



Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Commercial Recreational Land Use Permit Application

As required by Sitka General Code 14.10 No person may conduct commercial recreational activities on city and borough of Sitka lands subject to this title except as authorized by a permit issued by the municipal staff as designated by the administrator.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Business Name Talon Charters, inc

Primary Contact Philip Younger

Address [REDACTED]
Sitka, AK, 99835

Phone Number [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

DETAILS OF TOUR OR GUIDED ACTIVITY

Season Start Date Sunday, May 10, 2026

Season End Date Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Commercial Allocations: For each area, the commercial carrying capacity is indicated in the far left column next to the area name, denoted as (maximum client group size/maximum groups per week). For each area at which you would like to request commercial recreational use, check the "Area of use" box. Additionally, provide your maximum proposed group size (clients only, not including guides) for each area; may not exceed commercial carrying capacity maximum group size. For groups per week, provide your estimated number of groups per week based on a season average that will use each area. Enter an estimated total client number using each area in the far right column.

	Area of use	Group Size	Groups per week	Total Clients
Cross Trail North (12/26)	✓	6	1	50
Cross Trail South (8/23)	✓	6	1	50
Gavan Hill Access (7/19)	✓	6	1	50
Indian River (7/23)	✓	6	1	50
Thimbleberry/Heart Lake (14/24)	✓	6	1	50

	Area of use	Group Size	Groups per week	Total Clients
Herring Cove/Beaver Lake (7/18)	✓	6	1	50
Herring Cove Beach (6/24)	✓	6	1	50
Blue Lake Road (12/26)				
Blue Lake (6/20)				
Green Lake Road (8/26)				
Green Lake (6/20)				
Swan Lake (6/16)				
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach") (6/18)				
Sitka Sound Islands (6/18)				
Baranof Warm Springs (6/18)	✓	2	1	25
Goddard Hot Springs (6/14)	✓	6	1	50
Other (please list area below)				

OTHER - Areas of proposed use not listed above. Please list each area, group size, maximum groups per week and total client estimates.

Harbor Mountain Trail, Group Size 6/Group per week 1/Total Guests 50

The total number of clients across all activity areas represents the maximum capacity. The majority of guests spend their day sportfishing or freshwater fishing within permitted U.S. Forest Service (USFS) areas. The activities listed above are offered as alternative experiences for guests who prefer not to be on the water, are prone to seasickness, or are seeking a different type of outdoor experience.

Details of tour or guided activity: Fully describe tour or activity in each area, including guided activity, outfitting resources provided, typical areas of use, etc.

Description of Operations & Safety Practices

Talon Charters, Inc. / Talon Lodge provides fully guided, all-inclusive wilderness adventure experiences designed to showcase Sitka, Alaska and the surrounding areas of the Tongass National Forest in a safe, responsible, and environmentally respectful manner. Our objective is to deliver exceptional guest experiences while maintaining the highest standards of safety, professionalism, and resource stewardship.

All activities are conducted using Leave No Trace principles, with an emphasis on minimizing environmental impact, preserving natural resources, and respecting wildlife habitats. Guest safety is our highest operational priority across all excursions.

All hiking, freshwater fishing, and hot springs excursions are conducted exclusively under the supervision of trained and qualified guides. Each guide maintains current CPR and First Aid certification and is trained in wilderness communications and emergency response. Many guides also hold a valid U.S. Coast Guard Captain's License, reflecting additional training in navigation, passenger safety, and marine operations.

Prior to departure, each trip includes a comprehensive itinerary review and safety briefing, tailored to the specific activity, terrain, and environmental conditions. All trips are executed in accordance with the procedures and protocols outlined in the Talon Charters Safety Plan, including communications, tracking, emergency response, and incident reporting procedures.

Detailed trip descriptions, operational protocols, and emergency procedures for all activities—including hiking, freshwater fishing, and visits to the Hot Springs—are fully documented within the Safety Plan and are reviewed regularly to ensure continued compliance with applicable regulations and best practices.

Please include the following information and attachments with your application.

Certificate of Insurance (City & Borough of Sitka named as additionally insured)

Safety & Operating plan

Additional documentation (as needed/if applicable):
Copy of permit(s) from other agencies for use of joint-jurisdiction areas. If use of Baranof Warm Springs or Goddard Hot Springs is requested, attach copy of bathing instructions/etiquette provided to clients.

File Upload



Talon_Charters_Guest_Safety_Plan 1....docx



TALON-199979 Certificate of Insurance.pdf

APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Commercial Use Regulations:

- Applications and permits issued under [SGC 14.10 COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL USE OF MUNICIPAL LANDS AND FACILITIES](#)
- Guidance provided by the [2026 Commercial Recreational Land Use Plan](#)
- Permits shall expire on December 31st of each calendar year.
- Permits are valid only for the dates, times, activities, and areas specified.
- Permits are not automatically renewable. Issuance of a permit shall not entitle any priority or preferential consideration for subsequent, new, or additional permits for the same area or for related uses.
- Permit Fees will be invoiced after January 4, 2026 application closure.

Upon acceptance of a permit, all permittees shall execute an instrument under the terms of which the permittee shall agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City and Borough of Sitka from any and all claims for injury or damage to persons or property suffered in connection with the permittee's activities unless such injury or damage is caused by the gross negligence of the City and Borough of Sitka.

I certify that the business/operator(s) are registered with the CBS Sales Tax Office, unless specifically exempt from collecting and remitting sales taxes for sales outside of City and Borough of Sitka jurisdiction, and have no outstanding judgements to the City and Borough of Sitka.

Terms and Conditions

Accepted

Date

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

SignatureA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Young".

TALON CHARTERS, INC.

GUEST SAFETY PLAN & FIELD OPERATIONS PROCEDURES

1. Emergency Survival Supplies & Safety Equipment

All guides and field staff are equipped with appropriate emergency survival and safety equipment for remote operations.

Guide Equipment Includes:

- Food and potable water
- Signal flares
- Comprehensive first-aid kit
- Bear spray
- Protection firearm (where legally permitted and required)
- Handheld radio
- Garmin satellite communication and tracking device

Each guest is provided with:

- A basic personal first-aid kit within their issued day pack
- A pre-trip safety and first-aid briefing

All trips are pre-planned with defined routes, destinations, and timelines. Floatplane and vessel movements are coordinated with airline operators and Talon Lodge Base for tracking and contingency response.

2. Communications & Tracking

Reliable communication and tracking are mandatory for all off-island activities.

Communication Equipment:

- Handheld VHF radio

- Cell phone (where coverage exists)
- Garmin Mini or Garmin Explore satellite communication and GPS tracking device

Tracking Protocol:

- Tracking is activated and tested at the Talon Lodge dock prior to departure
- Status check-ins are sent to Talon Lodge Base at the following points:
 - Arrival at destination
 - Lunch or mid-activity checkpoint
 - Departure from activity site

Talon Lodge Base monitors tracking continuously via the Garmin system, with position checks conducted at least hourly or more frequently as conditions require.

3. Lost or Overdue Client & Employee Procedures

A detailed adventure plan is reviewed prior to departure for all trips, including destination, duration, route, and participant roster.

Floatplane Operations:

- Radar and operator tracking are monitored by Talon Lodge Base
- If a plane is delayed or unable to retrieve guests (most often weather-related), a boat is immediately deployed
- Guests are notified of timing and revised logistics

Overdue Aircraft:

- Initial contact is made with the operator's base
- If unresolved, airport air traffic control is contacted
- If communication is lost, United States Coast Guard and appropriate authorities are notified

Overdue Hiking, Fishing, or Hot Springs Groups:

- Search teams are deployed per the adventure plan

- Notifications are made to the U.S. Coast Guard, Alaska State Troopers, and local authorities as appropriate

A dedicated safety response team is always available on the Talon Lodge island.

4. Client Briefing & Wildlife (Bear) Safety

All guests receive a safety briefing prior to departure that addresses:

- Trip-specific hazards
- Terrain and weather conditions
- Physical requirements
- Wildlife awareness

Guests are never permitted to enter National Forest or wilderness areas without a trained guide.

Bear Safety:

- Bear safety briefings are conducted before all wilderness trips
- Guides remain with guests at all times
- Each guide carries bear spray and a firearm

Trip difficulty and terrain are matched to guest physical ability to minimize risk. All incidents, regardless of severity, are documented and followed up.

5. Emergency Response & Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency (fire aboard, vessel incident, serious injury, illness, or evacuation):

Emergency Notifications (as applicable):

- 911
- VHF Marine Channel 16
- Alaska State Troopers

- U.S. Coast Guard

All Talon Lodge captains and guides are trained in emergency response. A full safety briefing is conducted prior to departure from the Talon Lodge dock.

Field Emergencies:

- Outside cell/VHF range: reported via Garmin satellite device to Talon Lodge Base
- Within cell/VHF range: reported directly to 911 or USCG as appropriate

Evacuation procedures are adapted to the specific emergency, location, and environmental conditions.

6. Incident Reporting & Documentation

All incidents are logged in writing by the primary guide and/or witness.

Incident Log Includes:

- Name of guest or staff member
- Date and time
- Location
- Cause of incident
- Initial assessment and prognosis
- Actions taken to mitigate and assist

Logs are signed by the guide and witness.

For incidents occurring at U.S. Forest Service–permitted locations, logs are emailed to the District Ranger and followed up with a confirmation phone call.

7. Freshwater Fishing & Hiking Safety Procedures

Freshwater fishing and hiking activities occur in remote wilderness environments and require heightened situational awareness.

Guest Requirements:

- Wear sturdy, non-slip footwear
- Use polarized eyewear and appropriate clothing
- Follow guide instructions at all times

Safety Guidelines:

- No casting near other guests or guides
- Hooks, lures, and knives handled only under guide direction
- Guests must maintain safe spacing along shorelines and streams
- Wading is permitted only where approved by the guide

Environmental & Wildlife Awareness:

- Guests must remain alert for bears and other wildlife
- Fish handling and release procedures are demonstrated prior to fishing
- No fish waste or food scraps are left behind

8. Hiking Safety Procedures

All hiking excursions are guided and planned according to guest ability and environmental conditions.

Guest Requirements:

- Sturdy hiking footwear with traction
- Weather-appropriate layers
- Day pack with water and personal items

Hiking Protocols:

- Guests must stay with the group at all times
- No off-trail travel unless directed by the guide
- Rest breaks are scheduled and mandatory as needed

Terrain & Environmental Hazards:

- Uneven ground, wet roots, rocks, and steep terrain are common
- Guests must move cautiously and use handholds when available
- Weather conditions may change rapidly

Children must be closely supervised by an adult at all times.

9. Guest Safety Procedures – Hot Springs Trips

Purpose

Goddard Hot Springs is a remote geothermal site accessed by boat and characterized by uneven terrain, changing tides, and unregulated water temperatures.

Pre-Departure Briefing Includes:

- Site overview and tidal conditions
- Duration of visit
- Required footwear and attire
- Medical considerations
- Wildlife awareness
- Emergency procedures

Guests must disclose medical conditions that may be affected by hot water immersion.

Attire & Equipment:

- Non-slip water shoes or strapped sandals
- Weather-appropriate clothing
- Towel and dry clothes
- Hydration

Soaking Guidelines:

- Enter water slowly and test temperature
- Recommended soak time: 10–15 minutes
- Exit immediately if discomfort occurs
- Alcohol consumption before or during soaking is discouraged

Terrain & Tidal Awareness:

- Surfaces may be wet, slippery, and unstable
- Guests must follow crew instructions for access and departure

Environmental Stewardship:

- No soaps or personal care products
- Pack out all items and waste
- Do not disturb natural features

Emergency Procedures:

- Report any injury or unsafe condition immediately
- Crew coordinate response and evacuation as required

10. Guest Acknowledgment

Participation in Talon Charters activities is voluntary. Guests acknowledge the inherent risks of remote wilderness environments and agree to follow all safety instructions provided by Talon Lodge staff and guides.