



(We have a long term relationship with the top “fly out” lodges and float trips in Alaska. About a year ago, we received an interesting request to locate a stationary lodge that provided a unique Alaska fly fishing experience, but without fly outs. After presenting the best options to the group below, they favored a special two week period at the Goodnews River Lodge when rainbow and dolly varden fishing would be good and also, numbers of silver/coho salmon could be taken on the surface right at the lodge. The location of a stationary lodge is critical and this operation was located perfectly to supply all these options as well as long fishing days - virtually “fish until you drop” if you choose - and a solid overall reputation as an outstanding fishing lodge.)

Ben Resch, Ken Webb, Jeff Reinke and Gordon LaFortune (left to right in photo at right), had these “edited for space” comments on their week at Goodnews River Lodge:



Gordon (left with silver): “The trip was fantastic! It was everything I wanted and needed; really good fishing, comfortable but not too fancy lodging, good food, relaxed and informal atmosphere, good guides and staff and the list could go on. I don’t think

I’d change anything.”



Jeff (left with rainbow) reported he fished for silvers subsurface with streamers on the first day only. After that, it was all surface fishing and the visual experience of watching the silvers attack the fly or popper was a thrill. He had 20+ fish days, all on the surface, with fish from 8 to 14# and lots of 10 to 13 pounders. Visual excitement also came from viscous strikes on a skated fly from dolly varden.

From Ken (with silver at right): “Definitely a record setting week in quantity and size for many of us.....you were right on the money when you said it was a "serious fishing camp".....only thing I would add is a seriously fun, comfortable and pleasant fishing camp.... For me personally, it was the best fishing trip of my life.”



From Gordon on the surface action for Silvers:



“I had heard of taking Pacific Salmon on the surface but had never done it..... when I saw the ‘popper’ style flies at Goodnews, I was surprised. I gave it a shot on the third day and caught several, about six during the morning alone. I did it several other times and I could have caught more fish than I actually did if I was more experienced with it. I think we were fortunate because you could fish poppers all day if you wanted. It wasn’t quite as productive as streamers, but once I got it down it was productive enough. It’s hard to describe the excitement of watching these big fish chase the fly or attack it from the side.”



The main attractions: silvers, rainbows, and dolly varden.



“For me the fishing highlight was the variety of water and fish. I ended up doing something different most days and that was my choice. After a day of wearing out my arm on silvers it was a nice change to go after rainbows or dollies. The number and variety of fish that I caught was outstanding”.....Gordon

(Note: one option was to fish silvers in the morning, rainbows and dollies upriver in the afternoon, and then back to silvers in front of the lodge after dinner.)



Dollies



Ken arrived at the Goodnews River Lodge as a spin fisherman with hopes of learning to fly fish. By the end of the trip, he was double hauling and casting into the wind! “I now have the confidence to go fly fishing as my regular fishing technique. Now, I just need my wrist to heal from the strain of fighting silvers and casting a million times this week. They should name the lodge the Great News River Lodge.....what an experience!”



Anticipation on the tarmac in Anchorage as the charter prepares to depart. The private charter landing at Goodnews.....and outside the stationary tent-cabin.



Silvers on light rods - at left, Ben with 5 wt. Middle - Gordon with silver on his 6 wt that attacked a mouse pattern while fishing for rainbows. Right – hooked jaw on big male.



Doubles were not uncommon – silvers, rainbows, and dolly varden



Note on availability: this group booked their trip almost a year in advance. The small window of the fishing opportunities described here is about two weeks and they sell out very early. Price for that week in 2008 was \$6,600. Must be deposited by 10/15 to secure the 2008 rates – the new 2009 rates are not yet out, but will be higher. Balance paid by 12/15 on 2008 rates for 2009 dates.

Photo credits: Jeff Reinke, Ben Resch, Ken Webb, and Gordon LaFortune