

Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge

Visitor Information

Welcome!

The Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge was established by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) on December 2, 1980. As one of nine new Alaskan refuges established by ANILCA, the refuge was officially recognized as a national treasure.

This 730,000 acre refuge is located in east central Alaska, adjacent to the Yukon Territory, directly south of the Alaska Highway and north of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The major physical features include broad flat river basins bisected by rolling hills, extensive marsh and lake complexes, foothill areas of the Nutzotin and Mentasta Mountains, and two major glacial rivers which combine to form the Tanana River.

The primary objectives for Tetlin include: conserving fish and wildlife populations in their natural diversity, providing opportunities for local subsistence users, and providing opportunities for interpretation and environmental education.

Recreation

Recreational opportunities on the refuge include wildlife observation, sport hunting and fishing, trapping, canoeing and power-boating, and camping. Hiking opportunities exist, but are very limited. Scenic vistas of the refuge are especially good from the refuge visitor center and interpretive pullouts along the Alaska Highway. Check with refuge personnel prior to a visit for more detailed information.

Access

The Alaska Highway provides access along the northern border of the refuge. Foot access is possible along the highway from the Canadian border to Gardiner Creek and at other points. Small boat access is possible from the Alaska Highway at Desper Creek and from the Northway Road at the Chisana River bridge. There is also a boat ramp at Deadman Lake Campground. Charter air service is available in Tok as well as Fairbanks and Anchorage. Riverboats are available at Tok and Northway. There are no designated roads or trails for motorized vehicles on the refuge.

Hunting and Fishing

Ducks, caribou, and moose attract most hunters while northern pike, burbot, and grayling are the most popular sport fish. The deeper lakes generally support pike, while most silty streams host burbot and clear streams support grayling. Information on hunting and fishing is available from the refuge office in Tok or the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Address: ADF&G, P.O. 355, Tok, Alaska 99780. Phone 907-883-2971).

Camping

Camping is allowed throughout the refuge. The best undeveloped summertime campsites are on riverbars or ridges where insects are less of a problem. Choose sites carefully and be prepared for possible flooding. Dry wood is usually available on riverbars or in spruce stands. Please use dead or downed wood only.

There are two public campgrounds along the Alaska Highway operated and maintained by the refuge. These are Lakeview Campground located at Milepost 1256.7 and Deadman Lake Campground at Milepost 1249.3.

- Take Pride in America! Please "pack out what you pack in." Properly dispose of refuse by burning combustible items and pack out the rest. Fill in firepits and latrines.
- Supplies for camping as well as gas, food, and lodging are available in Tok and Northway, Alaska, and Beaver Creek, Yukon Territory, Canada.

Weather

In June and July daytime temperatures often exceed 80°F with nightly lows to 40°F. By mid-September daytime temperatures of 45°F and nighttime temperatures of 25°F are common. Weather can change rapidly. Snow can occur anytime—sometimes as early as August.

For Your Safety and Comfort

- There are few trails on the refuge which makes hiking difficult. Some trails appear on maps but are difficult to find on the ground. Maps and a compass are a wise investment for an extended trip into the refuge. Topographic maps are available from the U.S. Geological Survey in Anchorage or Fairbanks and from commercial businesses in Tok.



- Leave a travel plan describing your trip with family or friends and do not forget to notify them when you return.
- Standard precautions should be taken to avoid unwanted encounters with bears. Make noise when hiking or walking. Keep a clean campsite and store *all* food items away from tents out of the reach of bears. Do not bury garbage or debris. Burying garbage encourages animals to dig it up and seek other campsites as sources of food.
- Boil or chemically purify water before drinking. Giardiasis is a waterborne intestinal disease common in Alaska.
- Be prepared with headnets and repellent to meet the famous Alaskan **mosquitoes!**
- Please do not harass animals by venturing within a few yards to take pictures. Remember that feeding animals can also be dangerous.



Private Lands and Cabins

- Large acreages within the refuge have been conveyed to Native corporations and individuals. If you want to use private lands be sure to ask permission. If you are uncertain as to land status, contact refuge personnel.
- Cabins are scattered throughout the refuge. Their contents are essential to trappers and subsistence users. Cabins or contents should be used **only** in an emergency. If you are forced to use a cabin or its contents notify refuge personnel so supplies can be replaced. Failure to replace supplies could cost the life of a trapper or subsistence user.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibility for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources."

The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better, United States — now and in the future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Refuge Manager
Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge
Box 155
Tok, Alaska 99780 Telephone: (907) 883-5312

BUY DUCK STAMPS
SAVE WETLANDS FOR WILDLIFE

Interpretive Opportunities

The Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, located near the Alaska/Canada border (Milepost 1229), offers a wide variety of interpretive opportunities for visitors. Deckside talks, wildlife displays and exhibits can all be enjoyed there. An Alaska Natural History Association sales outlet which offers books about Alaska's natural and cultural resources is a part of the visitor center. The refuge interpretive pullouts along the Alaska Highway provide more information about the area's natural and cultural resources. A kiosk located at the international border provides an introduction to the Yukon Territory and Alaska, and tells about the Alaska-Canada Highway. The refuge staff also offers other interpretive programs for visitors and assists schools and other groups interested in outdoor classroom experiences. In addition, the Alaska Public Lands Information Center in Tok offers wildlife displays and trip planning information.



Wildlife

Most wildlife are active just after sunrise and just before sunset. Traveling along the highway during these periods may increase your chances of glimpsing some of the Tetlin's wildlife. Stopping to watch quietly or hiking to vantage points along a river or a ridge may also increase your chances of seeing wildlife.

The refuge has one of the highest densities of nesting waterfowl in Alaska, and in favorable years produces about 100,000 ducklings to flight stage. As a migration corridor for all types of birds entering and leaving Alaska, the refuge provides habitat for 143 nesting species of birds and 47 migrants. **TRUMPETER SWANS** migrate through and an increasing number also nest in the refuge. **BALD EAGLES, OSPREYS,** and other raptors may also be observed.

Both **BLACK** and **GRIZZLY BEARS** are found on the refuge. Bears are unpredictable and should always be considered dangerous—especially sows with cubs.

MOOSE are popular, year-long residents of the refuge. Keep a respectable distance, however. Moose can also be dangerous. Cows have been known to charge persons who have gotten too close to their calves.

CARIBOU are primarily winter residents and are easily seen along the highway during that season.

WOLVES are common throughout the area but are wary and therefore seldom seen.

BEAVERS, MUSKRATS, and their lodges can be found on Tetlin's ponds, lakes, and streams. A quiet observer can watch these animals go about their work.

Other small mammals, such as **FOXES** and **HARES** are commonly seen along the highway.

With a little luck you may be able to spy some of these animals in your travels through the Tetlin NWR and Alaska! Watch, take pictures, and enjoy, but please do not disturb them.

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