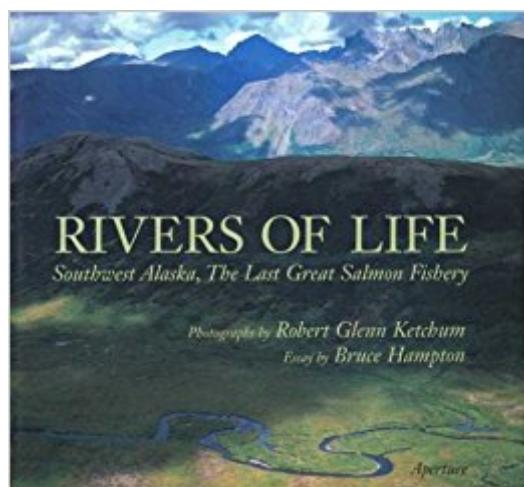


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# Rivers Of Life: Southwest Alaska, The Last Great Salmon Fishery



## **Synopsis**

In his most stunningly beautiful book to date, renowned landscape photographer Robert Glenn Ketchum turns his encompassing and color-rich vision to the vast habitat and fisheries resources of southwest Alaska and Bristol Bay. With his artist's eye for color, texture, and extraordinary detail, Ketchum's large and powerful images capture the immense richness of this magnificently wild country. Framed between some of Alaska's most spectacular mountain ranges and the northern Pacific, here lies the spawning ground of the world's largest population of sockeye salmon. It is also one of the last productive wild fisheries remaining on earth, providing bountiful harvests for a host of dependent creatures—“from whales to grizzlies to fishermen.” Co-author Bruce Hampton provides an engaging and comprehensive essay on the life history of sockeye salmon, the region's commercial and sport fisheries, and their crucial importance to the region's environment and the people who depend on salmon for survival. Greg Syverson's intimate photographs of fish and their aquatic habitat further illuminate the text.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Robert Glenn Ketchum is the curator of photography for the National Park Foundation. He has received the United Nations Outstanding Environmental Achievement Award and the Sierra Club's Ansel Adams Award for Conservation Photography. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I thought the book was more about Bristol Bay, but it mostly covers Wood-Tikchik area.

"Rivers of Life" is an exquisite extended photo-essay on the Southwest Alaska salmon fishery, compiled in a 2001 coffee table book-sized format. It combines spectacular photography by Robert Ketchum with a history by Bruce Hampton. Bristol Bay and the rivers and lakes inland from the bay constitute the most productive wild salmon fishery left in the world. The essay by Hampton narrates the exploitation of the fishery from ancient Inuits and Aleuts, through early European/American fishing fleets and canneries, to the present day division of labor between commercial and subsistence fishing. Ketchum's full page photographs, many of them aerial shots, capture the stunning and unspoiled beauty of the Alaskan Peninsula and the lakes and rivers draining into Bristol Bay. Additional photography by Greg Syverson provides a close-up look at the salmon on their annual migration up-river to spawn. Hampton explores the long push and pull between exploitation and conservation of a valuable resource whose ebbs and flows from year to year are still imperfectly understood. Management of the fishery has historically been a source of competition and contention between private, local, state, and federal authorities. As of 2012, the management of the salmon fishery remains a source of hot debate in the face of a proposal to conduct mining deep in the Bristol Bay watershed, a project that could bring much needed economic development and diversification, but could also place at risk some portion of the salmon fishery. To Hampton's credit, although the production of this book was sponsored by conservation groups, the narrative is largely even-handed on this sensitive topic. "Rivers of Life" is highly recommended, even in used condition, to those interested in the topic and the region.

Rivers of Life has stunningly beautiful photography of the rivers and fish of Bristol Bay, Alaska. Although I have been there several times, Ketchum and Hampton's book reveals so much more about this remote region than a visitor would typically see or learn. It also documents the poignant inside story of the history of this, the world's greatest wild salmon fishery, and the century-long struggle among the natives, commercial fishermen, sport-fishermen, and government to conserve the resource and use it wisely.

Much of the photos in this book are taken from fairly high up, helicopter or aircraft. Composition is better than anything in the genre. Medium format Pentax 645 ensures a high level of detail. Printing quality is among the best i've seen. This is not just another book on the beauty of Alaskan wilderness. Interesting text for those with little background on salmon and their rivers. A

masterpiece!

This was an extraordinary book that shows the vital necessity of protecting this area from projects like Anglo-American's Pebble Mine, which could ruin the salmon fishery at the heart of the ecosystem.

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