

Cape Krusenstern

CAPE KRUSENSTERN
NATIONAL MONUMENT
ALASKA



Cape Krusenstern, projecting into the Chukchi Sea, has been the site of seasonal marine mammal hunting by Eskimo peoples for several millenia. This tradition continues today. The monument, composed of 226,000 hectares (560,000 acres) in northwestern Alaska, borders the Chukchi Sea and Kotzebue Sound north of the Arctic Circle. It is about 725 kilometers (450 miles) west-northwest of Fairbanks and, at its closest point, is 16 kilometers (10 miles) northwest of Kotzebue. The Cape is remarkable archeologically, because within its gravels, in chronological order, lie artifacts from every known Eskimo occupation of North America. She-

shalik Spit, in the monument's southeastern corner, extends into Kotzebue Sound and is a focus of modern marine mammal hunting. A series of lagoons lies inland. Other archeological sites have been discovered in the rolling hills of the monument's central and eastern portions.

WHAT TO DO AND SEE

Cape Krusenstern National Monument has no National Park Service facilities, trails, or services. There is no public display of archeological artifacts. People who come here are chiefly interested in backpacking and camping. The best areas are along the coast on the monument's west side,

and in the hills running north and south through it. Wildlife includes grizzly bear, black bear, caribou, moose, an occasional musk ox, wolves, and lynx. Walrus, polar bears, and several species of seals and whales occur offshore at various times of the year. Many waterfowl species nest around the lagoon in summer. Grayling, arctic char, and whitefish inhabit monument waters.

ACCESS

Northwestern Alaska cannot be reached by road. Daily commercial flights serve Kotzebue from both Anchorage and Fairbanks. From Kotzebue, access to the monument is by chartered aircraft or chartered boat. Average flight time for a chartered aircraft to drop off passengers at Cape Krusenstern (and return empty to Kotzebue) is one hour. Aircraft land on very primitive airstrips or

certain beaches, or if float-equipped, on lagoon waters. Summer weather, extremely variable, can curtail travel to and from the monument.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES

There are no accommodations or campgrounds in the monument. Kotzebue has a hotel. Camping is permitted in most of the monument. It is not permitted in archeological zones; where

it would interrupt subsistence activities; or on the extensive private coastal inholdings without the owner's consent. Kotzebue has a number of small stores where most basic goods can be purchased. Fairbanks and Anchorage offer all the usual merchandise. A few guides and outfitters work out of Kotzebue; some services are offered by air taxi operators and boat owners.

