



United States Department of the Interior

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
12-5010

May 23, 2012

NEW RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUBJECT: Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Issues Temporary Restriction Order for Russian
River Ferry Area

The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge is placing additional temporary restrictions in the area of the Russian River Ferry at Cooper Landing, Alaska, again this year. These changes are being made to reduce human/bear conflicts in this area which is highly used by both humans and black and brown bears. These restrictions are consistent with those in effect on adjacent lands managed by the US Forest Service.

The following Temporary Restriction Order is in effect from May 25, 2012 until October 1, 2012 and states that, **“On all lands and waters within ¼ mile of the Russian and Kenai Rivers, extending from the Russian River Falls downstream to the confluence of the Kenai River, then proceeding downriver on the mainstream Kenai River to the crossing of the powerline:**

- a. **all food, beverage, garbage and all equipment used to transport or store these items (for example, coolers and backpacks) must be locked in a hard-sided vehicle or camper, in a commercially produced bear resistant container, or within immediate grasp which means within 3 feet of the person at all times.**
- b. **all lawfully retained fish must be locked in a hard-sided vehicle or camper, in a commercially produced bear resistant container, or closely attended which means within 12 feet of the person.**
- c. **Pets must be kept on a leash no greater than 6 feet in length.”**

The Russian River Management Area is an area of intensive public use where as many as 150,000 anglers and other recreational users visit each summer. The boundary of the Chugach National Forest and Kenai National Wildlife Refuge divide the area (at the thread of the Russian River) and consistent regulations are necessary to address management needs of both land management agencies, and reduce potential confusion to the visiting public. The primary objective is to provide a safe environment for visitors in an area of heavy use by bears. Bear-human conflicts in the area have been common, and consistent regulations will help to minimize negative bear-human encounters by closely managing human generated attractants that draw bears to the area. The Refuge and Forest have addressed management issues in the Russian River Management Area for over 50 years, and have frequently implemented emergency or temporary regulations or orders to address threats from bears or other management concerns.

For additional information, please contact Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Services Manager, Janet Schmidt, at (907) 260-2808, or janet_schmidt@fws.gov.

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