

4. Leave What You Find



Leave What You Find means retaining the original character of the Alaskan wildlands such that natural ecosystems and traditional human sites remain intact and we pass on the gift of discovery to those who follow.

- Before your trip discuss how you are both visitors and stewards for the present and future.
- Throughout your trip emphasize the value of leaving natural and cultural objects undisturbed.
- In many areas collecting natural and archaeological or historic objects is prohibited or regulated: know the pertinent laws and regulations for the areas you will visit.

- [The Archaeological Resources Protection Act](http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/tribalrelations/Policy/ARPA_PL96-95.pdf) and other federal laws make it illegal to damage, destroy, deface, or remove archaeological and historic resources from public lands. (Link: http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/tribalrelations/Policy/ARPA_PL96-95.pdf)

Images in stone and wood created by Native artisans entwine tradition, belief and location. The essences of the images are inseparably joined to their location in the cultural landscape.

- Artifacts and structures that may be found along the Alaskan coast include rock art, stone tools, ancient fish traps, culturally modified trees, shell middens, grave sites, totem poles, cabin remains, village sites, and industrial remains including mines, canneries and fur farms.
- Preserve Alaska's past: appreciate, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave them as you find them.
- Gain a sense of discovery by learning the local human history and understanding how people and nature have inter-related where you now visit.



Less than 1% of the Tongass and Chugach National Forests have been inventoried for the presence of archeological resources.

- If you find artifacts during your expedition, please note/GPS their location, photograph them and share your discovery with your local USFS archeologists.
- Assist archeologists by volunteering for a [Passport in Time](http://www.passportintime.com/) project. (Link: <http://www.passportintime.com/>)

Legislation designating public lands in Alaska recognizes and allows the continuation of traditional uses.

- Respect private inholdings, permitted cabins and traditional/subsistence camps you encounter in the wild.
- If you believe a trespass cabin has been built on public lands, inquire with local USFS staff.



Specifically address souvenir-gathering before and during your trip, recognizing that many people value possessions more than undisturbed nature.

- Teach your clients and party to load their cameras, not their packs; to fill their journals, not their pockets.
- Explain to collectors and children the role that natural objects fill in the ecosystem, such as how antlers nourish red-backed voles and how beach stones shelter amphipods (beach hoppers).



Modern portable equipment lets us visit a site comfortably without modifying it. This allows the site to retain its natural integrity and appeal.

- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.
- Do not cut down trees, break branches or clear vegetation.
- If you choose to move a few small sticks and stones for your tent site, replace them before you leave.



Non-native species that alter natural ecosystems are rapidly being introduced to and proliferating in Alaska, especially along popular roads, trails and waterways.

- Water, mud and soil may contain harmful seeds, spores, tiny plants and animals.
- Empty and clean your packs, tents, boats, fishing equipment, vehicles after every trip.
- Before setting out on your trip, clean the dirt from your boots and tire treads.
- Make sure the coat of your pet is free from seeds, twigs and ticks.