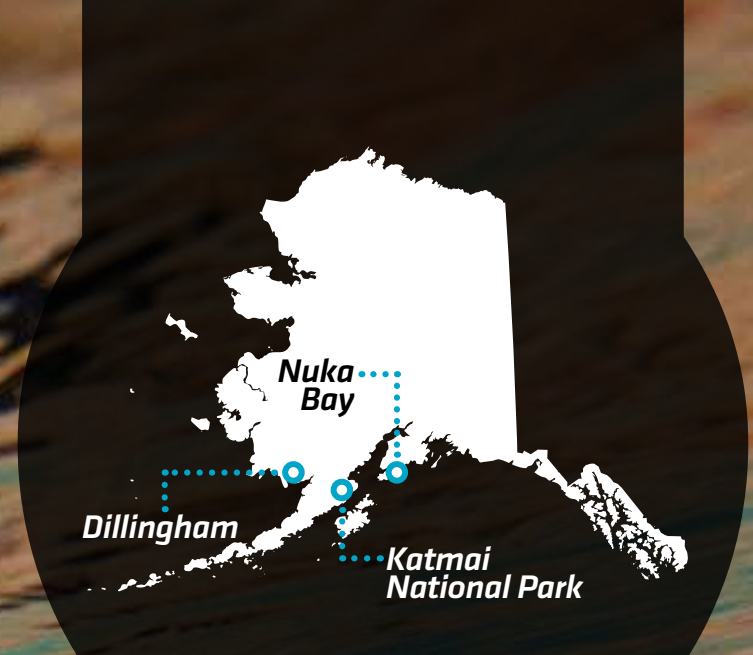


LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Plentiful waters for fish and anglers

PHOTOS BY GARY KRAMER



The millions of Pacific salmon that miraculously migrate each year from the ocean to their natal Alaska streams support canning and tourism industries and help keep bears and other wildlife fat enough to endure the long, hard winters. But in terms of angling, Alaska offers a whole lot of other opportunities.

If you want numbers, trophies or meat...

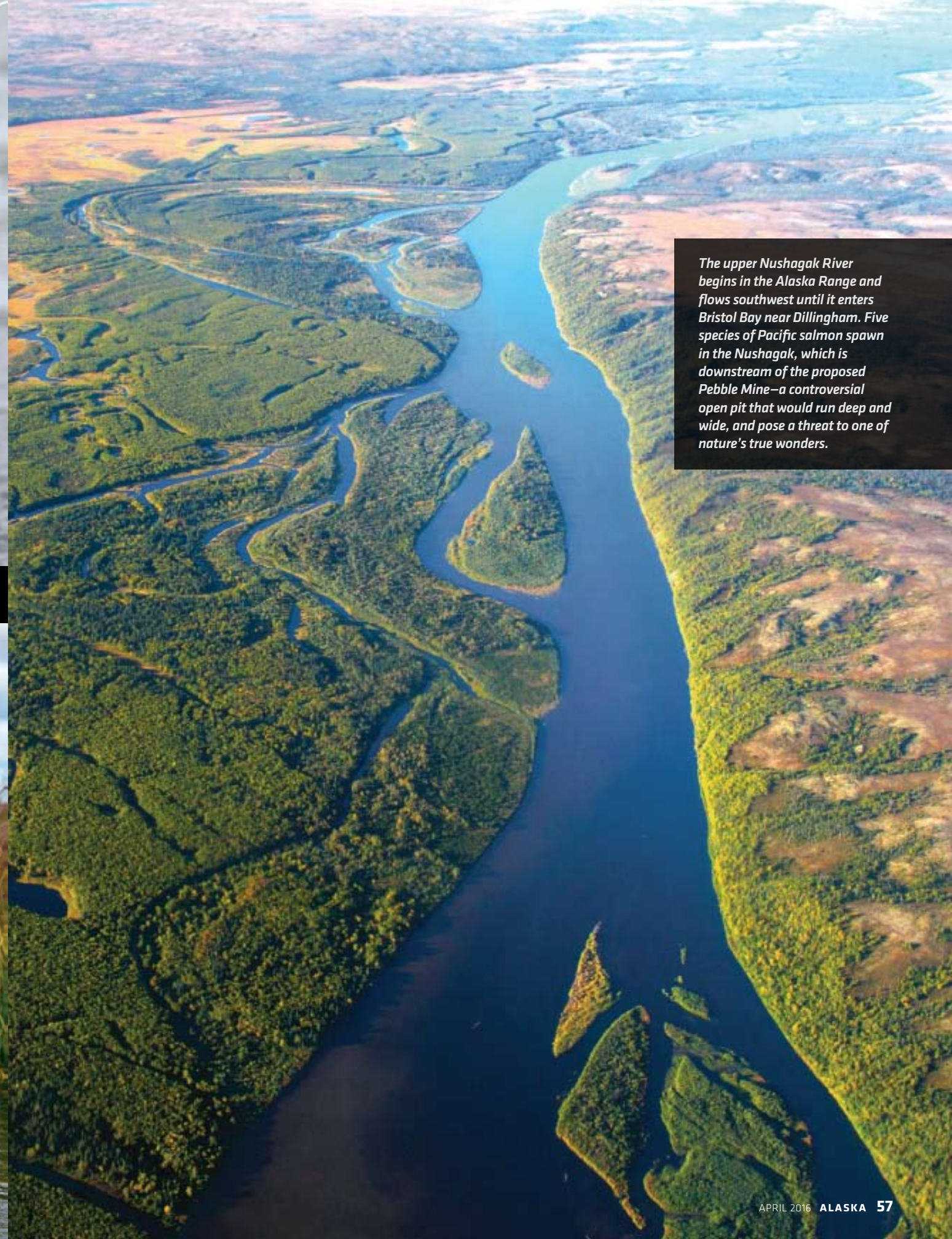
If you want to swing flesh flies to monster rainbows or drift dainty dries to ever-receptive grayling (like this one)...

Or if you simply want to experience genuine wilderness...

You owe it to yourself to fish Alaska.



A fly angler lifts an Arctic char from the Agulupak, a river that runs from Lake Beverly southward two miles to Nerka Lake. The Agulupak is one of the many fine fisheries in the Bristol Bay watershed, which is the best place in the world to catch trophy rainbow trout—including specimens that top 30 inches.



The upper Nushagak River begins in the Alaska Range and flows southwest until it enters Bristol Bay near Dillingham. Five species of Pacific salmon spawn in the Nushagak, which is downstream of the proposed Pebble Mine—a controversial open pit that would run deep and wide, and pose a threat to one of nature's true wonders.



Here, guide Brandon Beebe shows off a beautiful, bright rainbow from the Kvichak.

The Brooks River flows through Katmai National Park and is famous for its annual gathering of brown bears. Anglers on the Brooks learn to give bears wide berth, but when a grizzly wades within a rollcast's distance, you get a new appreciation for the term "wilderness experience." Generally, bears concentrate on fish not on humans, but it is always wise to be respectful.





Dolly Varden, which is close cousin to Arctic char, take fluorescent leech patterns, too. This spotted beauty came from the Kenai Peninsula's Deep Creek. Below, Ledda battles another silver in Nuka Bay where the fish often accumulate before heading upstream. If you handle the rising tide just right, the fishing from the beach can be fantastic.



Bright leech patterns catch a lot of fish in Alaska, including this beautiful and bright silver salmon that gave Bob Ledda, of All Alaska Outdoors, a good fight. Once the fish enters freshwater, however, its chrome color and fighting strength will wane.

