

Dear Alaskans,

I'm honored to have my novel, *Surviving Bear Island*, chosen as the 2022-2023 Alaska Reads book. I first came to Alaska in the summer of 1984 to work in a salmon cannery. I fell in love with the landscape and open space, and after graduating from college in 1986 slowly but surely worked my way back to Alaska eventually settling in Fairbanks where I have been an educator since 1990.

Over the years I have worked with students of all ages, the bulk of my teaching career being a junior high and high school English teacher in an alternative program for at risk teens. For the past eight years I've worked as Special Education teacher for students in kindergarten through third grade.

Like many Alaskans, I have spent extended time periods in remote parts of the state. The first time I went sea kayaking I was gone on a nine-week, five-hundred-mile journey in Prince William Sound. That first trip and many others that followed provided the inspiration for *Surviving Bear Island*—a contemporary survival story set in Prince William Sound.

I'm thrilled to have this opportunity to meet with groups across the state to talk about writing, teaching, wilderness travel and survival, and any other topics people are interested in discussing.

Below you will find a list of my books with short descriptions of each.

Surviving Bear Island (Move Books, 2015)

Surviving Bear Island is the riveting story of 14-year-old Tom and his father, who are capsized from their kayak into Prince William Sound. What follows is a harrowing 80-day experience for young Tom, as he struggles to survive after washing up on an island with a substantial bear presence.

Follow the River (Move Books, July, 2021)

When Billy and his dad are injured, Tom summons the courage to get back on the water. This time he must travel in a rickety old homemade canoe through the Alaska wilderness

to get help. But it's not just the canoe and the terrain he has to worry about—he's surrounded by dangerous adversaries.

The Wild Lands (Macmillan, Jan. 2019)

in *The Wild Lands*, Travis and his sister are trapped in a daily race to survive—and there is no second place. Natural disasters and a breakdown of civilization have cut off Alaska from the world and destroyed its landscape. Now, as food runs out and the few who remain turn on each other, Travis and his younger sister, Jess, must cross hundreds of miles in search of civilization.

Hostile Territory (Macmillan, Jan. 2020)

In **Hostile Territory**, a catastrophic earthquake strands four teens in the Alaska wilderness—and leaves them without a civilization to return to. After a few days, it's clear no rescue is coming, and distant military activity in the skies suggests this natural disaster has triggered a political one. Josh and his fellow campers face a struggle for survival in their hike back home—to an America they might not recognize.