



# Important Information About the Alaska River Logs

These narratives about trips on Alaska rivers are valuable even decades after they were written. However, we recommend that you to keep the following in mind as you read.

**First, a word of warning:** use these river logs as one source of information that you will supplement with more. Alaska rivers can be very dangerous because of their remoteness, the climate, their sources, and other factors. Bring adequate and proper clothing, equipment, and food. File a "float plan" with someone who can call for help if you do not return on time. Take a satellite phone or other communications tool if at all possible (but not usually a cell phone because of their limited coverage in Alaska). You should plan carefully for a safe and pleasant trip.

**Second, note also that land status information contained in these documents may no longer be accurate.** These logs were compiled long before massive land transfers of unreserved public land to restrictive public ownership or private ownership. River users should be careful to follow federal or state regulations where appropriate, and to avoid trespassing on private land. [Here is some additional information Alaska native landowners.](#) You can obtain

information about access on public lands from the [Alaska Public Lands Information Center](#).

**Third, be sure to also check current fishing or hunting regulations, as what was legal decades ago may not be legal today.** You can obtain information about state fishing and hunting regulations from the [Alaska Department of Fish and Game website](#). More restrictive federal regulations may apply on certain federal lands.

**Finally, there may be errors.** We are working to make as much of this material as possible searchable by adding a text layer to the original image-only PDF files using a text capture process. This process is ongoing. Where possible, we have also converted these to HTML files. Please note that while we have corrected obvious errors generated during these processes, errors may still remain. There may also be errors in the original material.

[Return to Alaska outdoors areas](#) for more information about boating, fishing and hunting areas.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

D4225 Alaska  
(W&SRS)

TO : Files

DATE: September 27, 1973

FROM : David Dapkus

SUBJECT: Aniakchak River Float Trip - July 1973

We floated the Aniakchak River via 2-man rubber rafts July 11-18, 1973. The river lies on the Alaska Peninsula east of Port Heiden, Alaska. Participants were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
David Dapkus	BOR, Team Leader
John Menick	BLM, Anch. District
Keith Trexler	NPS, Anch. ATF
Nate Johnson	ADF&G, Anchorage
Pat Dobey	ADNR, Anchorage
Bill Lyle	ADNR, Anchorage
Rob Stern	photographer for NPS
Tom Flower	photographer for NPS

We were flown into Surprise Lake in Aniakchak Caldera by BLM goose. Part of the team came from Anchorage and the remainder from King Salmon, Alaska. Ben Gale, a "free lance photographer" was picked up at Surprise Lake and sent back to Anchorage.

Two days were spent in the 36 sq. mile caldera exploring. Then on July 13, we paddled across the lake and down to the "Gates", which are a natural "V" opening through which the river flows toward the Pacific Ocean, 32 miles away. We made 5 miles the first day, 5 miles the second day, 8 miles the third day and the remaining distance the fourth day, July 16. We then spent two days at the mouth of the river waiting for the weather to clear so we could be picked up. Three of the team were picked up July 17, by charter plane. The rest of the team were picked up by helicopter July 18, and flown to Port Heiden where we were picked up again by BLM goose and flown back to Anchorage.

The Aniakchak River is runable by raft only. The first 15 miles, including the "Gates" drop at 100 ft. per mile.



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It is shallow, rocky, has low falls, and high speed which makes it a very dangerous river. We portaged for about 400 yards near the end of the one mile long "Gates" and then at two "pillars", (25 ft. high rocks) about 10 miles downstream, we lined the rafts. The rest of the river is runnable by raft by experienced people. The lower 17 miles of river are slow, meandering through flat land. High winds can be expected through the "Gates" and along the entire river, as can continuous rain.

One man, Tom Flower, was continually soaked and became ill, and was flown out by emergency called helicopter on July 16. He recovered in Anchorage.