



# The K'elt'aeni

The Official Guide of Wrangell-St. Elias  
National Park and Preserve

Volume 13, Number 1

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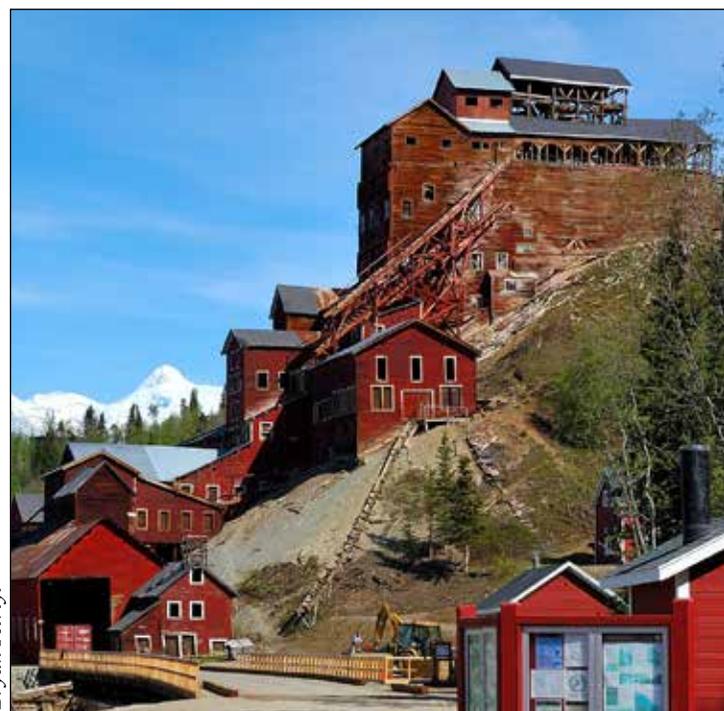
## Wrangell-St. Elias - America's Largest National Park

THE 13.2 MILLION ACRES WHICH COMPRISE Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve have for centuries served as a crossroads of human activity. Russians began to enter the area in the late 1700s. The subsequent United States purchase of Alaska in the 1800s further spurred expeditions, but all of these endeavors came long after people became active in this region more than 8,000 years ago.

Humans were drawn here to trade with other groups for materials unavailable in their own territories and by dreams of fur trapping, mineral riches, and rivers teeming with salmon. They initially were lured into this wild country of jagged peaks and immense glaciers, swift, cold rivers and active volcanoes to make a livelihood. Now they are also attracted to Wrangell-St. Elias to find solitude, inspiration, and adventure, to test their wilderness skills, and to bring back memories to last a lifetime from America's last frontier.



Bryan Petryl



Kennecott Mill

Since establishment of the park and preserve in 1980, human activities have slowly evolved. Many residents still engage in traditional subsistence hunting and fishing, but many others who visit our largest national park come for recreation or to learn. They come to face wilderness challenges, such as fording glacial streams or topping an ice-clad mountain. They come to monitor species of concern, such as Kittlitz's murrelets or Chisana caribou. They come to see the largest glaciers in North America, or to study evidence of past human activity along their receding margins. They come to experience the Kennecott Mill Town, which once extracted the world's richest copper ore, to follow in the footsteps of early stamperders along the Richardson Highway, or to feel the quiet passage of time among the ruins of Chisana City.

All who visit Wrangell-St. Elias are amazed and inspired by the unrelenting efforts of humans throughout history to experience, understand, and benefit from one of the most rugged, yet alluring, landscapes on earth. All who visit can savor a taste of this vast, visually stunning, untamed land.

### Welcome to YOUR Park

WELCOME TO WRANGELL-ST. Elias National Park and Preserve. Encompassing over 13 million acres, this is the nation's largest national park! We are pleased you have chosen to visit us.

Here you have the opportunity to experience a wild corner of Alaska on a grand scale. Natural processes are at work all around you: glacial ice carves mountain valleys; caribou, moose and other wildlife roam freely; volcanic activity shapes the land; and rivulets of glacial meltwater converge to form wide braided rivers that flow to the sea. Here you have the opportunity to experience wilderness on a scale that you are unlikely to experience elsewhere.

Human beings have been a part of this landscape for millennia. Much of this land has long been home to the Ahtna, Upper Tanana, Eyak and Tlingit peoples, who continue to this day to hunt, fish, and gather foods from the land. Miners passed through, working the land in search of copper and gold, and their camps and mine buildings are a fascinating reminder of the challenges of that time. Settlers and pioneers followed, and today the park has many friendly Alaskan neighbors you may meet in your travels.

Please travel safely in this "Great Land," and may this visit be only one in a lifetime of exploration at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.



Rick Obernesser  
Superintendent,  
Wrangell-St. Elias  
National Park  
and Preserve

Bryan Petryl



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

## Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

The name K'elt'aeni (kel-TAH-nee), an Athabaskan word for the Wrangell volcanoes, means "The ones that control the weather." This reference is to the clouds and strong storms that often form above and cover these lofty summits.

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EliasNPP

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@WrangellStENPS

# Something for Everyone

THERE REALLY IS SOMETHING for everyone in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. For the history buff, there is the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark or the Chisana Historic Mining Landscape. Hiking and backpacking opportunities cover a wide range of terrain and difficulty. Raft trips down the rivers are an exciting way to see the park. Mountaineers find some of the tallest peaks and most challenging conditions in North America. There are places to take your tent and enjoy a few days away from it all. Bird watching, flightseeing, and photography are all popular visitor activities.

### Park Roads

There are two roads into the park: the McCarthy Road (59 miles) and the Nabesna Road (42 miles). Visitors can drive the McCarthy Road or take a



shuttle bus from Glennallen, Copper Center, Kenny Lake, or Chitina.

### Guide Services

A flightseeing trip or backcountry dropoff by air taxi are excellent ways to explore the park. Air taxis are often used to access remote areas of the park. Many visitors choose to hire guides for river rafting, hiking, glacier trekking, hunting, and fishing.

### Fishing & Hunting

The National Park Service and the State of Alaska manage the wildlife resources of the park and preserve cooperatively. A state fishing and hunting license is required for all hunters and anglers age 16 or older. Sport hunting is allowed in the preserve only. Subsistence hunting and fishing by qualified, local, rural residents is allowed in the park and preserve.



### Access

Motorboats, airplanes, and snowmobiles may be used in the park without permits. All-terrain vehicles are allowed on established ATV trails with a permit. Stop by the Slana Ranger Station or visitor center in Copper Center for permits and the latest ATV trail conditions, restrictions, and status.

### Yakutat

Yakutat is served by commercial air service and the Alaska Marine Highway, and is a takeoff point for many visitors to the southern coastal area of the park. Air taxis, a small boat harbor, and guide services are all available. Ocean kayaking and whale watching are just two of the opportunities park visitors can take advantage of while in Yakutat.



Hey Kids!  
Become A Wrangell-St. Elias

## Junior Ranger!



Young people of all ages can become a Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve Junior Ranger! Stop by one of the visitor centers in the park and ask a park ranger for the Junior Ranger Activity Book. Complete the required sections, state the official pledge with a ranger, and you will earn your own badge and certificate.

If you cannot visit the park in person and you have internet access, complete an online version of the Junior Ranger booklet! Visit the park website at [www.nps.gov/wrst/forkids](http://www.nps.gov/wrst/forkids).

### ALSO...You Can Be a National Park Service WebRanger!

Now you can be a Junior Ranger even if you are not able to visit a national park. This is an interactive website where you can become a member of a group of young people who are interested in the world around them and involved with their nation's heritage... The WebRangers!

[www.nps.gov/webangers](http://www.nps.gov/webangers)



# Weather and Climate

THE HIGH PEAKS OF THE Chugach Range intercept ocean storms and provide a barrier to warmer marine air masses. As a result, with the exception of the coastal strip near Yakutat (150 inches of rain/year), the park has an interior dry continental climate.

Winter is long and frigid, when temperatures may not rise above freezing for 5 months. Spring brings longer daylight hours and flooded landscapes. Summer is warm but short, with a lot of mosquitoes! Fall arrives early, with colors changing by mid-August.

Average snowfall is 50 inches, yet it holds little moisture. Annual precipitation (rain and snow) adds up to only 11 inches.

### AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

HIGH / LOW °F

	SUMMER	WINTER
Glennallen	66 / 44	7 / -11
Record Temp	91	-58
McCarthy	69 / 39	14 / -5
Record Temp	89	-57
Slana	67 / 42	10 / -8
Record Temp	93	-57
Yakutat	59 / 46	34 / 21
Record Temp	88	-24

Source: Western Regional Climate Center

# Park Visitor Centers

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE HAS VARIOUS visitor contact points. Each of these facilities is staffed by interpretive park rangers who can assist you with a variety of services. The rangers are equipped to assist you with your visit to the park. Their first-hand knowledge of the park is a great asset to you as you plan activities and learn about the unique features of the area.

## JOIN A RANGER

A full range of interpretive activities are offered throughout the summer. Stop by a visitor center and join a park ranger for a guided walk, talk, or evening program. Check the activity schedule posted at all visitor centers.



### Park H.Q. & Main Visitor Center

**Location**  
Mile 106.8 Richardson Highway  
(10 miles south of Glennallen, AK)  
907-822-7250

**Hours**  
Summer: 9:00 am-6:00 pm daily  
Winter: 9:00 am-4:00 pm M-F

**Highlights**  
Exhibit building, nature trail, large park relief map, park orientation film, ranger programs, bookstore, restrooms, picnic tables, trip planning, information desk, subsistence permits.



### Slana Ranger Station

**Location**  
Mile 0.2 Nabesna Road  
907-822-7401

**Hours**  
Summer: 8:00 am-5:00 pm daily  
Winter: call for hours

**Highlights**  
Park Information, trip planning, exhibits, park orientation, ATV permits, subsistence permits, bookstore, public phone, restrooms.

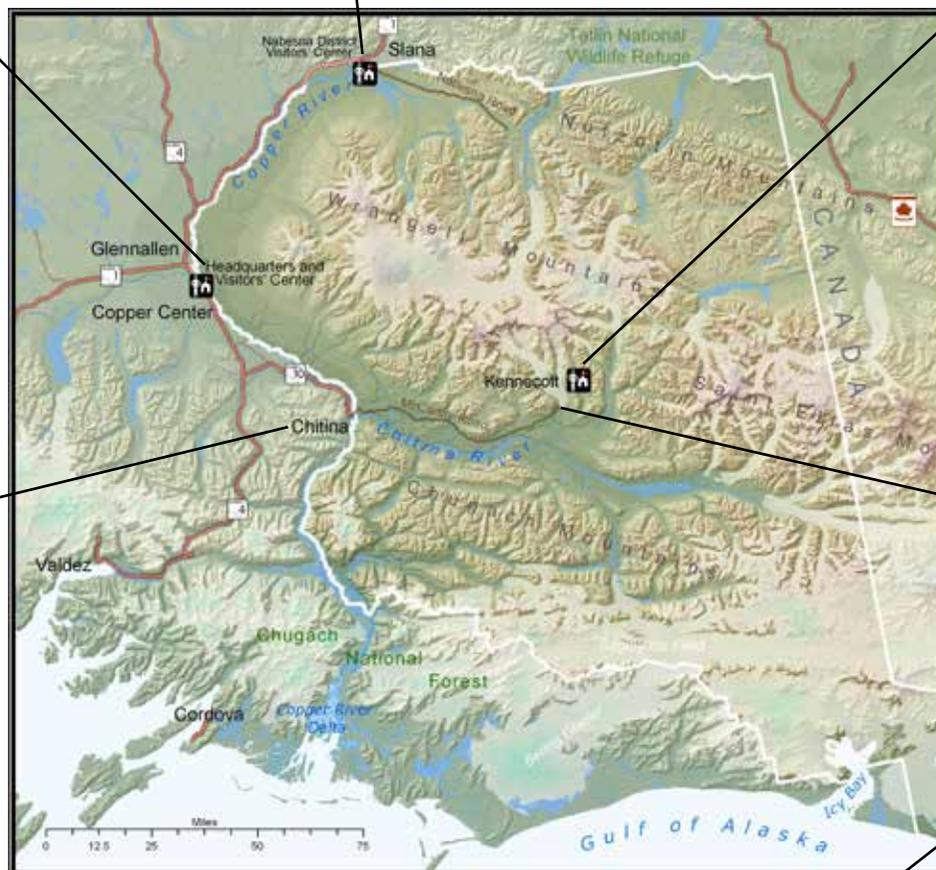


### Kennecott Visitor Center

**Location**  
Historic Kennecott Mill Town  
(5 miles north of McCarthy)  
907-822-7476

**Hours**  
Summer: 10:00 am-7:00 pm daily  
Winter: closed

**Highlights**  
Located in a historic building, exhibits, park films, trip planning, trails, bookstore, backcountry information, and ranger programs.



### Chitina Ranger Station

**Location**  
Chitina, Mile 33 Edgerton Highway  
907-823-2205

**Hours**  
Summer: 10:00 am-4:30 pm,  
Thursday-Monday closed  
Winter: closed

**Highlights**  
Historic log cabin, park information, park orientation film, McCarthy Road conditions, backcountry information, trip planning, picnic table, subsistence permits.



### McCarthy Road Info Station

**Location**  
Mile 59 McCarthy Road  
(1/2 mile before the end of the road)  
This information station is not staffed.

**Hours**  
Summer: Posted information available.  
Winter: closed

**Highlights**  
Maps and information on the local area, restrooms. Free day-parking.



### Yakutat Ranger Station

**Location**  
Mallot Avenue, Yakutat  
907-784-3295

**Hours**  
All year: call for hours

**Highlights**  
Exhibits, information, park orientation film, bookstore, and trip planning. Info also available about Glacier Bay NP&P.



# Now That You're Here... What Should You Do?

THERE ARE MANY ACTIVITIES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO EVERY VISITOR TO WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE. IT REALLY is a matter of how much time you plan to spend in the area. For some guidance you may want to use one of these itineraries.

## One Day

- Visit the Headquarters Visitor Center, located 10 miles south of Glennallen. Explore the exhibits, browse the bookstore, stroll the short nature trail, and enjoy the 22-minute park movie, Crown of the Continent.
- Talk to a park ranger to help you discover the park and surrounding area and plan your visit. Interpretive programs are offered daily during the summer.
- Drive south towards Chitina. Along the way, hike on the Tonsina River Trail or the Liberty Falls Trail and enjoy a panorama of the park's high peaks. Please contact a ranger at the visitor center to get detailed information about these hikes and their location.
- Stop by the Chitina Ranger Station, open most days during the summer, to view historic photos of Chitina and to visit a historic cabin.
- Continue to the nearby bridge over the Copper River where in summer you can watch busy Alaskans harvesting salmon with traditional fishwheels and dipnets.
- Another option is to book a flight with a local air taxi service at the Chitina airport for a daytrip to McCarthy and Kennecott.

## Three Days

- One option is a drive along the Nabesna Road which will take you to remote corners of the park with great camping, hiking, and wildlife viewing. See the Nabesna Road Guide in this publication for more details. Make sure that you stop at the Slana Ranger Station to get latest trail and road conditions.
- Another option is to drive along the McCarthy Road, which allows for exploring a rural Alaskan town and the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark. A short easy hike around mile 35 is the Crystalline Hills Trail. See the McCarthy Road Guide in this publication for more details.
- Once in Kennecott, a moderate hike along the Root Glacier Trail brings you up close to the area's rich history and a mighty river of ice. More strenuous hikes lead to the mountainside Bonanza and Jumbo Mines. Join a local guide/outfitter service for glacier hikes, mill building tours, and river rafting trips.
- A flightseeing excursion among the glaciers and mountains will give you a whole new appreciation for the size, wildness, and magnificence of Wrangell-St. Elias. Park rangers at any visitor center can help you plan such an adventure.

## One Week

- You will have time to drive and explore both roads in the park, but you could also visit more remote locations.
- The backcountry of Wrangell-St. Elias contains some of the world's most spectacular wilderness. There are multi-day backcountry trips that can start from the Nabesna or McCarthy roads. A short flight on an air taxi from Nabesna, Glennallen, Chitina, or McCarthy can transport you into the heart of the park, where hiking and camping possibilities are virtually endless.
- There are public-use cabins available in the backcountry too. Stop by any park visitor center to discuss potential trips with a ranger.



Backpacking in the Nabesna District



Rafting on the Nizina River



Root Glacier hike, Kennecott District

## Yakutat: From the Mountains to the Sea



WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS IS AMERICA'S largest national park, that covers over 20,500 square miles! The park is home to some of the tallest mountains in North America. Yet, near Yakutat, the park also has 122 miles of little-known coastline within its boundaries and North America's largest tidewater glacier, the Hubbard Glacier.

With a mere 600 residents, Yakutat may be small in size but has most amenities of a rural Alaskan community. Getting to Yakutat is either by plane or boat; no roads connect Yakutat to the main portion of the park.

Kayaking among the seals and seabirds in Icy Bay is an amazing trip. Yakutat boasts that it has some of the best surfing in the western hemisphere. Yes, surfing! Where

else can you surf the waters of the Pacific Ocean and view the 4th tallest peak in North America, Mount St. Elias? World class steelhead trout fishing is also a favorite pastime for many visitors to Yakutat.

The Tlingit people are the native inhabitants of this part of Alaska. They have thrived for thousands of years, harvesting the bountiful resources of the coastal waters and forests of Wrangell-St. Elias.

So if you are ready for an adventure into a seldom visited part of the park, Yakutat is for you. It requires a little more planning and patience to get there, but it is well worth the effort.

**For more information, contact the Yakutat Ranger Station at 907-784-3295.**

# Where Can We Camp?

THERE ARE SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO CAMP WITHIN THE PARK. All sites are primitive and available on a first come, first served basis. In general, no potable water is available at camping areas located on federal land. Remember, treat or boil all water, pack out all your trash, store food properly, and be careful with fire. All State of Alaska fishing regulations and most state hunting regulations

apply in Wrangell-St. Elias. Regulation booklets are available at park visitor centers. Bears are frequently sited in the park. Never leave food or items with an odor unattended. Please note: that there is private property located along the Nabesna and McCarthy Roads. Please take care not to camp or hike on private property.



## Camping along the Nabesna Road...

One of the best camping areas is in the northern part of the park, along the Nabesna Road. There, you will find pullouts along the roadside that are perfect for a small RV, camper trailer, or tent camping. The Nabesna Road also hosts the only National Park Service owned and operated campground in the park. The Nabesna Road boasts spectacular scenery, majestic views of the Wrangell Mountains, wildlife viewing, and hiking opportunities.

### Rufus Creek, mile 6.1

This site has a picnic table and is located next to a creek. There are no vault toilets here. Note: The site is close to the road and can be a little dusty when traffic passes.

### Kettle Lake, mile 16.6

This site has a picnic table and a view of the Wrangell Mountains. Follow game trails across the tundra to a small lake. There are no vault toilets here. Note: The site is close to the road and can be a little dusty when traffic passes.

### Rock Lake, mile 21.8

This site has a picnic table and vault toilet. It looks out on a mountain lake and the Wrangell Mountains. Note: The site is close to the road and can be a little dusty when traffic passes.

### Kendesnii Campground, mile 27.8

This is a National Park Service campground with 10 designated sites, located near Twin Lakes.

### Jack Creek, mile 35.3

This area has picnic tables and a vault toilet. There is room for up to three vehicles. The road beyond mile 29 receives less traffic so this is often a place to camp in solitude. There are game trails to follow and you may be able to view Dall Sheep. Jack Creek is a great spot to catch grayling.

## COME STAY AT THE KENDESNI CAMPGROUND!

This camping area, which was constructed in 2012, is the only National Park Service campground in the park. Located at mile 27.8 on the Nabesna Road, it has 10 designated campsites, each with a picnic table and a fire ring. There are two vault toilets. Each site can accommodate a small to medium RV or other vehicles. It is free and open year-round. No reservations are required.

The area is surrounded by trees and shrubs, and far enough from the road to avoid dust. There are picnic sites near the shoreline of the lakes and short hiking trails. Enjoy canoeing, viewing waterfowl, and fishing for grayling.



## Camping along the McCarthy Road...

There are fewer opportunities to camp along the McCarthy Road. You will find pullouts along the roadside that can accommodate a small RV, camper trailer, or tent camping. There are no National Park Service operated campgrounds along the McCarthy Road, although you will find privately-owned campgrounds there. The McCarthy Road boasts spectacular scenery, views of the Copper and Chitina Rivers, wildlife viewing, historic structures, and hiking opportunities.

### Copper River Campground, mile .1

This is a non-Park Service primitive campground. It is located just after crossing the bridge. This area has 12 sites, picnic tables, firepits, and vault toilets.

### Kuskalana Bridge wayside, mile 17.1

This site has vault toilets and is a gravel pullout. Note: The site is close to the road and can be a little dusty when traffic passes.

### Gilahina Trestle, mile 29

This site has vault toilets and is a gravel pullout. There is a good view of the historic railroad trestle. Note: The site is close to the road and can be a little dusty when traffic passes.

### State wayside, mile 55

This site has vault toilets and is a gravel pullout surrounded by trees. Note: The site is close to the road and can be a little dusty when traffic passes.

### Kennicott River, mile 59.2

This is the end of the McCarthy Road. There are privately-owned parking areas where you can camp for a fee (primitive camping), or there is a nearby developed private campground with designated sites.

# Take a Hike!

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE IS A VAST wilderness with just a handful of trails or routes that have been established. There are several trails that provide for rewarding day hikes. The following is a sampling

of shorter hikes and easier walks found in various parts of the park. Ask a ranger for more details on these routes, or to learn about more hiking opportunities.

## Hikes near Copper Center

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL LENGTH	TRAIL DESCRIPTION	TRAILHEAD LOCATION
Boreal Forest Trail	0.5 Miles Roundtrip	An easy loop trail with interpretive panels that describe the area. A self-guiding brochure is available at the visitor center.	At the main park visitor center in Copper Center.
Aspen Interpretive Trail	1.0 Mile Roundtrip	Privately maintained trail, not maintained by the National Park Service. An easy loop trail through aspen/spruce forest with interpretive panels that describe the area.	In Glennallen, look for the Aspen Trail sign on the Glenn Highway (Hwy 1). Trailhead is on Co-op Road.
Tonsina River Trail	2.0 Miles Roundtrip	Bureau of Land Management maintained trail, not maintained by the National Park Service. An easy trail through aspen/spruce forest with the destination of an overlook of the Tonsina River. May be muddy & buggy.	Take the Richardson Highway (Hwy 4) south, turn left onto the Edgerton Highway (Hwy 10) to Kenny Lake. Trailhead parking area is just past mile marker 12 on the Edgerton Hwy.
Liberty Falls Trail	2.5 Miles Roundtrip	Bureau of Land Management maintained trail, not maintained by the National Park Service. A moderately difficult but short trail that leads to views of the Wrangell and Chugach Mountains. To view the falls, travel to the campground parking area.	Take the Richardson Highway (Hwy 4) south, turn left onto the Edgerton Highway (Hwy 10) to Kenny Lake. Trailhead parking area is just past mile marker 23.3 on the Edgerton Hwy.

## Hikes in the Nabesna Area

Caribou Creek Trail	6.0 Miles Roundtrip	The trail gains about 800 feet in three miles with some stream crossings along the way. Nice views along the way and many wildflowers. Trail may be muddy.	Trailhead is located at mile 19.2 on the Nabesna Road. Parking is located about 1/4 mile from the trailhead at mile 18.9.
Lost Creek Trail	Varies, 14-20 Miles Roundtrip	The trail gains slight elevation as it goes through woods and then enters a creek bed. After about 7 miles, trail becomes a route. Moderately difficult due to walking in rocky creek bed and climbing tundra hills.	Trailhead is located at mile 31.2 on the Nabesna Road.
Skookum Volcano Trail	5.0 Miles Roundtrip	The trail gains about 2500 feet in 2.5 miles with some difficult footing along the way. The trail climbs through tangled geologic formations with stunning views. Look for Dall Sheep.	Trailhead is located at mile 36.2 on the Nabesna Road.
Rambler Mine Trail	2.0 Miles Roundtrip	The trail gains about 400 feet in a half mile with some spectacular views. The trail leads to an abandoned gold mine, with the choice of climbing up a further route.	Trailhead is located at the end of the Nabesna Road (mile 42). Drive past Devil's Mountain Lodge for 1/4 mile with trailhead parking on the right. Walk 1/3 of mile for the start of the trail on the right.

## Hikes in the McCarthy/Kennecott Area

Crystalline Hills Trail	2.5 Miles Roundtrip	The trail climbs gradually through the dense forest and loops back along the base of the steep Crystalline Hills. Nice views of the Chitina River valley and Chugach Mountains.	Trailhead is located at mile 34.8 on the McCarthy Road.
Root Glacier Trail	4.0 Miles Roundtrip	An easy trail through aspen/spruce forest along the edge of the Root Glacier. Great views of the Stairway Ice Fall.	Trail departs from Kennecott Mill Town, located 5 miles from McCarthy.
Bonanza Mine Trail	9.0 Miles Roundtrip	The trail gains 3800 feet in 4.5 miles with some difficult footing along the way. There are stunning views once above treeline and abandoned mine buildings.	Trail departs from Kennecott Mill Town, located 5 miles from McCarthy. Bonanza Mine Trail spurs off from the Root Glacier Trail. After about 1 mile, stay to the right to get to Bonanza Mine.
Jumbo Mine Trail	10.0 Miles Roundtrip	The trail gains 3300 feet in 5 miles with some difficult footing along the way. There are stunning views once above treeline and abandoned mine buildings.	Trail departs from Kennecott Mill Town, located 5 miles from McCarthy. Trail spurs off from the Root Glacier Trail. After about 1 mile, turn left to get to Jumbo Mine.

If you would like more information about these trails or backcountry trip options, please call the park at 907-822-5234 or see our website: [www.nps.gov/wrst](http://www.nps.gov/wrst).

# Hazards of the Wild

## Bear Safety

BOTH BLACK BEARS (*URSUS AMERICANUS*) AND GRIZZLY/BROWN bears (*Ursus arctos*) are found throughout Wrangell-St. Elias. A few precautions can help keep you safe while camping and hiking, and protect the bears. Once a bear learns to identify hikers, campsites, or cabins as a source for food, there is rarely a happy ending.

### AVOID ALL ENCOUNTERS

- Watch for signs of bears such as tracks and scat.
- Be alert to potential food sources such as carrion, salmon spawning streams, and berry patches.
- Make noise, particularly where visibility is limited. Your voice is best—bear bells are not very effective.
- Travel in groups. Groups are noisier and easier for bears to detect.
- Store food, trash, and personal hygiene products by using bear-resistant storage containers. Never store them in your tent.
- Cook and store food at least 100 yards from your tent.

### IF YOU DO ENCOUNTER A BEAR

- If the bear is unaware of you, detour away quietly.
- If the bear sees you, stop where you are. Wave your arms and talk to the bear in a calm voice. Retreat slowly, keeping the bear in sight.
- If the bear follows you, stand your ground.
- If contact by a grizzly bear is imminent, play dead. Lie flat on the ground, face down and legs apart. Protect your neck. Leave your pack on to protect your back and strive to remain face down. If the attack is prolonged, fight back vigorously.
- If it's a black bear, do not play dead, fight back vigorously.



**PLEASE REPORT ALL BEAR ENCOUNTERS TO A PARK RANGER!**



THERE ARE SEVERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS THAT YOU CAN TAKE:

### PEPPER SPRAY

Containers containing capsaicin, a red pepper extract, is an effective, non-lethal deterrent against attacks by aggressive wildlife. Sprays have a maximum range of about six to eight yards. If discharged upwind or in a vehicle, they can disable the person using them. Use sprays approved by the EPA that contain at least eight ounces of deterrent.

### FIREARMS

Weapons are allowed in Wrangell-St. Elias, but should never be used as an alternative to common-sense approaches to bear encounters. You are allowed to carry a concealed weapon in the park. However, some buildings are designated with a sign prohibiting the possession of a firearm within that facility. **If you are inexperienced, you are more likely to be injured by a gun than a bear, and any misplaced shot may enrage the bear further, prolonging an attack.** A rifle of at least .30 caliber or a 12-gauge shotgun with slugs is recommended. Alaska law makes provisions for shooting a bear in self defense if there is no alternative and the attack was unprovoked. The hide and skull must be salvaged and turned over to authorities.

### FOOD STORAGE



Appropriate food storage is required in Wrangell-St Elias National Park and Preserve. You can borrow NPS-approved bear-resistant containers (BRFCs) at park visitor centers for backcountry use. A refundable deposit is required.

Keep all food and cosmetics in the BRFC when not in use. Place any snacks, wrappers, lip balm, sunscreen, etc. into the BRFC before entering your tent. At night, store your BRFC and clean cooking gear off of main animal trails, and at least 100 yards from your tent. Prepare and consume food at least 100 yards from your tent site and food storage area. Try to select cooking areas where you can see a comfortable distance to minimize the risk of a surprise encounter with a bear passing through the area.

## River Crossings

CHALLENGING CONDITIONS MAKE RIVER CROSSINGS ONE OF THE most hazardous elements of backcountry travel in this park. These crossings can be VERY dangerous without preparation, patience, and planning. You must carefully evaluate conditions at each river crossing. Never let a deadline rush you into making a poor decision, and always be willing to turn back or wait for a more suitable time if a crossing seems too risky.

### PREPARE

Pack sleeping bags and extra clothing in plastic bags or dry-bags inside your pack. Choose polypropylene or nylon clothes that dry quickly and won't trap silt. Leave your boots on—don't cross in socks or bare feet. Loosen pack straps before crossing so that you can slip out of your pack quickly in case of a fall. Change out of wet clothing as soon as possible.

### TIME

Area rivers are fed by glaciers and volume can fluctuate dramatically. The safest time to cross is during the cool hours of early morning. As the day progresses, sunlight and warm temperatures increase glacial melt, causing water-level to rise.

### PLACE

Choose the widest or most braided section for crossing rivers and look for slow-moving water flowing over level ground. These are usually indications of relatively shallow water. Straight channels generally have uniform water flow and depth, while bends often have deep cut banks and swiftly moving water. Stay alert to changing conditions and be prepared to alter your plans. Always proceed with caution; silt obscures visibility, making any crossing of a glacial river extremely hazardous.



**Remember:**  
If crossing a river appears too risky, it probably is!

# Why This Park is Significant

OUR NATIONAL PARKS HAVE BEEN SET ASIDE BY THE UNITED STATES congress to preserve and protect our nation's unique natural and cultural history and also provide opportunities for people to enjoy them. Each park represents

a distinctive piece of America. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is a unique and breathtakingly beautiful place, and was set aside for multiple reasons that are listed here.



*Copper River*

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve contains major river systems with more miles (over 1,000) of scenic, free-flowing, glacial rivers in their natural state than are found in any other protected area in the United States.



Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve provides superlative scenic beauty.

*The purpose of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is to maintain the natural scenic beauty of the diverse geologic, glacial, and riparian dominated landscapes, and to protect the attendant wildlife populations and their habitats; to ensure continued access for a wide range of wilderness-based recreational opportunities; to provide continued opportunities for subsistence use.*



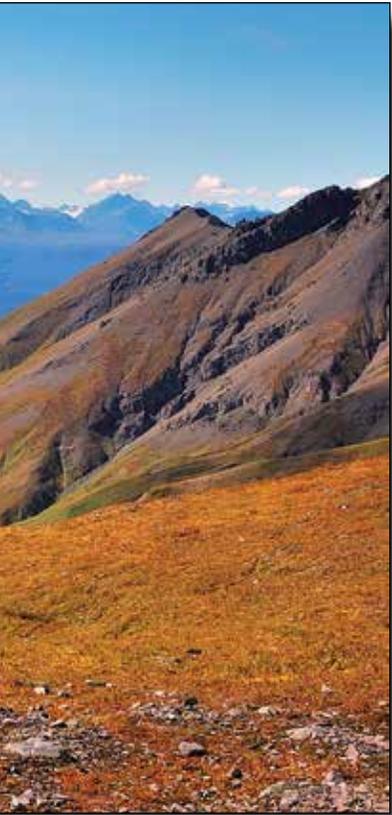
*Yakutat*

The vast undeveloped expanse of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve contains diverse aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, ranging from alpine to marine, and providing natural habitat for populations of Alaskan flora and fauna.



*Nizina Glacier*

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve encompasses the nation's largest protected active glacial complex.



*Dixie Pass*



*Nugget Creek Cabin*

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is an inhabited area where local communities and traditional human activities remain integrated with the wilderness setting.



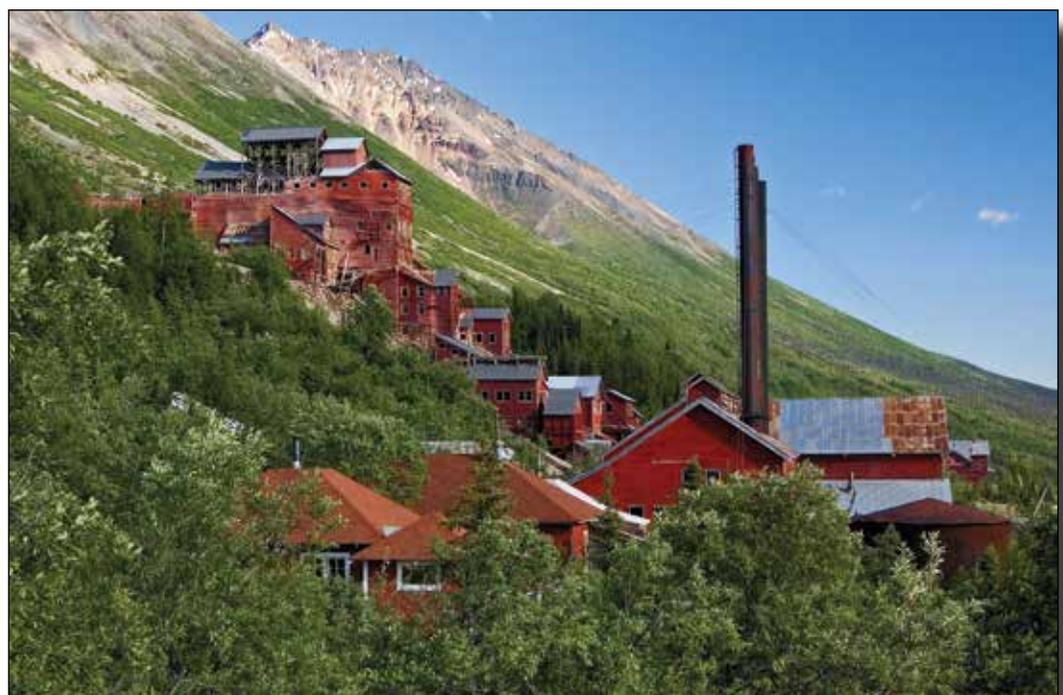
*Icy Bay*

Encompassing portions of three major mountain ranges, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve contains vast areas of scenic high mountain terrain from sea level to 18,000 feet and includes nine of the sixteen highest peaks in North America.



*Chitistone Pass*

The Wrangell-St. Elias Wilderness is the largest unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System, encompassing nearly 10 million acres of remote and geographically diverse mountainous landscapes.

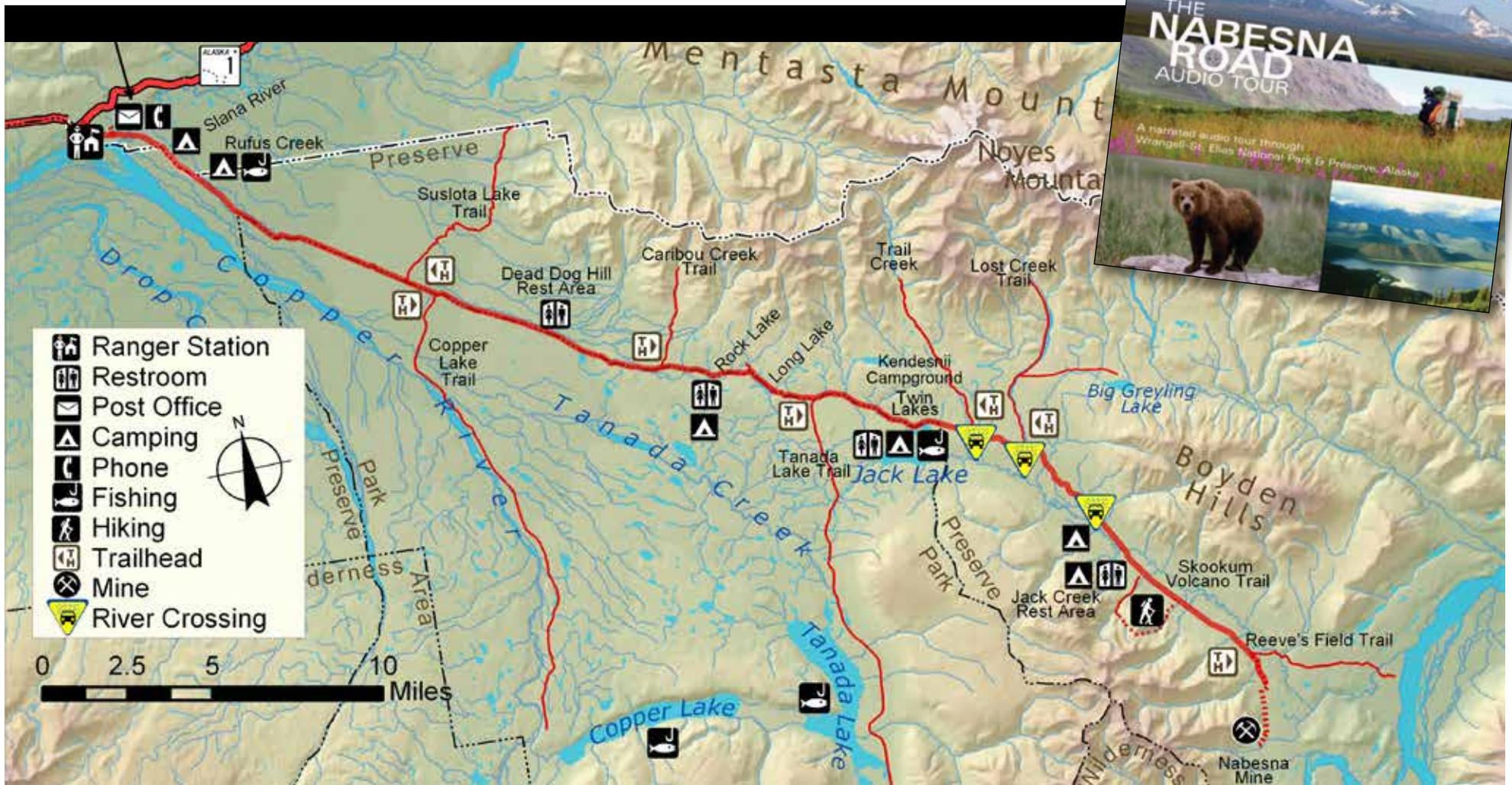
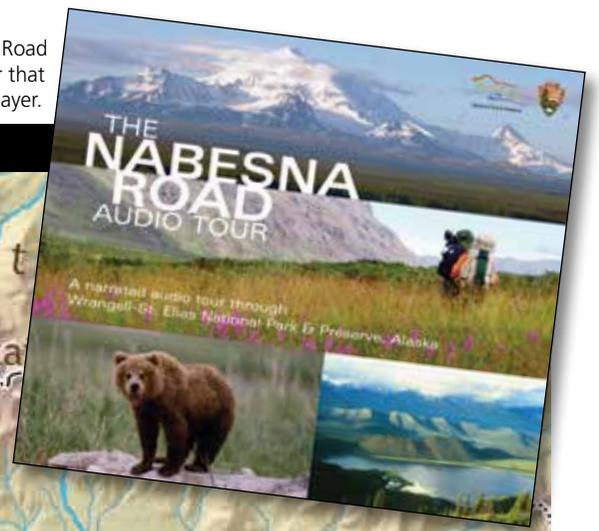


*Kenecott Mines National Historic Landmark*

Preserved within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is abundant evidence of more than 3000 years of cultural and technological development. This long history reveals a range of human adaptations to changing climates, environments, and economic circumstances.

# Nabesna Road Guide

Pick up a free copy of the Nabesna Road Audio Tour! This is a narrated tour that plays in your vehicle's cd player.



THE NABESNA ROAD OFFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE INTERIOR ALASKA AND THE northern reaches of the park. The road begins at mile 60 of the Glenn Highway (Tok Cutoff), and soon becomes gravel as it winds 42 miles into the park. The drive is an adventure in the midst of the Wrangell, Mentasta, and Nutzotin Mountains. Along the way, you will find campsites, lakes and streams for fishing, hiking routes, and opportunities for wildlife and bird watching. But you won't find many people. So if you like taking a road less traveled, the Nabesna Road may be right for you.

A drive on the 42-mile long Nabesna Road is much the same today as it was when it was built by the Alaska Road Commission in 1934 to connect Nabesna Mine to the port in Valdez. Today, Nabesna Road provides access to the less visited northern part of the park offering the chance to experience true Alaska wilderness.

Before beginning your trip, stop at the Slana Ranger Station to check on current road conditions. Generally, the road is passable by any two-wheel drive vehicle, even most RVs.

At times, high clearance and four-wheel drive are recommended beyond Mile 29, where you encounter the first of three creek crossings. Following spring runoff or a heavy rain, these intermittent stream crossings can temporarily become impassable due to high water and deep channels. Please be aware that private property adjoins many parts of the road and that the Nabesna Mine is private. Ask a ranger for information on area commercial services, federal land access, and private property locations.

## Nabesna Road Basics

- Begins at mile 60 of the Glenn Highway (Tok Cutoff)
- 42 miles, allow 1.5 hours EACH WAY
- This is a remote area with limited services. NO FUEL is available in Slana. Fill up either in Chistochina (20 miles south) or Mentasta (15 miles north).
- Drive slowly, carefully, and courteously.
- Carry a full-sized spare and an adequate jack.
- **Private land** adjoins many parts of the road. Please respect private property.
- Cell phone coverage is limited.

**Mileposts** The following highlights are points of interest along the Nabesna Road. The mileage begins at the intersection of the Glenn Highway (Tok Cutoff) and the Nabesna Road and is based on actual odometer readings.

### 0.0 Junction of the Glenn Highway (Tok Cutoff) and Nabesna Road

#### 0.2 Slana Ranger Station



Stop here for information about the park and local area, exhibits, and ranger-led activities as well as an Alaska Geographic book store. Always check on current Nabesna Road conditions before beginning your journey.



There are many trails that are closed to recreational off road vehicles (ORVs) trails that are open require a permit and are available at the ranger station. **Always check on current trail conditions and any closures that may be in effect.**

#### 1.0 Original Slana Roadhouse (now private property)

The Slana Roadhouse is visible on the south side of the road. This structure was built in the 1930s, but there has been a roadhouse here since 1912. This roadhouse is one of the few that remain of those that served travelers on the trail from Gakona to Chisana, the site of Alaska's final gold rush. It is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### 1.7 Slana River Access & Primitive Campsites

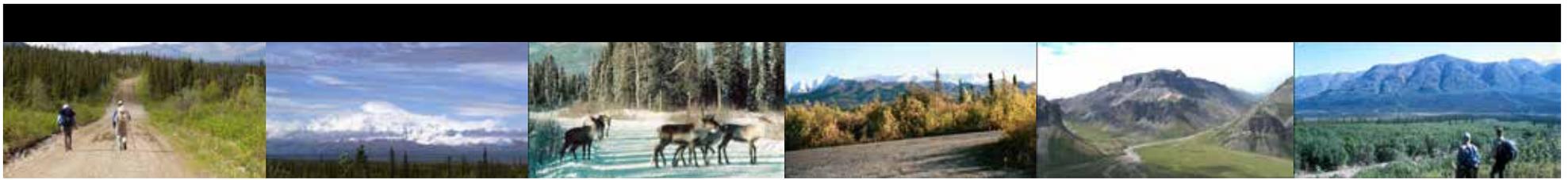
Rafters often begin trips down the Copper River here. The confluence of the Copper River and the Slana River is less than a mile downstream. The Slana River begins in the Mentasta Mountains, seen to the north.

#### 2.7 Entering Federal Land

On the southside of the road, the boundary of the "National Preserve" begins.

#### 4.0 Junction with "4-Mile" Road - Gravel surface begins

"4-Mile" Road leads into the Slana Settlement, created in 1983 when the BLM opened over 10,000 acres north of the road to homesteading. It was one of the last opportunities for homesteading federal land. Eight hundred claims were filed, but most were soon abandoned. Alaskan winters took their toll. Many tried to live in hastily-built cabins and tents, with temperatures down to -60°F. Jobs were scarce and the climate was not suited to farming. Only a little over a hundred claims were eventually patented. Today, about 50 people live in the settlement. Both the north and south side of the road are part of the boundaries of the park.



## 5.6 Preserve to Park

The north side of the road is “National Preserve” whereas the south side is “National Park.” Sport hunting is allowed in the National Preserve but not in the National Park. However, subsistence hunting is allowed in both the National Park and Preserve.

## 6.1 Rufus Creek primitive campsite (picnic table)

## 12.2 Copper Lake Trailhead & primitive campsite (picnic table)

This is a 12-mile trail with access to Copper Lake. Copper Lake has opportunities for Lake Trout, Grayling, and Burbot fishing. The first 2.5 miles are suitable for hiking, then the trail crosses Tanada Creek and trail conditions deteriorate.

## 15 to Views of the Wrangell Mountains

18



Over the next few miles, enjoy the splendid views of high snow-clad volcanoes of the Wrangell Mountains. Mt. Sanford (16,237') is the tallest mountain that can be seen from the Nabesna Road. To the left of Sanford is the rounded, icy dome of Mt. Wrangell (14,163'). It is the park's only active volcano and occasionally steam can be seen rising from the summit. Wrangell's broad sloping profile is an excellent example of a shield volcano. The jagged summits of Tanada Peak to the left of Mt. Wrangell and Capital Mountain to the right of Mt. Sanford are actually highly eroded remnants of once massive shield volcanoes.

## 16.6 Kettle Lake primitive campsite (picnic table)

## 17.8 Dead Dog Hill Rest Area

This is a great site to take a break for some wildlife viewing or bird watching. There are views of wetlands, a small lake, and boreal forest. Moose are often seen here and caribou migrate through this area in the spring and fall. During spring and summer, look for nesting ducks and trumpeter swans.

## 19.2 Caribou Creek Trail



Park at the gravel pit at mile 18.9. The trailhead is at mile 19.2. The trail is approximately 4 miles long and offers awesome views of the Wrangell Mountains and the tangles of lakes and rivers below. The trail ends at a cabin, but you could easily make this a longer trip by following game trails or striking out on your own.

## 21.8 Rock Lake Rest Area & primitive campsite (outhouse, picnic table, trash bin)

**Access to Viking Lodge Public Use Cabin** Reservations are required for use of Viking Lodge. Contact the Slana Ranger Station to sign up for this public use cabin. The 1/4-mile trail to the cabin is on the north side of the road.



## 24.7 Watershed Divide (3,320ft)

You have reached the highest point on the Nabesna Road, and crossed a major watershed divide. All waters flowing west and south from the divide are carried by the Copper River to the Gulf of Alaska. All waters flowing to the east enter the Nabesna River, the Tanana, the Yukon, and ultimately the Bering Sea.

## 27.8 Kendesnii Campground (picnic tables, vault toilets, trash bins, information)



Several picnic tables, vault toilet, fire rings, and ten informal campsites provide a nice spot for primitive camping. This is a great place to fish and view wildlife. A hike of about a half-mile to the south and over the ridge will take you to Jack Lake and more beautiful views of the Wrangell Mountains.

## 28.1 National Preserve

Both sides of the road are now “National Preserve.” Sport hunting is allowed.



**BEFORE YOU CONTINUE** Road conditions can deteriorate beyond Twin Lakes. Trail Creek (Mile 29), Lost Creek (Mile 30.8), and Boyden Creek (Mile 34.3) may be flowing across the road. Generally, these creekbeds are dry, but during spring run off or following prolonged rain, high-clearance and occasionally four-wheel drive may be necessary. Carefully evaluate all crossings before driving across.

## 35.3 Jack Creek Rest Area & primitive campsite (picnic tables, trash receptacle, outhouse)

Several nice campsites with picnic tables and fishing along Jack Creek.

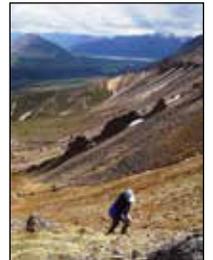
## Dall Sheep Habitat



Dall sheep inhabit high altitude ridges, meadows, and extremely rugged “escape terrain.” Sheep use these areas for feeding, resting, and to escape predators. Although they usually stay at higher elevations, in this area they are known to descend to springs and mineral licks and even cross the road. Careful observers can usually spot small flocks on the mountainsides over the next few miles.

## 36.2 Skookum Volcano Trail (Hiking trail only)

The Skookum Volcano Trail/route is 2.5 miles one-way to a beautiful high pass. This trail leads through an extinct, deeply eroded volcanic system with fascinating geology. The elevation at the trailhead is 3,000' and rises to an elevation of 5,800' at the pass. Hikers can explore other routes or expand this hike into a multiple-day trip.



## 40.2 Reeve's Field Trailhead

This is a multiple use trail (4.5 miles) with access to the Nabesna River. During 1941, trucks hauled equipment from Valdez to a rustic strip along the river. Pilot Bob Reeve cut everything into pieces, loaded it into his Boeing Trimotor, flew them to Northway, about 40 miles north, and then had them re-welded. This effort was organized to build the Northway Airport, a critical stopover in ferrying lend-lease aircraft to the Soviet Union during WWII. By November, he had transported all the materials for a full-scale airport. It was good timing. One month later, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor gave Northway new relevance, and it became a critical element in the defense of Alaska.

## 42 End of maintained road



The Ellis family lives here. Please respect their property and privacy. Stay alert, and be careful not to park on the airstrip. From here on, the road provides access to private lands at Nabesna Mine, and is not regularly maintained. During wet weather, this section may require four-wheel drive, or become impassable.

**Continue on Foot:** Approximately a 1/4 mile beyond the Ellis property, there is a gravel parking area. If you'd like to explore further, this is the best place to park your vehicle, as the road is not maintained beyond this point.

## Rambler Mine

Approximately 1/4-mile past the lodge, a trail leads south towards the remains of the abandoned Rambler Mine, an area that was active after WWII. The one-mile trail is steep, but the effort rewards you with superlative views of the Nabesna River and Nutzotin Mountains.



## 46 Nabesna Gold Mine

Carl Whitham staked the claims that became Nabesna Gold Mine in 1925. The mine operated until 1945. By that time over 73,000 tons of gold ore valued at \$1,870,000 had been shipped to the Tacoma, Washington smelter. Limited, small scale mineral extraction has occurred since that time. Nabesna Mine is privately owned.

# McCarthy Road Guide



THE 60-MILE MCCARTHY ROAD WINDS DEEP INTO THE HEART OF WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS. ONCE THE gateway to tremendous fortunes, it is now your gateway to spectacular scenery, vast wilderness, and adventure. For those willing to leave the pavement behind and brave the ruts and dust, this road provides access to the many natural and historic wonders of our largest national park.

## Born On Rails

Today's road originated in 1909 as a railway constructed to support the Kennecott Copper Mines. Over 200 million dollars worth of ore was hauled from the Kennecott Mill 196 miles to the port of Cordova. When large scale mining ended in 1938, most of the rails subsequently were salvaged for scrap iron, and no longer maintained, the bridge over the Copper River was soon destroyed by flooding. In 1971 a new bridge was constructed over the Copper River, and the rail bed was covered with gravel, creating today's road surface.

## What To Expect

Narrow and winding, the road still reflects its railway origins. In places, remnants of railroad ties may surface, along with the occasional spike, creating unexpected hazards.

Please drive slowly, carefully, and courteously. Although traffic and weather often result in ruts and washboarded surfaces, under normal summer conditions, most passenger vehicles can make the trip. Please allow faster vehicles to pass by using turnouts. Soft shoulders have led to numerous accidents and vehicle damage.

A Park Service information station is located near the end of the road. Posted information about the area is available at this station. The road ends at the Kennicott River, a half-mile short of McCarthy and five miles short of historic Kennecott. Public parking is limited but additional parking is available from private vendors. Cross the footbridge over the river, then continue on foot, by bicycle, or shuttle.

## McCarthy Road Basics

- Begins at mile 33 Edgerton Highway at Chitina.
- 60 miles, allow 2 hours EACH WAY.
- This is a remote area with **NO** services. NO FUEL is available past Chitina.
- Drive slowly, carefully, and courteously.
- Carry a full-sized spare and an adequate jack.
- Many people spend a minimum of two days exploring the area.
- **Private land** adjoins many parts of the road and McCarthy-Kennecott area. Please respect private property. Ask a Ranger about public land access and private property locations.
- Cell phone coverage is limited.

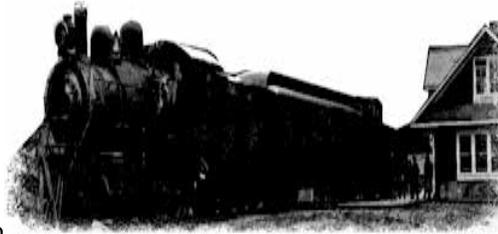
## Chitina

Pronounced, "Chit-Na," this railroad town sprang to life in 1910. Busy during the summer fishing season, this town was once bustling as the major stopover and service point for the



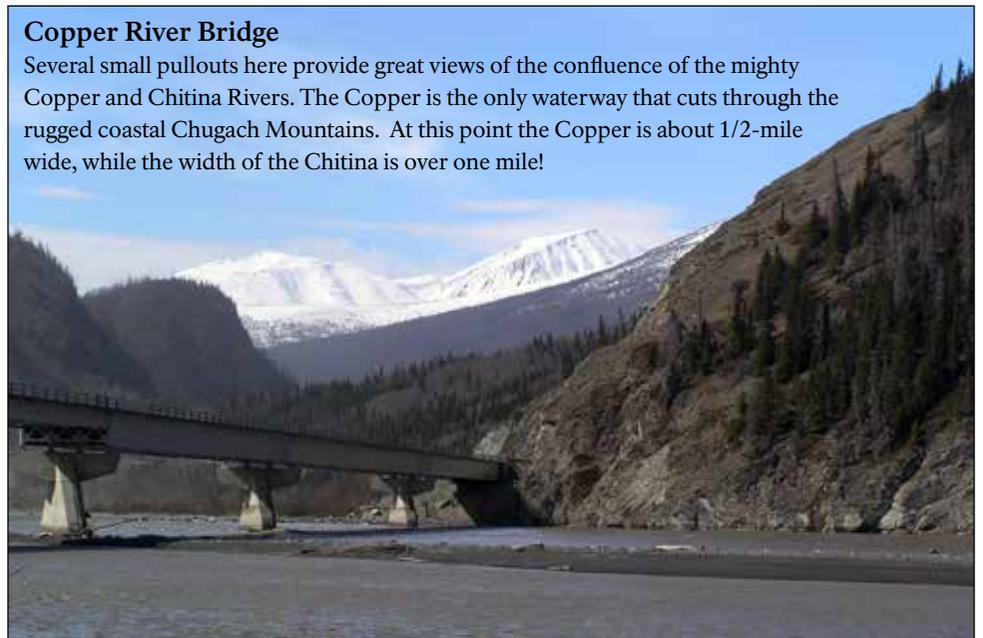
trains that carried ore from Kennecott to mining camps in Cordova. Restrooms and informational panels can be found at the downtown wayside.

During the summer months, the historic Chitina Ranger Station may be staffed by a Park Ranger. This log cabin, which was constructed in 1910 by the Ed S. Orr Stage Company to house its local superintendent, serves as an enduring reminder of Alaska's colorful transportation history. One of Chitina's oldest surviving buildings, it was recently rehabilitated by the National Park Service and now serves as a visitor contact station. Stop in for road updates and park information. Be aware that Chitina is the last chance to obtain fuel and supplies before you enter Wrangell-St. Elias.



## Copper River Bridge

Several small pullouts here provide great views of the confluence of the mighty Copper and Chitina Rivers. The Copper is the only waterway that cuts through the rugged coastal Chugach Mountains. At this point the Copper is about 1/2-mile wide, while the width of the Chitina is over one mile!





## 0 Crossing the Bridge



As you cross the bridge, you will notice that these rivers are dirty...but they are not polluted. These flowing waters begin as flowing “rivers of ice.” Millions of tons of rock dust are scoured off of distant mountains by glaciers and carried downriver each year. The resulting silty waters hide salmon swimming up these rivers to spawn.

Copper River “Reds”(sockeye salmon) are world-renowned. In summer, look for busy Alaskan residents catching red, silver, and king salmon with dipnets and fishwheels. How well do you think these fishing methods would work in a crystal clear river?

The large snow covered mountain visible to the north is volcanic Mount Drum (12,010’), part of the Wrangell Mountains.

**The McCarthy Road begins as you cross the Copper River bridge**  
Look for the mile-marker posts and follow along with this guide

## 5.0 Chitina River Scenic Vista



Stop here and enjoy the view. The Copper and its tributaries (including the Chitina) drain an area of approximately 24,000 square miles. Much of this drainage basin lies within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve and almost 25% of it is covered by glaciers. Because of this glacial influence, high water in the Copper River typically occurs not during the snowmelt of spring, but summer hot spells that cause rapid ice melting. Low water usually occurs in late winter when everything is frozen. The Chitina River is a popular rafting trip from McCarthy. Several rafting companies operate out of McCarthy.

## 10 Strelna Lake Trail

A small pullout on the left provides access to a 1/2-mile trail to Strelna Lake. The Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game stocks this lake with rainbow trout.

## 10.7 Silver Lake

Foot access to Silver Lake for trout fishing.



## 14.5 Backcountry Trailheads

The access road on the left leads 2.5 miles to the trailheads for Nugget Creek and Dine Pass. These primitive routes offer abundant wilderness adventure. Ask a park ranger for more information and route descriptions. Nearby Strelna was once a bustling supply stop along the railway and provided support for area mines.

## 15.9 Entering Federal Land

The road is now entering land managed by Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve.

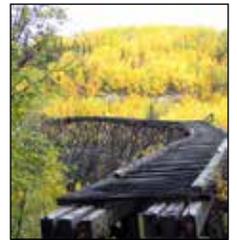
## 17 Kuskulana River Canyon & Bridge



A spectacular achievement, the Kuskulana Bridge was constructed during the winter of 1910. Imagine riding high in a heavily loaded ore train across the two icy rails. Perched 238 feet above the raging Kuskulana River, this single-lane railroad bridge is for many the most hair-raising part of the entire drive. The muddy Kuskulana River reflects its origins from melting glaciers that drain Mt. Blackburn. The Kuskulana Wayside 0.1 miles up from the bridge offers toilets and exhibits.

## 29 Gilahina Trestle

This wooden structure was originally 890 feet long and 90 feet high, required one-half million board feet of timber, and was completed in eight days in the winter of 1911. Due to the rugged landscape, over 15% of the entire railway was built on trestles such as this. A wayside here offers toilets and exhibits.



## 34.7 Crystalline Hills Trail



A trailhead on the left marks the start of this 2.5 mile loop trail through dense spruce forest to the base of the Crystalline Hills and a nice view of the Chitina River Valley.

## 44 Entering Non-Federal Land

The road is entering privately-managed land.

## 45.2 Long Lake

Each year, an average of 18,000 sockeye salmon struggle up the silty Copper and Chitina Rivers to spawn in this lake. This is a unique run. Salmon begin entering the lake as late as September and spawning continues until April.



## 55 State Wayside (toilets and exhibits)

## 57.8 Entering Federal Land

The road is now entering land managed by Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve.



## 58.5 National Park Service Information Station

The McCarthy Road Information Station contains posted information that is updated during the summer. Day-use parking is available, as well as restrooms and updated bulletin boards.

## 58.7 Entering Non-Federal Land

The road is entering privately-managed land.

## 59.2 Kennicott River-Road's End

You've made it to the end of the road, but in many ways, your adventure is just beginning.



## McCarthy

Homesteaded in 1906, McCarthy quickly grew into a lively community with a story all its own. McCarthy served as the supply and recreation stop for the entire Kennecott mining district. Town history is well portrayed by the local museum and guide services. Today, McCarthy retains much of its original flavor. Accommodations, dining, guide services, and air taxis are just some of the services available here.

## Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark

Like a time capsule, the impressive structures and artifacts left behind when the mines were depleted represent an ambitious time of exploration, discovery, and technological innovation. Currently, the National Park Service is stabilizing and rehabilitating many of the old buildings.

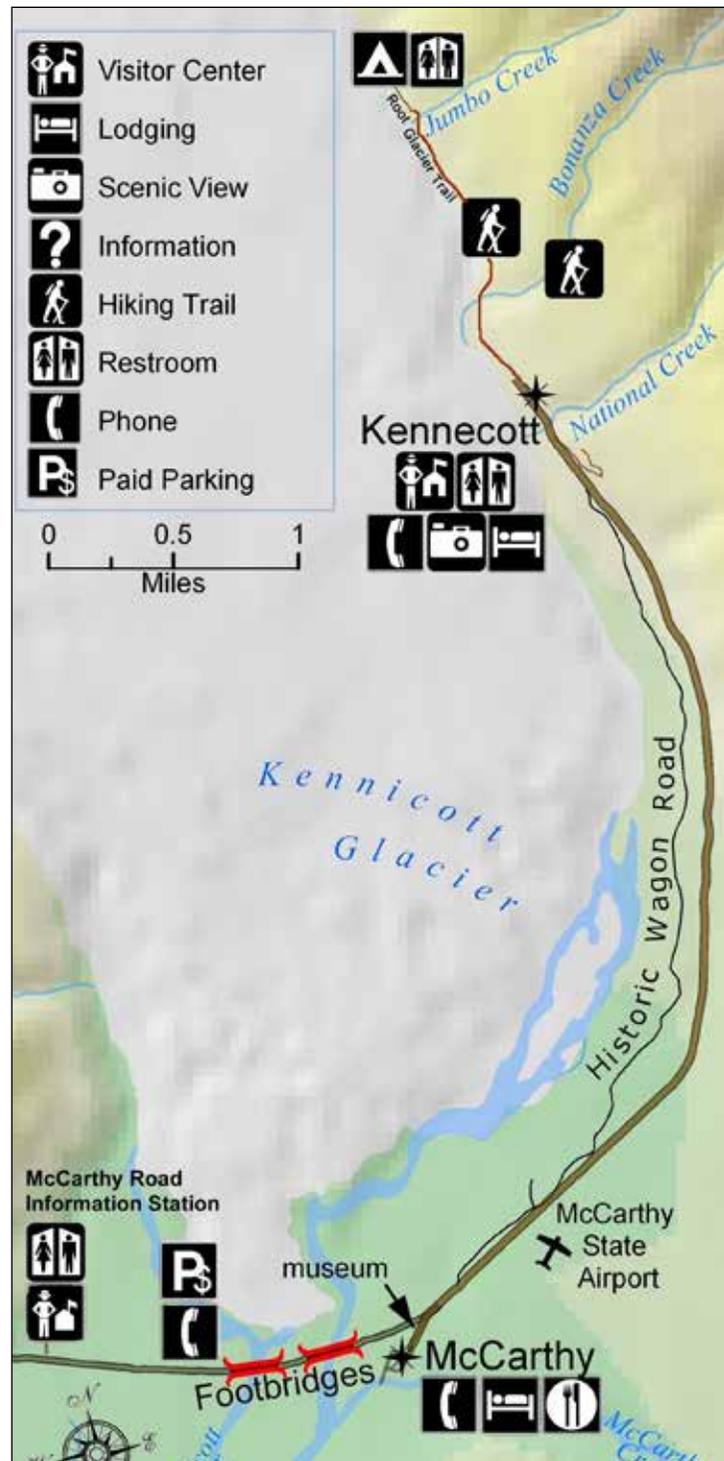
A National Park Service Visitor Center is located within the Kennecott Mill Town. Park Rangers and local guide services conduct history programs and building tours daily. This area is overflowing with history. Trails lead to the Root Glacier and the remains of several mountains.



# The End of the McCarthy Road...

ONCE YOU'VE SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATED THE 60-MILE MCCARTHY Road, your adventure in many ways is just beginning. The road ends at the banks of the Kennicott River. The town of McCarthy lies one-half mile beyond, and the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark is another five miles up the old

railroad grade. It can be confusing. Where should I park? Where can I camp? Is there a shuttle to Kennecott? We are here to help! Please ask a park ranger further questions at any park visitor center.



## McCarthy Road Information Station - Mile 58.5 - one half mile before the end of the road.

Up-to-date posted information on parking, shuttles, Kennecott, McCarthy, park access, and activities can be found at the McCarthy Road Information Station. This site also has day-use parking, restrooms, and a short trail. No overnight parking or camping is allowed. This information station is usually not staffed.

## Parking

All vehicles must park at one of the designated parking lots near the end of the McCarthy Road. Vehicle access into McCarthy and Kennecott is for local residents only.

Free public day-use parking is available at the McCarthy Road Information Station, located a half-mile from the end of the road. Overnight parking is available for a fee in one of the private parking lots located near the end of the road.

## Kennicott River Footbridges

There are two footbridges that span the Kennicott River at the end of the McCarthy Road, which provide access for visitors into McCarthy. Before crossing the footbridges, drop off passengers and luggage directly in front of the footbridge. There you will find hand carts to help haul your luggage across the river.

## Shuttle Service

Once you cross the first footbridge over the Kennicott River, there is a private shuttle that takes passengers into the town of McCarthy and/or to Kennecott Mill Town. Shuttle tickets are approximately \$5/one-way. The shuttle schedule is usually posted at the footbridge and other locations around town. Typically, the shuttle runs once or twice an hour during the summer, although shuttle times may vary. The shuttle does not operate during the winter.

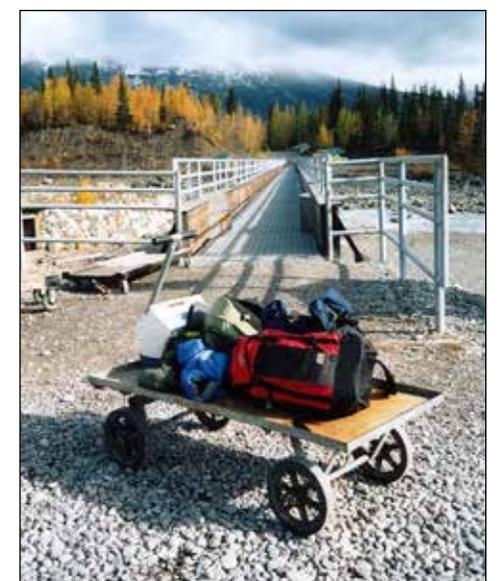
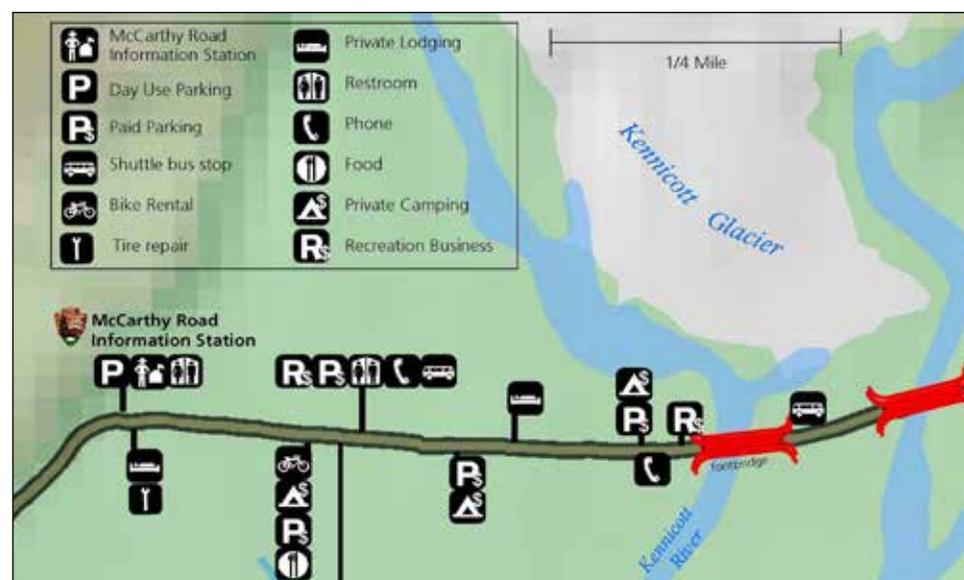
You are welcome to walk, but be advised that from the Kennicott River, it is a half-mile walk into McCarthy and a 5-mile walk to Kennecott Mill town. There are no Park Service-operated shuttles in McCarthy or Kennecott.

## Lodge Guests

Lodges on the other side of the Kennicott River footbridges generally provide transportation for their guests. Contact the lodge directly to arrange the lodge shuttle.

## ATVs and Motorcycles

It is against state law to take any type of motorized vehicle across the Kennicott River footbridges. ATV access to Kennecott is limited to private property owners and their guests in the process of accessing their property. If you've brought your personal ATV or motorcycle, please leave it parked at the end of the McCarthy Road.



# Climate Change

CHANGE IS A DYNAMIC FORCE OF nature, ever present and constant. Often we depend on it, like the changing seasons, the rising and setting of the sun, and the passage of time. The natural world displays versatility and adaptation to these changes that have occurred over the millennia.

In today's news we are hearing about Climate Change and its effects on the environment. Scientists say that climate change is happening and that there are consequences for our national parks, people, and the planet. Since climate change is happening at such an unprecedented pace, the planet does not have time to adapt, and ultimately, survival may be at stake.

In Alaska's national parks, there has been substantial and ongoing research, with national significance, which involves studying climate change. Scientists with the National Park Service recognize that monitoring the climate is critical to understanding the condition of park ecosystems. They also recognize that parks need to work together to achieve needed results.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve holds icefields, high-country areas cloaked

with snow year-round, and the nation's largest system of glaciers.

In fact over 25 percent, or approximately 5,000 square miles, of Wrangell-St. Elias is covered with ice. Near the coast, the Malaspina Glacier is North America's largest piedmont glacier, which is a type of glacier that is formed at the base of a mountain rather than enclosed by a valley. Covering an area of 1,500 square miles, the Malaspina Glacier is so large that it can only be seen entirely from the air.

If warmer winters and longer, more intense melting seasons continue, we may no longer be able to claim these amazing resources. The Kennicott Glacier has shrunk considerably in the last 100 years, as shown in the pictures on the right. The Kennicott Glacier can be seen in the right-hand corner of the pictures.

Taking action to monitor, manage, and decrease the impacts of climate change will have positive benefits for our park and its resources. By dealing successfully with climate change, the National Park Service will be moving towards a way of life that is in harmony with the natural processes and changes that operate on our planet.



Kennecott view from the mill buildings in the 1930s.



Kennecott view from the mill buildings today.



## Alaska Geographic

Wrangell-St. Elias's Nonprofit Education Partner

**Bookstore**  
Browse an extensive collection of books, maps, guides, films and gifts at any of Wrangell-St. Elias's bookstores or many other locations around Alaska.

**Educator**  
Learn in Alaska's wildest classrooms by participating in programs like field seminars, teacher trainings, or other programs we support like Junior Ranger and ranger led talks.

**Publisher**  
Enjoy publications that otherwise would not exist. Funds earned through the educational bookstores support the development of new publications.

**Supporter**  
Share the results. Proceeds from sales and donations have paid for the printing of this visitor's guide, select exhibits, and many other educational projects and services at Wrangell-St. Elias and around Alaska.

Be a part of it all by becoming a member at any of our bookstores, online, or by calling 1-866-AKPARKS. Members receive a 15% discount on purchases and other exclusive benefits.

[www.alaskageographic.org](http://www.alaskageographic.org)



### Wrangell-St. Elias's Alaska Geographic Bookstores

Year round:  
Copper Center Visitor Center

Seasonally:  
Chitina Ranger Station  
Kennecott General Store  
Slana Ranger Station  
Yakutat Ranger Station

Wrangell - St. Elias National Park and Preserve

