

FISHING IN BEAR COUNTRY

When fishing in bear country you are at risk of surprising a bear, cougar, moose, or even a rattlesnake

Safety Tips from the Be Bear Aware Campaign



Sudden unexpected encounter

Carry Bear Spray readily accessible on your waist, hip, shoulder, or chest.

When Buying Bear Spray look for 7+ seconds of spray duration and distance of 30+ feet.

Fish after sunrise and before sunset. Fish with at least one partner.

On the hike, Look, Listen & Smell for bear signs such as tracks, scat, claw marks on trees, rocks/logs rolled over, and foul odors from fish or carrion or a bear that has rolled in it.

Call Out when travelling near or through thick brush, around blind corners, near noisy streams and rivers, along the shoreline, and when windy.

Fish in Areas that Have a Good Range of Vision.

Be Aware of Your Surroundings, especially behind you if you are on the river bank.

Never Leave Your Pack Unattended, wear it or hang it from a tree out of a bear's reach.

Immediately Kill Your Fish and store them in a bear-resistant container.

Clean Your Fish away from campsites, campgrounds, and trails.

Dispose of fish guts by tossing small amounts into fast moving water or burn in a hot fire. Never leave or bury the entrails.

Never let a Bear Have Your Fish. Splashing fish attract bears. Be prepared to cut the line and let the fish go.

If You Encounter a Bear, stop and quickly assess the situation as you ready your bear spray. Follow bear encounter protocol.



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How to Avoid Encounters

Proper Food Storage

Bear Identification

What to do in an Encounter

How to Deploy Bear Spray

BE BEAR AWARE CAMPAIGN

Bear Spray

The Be Bear Aware Campaign promotes the carrying and proper use of a quality bear spray when hiking, biking, fishing, camping, and hunting in bear country. We recommend you purchase bear spray that has a spray duration of at least 7+ seconds and has a spray distance of at least 30+ feet. Meeting or exceeding this standard gives you extra protection for more than one charge, multiple bears, wind, rain, cold, erratic spraying, or accidentally spraying over top of the bear.

Try to avoid “Tunnel Vision”. Look around you often.

Rushing rivers are loud. Have a hand signal worked out with your fishing buddies so you can notify them of any bears or cougars approaching.

Never allow a bear to get your fish. Be prepared to cut the line and release your fish.



What If You Encounter a Bear?

If you see, or suspect, a bear is in the area, stop and get your bear spray ready for quick use.



If the bear is in the distance and **does not** notice you, take a route that detours around the bear and remain cautious.

If the bear is in the distance and **does** notice you, stop, talk in a non-threatening, monotone voice and assess the situation. Can you back away and take a detour? Is the bear approaching you? Does it appear agitated, aggressive, or ready to charge?



What If You are Charged by a Bear?

When the charging bear is about **60 feet away**, spray slightly downward to a point about 30 feet in front of you. The bear spray will come out with a whooshing sound and reddish-orange coloring, this sometimes is enough to deter the bear from its charge.

When the bear charges from **30 feet**, spontaneously spray downward toward the front of the bear. The bear spray will make a cone-shaped cloud that expands outward and upward. DO NOT AIM, just spray and keep spraying until the bear diverts its charge.

If the charge is from **15 feet**, spray if you are prepared. If contact is inevitable and you are not in the water, drop and lie flat on your stomach and clasp hands behind your neck. If you can, spray the area both you and the bear are in. It is never too late to use bear spray.