About

The Alsea River is one of the most pristine estuaries on the Oregon Coast and offers excellent opportunities for both experienced and novice paddlers. There are many places along the river to safely launch and take out. This guide covers the lower ten miles of the estuary, which is tidally influenced. The guide is designed to help you make informed choices about your paddling experience.

Known for its beauty, fishing and crabbing, the Alsea is also an exceptional place to view birds and wildlife. The Alsea is recognized globally by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area, and is part of the Oregon Coast Birding Trail. Many species of waterfowl and shorebirds visit the estuary each year, and sightings of brown pelican, Caspian tern, and bald eagles are common in season.

The Alsea is also home to approximately 500 harbor seals. Harbor seals are protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act. When hauled out the seals are resting, and should not be approached.

Resources

- The Port of Alsea is a reliable source of information for persons interested in paddling on the Alsea. The Port is a year-round public boating facility with a good beach launch, launch ramp, docks, restrooms, restaurants, and a public park. For more information, phone (541)563-3872, e-mail portofalsea@casco.net, or visit www.portofalsea.com
- For information on Lower Drift Creek and the Drift Creek Wilderness, contact the Siuslaw National Forest at (541)563-3211.
- Alsea Bay Board Sports: offering kayak, wetsuit, surf and boogie board rentals, dry bags, kite board and surfing lessons. (541)563-7873
- Waldport High School Kayak Shack: Featuring summer kayak rentals and guided tours by high school entrepreneurs. (541)563-3476
- Waldport Chamber of Commerce: (541)563-2133, or www.waldportchamber.com

Safety

Any travel on the water presents certain risks. Planning ahead for your trip can help you minimize these risks and have an enjoyable trip. Always consult your tide table before setting off. Parts of the bay are extremely shallow, and an outgoing tide could leave you high and dry! The tide book can help make your trip more enjoyable - it is much easier to paddle with the tide than against it.

Always wear your personal flotation device (PFD/life jacket). The Alsea River is a cold river and the PFD could save your life. Dress in layers and bring a change of clothes in a waterproof container.

Weather conditions can change rapidly. During the summer months the wind blows out of the northwest in the afternoon and can cause dangerous conditions. **The entrance of the bay is extremely dangerous on an outgoing tide. Kayaking west of the bridge is not recommended.**

Avoid downed trees and stationary obstacles in the water. Tides and currents can cause your kayak or canoe to overturn when up against a stationary object.

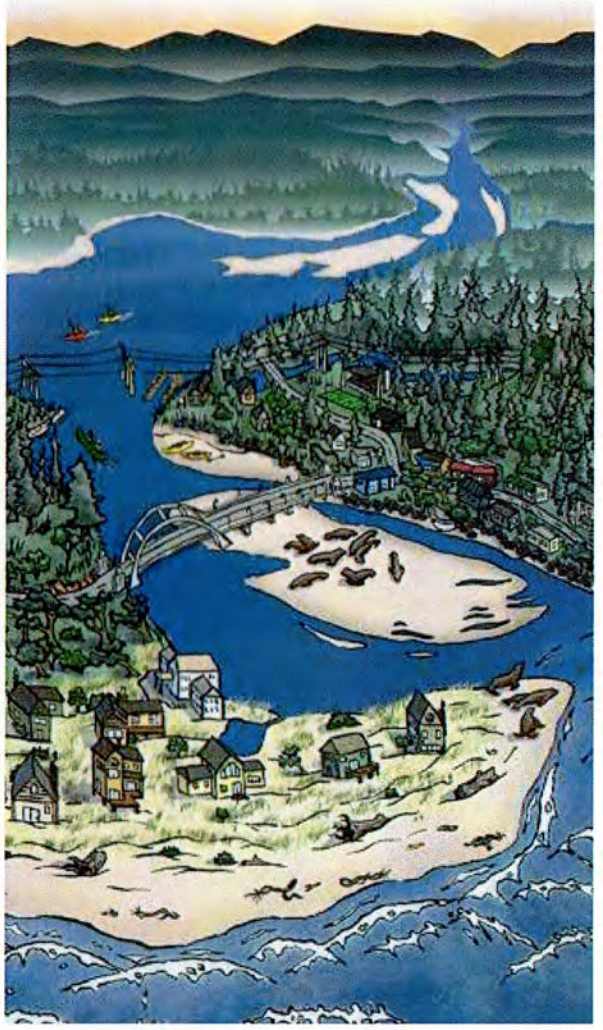
During the late summer and early fall, there can be over one hundred power boats on the bay and river. Never assume that you can be seen by a power boat operator. Plan to make your crossings quickly and carefully.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the Port of Alsea, National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department, U.S. Forest Service, the Community Services Consortium, the City of Waldport, the National Audubon Society, and everyone who provided information, good suggestions, and support along the way.

Brochure produced by the Port of Alsea with assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program.

Alsea River Water Trail



"Estuaries are a happy land, rich in the continent itself, stirred by the forces of nature like the soup of a French chef; the home of myriad forms of life from bacteria and protozoa to grasses and mammals; the nursery, resting place, and refuge of countless."
STANLEY A. CAIN, Speech, 1966

For additional brochures or further information contact:
Port Of Alsea, PO Box 1060 Waldport, OR 97394
541-563-3872
portofalsea@casco.net
www.portofalsea.com

Remarkable River, Reliable Access

Information

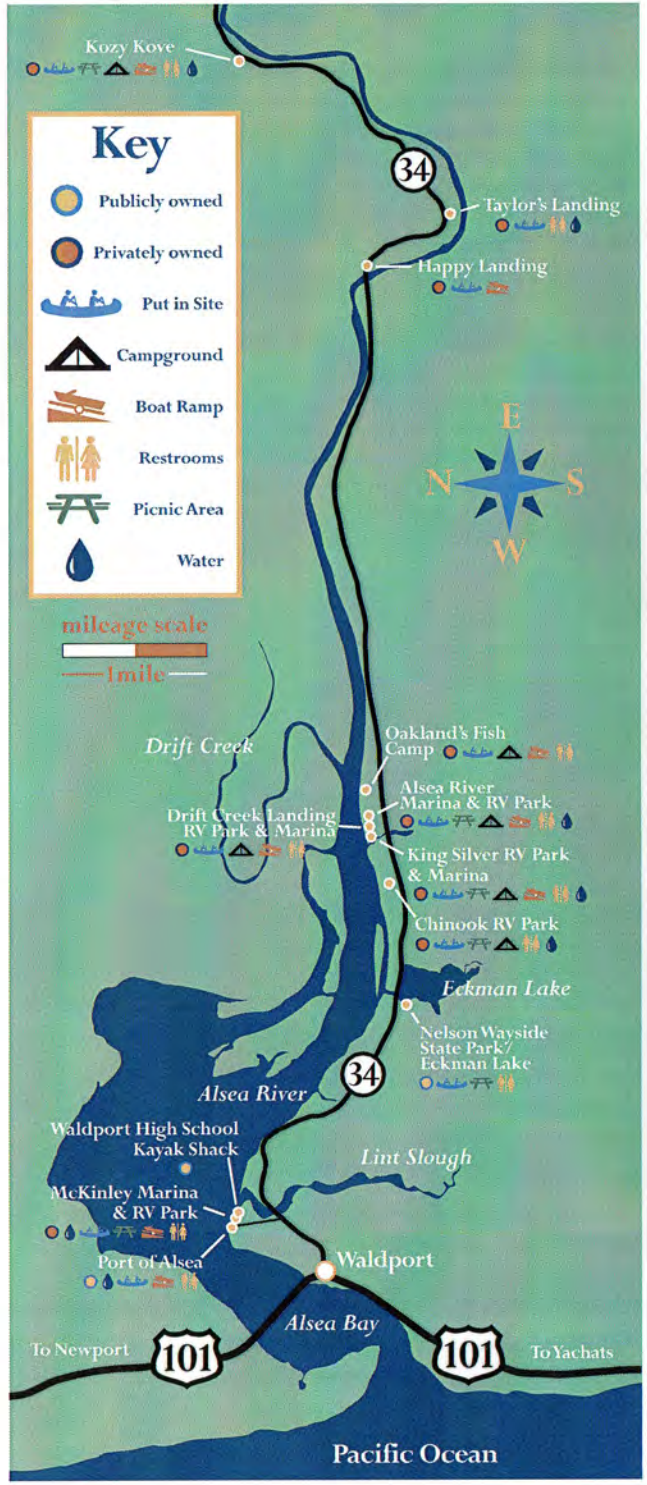
Launch Sites & Services

(road miles) Note: At most sites a parking or launch fee is required. The Port of Alsea and Nelson Wayside are publicly owned and operated. The other marinas are privately owned but welcome kayakers and canoeists.

- **Mile 0.3:** Port of Alsea: launch ramp and good beach launch, docks, restrooms, water, public park, restaurants, and bait shop (541)563-3872
- **Mile 0.4:** McKinley's Marina & RV Park: launch ramp, docks, restrooms, water, picnic tables, store, overnight RV park. (541)563-5656
- **Mile 0.4:** The Waldport High School Kayak Shack: youth entrepreneurs providing kayak and gear rentals and guided tours during the summer. (541)563-3476
- **Mile 2.7:** Nelson Wayside State Park/Eckman Lake: a shallow lake with public dock, vault toilet, picnic area, and good birding opportunities.
- **Mile 3.3:** Chinook RV Park: camping, restrooms, water, picnic tables, possible shore launch at high tide. (541)563-3485
- **Mile 3.7:** King Silver RV Park & Marina: launch ramp, restrooms, water, picnic tables, docks, camping, bait shop during salmon season, good access to Drift Creek. (541)563-3502
- **Mile 3.8:** Drift Creek Landing RV Park & Marina: launch ramp, docks, restrooms, laundry, showers, camping cabins, RV park, good access to Drift Creek. (541)563-3610
- **Mile 3.9:** Alsea River Marina & RV Park: launch ramp, docks, restrooms, showers, laundry, water, picnic tables, bait shop, camping, good access to Drift Creek. (541)563-3401
- **Mile 4.1:** Oakland's Fish Camp: launch ramp, docks, restrooms, laundry, showers, tent camping, good access to Drift Creek. (541)563-5865
- **Mile 7.0:** Happy Landing: shore based facilities used seasonally during salmon season, launch ramp available all year.
- **Mile 7.1:** Taylor's Landing: docks, restaurant, restrooms, water , bait. (541)528-3388
- **Mile 10:** Kozy Kove: launch ramp, docks, restaurant, store, restrooms, picnic tables, RV sites, camping, water. (541)528-3521 for the campground & store. (541) 528-7077 for the restaurant.

"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water."

LORAN EISELY, The Immense Journey, 1957



River Etiquette

Practice the seven principles of "Leave No Trace": plan ahead and prepare; put in, take out and camp on established surfaces; dispose of waste properly; leave what you find; minimize campfire impacts; respect wildlife, and be considerate of other river users. Much of the river is bounded by private property. Never stop at a property unless you are certain it is publicly owned OR a private marina offering services to the public.

Tributaries

Lint Slough is a 3/4 mile easy paddle and will take you into the "backyard wilderness" of Waldport, where you might catch a glimpse of river otters, waterfowl and an occasional deer or elk. Once a salmon research facility with dams, a canal and concrete tide gates, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is in the process of restoring Lint Slough to its natural state.

Lower Drift Creek offers paddlers a sheltered environment and the opportunity to see another restoration project in progress. Originally acquired by the Western Rivers Conservancy, Lower Drift Creek is now owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The Forest Service is working diligently to restore important coho habitat, remove invasive species, and restore tidal function to an area that once was the site of a working homestead.



The best time of year to paddle up Drift Creek is during spring and summer. Drift Creek and the Alsea River, from mile 5 to 12, are heavily used by motorized boaters during the fall salmon season.

There are no services or facilities up Drift Creek, so plan accordingly. If time and tides allow, travel approximately five river miles upstream to view beautiful Wheelock Falls.

"Any river is really the summation of the whole valley. To think of it as nothing but water is to ignore the greater part."

HAL BORLAND, This Hill, This Valley