

# Kachemak Bay supplement

to the

## ALASKA BOATER'S H A N D B O O K



March 2007

# STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

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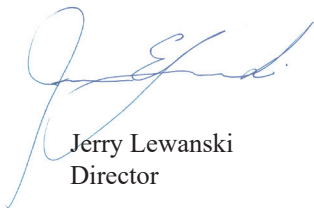
Dear Alaskan:

The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Office of Boating Safety is pleased to offer this first edition of the Kachemak Bay Supplement to the Alaska Boater's Handbook.

Kachemak Bay's rich marine environment and beautiful scenery combine to offer outstanding on-water opportunities that powerboaters and paddlers have long enjoyed. For all its rugged beauty, however, the bay can be a treacherous place for the inexperienced or unprepared boater. This supplement to the Alaska Boaters Handbook provides valuable local information, intended to help make your boating experiences more fun and less troublesome. While especially useful to those unfamiliar with the area, even experienced boaters should find this information useful.

The best skippers know that thorough preparation significantly increases the odds of having a safe and successful trip. We in the Department of Natural Resources hope you find this supplement useful, and that your experiences on Kachemak Bay will be pleasant ones. And, please remember that because 9 out of 10 boating fatalities in Alaska are the result of a sudden capsized or fall overboard into cold water, always wear your life jacket when in an open boat or on an open boat deck.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry Lewanski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "L".

Jerry Lewanski  
Director

# **KACHEMAK BAY SUPPLEMENT**

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# OVERVIEW

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Kachemak Bay extends northeasterly some 36 miles from the Lower Cook Inlet into the heart of the Kenai Peninsula. Encompassing 354 square miles, the bay has 320 miles of shoreline and an average depth of 25 fathoms (150 ft.). In some places the bay reaches depths of 96 fathoms (576 ft.).

Coastal forests, saltwater marshes, wetlands, mountains, glaciers, alpine tundra, lakes, rivers, and streams are all part of the bay's stunning scenery.

Ranking among the richest marine environments in the world, Kachemak Bay supports over 231 species of birds, including 90% of Cook Inlet's wintering sea birds, 450 species of marine invertebrates, and 100 species of fish, including all five species of Pacific salmon. Halibut swarm the waters of the bay and Cook Inlet in numbers that give Homer its reputation as "halibut capital of the world." More than 190,000 shorebirds move through the area during the annual spring migration. Bald eagles and other raptors, Steller's sea lions, harbor seals, harbor porpoises, and sea otters are commonly observed. Humpback, minke, killer (Orca), and beluga whales, and Dall's porpoises are observed occasionally. Mountain goats and black bears are sometimes seen on mountain slopes. Many other terrestrial mammals including brown bear, moose, wolverine, coyote, wolf, river otter and lynx live in the surrounding uplands.



Natives were drawn to the bay's abundant fish and wildlife and relatively mild climate at least as long as 5,000 years ago. Homesteaders, coal miners, and herring fishermen moved into the area during the 1800s and 1900s. Since the



early 1900s, commercial fishing has been a mainstay of the local economy, later joined by commercial mariculture, marine transportation, scientific research, government, tourism, and sport fishing. The bay and the lower inlet are popular saltwater recreational boating and fishing playgrounds for southcentral Alaska residents, and popular destinations for visitors.

Repeatedly recognized for its superlatives, Kachemak Bay is a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Network Site, a National Estuarine Research Reserve, and a State Critical Habitat Area. Kachemak Bay State Park is Alaska's first legislatively designated State Park and Kachemak Bay State Wilderness Park is Alaska's first and only State Wilderness Park. Collectively they encompass roughly 400,000 acres of land and water stretching across the Kenai Mountains from Kachemak Bay to the Gulf of Alaska.

Thousands of boaters enjoy the bay each year via Homer, Seldovia, and other bay communities. Much of the bay is accessible to boaters, but it can be dangerous, even deadly, for the unknowing or unprepared. Read on for information that will help you have an enjoyable and memorable boating experience on Kachemak Bay.





## HOMER

This picturesque seaside community of 5,000 is the gateway to Kachemak Bay. Homer hosts an array of amenities for boaters. Following are some highlights:

### Homer Area Boat Launch Sites

Most recreational boats can be launched at the Homer small boat harbor. Kayaks, canoes, and other hand-portable craft also may be launched at several locations along the Homer coastline including Bishop's Beach, Mud Bay, the Fishing Hole, the sand beach between the ferry terminal and Land's End Resort, the boat harbor, and at several points along the west side of the Homer Spit. A Travelift at the Northern Enterprises boatyard on Kachemak Drive can launch vessels too large for trailer launching (up to about 70 feet in length and 70 tons in weight).



Note: East End Road winds 20 miles east from Homer along the bluffs above the north shore of the bay to the villages of Voznesenka, Razdolna, and Kachemak Selo, but does not provide vehicular access to the bay.

## Homer Small Boat Harbor

The small boat harbor, near the end of the Homer Spit, is the central fixture of the Port of Homer. It features 920 reserved stalls, more than 6,000 feet of transient mooring, boat maintenance grids, a commercial fish dock, and a multi-lane boat launch ramp.

The launch ramp is open year round. Launch fees apply from April 1 - October 15. Launch passes are available at the entrance booth or the adjacent self-pay station. Season passes are available either at the booth or the harbor-master's office. Please note that launch fee payment is enforced whether or not the booth is staffed. Several ramps and two floating docks can be used at all tides. Restrooms are located at the top of the ramp. A limited amount of vehicle and trailer parking is available in lots adjacent to the ramp, but please obey posted signs. Users should prepare their boats before arriving at the ramp to expedite the launching process, and then move their vehicles and trailers away from the ramps as quickly as possible to prevent congestion.



Reserved moorage is available, with stalls leased on an annual basis. There is a waiting list for some stall sizes, but the “hot berth” program allows stalls that are not currently being used by their assignees to be temporarily leased to others by the harbormaster. Transient mooring is also available. All moorage fees are based on vessel length.

Laws against littering and pollution are strictly enforced. Other than at designated fish cleaning stations, cleaning fish in the harbor is forbidden.

# OVERVIEW

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Receptacles for trash, used motor oil, and fish waste are available. A sewage pump-out barge is also available in the harbor.

The harbormaster has a limited amount of spill containment equipment and materials, and charges for these services. The harbormaster's office is available to answer requests for the local time, tides, NOAA weather forecast, and local weather observations.

It is not uncommon to see seals and sea lions in the harbor; however, feeding or harassing sea lions or other wildlife is prohibited under federal law.

For more information on launching, moorage, the location and use of harbor facilities, refuse disposal sites, and weather updates, contact the harbormaster's office at 907-235-3160 or on VHF Ch. 16. The web site is

<http://port.ci.homer.ak.us>.

## Fuel and Supplies

Gasoline, diesel, and lubricants are available at gas stations in town and at the two fuel docks at the south end of the small boat harbor, near the harbor entrance. Fishing tackle, bait, ice, groceries, fishing licenses, and general supplies are available at stores in town and on the spit. Marine supplies and services are offered at several locations around Homer (see the *Boat Owner's Guide to Homer*, published by the Homer Chamber of Commerce).

## Camping

Camping is permitted at two municipal campgrounds on the spit - one near the base of the spit on the southwest side, the other across the road from the small boat harbor. Amenities include potable water, RV dump station, restrooms, dumpsters and fish cleaning tables. Separate fees are charged for RVs and tents. Each unit requires a permit. Pay stations are located at several sites, and attendants also collect. Credit cards are accepted. Maximum stay is 14 days. An additional municipal campground, Hornaday Park, is located in town at 629 Fairview Avenue. For more information call 907-235-1583 (seasonal number).

The privately owned Heritage RV Park is located near the Fishing Hole and offers full RV hookup services. Information is available at 907-226-4500 or 800-380-7787. Another commercial facility, the Homer Spit Campground, can be reached at 907-235-8206.



For information on other camping facilities in the area, check with the Homer Chamber of Commerce at 907-235-7740, or the web at <http://www.homer.alaska.org/>.

## **The Nick Dudiak Fishing Hole**

This small, artificial basin adjacent to the small boat harbor is stocked annually by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game with juvenile silver (coho) and king (chinook) salmon. The hatchery-bred smolt leave the basin to forage in the open North Pacific, returning one to three years later as full-grown adults. Chinook start arriving in May. Silvers begin to arrive in mid-July and continue to be present around the spit and inside the basin until September. Salmon bound for the Fishing Hole can be caught by boat anglers from Mud Bay out to the green buoy marker at Archimandritof Shoals, a mile west from the tip of the Spit.

## **Boat Storage**

Many boaters prefer to store their boats in the Homer area to avoid long tows up and down the highway. The Port of Homer offers non-secure parking in some areas around the boat harbor for up to seven days. Commercial storage is available at several locations around Homer, including the Homer Boat Yard (907-235-7158) and Northern Enterprises (907-235-8234), both located on



## OVERVIEW

Kachemak Drive. Some marine businesses also have capacity to store smaller numbers of boats.

Following are brief descriptions of other communities on or near Kachemak Bay and Kachemak Bay State Park:

### HALIBUT COVE

The community of Halibut Cove, between Ismailof Island and the mainland, is a scenic and interesting place to visit by boat. Most of the land in Halibut Cove is privately owned. A public dock is located near the east end of Ismailof Island, but boat-ers should be aware that most of the upland adjacent to the dock is private. The entrances to the cove are shallow, and the southeast entrance is too shallow for boats during low tide.



### SELDOVIA

Seldovia has a small boat harbor, restaurants, lodging, guide services, an airport, a medical clinic, a historic Russian Orthodox church, a small museum, roads and trails, and other attractions and amenities. See the harbormaster's office, just west of the head of the ramp, about moorage. The western side of the entrance to Seldovia is marked with buoys.

### NANWALEK

Nanwalek, formerly English Bay, is a small village located on a promontory at the south side of the entrance to Port Graham. It includes a spit with a sandy beach, which nearly encloses a small lagoon and is accessible by boat only on tides 14 feet or greater. The approach by water has many rocks and the area experiences strong surges from the sea when the wind is from the west. There are no channel markers, so follow the chart carefully. Nanwalek offers no fuel or visitor services. Small boats can parallel the rocky shore into the bay and on to the village of Port Graham.



## PORT GRAHAM

Port Graham is a Native community, located about three miles into Port Graham (the bay), on the south shore. The entrance to Port Graham is rocky. The approach from Dangerous Cape is identified with channel markers. Day markers are located on the north side of the mid-channel island. A floating dock lies next to a hatchery and fish processing site. Watch out for floating fish net pens. Gas and diesel are available from a dealer on the upland near the floating dock, but fuel has to be carried in jugs to the float. At high tide fuel drums can be rolled down the beach and the other (northeast) side of the village site. The village has a couple of small shops with groceries, fishing tackle, and a minimal selection of other supplies and services. The Port Graham area is scenic and offers several attractive beach camping sites. Check with the Port Graham Native Corporation for permits. The head of the bay shallows well out. A small bay on the northeast side of the entrance has a gravel beach and distinctive white streaked cliffs.

## ANCHOR POINT

Anchor Point, located at the western most highway point on the continental road system, is 200 miles south of Anchorage and 12 miles north of Homer. Many boaters access lower Cook Inlet via a beach access road that runs west from town along the Anchor River. Some put in from the beach at the end of the road; others continue north along the beach to the mouth of the Anchor River and launch at high tide. Launching a boat at either of these locations can be tricky and is not recommended for those unfamiliar with the area. The beach is soft silt and sand and has a shallow water table. Many vehicles have become stuck and some even lost to the incoming tide. Please use extreme caution.

A boat tractor launch service operates seasonally at the west end of the beach access road. It is a popular choice, but boat trailers must be equipped with side rails to use this service. Before arrival at the tractor launch, boats should already be loaded and prepared for launching. Make sure engines start and run well with systems operational, and you have plenty of fuel, food, and water. Once at the launch site remove tie downs, install drain plugs, and disengage the engine travel bracket(s). Ask for and follow directions from the launch service staff. The launch service recommends boaters carry cell phones. For more information about Anchor Point, visit the Chamber of Commerce web site at <http://www.anchorpointchamber.org/>.

# KACHEMAK BAY STATE PARK

Kachemak Bay State Park and Kachemak Bay State Wilderness Park collectively contain some 400,000 roadless acres of spectacular mountains, forests, glaciers, lakes, rivers, and coastline. Much of the area extending from Bear Cove to Tutka Bay and south to the Gulf of Alaska coast is within the park, although there are numerous private inholdings. Access to the park is by boat or airplane. Air charters, boat rentals and water taxis are available in Homer for those without private transportation. Information on water taxi service is available at [www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/units/kbay/kbaytaxi.htm](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/units/kbay/kbaytaxi.htm). The park offers a range of outdoor recreational opportunities, including the following:

Six **public use cabins**; three are in Halibut Cove Lagoon (where there is also a **public dock**), one at Leisure (China Poot) Lake, one in Moose Valley, and one on the south side of Tutka Bay. The cabins are very popular and must be reserved well in advance. Contact State Park offices or <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/cabins/kenai.htm> for more information. Nomad Shelters, Inc. rents **yurts** at several locations in the park. Check with the company in Homer for more information, or at <http://www.nomadshelter.com/>.

**Public mooring buoys** are provided at several popular sites.

**Camping** is allowed anywhere on park land. Designated **campsites** are located on: Chugachik Island, Mallard Bay, Humpy Creek, Glacier Spit, Right Beach, Halibut Cove Lagoon, China Poot Bay, North Eldred and South Eldred Passage (east side of Eldred Passage), the entrance to Sadie Cove, Kayak Beach (at the north entrance to Tutka Bay). There are three more inside Tutka Bay plus one at Tutka Bay Lagoon. Campsites are minimally developed and users have the responsibility to keep them clean and ready for the next visitors. Campfires are only allowed below timberline, on beaches or gravel bars with no vegetation, or in the metal fire rings provided.

**Designated hiking trails** lead to lakes, mountain peaks, glaciers, and other natural attractions. **Trailheads** along the shore are marked with orange triangles with a black “T.”

Other attractions in the park include: a pink salmon run at Humpy Creek, a sockeye salmon run at China Poot Creek, a king salmon sport fishery in Halibut Cove Lagoon, and hard-shell clam beds at numerous locations.

The park office is located in Homer, and a seasonally staffed ranger station is located in Halibut Cove Lagoon. Check with park staff at 907-235-7024 or go to the Alaska State Parks web site for more information: [www.dnr.state.ak.us](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us).



# PREPARATION

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Along with knowledge and skillful boat handling, thorough preparation is what distinguishes the best skippers and paddlers from other boaters. This is especially true when boating Alaska's coastal areas. Boaters must be as self-sufficient as possible. Adequate preparation may help resolve or prevent many common boating problems, and boaters will be better prepared to assist others in trouble. The first step is education.

## Boating Courses and Other Instruction

Those new to powerboating should look for boating courses approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). Experienced boaters should consider taking a boating course occasionally as a refresher, because boating laws and technologies change and current courses contain updated information. All boaters should understand state and federal boating laws, know how to signal for help using a variety of methods, know first aid and CPR, and understand the International Navigation Rules.

In addition, Kachemak Bay and lower Cook Inlet boaters should be proficient in basic navigation. Even near shore boaters can be suddenly caught in fog or quickly deteriorating weather. Boaters should know how to use a compass, read a tide table, and be able to determine their position on a chart. Consider taking basic coastal navigation courses, such as those offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.



Coastal paddling requires specific knowledge and skill and should not be undertaken until you have had both adequate instruction and practice. Both dry land and in-water instruction (in protected areas) are highly recommended for paddlers. A capsized boat is serious business for coastal kayakers. Besides learning efficient paddling techniques, obtain and maintain essential skills in re-

boarding a capsized boat in open water, such as the paddle float self-rescue and the two boat “T” rescue techniques. Then, practice in protected areas to build skill and confidence before heading out into the open water.

## Pre-departure Checks

A pre-departure checklist should incorporate all federal and state requirements, as well as any additional equipment and procedures specific to your type of boat, the way it is used, and the current conditions. Keep in mind, while some items need only be checked at the start of each season or periodically, others should be checked before each trip. If transporting your boat to the bay via the road system, the best time to do a pre-departure check is before leaving home. Boat and equipment problems are better discovered in the driveway than at the launch ramp.

## All Coastal Boaters

All boaters must comply with both state and federal laws. The Alaska Requirements table on page 16 summarizes state requirements. The following items are also highly recommended:

- Marine VHF-FM radio. Besides use in case of trouble, a marine VHF radio can be used day-to-day to update float plans, communicate with other boaters, or to check on the weather.
- Compass
- Nautical chart #16645 (Gore Point to Anchor Point)
- Tide tables (turn to the section labeled “Seldovia” for tables most accurate for Kachemak Bay)
- Manual bailing devices (even if you have an electric pump system)
- First aid kit
- Personal survival kits (each person)
- Sleeping bags, small tent or tarp, and spare food (in case of an unexpected overnight stay)
- Full rain gear, with rain hat or hood
- Change of clothes in a waterproof bag
- Insect repellent and head net
- AM/FM radio for weather forecasts (if no marine VHF radio)
- Hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen



# PREPARATION

## 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  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Life Jackets</b>             | One U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket for each person on board. Must be in serviceable condition, approved for the activity, and worn in accordance with the label and owner's manual. Persons under 13 must wear a life jacket when in an open boat, on the deck of a boat, or when being towed (i.e., tubing, waterskiing)  |  |  |   |
| <b>Throwable Devices</b>        | Recommended but not mandatory.  | Except for canoes and kayaks, one U.S. Coast Guard approved throwable device. (i.e., seat cushion or throw ring)   |  |   |
| <b>Sound Producing Devices</b>  | 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, a whistle or horn.                         |
| <b>Visual Distress Signals</b>  | Night signals meeting federal requirements (33 CFR 175.110) between sunset and sunrise.   | Signals meeting federal requirements (33 CFR 175.110) for both day and night time use.<br>Exception: boats and open sailboats not equipped with mechanical propulsion and under 26 feet in length are <b>not</b> required to carry day signals.<br><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> |  |   |
| <b>Fire Extinguishers</b>       | At least one U.S. Coast Guard 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 U.S. Coast Guard approved fire extinguishers. | At least three B-I or one B-II and one B-II U.S. Coast Guard approved fire extinguishers. |
| <b>Navigation Lights</b>        | Display required between sunset and sunrise and when visibility is restricted. International configuration required (varies with length and mode of operation). See the International Navigation Rules.   |  |  |   |
| <b>Backfire Flame Arrestors</b> | One U.S. Coast Guard approved backfire control device on each carburetor of all inboard gasoline engines.   |  |  |   |
| <b>Ventilation</b>              | Boats with permanently installed engines, closed compartments or permanent fuel tanks must have efficient natural or mechanical ventilation.  |  |  |   |
| <b>Registration</b>             | 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. |  |  |   |

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- Food and water
- Camera
- Nonslip footwear such as sneakers or rubber boots

Check the local weather and tides again immediately before departure. File a float plan, and stick to it. Brief passengers. Everyone should know the trip plan (including the possibility of a late return) and the location of and how to use all equipment. Make sure everyone has proper clothing.

### Powerboats

Shallow draft, low-sided, flat bottom boats are intended for inland lakes and rivers, not for open coastal waters. They may perform poorly in rough water conditions and have little freeboard.

Mechanical breakdown is the number one powerboating problem. Practicing preventive maintenance per owner's manuals is cheap insurance against an unpleasant and potentially dangerous situation on the water.

In addition to the recommended items for all coastal boaters, every powerboat on coastal waters should have on board:

- Two anchors - each with chain and anchor lines, with one anchor and line attached to the boat.
- Tools and spare parts including spark plugs, spare propeller, and a prop nut kit.
- Fuel - enough for your trip plus a healthy reserve in case of deteriorating conditions, disorientation, or if you need to loan fuel to or tow another boater. Keep in mind that the return trip, especially if against the tide or wind, or in choppy conditions, may require considerably more fuel than the outbound trip. Think 1/3 out, 1/3 back, and at least 1/3 spare.
- A water/fuel separator filter, installed between the fuel tank(s) and the engine, is highly recommended when boating the coastal areas of Alaska.
- Depth finder

Powerboaters should also consider carrying electronic navigation equipment. A GPS receiver indicates current position and if properly programmed

# PREPARATION



shows the way to important features. However, it is most valuable when used in conjunction with a nautical chart or an electronic chart plotter. Radar is invaluable on the bay especially in cases of fog or limited visibility.

## Paddlers

Coastal paddlers should be knowledgeable of the effects of cold water immersion and be in good physical condition. Choose boats designed for rough coastal waters. Sea kayaks, with their very low center of gravity, covered decks, and high stability, are ideal. Canoes are not recommended unless they are completely decked and/or have flotation bags installed to displace water, and the paddler has extensive knowledge and experience in canoeing rough, open water. In addition to legal requirements and the other items recommended for all boaters, coastal paddlers should also carry:

- paddle float
- paddle leash
- stirrup
- towing strap
- plenty of visual distress signals (including a signal mirror)
- spare paddle

Alaskan paddlers should choose clothes in consideration of both the air and water temperatures. Summer temperatures in coastal areas of Alaska average 40-70° degrees. Wear clothing in layers and choose synthetic fabrics such as fleece, polypropylene, and nylon. Cotton clothing is inappropriate for coastal kayaking. Wear wet suits, dry suits, or paddling jackets as an outer layer when appropriate. All persons should be dressed for a capsize, and that means wearing a life jacket. They should be fit tested and put on before departure.

Proper trip planning is essential. Boats should be selected for each person based on their experience and ability. Local waterway and weather conditions and potential hazards should be researched, especially tidal currents, surf, fog and wind. Select trip routes suited for the least experienced/skilled participant. Group gear should be double-checked. The weather forecast should be checked, then rechecked just before departure. All persons should know the route, location of pullouts, float plan, location of group gear, communications plan, and hand, paddle and whistle signals. All persons should be prepared for an extended trip due to changing weather.

Consider arranging transport to and from the south side of the bay to avoid fighting the wind and current of the open water. Once there, kayakers can paddle the scenic and relatively sheltered south shore.



# LOCAL HAZARDS

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## WEATHER AND TIDES

Winds are commonly from the northeast, east and southeast during stormy or overcast weather, and from the southwest, west and northwest during fair weather. Winds can come up quickly and turn a calm sea into confused chop or large breakers in a matter of minutes. Listen to daily weather forecasts for wind predictions. Fifteen knots can create an uncomfortable chop and anything over 25 knots is suitable only for experienced skippers in craft designed for offshore water. In summer, early mornings are frequently calm or may have a light chop, but as the air over land heats and rises during the day, air rushes in from the sea, frequently producing a stiff west wind locals call the day breeze, which can reach 25-30 knots even on a bluebird summer day. The day breeze creates closely spaced whitecaps on the bay, and at times, significant surf on the bay's west-facing beaches. When this chop combines with ocean swells, often in late summer and fall, dangerous sea conditions can develop. Those who beach or anchor boats in the morning may not be able to safely leave until the seas calm down. Be prepared for, and advise your passengers of, the possibility of unexpected delays due to changing weather conditions. Be patient and wait for conditions to improve, which they eventually do.

**Tide** differentials in the bay range from 15 feet to nearly 28 feet. The twice-daily cycle produces **tidal currents** that can be swift in constricted areas such as the channel entrances to Halibut Cove and Tutka Bay lagoons. Many of the small bays and coves around Kachemak Bay become **tidal flats** at low water, particularly at minus tides. Boaters need to refer to their tide tables and charts, and closely monitor depths to avoid being grounded or trapped. Boaters have become stranded when losing a boat to the tide from an anchorage or beach. **Avoid leaving a boat at anchor unattended.** If beaching, place the boat above the high tide line and carefully secure it with lines.



Working alone, the bay's **weather or tides** can present problems for boaters, but when combined, they can quickly become deadly. When an ebb tide runs against a strong wind the combination can, in some areas, produce closely spaced standing waves called **tide rips**, in which waves can reach more than six feet high. Some of the areas subject to tide rips are described in the local hazards section.

### HAZARDOUS AREAS (Refer to map on pages 24 -25)

Tidal flats, sand and gravel bars, rocks, and drifting debris are all potential hazards to boaters on Kachemak Bay. By knowing where and when hazardous conditions occur, boaters can more easily avoid them. Please note the following information is provided as a courtesy, and is not a substitute for using proper navigational tools and techniques and practicing good seamanship.

Boats returning to the **Small Boat Harbor** from the west tend to cut close-in along the outermost tip of the Homer Spit. Outbound boats are urged to use caution when rounding the point to avoid collisions. Likewise, operators of returning vessels need to be aware that outbound boats also may be transiting close to the point. The entrance to the small boat harbor can be very rough due to waves and boat wakes, particularly when there is a strong northeast or southeast wind and a strong tidal current.

The east side of Cook Inlet, along the Homer bluff's west of **Bishop's Beach** and toward **Bluff Point** and beyond, is popular with local anglers, particularly around the edges of kelp beds. However, the water is shallow in many areas, and there are numerous large boulders. Kelp can also foul water intake ports and cause engines to overheat.

The entire west side of the **Homer Spit** is shallow quite a distance off the beach, and there are old pilings in some places.

The north side of Kachemak Bay, from **Mud Bay** all the way to the **Fox River Flats**, is shallow a long way off the beach and is studded with boulders.

**Fox River Flats State Critical Habitat Area** includes the tidal flats and deltas of the Fox and Bradley Rivers. The area is rich in waterfowl but difficult to reach by boat because of the tidal flats. The flats extend some three miles

## LOCAL HAZARDS

seaward from the river mouth, and can easily trap a boat during a falling tide. If this happens, stay in the boat and float free on the next flood tide, rather than trying to walk to shore and risk being caught by rising waters. There is also reported to be “quick mud” in parts of the flats, which can trap a person.

Submerged rocks lie in the constricted and winding south entrance of **Bear Cove**. A pinnacle, covered at high water, lies in the middle of the anchorage at the head of the cove.

**Mallard Bay** is a small but scenic bay with wilderness character. It is shallow, so consult your tide book, charts, and depth finder before anchoring.

**Aurora Lagoon** should be avoided by boaters. It is very shallow and has an entrance with many rocks. Much of the upland is privately owned. If you must enter, stick to the right (west) side. For two hours on either side of high tide the entrance is barely passable. If attempted, extreme caution is required. Also, avoid disturbing the seals that haul out on the rocks that lie to the north of the lagoon.

The **Grewingk Glacier Spit** has a long gravel beach and is a popular destination for camping and hiking. The spit extends into the bay from **Right Beach** campground on the east side of Halibut Cove to its northeastern tip near the mouth of **Grewingk Glacier Creek**. The southwest side of the spit receives the full force of the day breeze and its subsequent chop, along with any ground swells entering the bay from the Gulf of Alaska. Tidal currents also run along the spit. Anchoring on the southwest side of the spit can be risky, and boats on anchor should not be left unattended. Smaller boats should be beached at high tide and carefully secured to the shore well above tide line.





**Rusty's Lagoon**, behind the Grewingk Glacier Spit, is somewhat protected from wind and waves, but campers should still choose sites carefully during high tides. The lagoon entrance, like Aurora Lagoon, has several large rocks and can be very hazardous to those unfamiliar with it.

The channel into **Halibut Cove Lagoon**, while generally sheltered from the wind, is treacherous because it is narrow and has a strong tidal current during tide cycles. The entrance to the lagoon is carpeted with broad mussel beds that are exposed at mid-tide. Some boaters with shallow drafts, who know the channel well, can navigate in and out roughly three hours before or three hours after most high tides. The entrance should not be attempted at less than a six foot tide. If Halibut Creek is running strong, it can put enough silt into the water at the entrance to make it impossible to see the bottom, so a depth finder is highly recommended. Once past the mussel beds, the channel into the lagoon is hard against the west bank. The narrow channel and current (commonly 8 knots and reportedly as fast as 14 knots) can make turning around in the channel very difficult. **A boater who loses propulsion because they experience mechanical trouble or hit bottom and damage a propeller or lower unit, may find themselves in serious trouble. Before entering the channel, prepare backup propulsion and have an anchor ready for immediate use.**

Big waves can form in occasional tide rips just off **Peterson Point**.

**Peterson Bay** is a scenic, sheltered bay with private shellfish farms, lodges, and the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies' field station. Watch out for set nets and floating oyster farms. Many local shellfish farmers use blue buoys that can be hard to see under some conditions.

**Gull Island**, between Peterson Bay and China Poot Bay, serves as nesting ground for eight species of seabirds including kittiwakes, murres, cormorants, and puffins. Boaters need to be respectful of birds on their nests as well as on the water (see section entitled Respect Wildlife). There are submerged rocks off the southwest end and southeast side of the island, and charted rocks off the northeast end.

**China Poot Bay's** extensive tidal flats supports many species of waterfowl and shorebirds. At the mouth, breakers and standing waves are sometimes formed by a combination of an outgoing tide and a west wind over shallow reefs. **China Poot Bay**, itself, is also very shallow. There is a channel to the



C O O K  
I N L E T

Anchor Point

Anchor Point

Bluff Point

Homer

KACHEMAK

BAY

STATE

CRIT

K A C H E M A K

Coh

Yukon  
Island

Hesketh Island

Grass Isl

Herring Isl

Barbara Point

Nubble Point

McDonald Spit

Kasitna Bay

Seldovia Point

Seldovia

Point Naskowhak

Point Pogibishi

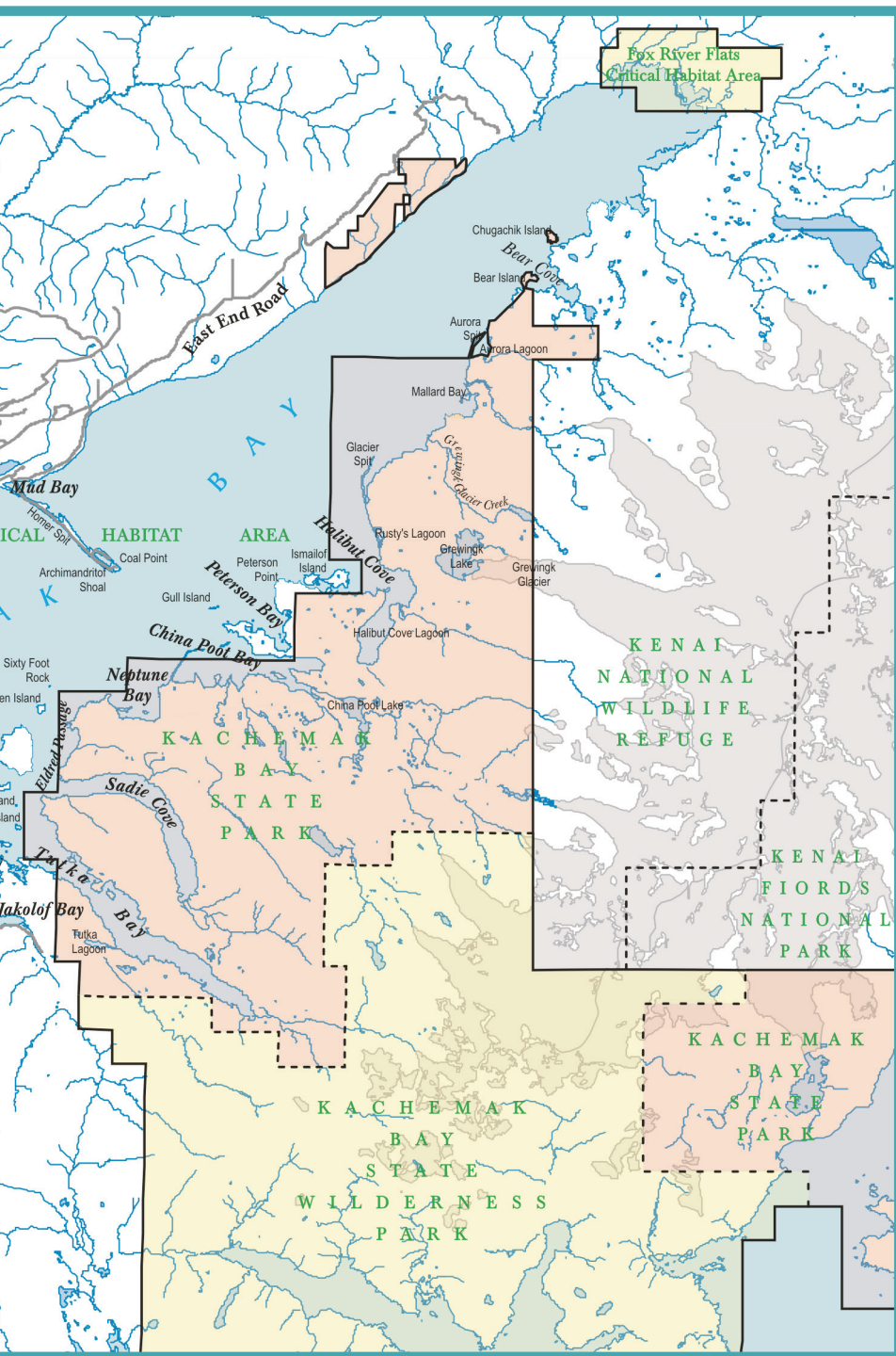
Dangerous Cape  
*Coal Cove*

Nanwalek

*Port Graham*  
Port  
Graham

Flat Islands

Note: map not intended to be used for navigation



## LOCAL HAZARDS

back of the bay along the north side. Go slow and use a depth finder. There is an uncharted rock in the channel just off the site of the private lodge.

**Neptune Bay** is shallow, largely intertidal, and goes dry at low tide a considerable distance out from the mouth of the Wosnesenski River. There are numerous rocks just offshore from Neptune, which present significant navigational hazards, and a number of rocks farther offshore from its seaward margin. Many rocks near Neptune Bay may be submerged or awash, depending on the tide. Also note that most of the beach is privately owned.



**Lancashire Rocks**, east of Sixty-foot Rock, are often visible, but use caution when near them.

The **Eldred Passage to Kasisitsna Bay** has many rocks, some visible and some not. Try to stay mid-channel and be cautious.

**Yukon Island** and **Sixty-foot Rock** are part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge and are attractive habitat for sea otters, seabirds, and other wildlife. The passage between **Yukon** and **Hesketh** islands is especially scenic and contains good seabird habitat. Numerous rocks lie around **Cohen**, **Yukon**, and **Hesketh** islands.

**Sadie Cove** is a narrow glacial fjord. Its steep sides can amplify



winds. Called “Sadie Eighties” by locals, these winds can cause dangerous sea conditions.

Avoid the rocky south side of **Tutka Bay**. The best route is along the north side (port side when entering), and once inside it’s best to stay to the left or mid-channel until even with the Alaska State Park’s public use cabin at Sea Star Cove.

**Tutka Lagoon** can be reached via a narrow channel, passable by small boats, but only at high water of at least a 13 foot tide. The channel can be difficult to locate if the water isn’t clear. Go slow and use caution. A rock sill at the head of the channel helps keep water in the lagoon even after the tide drops. Please note, if the lagoon’s outgoing tide is against a strong southeast wind, a dangerous rip can develop at the entrance to the channel.

Scenic **Jakalof Bay** ends with a small tidal flat and a creek. Numerous shellfish farms line both sides of the inlet. A former log storage area and road lie on the west side. Enter **Jakalof Bay** on the east (left going in) side of the mid-channel island, and favor the east side of the pass since a reef extends out well past the island. The bay is studded with rocks, and is shallow quite a way out from the south shore. The mouth of **Jakalof Bay** can also be treacherous when the ebb opposes the wind.

**Little Tutka Bay, Dunnings Lagoon, and Little Jackalof Bay (Bootleggers Cove)** are small, sheltered bays ringed by private cabins and lodges. They have tidal flats and are studded with rocks. Careful navigation can provide opportunities to see shorebirds and intertidal life in the frequently clear water. The dock in Bootleggers Cove is privately owned.

**MacDonald Spit** encloses the western half of **Kasitna Bay**. Private cabin sites cover most of the spit but intertidal areas are property of the state. Be aware, the western half of the bay goes dry at low water.

The coastline from **Barbara Point** to **Seldovia**, on to **Point Pogibshi, Dangerous Cape** and the outer reaches of Kachemak Bay at **Flat Island**, is mostly steep and rocky. The area is popular with recreational salmon and halibut anglers. However, it is an exposed area with swift tidal currents and treacherous tide rips. Exercise great caution when venturing there. When the tide races off **Point Pogibshi** and **Dangerous Cape**, very large breaking waves can build.

## OTHER HAZARDS

### Floating Debris

Fallen trees become floating hazards on the bay especially after storms and high tides. Over time they become water soaked, partially submerged, and can be difficult to spot. Debris accumulated on beaches can also refloat during high tides. Scan the surface of the water when underway, and be particularly vigilant during high tide cycles.

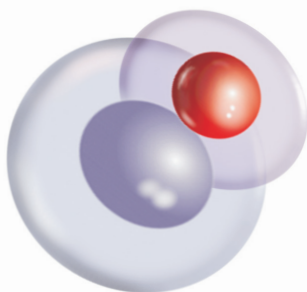


### Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, the leading cause of accidental poisoning death in America, is now recognized as a serious problem on our nation's waters. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, and 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.

Carbon monoxide binds to red blood cells 240 times more aggressively than oxygen, displacing oxygen and causing metabolic asphyxiation. 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 gasses from generators and engines are the main culprits. Exhaust fumes and carbon monoxide can accumulate in enclosed cabin spaces and under swim platforms. Use care when running the engine or generator continuously if 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.

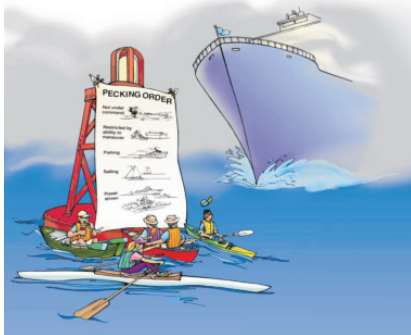
CO concentrations can be especially high under and around swim platforms. Everyone on board should keep well clear of engine and generator exhaust ports when they are running. Swimmers near the stern, or those launching or retrieving a dingy over the stern platform, are particularly vulnerable. If there 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.

Because CO is difficult to detect by sight or smell and poisoning can happen quickly, there is often little warning. Carbon monoxide poisoning is difficult to diagnose because of a wide range of vague and multiple symptoms. Fatigue and headache are most common, but others include the “flu like” symptoms of dizziness, vomiting, muscular twitching, weakness, and sleepiness. Victims often have a gray or ashen appearance. If someone feels dizzy or loses consciousness while on board, consider the possibility of CO poisoning. If you think someone could be suffering from CO poisoning, get him or her away from the suspected source and into fresh air immediately. Be prepared to provide basic life support up to your level of training and call for medical assistance.

One of the best protections against carbon monoxide is a regular and complete inspection of your engine’s exhaust systems. If you notice a change in the sound of the exhaust system or appearance of its emissions, shut the unit down and have it inspected and repaired by a competent mechanic.

## Other Boaters

Local hazards include other boats. Constant vigilance and a working knowledge and proper application of the International Navigation “Rules of the Road” is necessary. When encountering other vessels take early action to indicate your intention (i.e. “show a side” of your boat). Display your navigation lights during periods of restricted visibility.



Be watchful for ships and other large vessels. Cargo ships, passenger ferries, tugs and barges, cruise ships, and tour and charter fishing boats also ply the waters of the bay; some with surprising speed. Most large vessels maneuver poorly, need miles to stop, and may not even see a small boat directly ahead. Stay well clear of large vessels. Cross behind, never in front of them. If you encounter large wakes, slow down and turn into them at an angle.

Stay clear of fishing vessels with gear deployed, or in the act of setting gear. A purse seiner “sets” its net in a big circle, with the opposite end attached to a small skiff and sometimes to a “lead” or “tie-off” on the beach. Be careful not to get inside the set.

Gillnets may be very difficult to see in choppy water; look for the buoy at the far end of the net and a row of white corks between it and the boat. During salmon season, set gillnets are common along the south shore including **Halibut Cove** and **MacDonald Spit**.

Crab and shrimp pots are marked with floats or buoys. Long line sets are marked with buoys and small flags. Lines can stretch long distances just under the surface. Give these a very wide berth. Boaters are financially liable for any damage they cause to fishing nets and gear.



# RESPONSIBLE BOATING

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For all its rugged beauty, Kachemak Bay is delicate. Even unintentional acts can pollute the water, mar the land, or disturb fish and wildlife causing stress to the point of interrupting essential survival activity or resulting in reproductive failure. Responsible boaters avoid harming the land, water, or wildlife of the bay. Treating the bay and its resources responsibly will help ensure that it will continue to be enjoyed by those who follow us.

## Don't Pollute

- Take care when fueling. Powerboaters should have oil absorbent materials on hand to prevent fuel and oil from getting into the water. Use oil absorbent pads in your bilge, and consider an oil-sensitive pump switch. Even a small amount of oil on the feathers of a seabird can kill it or its developing embryo.
- Practice good housekeeping when on board. A good rule of thumb is don't throw anything into the bay that didn't come out of it in the first place. Garbage, including food scraps, can choke seabirds and unnaturally attract predators to nesting areas. Collect discarded fishing line, cut it into short pieces, and dispose of it properly. It can easily entangle and kill birds and other marine animals. Bring all garbage back to town and dispose of it properly.
- Maintain good sanitation practices on the bay, its beaches, and at campgrounds. Use toilets before departure. Carry and use portable toilets. Federal law prohibits dumping sewage holding tanks into the water.

## Tread Lightly

- Camp on the beach or gravel areas above the high tide line providing there are no shorebirds nesting nearby.
- Avoid walking on muskeg and other sensitive soils. Use developed trails when possible.
- Wash at least 200 feet away from the shore. Use biodegradable soap.
- Use a gas stove for cooking instead of a fire. If you must make a fire, build it on gravel or rock, use dead and down wood, and erase all traces of the fire afterward.
- Avoid damaging live trees and plants.

# RESPONSIBLE BOATING

- Dispose of fish waste in the sea at low tide.
- “Naturalize” your campsite after use by dispersing any natural materials used, brushing over tracks, etc.
- Leave all plants, rocks, antlers, fossils and cultural artifacts in place.
- Keep food in airtight, bear-proof containers, and never cook, eat or store food in your tent or sleeping area. Use food storage lockers when available.



# RESPECT WILDLIFE

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## General Guidelines

All marine wildlife is susceptible to disturbance. Animals have been forced away from feeding grounds or deprived of rest, and some are actually struck by speeding boats. Following are some guidelines:

- Remain a respectful distance from animals and birds in or on the water, rocks, or cliffs. Rather than observing at close range, view with binoculars or spotting scope. If your presence causes a change in behavior, you are too close.
- Don't chase or try to corner wildlife to get a photo.
- Never feed wildlife.
- Keep pets under physical control at all times.
- Respect and avoid nests, dens, and resting places.
- Never handle, touch, or approach young birds or animals. Most likely they are not abandoned but only left in place while the mother seeks food.





## Intertidal Life

Intertidal areas are habitat for many species of invertebrates. Avoid walking on barnacles or mussels or through tide pools. Refrain from picking up or rearranging rocks on the beach, which are probably sheltering dozens of creatures. Slowly and gently replace stones or other dislodged items. Avoid handling beach creatures.



If digging clams in Kachemak Bay, quickly rebury any undersized or unwanted clams.

Unlike the razor clams of sandy beaches, these species cannot rebury themselves and will succumb to predators or to dehydration.

## Shorebirds and Eagles

Nesting shorebirds may withdraw from their 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 their nesting territories.





The appearance of shrieking terns circling and diving on hikers, other squawking birds overhead, or feigned “broken wing” behavior such as that exhibited by killdeer, often indicates concealed nests are near. Stay aware, particularly on gravel bars, grassy areas or beaches. Some birds make small, exposed nests of beach debris that are easily destroyed. Step carefully and leave the area if you suspect breeding birds are present.



Bald eagles nest May through August. They are sensitive to noise and may abandon an active nest if disturbed. Keep well clear of active eagle nests.

## Marine Mammals

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

## RESPECT WILDLIFE



- 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.
- Don't pursue, chase, herd, "leapfrog" around, get between mothers and young, or force whales toward shallow water. Slow down to an idle well before reaching the 100-yard perimeter. Stay back from breaching or flipper slapping whales. Stay away from the "bubble curtain" emitted by humpback whales to herd food. Humpback whales navigate by sound, not sonar. If they are focused on feeding, they could unknowingly either come up underneath or down upon the 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.
- Do not approach resting, fishing, or hauled out seals or sea lions close enough to cause them to enter the water or otherwise change their behavior. Forcing them into the water, or preventing them from hauling out, may cause critical energy loss, pup-mother separation, or even injury to pups. Maintain a slow, steady parallel-to-shore course while in their vicinity. Sea lions and seals are most vulnerable to disturbance May through July during pupping.

Dead sea otters that wash up on Kachemak Bay beaches frequently exhibit traumatic injuries from boat strikes. Slow down when in the vicinity of sea otters as they sometimes have difficulty judging speed and distance and fail to get out of the way of fast boats.



Steller's sea lions are federally protected under the Endangered Species Act, and seals and sea otters by the Marine Mammal Protection Act.



## Sea Birds

Seabird colonies are vulnerable to reproductive failure as a result of disturbance. Nesting seabirds can be permanently displaced from otherwise desirable locations or can be temporarily driven off, inadvertently knocking their own eggs off the ledge or exposing their eggs or chicks to excessive heat or cold, and predation. Some of Alaska's seabirds are already depleted and highly stressed. Stay far enough away from nesting areas, and never blast horns or whistles or



make other loud noises in the vicinity of seabird nests. When birds take flight in groups or waves rather than individually, they are disturbed and you are too close. Bobbing heads and shrieking are also signs of disturbance.

Skirt around flocks of resting or feeding seabirds 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 birds.

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

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.



# OPERATING TIPS

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## Power Boaters

- When underway, always maintain a proper lookout. Scan the water back and forth constantly for hazards, especially when facing into the sun, in fog or restricted visibility, rough water, and when rounding points or navigating narrow winding passages.
- Anchorages may be used by several boats, so be considerate and give others room. 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 also anchor safely. 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, shouting, or running generators excessively.
- Watch your wake, especially when passing paddlers or other small craft, or when near drifting, trolling, or anchored boats.
- Limit your use of public docks and mooring buoys to the time actually necessary for your stay. Be prepared to share them with other boaters.
- Please note regulations prohibit personal watercraft inside Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area (virtually all of the bay), and Kachemak Bay State Park.





## Coastal Paddlers

- Sea kayaks can be very difficult to see under conditions with limited visibility, rough water, and/or strong backlighting from the sun, and they don't appear on radar. In these situations, it helps to stay in a "pod" instead of in a string of boats. Wave paddles, if necessary, to attract the attention of the operators of approaching boats. Strive for high visibility. Wear bright clothing that can be seen easily by other boaters at a distance.
- Whenever possible, keep out of busy powerboat traffic lanes.
- Avoid paddling alone. In the event of a capsize, 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 it floated away on a high tide or was swamped by a large boat wake breaking on the beach.
- Never try to outrun a bad weather forecast.
- Keep a lookout for large boat wakes or 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 out.



## OPERATING TIPS

- Even the fastest sea kayaks are capable of speeds of only 6 mph. Avoid paddling in strong winds, fast tidal current or chop over one foot. A 15-knot head wind will significantly increase your workload and decrease your speed.
- Use your paddle leash.
- Avoid overloading decks.



# IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

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Every boat should have a marine VHF radio. **VHF Ch. 16** is your direct connection to help. Both the U.S. Coast Guard and the **Homer harbormaster** monitor Ch. 16 around the clock, and other boaters are required to monitor it if so equipped when underway.

A **cell phone** is not the best marine communications device, but in a pinch it's better than nothing. Numbers for local services are listed at the end of this publication. The Coast Guard has a special toll-free emergency cell phone contact code, which is **\*CG (\*24)**. This should put you in direct contact with a Coast Guard unit.

If you require assistance on the water, the Coast Guard may dispatch a unit from Homer's volunteer **Coast Guard Auxiliary** flotilla, known locally as **Rescue 21**. However, in non-emergency situations please note that the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary may decline to render assistance if commercial assistance is available. Assistance also might come from the Alaska State Troopers, a State Park Ranger, or the National Marine Fisheries Service. The **harbormaster's office** may dispatch one of its work boats to render assistance to boats disabled inside, or just outside, Homer Harbor. The Coast Guard or harbormaster's office may also call a local **water taxi operator** to provide assistance, such as bringing out fuel to an inoperative boat. During the busy summer season water taxies' non-emergency response times may be long.

## Emergency Radio Procedures

There are three types of emergency radio messages:

**SÈCURITÉ** - to notify others of bad weather or other hazards (pronounced se-cure-et-tay).

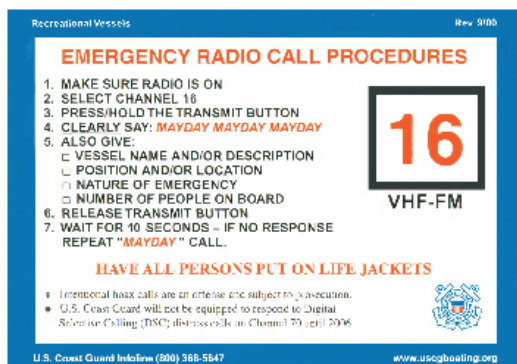
**PAN-PAN** - used when calling station has an urgent message for mariners (pronounced pon-pon).

**MAYDAY** - when a boater is experiencing an immediate threat to life.

## **IN AN EMERGENCY:**

1. Make sure radio equipment is **on** and **CHANNEL 16** selected.
2. Decide which of the three messages to use. Then **SAY IT CLEARLY THREE TIMES** (such as MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, then...)
3. **Say**  
"This is the vessel \_\_\_\_\_" or \_\_\_\_\_ (your name)

# IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE



“My position is \_\_\_\_\_” (give latitude/longitude if possible)

“The nature of my emergency is \_\_\_\_\_”

“I have \_\_\_\_\_ persons on board”

4. **Listen!** If there is no response within 10 seconds, repeat your broadcast until you are answered. Try different emergency channels if necessary. Continue until acknowledged.

ACTIVATE YOUR EPIRB IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO MAKE CONTACT.

If you get a response, be prepared to give the following information:  
Fill in these items\* in advance.

- Vessel description\*
  - length \_\_\_\_\_ hull color \_\_\_\_\_ house color \_\_\_\_\_
  - trim \_\_\_\_\_ mast(s) \_\_\_\_\_ registration number \_\_\_\_\_
  - construction type \_\_\_\_\_
- On-scene weather
  - wind speed \_\_\_\_\_ direction \_\_\_\_\_
  - sea height \_\_\_\_\_ swell direction \_\_\_\_\_
  - visibility (miles) \_\_\_\_\_ ceiling (feet) \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency and survival equipment onboard\* \_\_\_\_\_
- Radio frequencies available\* \_\_\_\_\_
- Operator's name and phone\* \_\_\_\_\_
- Owner's name and phone \* \_\_\_\_\_
- Home port\* \_\_\_\_\_
- What type/degree of assistance is needed \_\_\_\_\_

# CONTACTS

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## **Emergency**

### **Coast Guard**

VHF Ch. 16

Cell phone - \*CG (\*24)

1-800-478-5555

1-888-399-5555

1-907-463-2000

### **Alaska State Troopers**

VHF Ch. 16

tel. 911

1-907-235-8239

### **Rescue 21 (Coast Guard Auxiliary, Homer flotilla)**

VHF Ch. 16

## **Non-Emergency**

### **Homer Harbormaster**

VHF Ch. 16

1-907-235-3160

### **Seldovia Harbormaster**

VHF Ch. 16

1-907-234-7886

### **Cook Inlet Keeper (pollution)**

1-907-235-4068

### **Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation**

1-800-510-2332

1-907-269-7500

## **Resource Agencies**

### **Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

VHF Ch. 16

1-907-235-8191 Office

1-907-235-6930 Recorded sport fishing update

### **Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Kachemak Bay State Park**

1-907-235-7024 Homer Ranger Station

1-907-235-6999 Halibut Cove Ranger Station (summer)

VHF Ch. 16 (summer)

### **National Marine Fisheries Service**

1-907-235-2337 Enforcement Office, Homer

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge

1-907-235-6546

### **Other**

#### **National Weather Service**

Alaska Weatherline

1-800-472-0391 press 3, then 2, then 2 for area 4A

[www.arh.noaa.gov](http://www.arh.noaa.gov), click Marine Forecasts, then Marine Forecast for North Gulf Coast, Kodiak Island, and Cook Inlet then read area 4A Kachemak Bay

VHF Ch. WX-2 or WX-8



# RECOMMENDED READING

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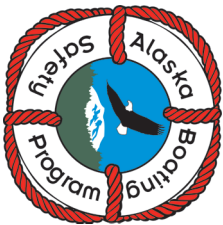
- *Alaska Boater's Handbook*, published by the Alaska Office of Boating Safety
- *Alaska: Cape Spencer to Beaufort Sea*, published by U.S. Dept. of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Service
- *Alaska Marine Mammal Viewing Guidelines*, published by the National Marine Fisheries Service, available at [www.fakr.noaa.gov](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov)
- *Alaska's Seashore Creatures*, by Carmen and Conrad Field, published by Alaska Northwest Books
- *America's Boating Course*, an interactive CD program published by the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadrons
- *Birding Hotspots, Homer Alaska*, by Rich Kleinleder, published by the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival
- *Boat Owner's Guide to Homer*, published by Homer Chamber of Commerce





## RECOMMENDED READING

- *Boating Skills & Seamanship*, published by the Coast Guard Auxiliary
- *Chapman Piloting*, edited by Elbert S. Maloney and published by Hearst Maritime Books
- *City of Homer Park Visitor Information*, published by the City of Homer
- Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats
- *Fog on the Mountain*, by Frederica de Laguna, published by Kachemak Country Publications
- *Kachemak Bay Years*, by Elsa Pedersen, published by Hardscratch Press
- *National Geographic Trails Illustrated 763 - Kachemak Bay State Park topographic map*, published by National Geographic
- *Port of Homer Small Boat Harbor, Fish Dock, Pioneer Dock,, Deep Water Dock*, published by Port of Homer
- *Seldovia Alaska*, by Susan Woodward Springer, published by Blue Willow, Inc.
- *The History of Kachemak Bay, The Homer Spit, and Archeology of Kachemak Bay*, all by Janet Klein, published by Kachemak Country Publications
- *Water Wise: Safety for the Recreational Boater*, by Jerry Dzugan and Susan Clark Jensen, published by the University of Alaska Sea Grant Program and the U.S. Marine Safety Association



**State of Alaska**  
**Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation**  
**Office of Boating Safety**  
**550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1380**  
**Anchorage, AK 99501-3561**

