Points of Interest

Portage Valley offers visitors a lot to see and do, from hiking and camping, to fishing, wildlife viewing and photography. Here are a few places you won’t want to miss!

1. Moose Flats Day Use Area
A great spot to stop and have a picnic, enjoy a 1/2 mile walk on the interpretive boardwalk trail, or do a little trout fishing.

2. Alder Pond
Try your luck or practice your technique at this trout fishing location.

3. Explorer Glacier Viewing Area
This area offers a great view of Explorer Glacier. Keep a lookout for signs of beaver activity in the area.

4. Tangle Pond
Another trout fishing location in the valley.

5. Black Bear Campground
A 13-site campground designed for tent and small RV camping. Cleared sites, campfire rings, bear-proof, dump station.

6. Williwaw Fish Viewing Platform
Late July through early September you can see salmon traveling up the creek to spawn. Species normally seen are red (sockeye), chum (dog), and pink (humpy). Williwaw Nature Trail starts here. This easy 1/2 mile trail connects the viewing platform to Williwaw ponds. The creek near the trail is closed to salmon fishing.

7. Williwaw Campground
A 60-site fully accessible campground designed for RV and tent camping. Paved sites with pull-through style parking pads, campfire rings, bear-proof dumpsters, hand-water pumps, outhouses, picnic tables and bear-proof food containers. No hookups or dump stations.

8. Williwaw Ponds
Trout fishing opportunities exist.

9. Byron Glacier Trail
An easy to moderate trail along Byron Creek to the snowfield at the foot of Byron Glacier. Avalanche danger exists throughout winter and into spring. Length: 0.8 miles (rough trail surface). Time: one hour round trip. Elevation gain: 100 ft.

10. Portage Glacier Tours
Hour long tours of Portage Lake to Portage Glacier, operated by Holland America under a special use permit with the Forest Service. Forest Service interpreters provide narration during each trip. Cruise operates from mid-May through mid-September. For information on trip times, ticket prices and reservations call: (907) 783-2893.

11. Portage Pass Trail
Trail starts on the Whittier side of the tunnel. This moderate trail leads to Portage Pass with spectacular views of Portage Lake and Glacier, and the surrounding sub-alpine terrain. Length: 1 mile. Time: One-two hours. Elevation gain: 750 feet. Tunnel schedule information is available by calling (907) 366-2244 from Anchorage or toll-free (877) 611-2586.

12. Gary Williams Nature Trail
An easy, self-guided trail showing glacial effects upon the landscape. Length: 1/4 mile loop. Time: 20 minutes. Elevation gain: 25 ft.

13. Portage Glacier Lodge
A 60-site fully accessible campground designed for RV and tent camping. Paved sites with pull-through style parking pads, campfire rings, bear-proof dumpsters, hand-water pumps, outhouses, picnic tables and bear-proof food containers. No hookups or dump stations.

14. Williwaw Nature Trail
An easy, self-guided trail showing glacial effects upon the landscape. Length: 1/4 mile loop. Time: 20 minutes. Elevation gain: 25 ft.

15. Portage Glacier Lodge
Privately owned gift shop and restaurant operated year around under special use permit from the Forest Service. For more information, please call (907) 783-3117.

If you plan on fishing, be sure to check the Alaska Department of Fish and Game’s fishing regulations before you go.

BEGICH, BOGGS VISITOR CENTER HOURS

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Summer hours begin on Memorial Day weekend and run through the end of September. Winter hours are subject to change due to weather closures. Call (907) 783-2326 (Begich, Boggs Visitor Center) or (907) 783-2342 (Glacier Ranger District) for the current hours of operation.
Portage Glacier is a terminal (end) moraine that was deposited by Portage Glacier. A terminal moraine is formed at the end of a glacier, creating steep-walled, flat-bottomed (or U-shaped) valleys like those you see in Portage Valley. Rocks embedded along the sides and bottom of the glacier create U-shaped valleys like Portage and Burns Glaciers over the last century. The blue colors show the current position of Portage Lake and the main stream of Portage Glacier. Did you know?

- Before Portage and Burns Glaciers began their latest retreat, early traders, miners, and indigenous peoples traveled across these glaciers using them as a ‘portage’ between Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet. Today, the railroad and tunnel to Whittier provide the most transportation link for people.
- Due to its location, Portage Valley is host to a variety of wild weather situations. As clouds rise over the Chugach and Kenai mountains they drop lots of rain and snow on the relatively flat valley floor. Some of the worst winter storms in recent history have occurred in Portage Valley. Portage Pass is a narrow land bridge between Prince William Sound and Turnagain Arm. As the air pressure between the two areas equalizes, extremely high winds can be created. These winds have snapped 50 foot flagpoles like twigs, peeled away asphalt, and lifted boxcars from the railroad tracks.

**Wildlife**

- These animals live in Portage Valley. Which have you seen?
- You may encounter a variety of wildlife while you enjoy Portage Valley. Keep in mind that help is far away! Avoid dangerous situations by having the proper equipment and experience necessary to tackle the adventure you have planned.

**Play It Safe And Enjoy Your Stay**

- Stay off the lake ice in winter. Periods of freezing and thawing throughout the winter make the ice very unstable.
- Avalanche danger exists in Portage Valley even in the summer months. Be aware of your surroundings and know how to evaluate conditions.
- Don’t approach wildlife! Make noise when hiking, maintain a safe distance, and learn how to handle an encounter with a wild animal.

- Wildlife can be seen anywhere, at anytime, but remember most species aren’t going to be active during your schedule to fit theirs.
- Keep your pets under control— it’s best to leave them at home or in your vehicle.
- Use binoculars, spotting scopes, and telephoto lenses for the best views.
- Don’t approach wildlife! Make noise when hiking, maintain a safe distance, and learn how to handle an encounter with a wild animal.
- Keep your pets under control— it’s best to leave them at home or in your vehicle.

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- If you see a wild animal, keep your distance and try not to approach it.
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