

Grab your rod for a 'reel' Alaska adventure

Fishing is a
great way to
explore the
Mat-Su
Valley

By Charles Peterson



One reason I love living in the Mat-Su Valley is because of the many fishing opportunities that abound. Within an hour's drive of my house in Wasilla I can get to numerous fishing holes that have great runs of all the varieties of salmon, as well as awesome rainbow trout fishing. Plus, the countless lakes are great to hit after work – there's a reason the Mat-Su Valley is known as the "Stillwater Fishing Capital of Alaska."

I have a boat and can get to remote fisheries like the Deshka River, but you don't have to have a boat to enjoy the fishing here. There is great road access to a number of streams like Willow Creek, Little Willow Creek and Montana Creek. The Parks Highway is great because all of the Susitna River tributaries cross the highway, and with a short hike from the highway, you can get to these great fishing areas. Plus, Willow Creek has an excellent campground where you can park your RV or pitch a tent and still be right next to a great fishing spot.

I know a number of guides in the area, and they are all very good at what they do. I often hire a

guide, even though I have a boat, first thing in the spring. They know exactly where the fish are, and they know the techniques needed to catch them. By going with a guide once or twice a season, I learn a lot of information that I can use when I'm fishing with my family. I look at it as an investment, and I'm never disappointed after spending a day with a guide.

Two things you should remember, though – one, make sure you have a fishing license before you go. And two, make sure you check the regulations, because the Alaska Department of Fish and Game changes regulations throughout the season. Ask someone at the local tackle store or sporting goods store if there are any changes, because they know better than anyone. If you have never fished in Alaska before, you can ask them what works best and they'll be able to get you all set for a great fishing adventure.

Grab your rod and head out to one of the many river, creeks or lakes that can be found everywhere in the Mat-Su Valley. Chance are, I'll see you there!