

Glacier Bay

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
Alaska



(907) 697-2230
www.nps.gov/glba



Kayaking near Lamplugh Glacier

Dear camper and kayaker,

Thanks for your interest in Glacier Bay National Park. Glacier Bay provides unparalleled wilderness and solitude. The vast majority of the park's 3.2 million acres of park's land and waters are designated Wilderness. Here, you have an opportunity for discovery, inspiration and self reliance. You are on your own and must completely depend on your skills, equipment, and common sense to handle all the challenges presented by this vast and dynamic land. It carries the responsibility of minimizing your impact so that others may also enjoy this untrammelled environment. It is a privilege to experience the wilderness of Glacier Bay National Park on its terms.

Plan Ahead/Be Well Equipped

Planning ahead is essential for a safe and pleasant backcountry visit to Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. The environment here can be extreme and is often unforgiving to the ill-prepared. Food and gear availability is limited in this area, so create a checklist of essentials. Bear-resistant food containers are issued at the Visitor Information Station (VIS) located at the Bartlett Cove public dock. All food and scented items must be stored in them. Nautical charts and maps are available for purchase at the VIS. Since dry wood is hard to come by anywhere in the park, cooking over a fire is not a practical option and is discouraged. White gas for camping stoves is available for purchase at Glacier Bay Lodge. It is illegal to transport any type of fuel on an aircraft. Showers, laundry facilities, and gear storage are available at Glacier Bay Lodge. Plan for rain and celebrate if the sun shines. This is a coastal temperate rainforest, so bring appropriate clothing and camping gear, including waterproof bags to store gear. Layering with wool, polypro, and/or fleece will keep you warm even when wet. Rubber boots are best for kayakers and hiking in the rainforest.

Camper Orientation

All campers (*including kayakers*) are required to attend a camper orientation and obtain a free camping permit. Orientations are regularly scheduled throughout the day at the VIS. This session is for your benefit: to answer your questions, provide you with a tide table, inform you of special wildlife and safety issues and closures, and to assist in trip planning.

Campground

The park's only campground is located along the shores of Bartlett Cove (no reservation necessary). This is a free, walk-in only campground that is only accessible on foot. Located approximately ¼ mile from the VIS, the campground has bear-resistant food caches, a drying shelter, pit toilets, a campfire circle, and 25 rainforest campsites. Camping is limited to 14 days/year. There are no RV facilities (*dump station, hookups, sites, etc.*) in the park.



Kayaking

Sea kayaking is the most popular way to experience the wilderness of Glacier Bay. Kayakers here have 800 miles of wild shorelines to explore and camp on. Kayak trips can originate from Bartlett Cove or the daily tour boat will drop-off kayakers further up the bay. Reservations for this service are recommended well in advance. If you prefer a guided day or overnight kayak trip, these can be arranged by contacting companies listed on the Visitor Services Directory.

If you are planning to transport your own hard-shell kayak to the park, it will have to be transported by boat and not by air. Kayak rentals are available in Bartlett Cove through **Glacier Bay Sea Kayaks**, (907) 697-2257 www.glacierbayseakayaks.com

Campsite with a view



Explore the shore



Iceberg



Rubber boots are best



Kayaking Glacier Bay



Camper Drop-off Service

During summer months, the Glacier Bay Lodge day tour boat drops-off and picks-up backcountry campers and kayakers at designated locations in the upper bay. It is possible to get dropped off at one site and picked up at another. The dropoff locations often change from year to year and in response to wildlife and other resource concerns. Contact Glacier Bay Lodge at 888-229-8686 or online www.visitglacierbay.com.

Additional Reminders

There are a variety of park regulations that pertain to both campers and kayakers. You are responsible for knowing and abiding by these regulations.

Kayaks are very difficult to see from cruise ships and other vessels—assume that vessels cannot see you. Watch out for wakes from cruise ships and other vessels.

Backpacking

More than a million acres await the backcountry traveler, however there are no trails in the Glacier Bay backcountry. Dense alder thickets and steep rocky cliffs can make foot travel very challenging and often impossible. The terrain is rugged by any standard. Be prepared to hike over rough and rocky ground. Shoreline and gravel streambeds usually offer the best routes.

Safety

Water is usually available, except on islands. All water should be boiled, filtered or treated for *Giardia*. Be aware of the threat of hypothermia and know about its prevention and treatment. Kayakers should be aware of Glacier Bay's cold water temperatures and understand tide charts and tidal currents. Never flag down another boat unless it is an emergency. Tides here are extreme...so be sure to store your kayak (*and bear canisters*) well above high tide.

Stay at least ¼ mile away from the face of tidewater glaciers as calving can occur suddenly resulting in large waves. Be cautious near all icebergs, which often roll unexpectedly and could easily flip a kayak.


Bears

Both black and brown/grizzly bears are frequently seen throughout the park. These are wild animals and should always be considered to be potentially dangerous. When hiking, lessen your chance of a bear encounter by looking for bear signs, making noise, and traveling in groups. Consider carrying bear spray in the backcountry. It is important that bears never come in contact with human food, so NEVER leave food unattended. Keep a clean camp. Store food and any scented items in bear resistant food containers at least 100 yards from your campsite. Do all cooking and eating in the intertidal zone at least 100 yards from your campsite. If you do encounter a bear, remain calm, identify yourself as a human (talk to the bear) and stand your ground. Do not run. You can not out run a bear and fleeing may trigger the bear's chase response. For more information visit the park web site.

Leave No Trace

Help us to ensure that future generations will enjoy Glacier Bay as it is today. Choose a campsite where you will leave little or no impact. A good campsite is *found* and not *made*. Campsites should be at least 100 feet from fresh water sources. Check at the Visitor Information Station for areas that are closed to backcountry use. Know these areas, and mark them on your maps and charts. Do not approach wildlife. Some animals are easily disturbed. You are responsible for knowing and following all applicable regulations during your visit to the park. Glacier Bay is wild, clean and unpolluted. Remember to carry out all trash (*do not burn*). Use the intertidal zone for campfires, and preparing and eating food. Generally, the next high tide will erase traces of your presence.

Recycling

 Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve operates an award-winning recycling program. We are committed to managing solid waste in an environmentally sustainable manner. The park goal is to divert as much waste from the incinerator as possible. Anticipate the need to sort your waste. There is a sorting station comprised of bear-proof bins near the Visitor Information Station located at the Bartlett Cove dock. Please help us by separating all aluminum, cardboard, compost, glass, and plastics. Hazardous materials can not be disposed of in Glacier Bay.

For More Information.

We look forward to your visit. For further information, explore the park's website www.nps.gov/gba or call (907) 697-2230.

