity to its absorption or suffocating effects. Depending on concentration, CO poisoning can happen very quickly, sometimes with even just a few breaths.

Exposure to improperly vented or malfunctioning cabin heating systems and exhaust gases from generators and engines are the main culprits at sea. Exhaust fumes and carbon monoxide can accumulate in areas such

as enclosed cabin spaces and under swim platforms. Use care in running the engine or generator continuously when the boat is closed up in cold or bad weather, particularly when the boat is not in motion. Be alert to any indication that exhaust fumes are present, and ventilate accordingly. If there is a need to be around swim platforms or exhaust ports, for any reason, first shut the engines down, and allow sufficient time for fumes to dissipate.

Carbon monoxide poisoning is difficult to diagnose because of a wide range of vague and multiple symptoms. Fatigue and headache are most common, but flu-like symptoms such as dizziness, vomiting, muscular twitching, weakness, and sleepiness can also occur. Victims often have a gray or ashen appearance. If someone feels dizzy or loses consciousness while onboard, consider the possibility of CO poisoning. If you think someone could be suffering from CO poisoning, get them away from the suspected source and into fresh air immediately. Be prepared to provide basic life support to your level of training and call for medical assistance.

FIRE

Most boat fires, explosions and fuel spills happen during or just after fueling. To help prevent this:

- Fuel before dark.
- Secure and cover batteries to prevent terminals from shorting and sparking fuel vapors and turn off all electronics and battery supply.



- Do not smoke or strike matches.
- Shut off motors.
- Close all cabin windows and doors.
- Make sure all tank vents are unobstructed.
- Ensure the boat's stability. Ask passengers to step on shore when fueling.
- Take portable tanks out of the boat to fill them.
- Do not rely on automatic nozzle shutoffs. Know how much the fuel tanks can hold and do not overfill them. Avoid "topping off" tanks.
- Keep the fill nozzle in contact with the tank while filling, to prevent static discharge.
- Catch drips and wipe up any spilled gasoline with oil absorbent pads. Discard on shore in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.
- Before starting the engine, ventilate engine compartment for at least four minutes, and sniff around to make sure there is no odor of gasoline anywhere in the boat.
- Keep bilges clean to avoid the risk of a fire.

GETTING HELP AND GIVING HELP

The boater is ultimately responsible for his or her own safety. In Alaska, boaters must have the sufficient equipment and ability to handle common boating problems, particularly in remote areas like Prince William Sound. In the event you need help, most of the time it will NOT be close at hand. The nearest U.S. Coast Guard helicopters are in Cordova and Kodiak. Private boats operated by U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary members are on the water during summer weekends, but may not be in all areas of the Sound. This is especially true in April/May and September/October when there are even fewer boaters and potential rescuers in the Sound. **It is the boater's duty to render assistance as a good samaritan so long as it is safe to do so.**

ACCIDENT REPORTING

For the purpose of gathering boating accident statistics, the boat operator or owner is required by law (AS 05.25.030) to file a written report if a boating accident occurs and results in:

- Loss of life
- Disappearance
- Injury requiring medical treatment beyond first aid
- Property damage over \$500 or complete loss of vessel

Please submit the accident report to:

**Alaska Office of Boating Safety
550 W. 7th Ave. Suite 1380
Anchorage, Alaska 99501**

Under federal law, if a person disappears or dies, or there are any injuries from the accident requiring more than first aid, the report must be filed within 48 hours. Other accidents must be reported within 10 days.

Accident report forms can be obtained from the Alaska Department of Public Safety, the U.S. Coast Guard, or may be downloaded from <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/boating/pdf/accident.pdf>



NON-EMERGENCY

In a non-emergency situation such as running out of fuel or mechanical breakdown, go to Ch. 16 on your marine VHF radio and issue a “PAN-PAN” or, if you are in an area with service, use your cell phone to contact the U.S. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard will want the same basic information from you as in an emergency distress call, but then will issue a Maritime Assistance Request Broadcast (MARB) to solicit help. Other boaters, government agencies, a commercial towing service, or the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, may respond to these calls for assistance. If you accept commercial assistance, the towing company will provide assistance for a fee. You can also get help by calling directly to one of the towing services listed in the back of this publication.



Robert Forgit

RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED READING/VIEWING

Alaska Boater's Handbook, published by the Alaska Office of Boating Safety.

Alaska Marine Mammal Viewing Guidelines, published by National Marine Fisheries Service <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/>.

Accessing Alaska's Public Lands & Waters, published by Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources and Dept. of Fish and Game.

Cold Water Survivors,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uu4oAt6Nkmo>.

Cruising Guide to Prince William Sound, by Nancy and Jim Lethcoe.

Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats.

Kayaking and Camping in Prince William Sound, by Paul Twardock.

Leave No Trace - Outdoor Skills & Ethics - Temperate Coastal Zones, by the National Outdoor Leadership School.

PledgeToLive.org to file a float plan, life jacket selector tool, check the NOAA marine weather, tide tables and much more.

Power Vessel Operator & Kayaker Suggested Guidelines for Safe Operations in Alaska, published by the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association and the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office.

Prince William Sound Alaska - travel safely - wisely - lightly, published by USDA Forest Service, Chugach National Forest.

Prince William Sound Communications - United States Coast Guard VHF-FM Radio coverage, published by the U.S. Coast Guard.

United States Coast Guard App. Visit the online app store.

EMERGENCY

U.S. Coast Guard

VHF Ch. 16

Cell phone: *CG (AK service providers only), or 1-800-478-5555 or 1-888-399-5555

HF/SSB- 4125 MHz or 2182 MHz

Alaska State Troopers

VHF Ch. 16

Phone: 911

Non-Emergency Alaska State Troopers

VHF Ch. 16

(907) 269-5511

Alaska Wildlife Trooper Division

VHF Ch. 16

(907) 269-5509

Whittier Harbormaster

VHF Ch. 16 or 68

(907) 472-2330

info@whittieralaska.gov

National Response Center

1-800-424-8802

AmericasWaterwayWatch.org

WEATHER AND TIDES

National Weather Service

VHF Ch. WX 1, 2 or 3

HF/SSB 4125 MHz.

pafc.arh.noaa.gov/marfctst.php

KDG 91 Yakutat at 0515, 1930, or KWL 38 Kodiak at 0800 and 1900
Weatherfax 2054, 4298 and 8459 KHz (upper sideband)

Alaska Weatherline

1-800-472-0391

Tide Tables

www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/boating/tides.htm

PledgeToLive.org

REGISTER YOUR BOAT**Department of Motor Vehicles**

<http://doa.alaska.gov/dmv/reg/index.htm>

CHARTS

NOAA National Ocean Service, United States Coast Pilot 9, Pacific and Arctic Coasts of Alaska: Cape Spencer to the Beaufort Sea

NOAA Chart 16680 Point Erlington to East Chugach Island

NOAA Chart 16681 Seal Rocks to Gore Point

NOAA Chart 16682 Cape Resurrection to Two Arm Bay

NOAA Chart 16683 Point Erlington to Cape Resurrection

Print-at-Home Chart Booklets

nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/staff/chartspubs.html

BOATING EDUCATION**Alaska Boating Safety Program**

AlaskaBoatingSafety.org

Alaska Kayak School

alaskakayakschool.com

American Canoe Association

americancanoe.org

Alaska Marine Safety Education Association

amsea.org

Knik Canoers & Kayakers

kck.org

National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

<http://www.nasbla.org>

National Safe Boating Council
safeboatingcouncil.org

National Water Safety Congress
watersafetycongress.org

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
cgaux.org

ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

AK Dept. of Environmental Conservation (Oil Spill Reporting)
(907) 269-3063, dec.state.ak.us/spar/spillreport.htm

AK Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (907) 235-6546
<http://alaskamaritime.fws.gov>

Kenai Fjords National Park (907) 422-0500
nps.gov/kefj

AK Dept. of Fish and Game, Soldotna Office
43961 Kalifornsky Beach Road, Ste. B
Soldotna, AK 99669
(907) 262-9368
adfg.alaska.gov



Alaska Office of Boating Safety

550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1380

Anchorage, AK 99501

(907) 269-8706

alaskaboatingsafety.org

Alaska State Parks, Kenai Peninsula

PO Box 1247

Soldotna, AK 99669

(907) 262-5581

dnr.state.ak.us/parks

Cliffside Marina and Yacht Club

cliffsidemarina.org

Chamber of Commerce:

Whittier: WhittierAlaskaChamber.org

Valdez: ValdezAlaska.org

Cordova: CordovaChamber.com

FUEL**Whittier**

Shoreside Petroleum Inc. (907) 472-2314

Valdez

North Pacific Fuel (907) 835-8850

Cordova

Novak's Fuel (907) 424-3800

Shoreside Petroleum (907) 424-3263

RESOURCE MANAGERS

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Marine Mammal Management (907) 786-3800
Anchorage field office (907) 271-2888

U.S.D.A Forest Service

(907) 783-3242 (Glacier District)
(907) 424-7661 (Cordova District)
VHF Ch. 16, vessel “Orca Chief”, “Williwaw” or “Seamaster”

Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Kenai / PWS Area Office
(907) 262-5581

Municipalities

Cordova (907) 424-6200
Tatitlek (907) 325-2311

OTHER

Alaska Railroad

(907) 265-2300

Alaska Recreation Management

(907) 522-8368

Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association

(907) 258-3171

Clearwater Environmental

(907) 522-6228

Chugach Alaska Corporation

(907) 563-8866



PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND TRIP CHECKLIST

- U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket for each person on board, properly sized and in serviceable condition
- Emergency communication devices such as a marine VHF-FM radio (cell phone coverage in Prince William Sound is limited) carried on your person
- Distress signaling devices such as a whistle and mirror (attached to life jacket)
- Re-boarding device
- Compass
- Nautical charts
- Chart ruler
- Tide tables
- Global positioning system (GPS)
- Auxiliary propulsion (engine, oars, paddles)
- Manual bailing devices (even if you have an electric bilge pump)
- First aid kit
- Personal survival kit (on your person)
- Sleeping bags, small tent or tarp, and extra food (in case of an unexpected extended stay)
- Wool or synthetic clothing (in layers) including a warm hat and gloves
- Hat and gloves
- Full rain gear with rain hat or hood
- Change of clothing in a waterproof bag
- Insect repellent and head net
- AM/FM radio (for weather)
- Sunglasses and sunscreen
- Food and water
- Camera
- Sneakers or rubber boots



Alaska's boating fatalities:

- Nine of ten were not wearing a life jacket, or were never found
- Five of six followed a capsizing, swamping, or fall overboard, into Alaska's cold water
- Nine of ten adult males
- Nine of ten boats under 26 feet in length
- Three of four powerboats

I, _____ pledge to always wear my life jacket when in an open boat or on deck because: _____



Visit PledgeToLive.org for a trip planner, E-float plan, weather, tides, and much more.

- Always wear a life jacket when in an open boat or on deck.
- Children under the age of 13 must, by law, wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket when in an open boat or on deck.
- Inspect the life jacket to ensure it is in serviceable condition.
- Ensure a snug and comfortable fit.
- Use in accordance with the manufacturer's label.



Too loose vs. a snug and comfortable life jacket.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

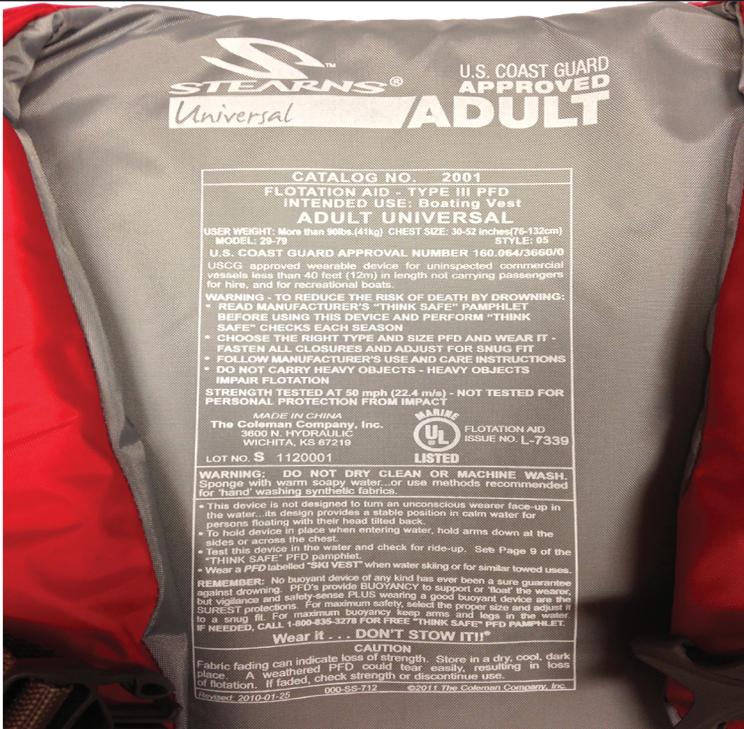
ALASKA REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY				
Requirements	Boats under 16 feet	Boats 16 feet to less than 26 feet	Boats 26 feet to less than 40 feet	Boats 40 feet to less than 65 feet
Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)	One USCG-approved Type I, II, III or V PFD for each person on board. Must be in serviceable condition. Persons under 13 must wear a PFD when in an open boat, on the deck of a boat or when waterskiing.			
Throwable Devices (Type IV)	Recommended but not mandatory.	Except for canoes and kayaks, one USCG-approved Type IV (seat cushion or throw ring) device must be carried.		
Sound Producing Devices	Boats less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) in length must be able to make an efficient sound signal (such as that made with a whistle or horn) to signal intentions and to signal position in periods of reduced visibility.			Boats 39.4 feet (12 meters) or more in length must carry on board a whistle or horn.
Visual Distress Signals	USCG-approved night signals required between sunset and sunrise.	USCG-approved visual distress signals for both day and night time use must be carried. Exception: boats and open sailboats not equipped with mechanical propulsion and under 26 feet in length are not required to carry day signals. <i>Note: Pyrotechnic devices, if used to meet this requirement, must be current, serviceable and readily accessible. At the minimum, a total of three day/night combination devices or three day and three night devices must be carried.</i>		
Fire Extinguishers	At least one USCG-approved B-I required for boats with inboard engines, living spaces, permanent fuel tanks or enclosed storage areas or hull voids not sealed or filled with flotation material.		At least two B-I or one B-II USCG-approved fire extinguishers.	At least three B-I or one B-I and one B-II USCG-approved fire extinguishers.
Navigation Lights	Display required between sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility. International configuration required (varies with length and mode of operation). See the International Navigation Rules.			
Backfire Flame Arrestors	One USCG-approved backfire control device on each carburetor of all inboard gasoline engines.			
Ventilation	Boats with permanently installed engines, closed compartments or permanent fuel tanks must have efficient natural or mechanical ventilation.			
Registration	Undocumented boats equipped with mechanical propulsion (gas, diesel or steam engines, and electric motors) and any undocumented vessel used in sport fishing charter activities must be registered with the Division of Motor Vehicles. Certificate of Number must be carried onboard. Registration numbers and validation decals must be properly displayed on hull of boat.			

REV 7.9.14

www.alaskaboatingsafety.org

For detailed information consult the *Alaska Boater's Handbook*.

Read the life jacket label.



- Is this life jacket U.S. Coast Guard approved?
- What are the weight and chest size limits?
- Is this life jacket restricted to any specific uses?

AlaskaBoatingSafety.org



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Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Office of Boating Safety
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1380
Anchorage, AK 99501
alaskaboatingsafety.org

Booze & Boating—

You Can

LIVE

Without It.

Many of Alaska's boating fatalities involve alcohol.

Alcohol Negatively Affects:

- **JUDGEMENT**—operators under the influence are more likely to take unnecessary risks and make bad decisions.
- **REACTION TIME**—in an emergency, sharp reflexes and quick action can save the day. Alcohol dulls reflexes and slows reaction time.
- **VISION**—alcohol can seriously affect an operator's peripheral vision, night vision and ability to focus.
- **BALANCE**—most alcohol-related boating deaths involve a fall overboard into cold water.

A designated operator is a great idea—
but don't let the passengers become
designated drowners.

In Alaska, the laws that define driving while intoxicated, and the penalties for a conviction, apply to boat operators too.



www.alaskaboatingsafety.org



Safe and enjoyable boating.