# CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST

## VISITOR GUIDE







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# Welcome to the Chugach National Forest

## A breathtaking landscape in the heart of southcentral Alaska.

The Chugach is the backyard for more than half of Alaska's residents and is a coveted destination for hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

The most northerly and westerly forest in the National Forest System, the 5.4 million-acre Chugach National Forest is composed of three distinct landscapes and compares in size to the state of New Hampshire. The Forest is home to many of Alaska's Native peoples, including Ahtna, Chugach, Dena'ina, and Eyak.

Chugach National Forest hosts more than half a million visitors each year. Visitors explore the 3,500 miles of shoreline in Prince William Sound, the glacier-studded Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area, the Kenai Peninsula's 175-miles of the Iditarod National Historic Trail-Southern Trek, or the Copper River Delta, the largest contiguous wetlands complex on America's Pacific coast and a spring migration stopover for millions of shorebirds.

While portions of Alaska are often considered remote, the Chugach is accessible through multiple routes. More than 500 miles of trails, 40 cabins, and 16 campgrounds provide plenty of opportunities to explore, making it a popular destination for those wanting to leave the bustle of the city behind.

During the summer, our two visitor facilities – Begich, Boggs Visitor Center and Crooked Creek Information Site – showcase the cultural and natural history of the Forest. When the facilities are open, Forest Service staff lead guided hikes, discuss natural history aboard the MV Ptarmigan on Portage Lake, and point out areas of interest on Alaska Railroad trips to the popular Spencer and Grandview Whistle Stops.

Spectacular fishing draws Alaskans and tourists to the Forest, where all five species of Pacific salmon can be caught in its pristine waters. The Forest's 48,000 acres of lakes and 1,800 miles of streams produce 66 million salmon a year or 11% of Pacific salmon production.

The Forest issues approximately 250 permits annually for activities such as guided summer and winter recreation, fishing, hunting, flightseeing, boat charters, rafting and kayaking, bird watching, scenic tours, and wildlife viewing. We urge you to take advantage of the nearly 120 permitted outfitters and guides to further your connection and experiences on the forest.

This visitor guide is an overview of opportunities and facilities available on the Chugach National Forest. Enjoy exploring your National Forest.

Jeff Schramm
Forest Supervisor, Chugach National Forest
Alaska Region

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Spencer Glacier & owl photos by Ralph Radford. Kenai Lake photo by Annette Heckart.
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# Get Out and Explore!

There's something for everyone on the Chugach National Forest. From the Kenai Peninsula to Prince William Sound, to the eastern shores of the Copper River Delta, the Forest is full of special places. Whether you have an hour or several days there are options galore for exploring. Here are just a few to get started.

## IF YOU HAVE A COUPLE OF HOURS:

### KENAI PENINSULA

**Visit the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center & Portage Valley**

- An hour's drive south of Anchorage
- Engaging exhibits and 20 minute film
- View salmon spawning at Williwaw Fish Viewing Platform
- Try your hand at the Agents of Discovery Portage Valley Mission

### PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

**Go Flightseeing**

- Experience the vast bounty of the Sound
- See magnificent glaciers sculpt the landscape
- Breathtaking scenery

### COPPER RIVER DELTA

**Hike the Eyak River Trail**

- 2.9 mile trail begins along the Eyak River
- A wonderful variety of forest landscapes
- Popular access site for anglers during the coho salmon runs

## IF YOU HAVE A COUPLE OF DAYS:

### KENAI PENINSULA

**Hike the Resurrection Pass Trail**

- Designated a National Recreation Trail
- 38 mile trail with eight rental cabins and camping spots along the route
- Varied terrain from thick forest to alpine meadows

### PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

**Take a Kayak Trip in Prince William Sound**

- Practice your kayaking skills
- Observe busy bird rookeries
- View sea life up close

### COPPER RIVER DELTA

**Take in a Festival**

- Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival
- Copper River Salmon Jam
- Cordova Fungus Festival



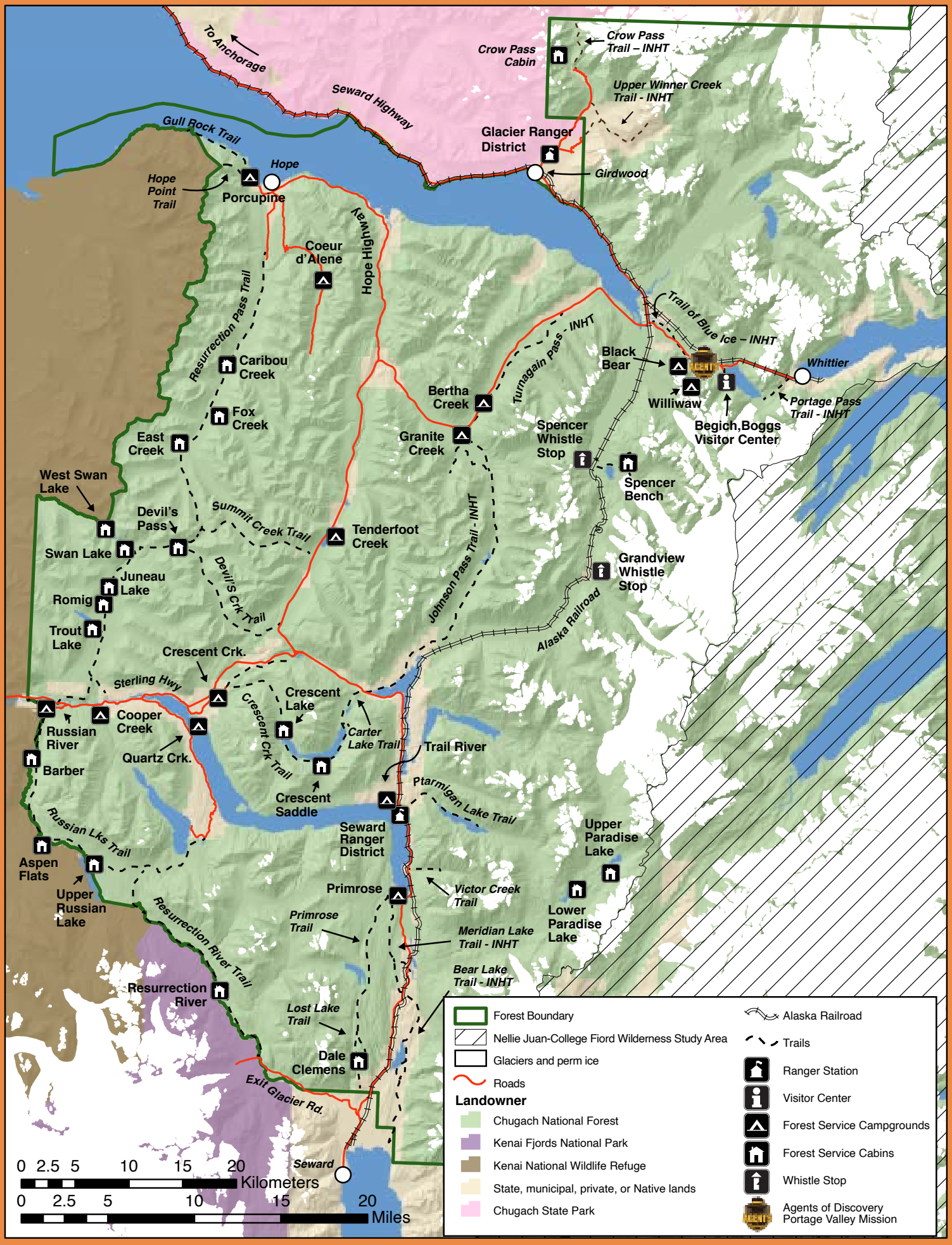

No permits are required for non-commercial use of Forest trails or backcountry camping.

## RESPONSIBLE RECREATION

The Chugach National Forest encourages the use and enjoyment of your public lands. Please recreate responsibly and preserve our National Forests for future generations.

This Visitor Guide offers ideas on where to go and what to do on the Chugach National Forest, making your visit safe and enjoyable.

More information can be found at: www.fs.usda.gov/visit/know-before-you-go/responsible-recreation


To Anchorage
Seward Highway
Crow Pass Cabin
Crow Pass Trail – INHT
Upper Winner Creek Trail - INHT
Glacier Ranger District
Girdwood
Gull Rock Trail
Hope
Hope Point Trail
Porcupine
Hope Highway
Coeur d'Alene
Resurrection Pass Trail
Caribou Creek
Fox Creek
East Creek
West Swan Lake
Devil's Pass
Summit Creek Trail
Swan Lake
Juneau Lake
Romig
Trout Lake
Devil's Crk Trail
Tenderfoot Creek
Crescent Crk.
Sterling Hwy
Cooper Creek
Russian River
Quartz Crk.
Barber
Crescent Lake
Crescent Crk Trail
Carter Lake Trail
Crescent Saddle
Trail River
Ptarmigan Lake Trail
Seward Ranger District
Russian Lks Trail
Aspen Flats
Upper Russian Lake
Resurrection River Trail
Resurrection River
Primrose
Primrose Trail
Victor Creek Trail
Meridian Lake Trail - INHT
Bear Lake Trail - INHT
Lost Lake Trail
Dale Clemens
Exit Glacier Rd.
Seward
Bertha Creek
Granite Creek
Turnagain Pass - INHT
Johnson Pass Trail - INHT
Alaska Railroad
Trail of Blue Ice – INHT
Black Bear
Whittier
Williwaw
Begich,Boggs Visitor Center
Portage Pass Trail - INHT
Spencer Whistle Stop
Spencer Bench
Grandview Whistle Stop
Upper Paradise Lake
Lower Paradise Lake
0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Kilometers
0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles
Forest Boundary
Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area
Glaciers and perm ice
Roads
Landowner
Chugach National Forest
Kenai Fjords National Park
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
State, municipal, private, or Native lands
Chugach State Park
Alaska Railroad
Trails
Ranger Station
Visitor Center
Forest Service Campgrounds
Forest Service Cabins
Whistle Stop
Agents of Discovery Portage Valley Mission



# Eastern Kenai Peninsula

The Eastern Kenai Peninsula in the Chugach National Forest is best known for its ease of access and spectacular recreational opportunities. Its forested lands, mountains, and rivers begin just 45 minutes south of Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska, via the scenic Seward Highway. The Peninsula is a place of almost unlimited possibilities. It boasts hundreds of miles of maintained trails and the numerous creeks and rivers offer great opportunities to reel in "the big one." The Eastern Kenai Peninsula truly holds some of the Forest's most accessible treasures.

## CAMPING

Numerous camping opportunities exist all along the Seward Highway, a nationally designated All-American Road. A popular campground for large groups, Trail River, is strategically located south of Moose Pass. It can accommodate modern recreational vehicles and has a day use area along the scenic shore of Kenai Lake. A group site, available by reservation, has a volleyball area, horseshoe area, covered pavilion with fire grates, and playground equipment.

## CHUGACH WHISTLE STOP

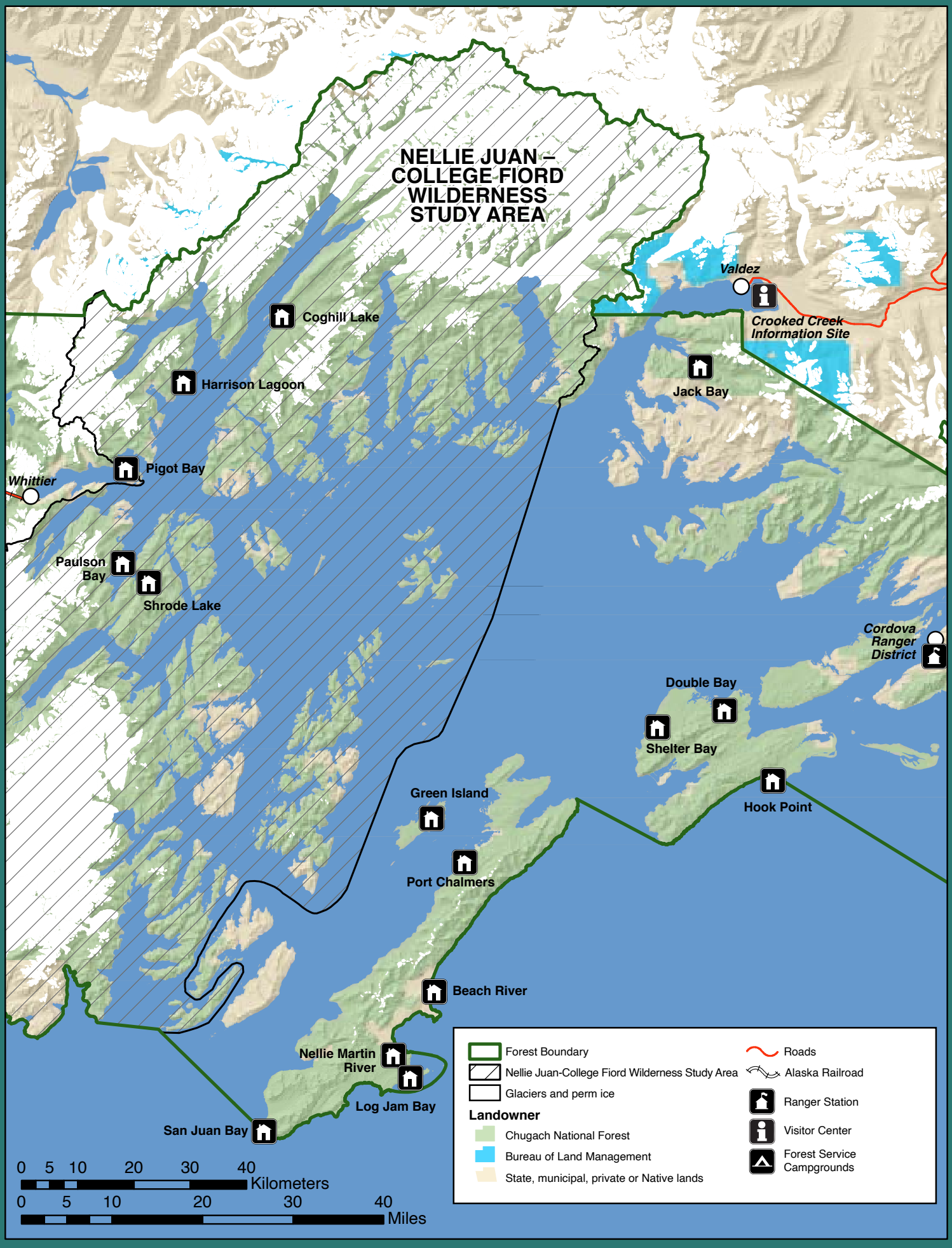
Through the Chugach Whistle Stop partnership between the Chugach National Forest and the Alaska Railroad Corporation visitors have a distinctive travel and recreation experience found nowhere else in the United States. The Glacier Discovery Train takes you into the backcountry of the Forest to Spencer and Grandview Whistle Stops. At Spencer a trail leads to a spectacular view of Spencer Glacier. For those looking to overnight, camping options include a group campsite, dispersed camping outside the developed recreation area, and the Spencer Bench Cabin. (Reservations required for group site and cabin.) At Grandview there is a short interpretive trail where passengers can stretch their legs before boarding the train to return to Portage and Anchorage. So climb aboard and experience the Chugach National Forest backcountry.




DON'T MISS...

## IDITAROD NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL — *SOUTHERN TREK*

The Chugach National Forest and partners are working to restore and develop more than 180 miles of the Southern Trek of the Iditarod National Historic Trail (INHT), connecting the communities of Seward, Moose Pass, Whittier and Girdwood. The trail represents a national heritage, recreation, and education resource that inspires and draws Iditarod enthusiasts, history buffs, students, and outdoor adventurers from around the world. Located less than an hour from Anchorage, the Southern Trek provides year-round opportunities to experience the spirit of the historic Iditarod.


NELLIE JUAN – COLLEGE FIORD WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
Valdez
Crooked Creek Information Site
Coghill Lake
Harrison Lagoon
Jack Bay
Pigot Bay
Whittier
Paulson Bay
Shrode Lake
Cordova Ranger District
Double Bay
Shelter Bay
Hook Point
Green Island
Port Chalmers
Beach River
Nellie Martin River
Log Jam Bay
San Juan Bay
0 5 10 20 30 40
Kilometers
0 5 10 20 30 40
Miles
Forest Boundary
Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area
Glaciers and perm ice
Landowner
Chugach National Forest
Bureau of Land Management
State, municipal, private or Native lands
Roads
Alaska Railroad
Ranger Station
Visitor Center
Forest Service Campgrounds



# Prince William Sound

The forest meets the sea in Prince William Sound, where lush rainforest borders 3,500 miles of intricate coastline. Visitors in a variety of watercraft and floatplanes explore the sparkling waters and nearly three million acres of forest. A day cruise or flightseeing trip are excellent ways to see the vast area and wildlife of the Sound. Hundreds of glaciers spill from high peaks, some flowing all the way to the ocean and calving into remote fiords. Retreating ice provides a glimpse of the area's unique geology and post-glacial reforestation.

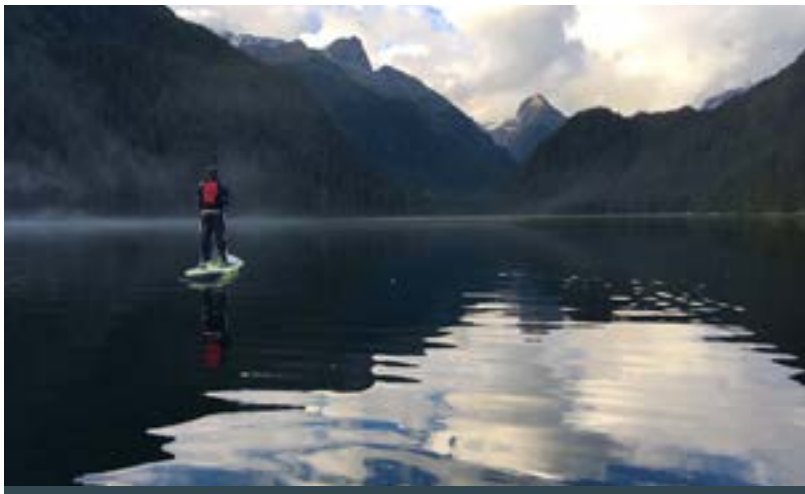
## EXPLORING THE WSA

In 1980, Congress designated roughly two million acres along western Prince William Sound as the Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area (WSA). This recognized the area's exceptional beauty and remoteness and its possible future designation as federal Wilderness. The Forest Service maintains the area's presently existing character to provide the public outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and inspiration in an undeveloped setting. Fishing, hunting, hiking, kayaking, skiing, camping, birding, and many other non-motorized activities are encouraged. The WSA only pertains to National Forest System Lands and does not affect uses on marine waters.

## RECREATING IN THE SOUND

Unplug from daily life! Enjoy kayaking, boating, glacier and marine life viewing. Established trails are few but the hiking is beautiful and short treks reach alpine areas and great views. For overnight stays, spend days exploring the alpine slopes, berry-picking, fishing, hunting, or skiing in winter, and evenings at a beach campsite. Always practice Leave No Trace principles (visit lnt.org), and follow restrictions if you are in the WSA.

Permits are not required for non-commercial camping and all campsites are primitive. Contain camping activities to beach gravel surfaces, clean up bits of garbage, dismantle fire rings, and replace moved rocks or materials. Four campsites in Blackstone Bay and Culross Passage provide durable gravel camping surfaces. Bear cans are available at the Glacier Ranger District.

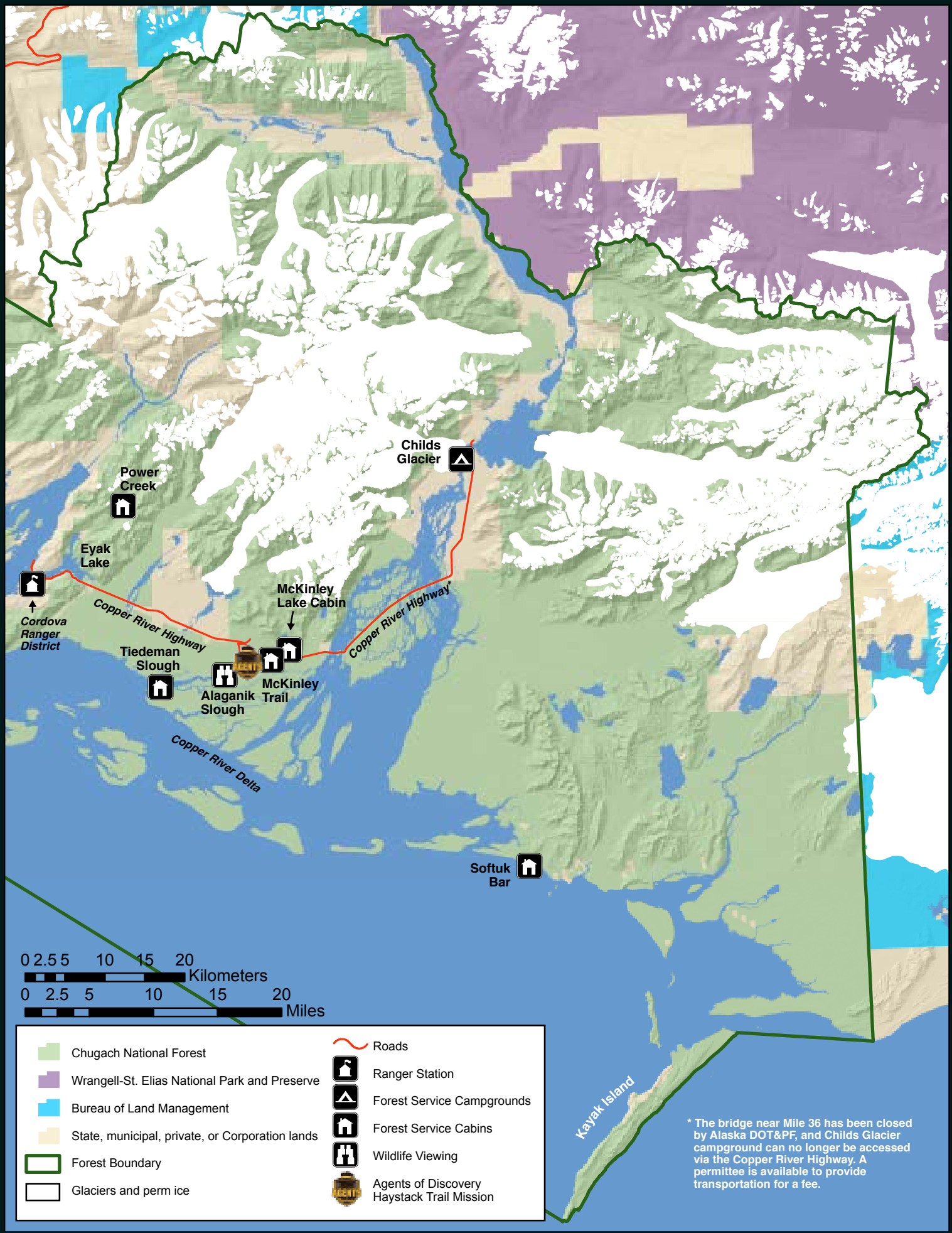


DON'T MISS...

### A TRIP TO PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

Enjoy viewing busy bird rookeries, sea life, and breathtaking scenery. Plan a multiple day trip to access remote campsites and cabins around the Sound.

Be prepared! Help can be hours away. Review tide, bear, and water safety information before heading out, as communications may be non-existent. If you're not comfortable heading out on your own, check out local tour operators providing guided adventures in the Sound.


Childs Glacier
Power Creek
Eyak Lake
Cordova Ranger District
Copper River Highway
McKinley Lake Cabin
Copper River Highway*
Tiedeman Slough
Alaganik Slough
McKinley Trail
Copper River Delta
Softuk Bar
Kayak Island
0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Kilometers
0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles
Chugach National Forest
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve
Bureau of Land Management
State, municipal, private, or Corporation lands
Forest Boundary
Glaciers and perm ice
Roads
Ranger Station
Forest Service Campgrounds
Forest Service Cabins
Wildlife Viewing
Agents of Discovery Haystack Trail Mission
* The bridge near Mile 36 has been closed by Alaska DOT&PF, and Childs Glacier campground can no longer be accessed via the Copper River Highway. A permittee is available to provide transportation for a fee.



# Copper River Delta

The 700,000 acre Copper River Delta is the largest contiguous wetlands along the Pacific coast of North America, named for abundant copper deposits which have drawn people to the river's edge for centuries. Woven from six glacial river systems, the Delta is renowned for its vast wetland habitats, mountains, and glaciers—with Miles and Childs Glaciers calving directly into the Copper River. Unconnected by roads, you must take a boat, ferry, or plane to Cordova in order to access the Delta.

The Delta is managed for the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats. Bear, moose, bald eagles, and mountain goats are frequently sighted, making wildlife viewing very popular. More than two million salmon spawn in the river each year, traveling almost 300 miles to return to spawning grounds. The high concentration of omega-3 fatty acids required for the journey make these fish a favorite of cooks and chefs the world over.



## BIRDING

The Delta is for the birds — literally. Swans, geese, ducks, shorebirds, and Bald Eagles are all temporary or permanent inhabitants of the area. Birds flock here to take advantage of lands set aside as nesting grounds and to refuel and rest on their way through the North American flyway. The Delta is an integral part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, which brings together organizations to recognize and protect critical shorebird habitat.

## ALAGANIK SLOUGH

Alaganik Slough is a unique wildflower viewing area situated on the expansive Copper River Delta. The three mile long road accessing Alaganik Slough from the Copper River Highway winds through species-rich wetlands and ponds supporting both aquatic and terrestrial plants. At the end of the road you will find a developed site including a 900-foot accessible boardwalk with a covered viewing platform. The best time to catch wildflowers in bloom is June – July. Alaganik Slough also has fishing for Dolly Vardon, coho salmon and hooligan from spring to fall.



DON'T MISS...

## COPPER RIVER DELTA SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL

The most inviting small town in Alaska just may be Cordova, a fishing community and birder's paradise. The first weekend in May, the community welcomes millions of shorebirds to the Copper River Delta. Community events, workshops, and educational opportunities are offered throughout the week. Travel to Cordova by air from Anchorage or by ferry from Whittier or Valdez. More information is available from the Cordova Chamber of Commerce (cordovachamber.com)


Dale Clemens Cabin

# Cabins in the Chugach

A stay in one of the Forest's 40 primitive (no electricity or running water) cabins can be a great way to explore the backcountry and have shelter from the elements. The cabins are located in a variety of landscapes across the Forest. Cabins along lakes and streams may have rowboat and oars providing a great way to extend your exploration or access a fishing spot. McKinley Trail cabin in Cordova is the only drive-up cabin on the Forest.

| | |
|---|---|
| **COST:** | $50-$100 a night. |
| **STAY LIMIT:** | 3-7 nights summer; 7 nights winter. |
| **GET THERE:** | Hike, paddle, charter a plane or boat. |
| **HEAT:** | Woodstove and/or oil stove. Know before you go: some cabins require you to bring your own fuel. |
| **BRING:** | Sleeping bags and pads, cook stove and gear, first aid, water, food, insect repellent, extra food, and clothing. |
| **EMERGENCY:** | There are no phones or radios. Cell phone coverage is not guaranteed. Be prepared. |

## RESERVATIONS

Cabins are rented at recreation.gov or (877) 444-6777 and can be reserved up to 180 days in advance.

To reserve the Spencer Bench Cabin for summer dates, call the Alaska Railroad at (800) 544-0552.

## CABIN HIGHLIGHTS

### TROUT LAKE CABIN

This large, rustic cabin sits on the eastern shore of Trout Lake, just 7.8 miles off the Sterling Highway, the first of a series of cabins on the 38-mile Resurrection Pass Trail South. It is a nice-first night stay if you are hiking the entire trail or a good home base for exploring or hunting and fishing (in season). Surrounded by willow, spruce, and birch trees and open brushy areas, there are great views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. The cabin sleeps seven and has a rowboat for puttering around the lake. The cabin is heated by wood stove. It can be reached by floatplane or trail.

### PIGOT BAY CABIN

Tucked away in Prince William Sound, this A-frame cabin sits on a dense evergreen forested bluff overlooking Pigot Bay. Accessible only by float plane or boat, there is a steep staircase from beach to cabin. Hiking is limited, but a kayak can expand your explorations into the Bay and surrounding waters. Wildlife is commonly sighted and pink salmon fishing is possible in late July – early August. Supplement your camp meal with abundant blueberries and raspberries from the area. The cabin is heated with a kerosene stove and visitors need to provide their own fuel.

### SOFTUK BAR CABIN

Located 45 miles southeast of Cordova on the Gulf of Alaska, this remote cabin sleeps six and is a scenic setting for hunting, birding, clamming, berry picking, and wildlife viewing. The sandy beach adjacent to the cabin is a great place for beachcombing in the springtime. Access to this site is a 25-minute flight from Cordova by wheel plane. The cabin is surrounded by alder and spruce forest and glacier capped peaks. Softuk Bar Cabin has both wood and kerosene stoves for heat; visitors need to provide their own fuel.


Pigot Bay Cabin

# Camping in the Chugach

## CAMPGROUNDS

Campgrounds are generally open from mid-May through mid-September, with stays limited to 14 days except for the Russian River Campground (3-day limit June 10 – August 20). Most campgrounds have a few sites for large RVs. Quartz Creek and Williwaw are able to handle 60-foot RVs. Back-country camping is permitted but limited to 14 days in one area. There are no water or electrical hookups.

Campgrounds on the Kenai Peninsula and Portage/Turnagain Pass area are operated by Alaska Recreation Management under permit from the Forest Service. Coeur D'Alene and Childs Glacier Campground are operated by the Forest Service.

## CAMPGROUND REGULATIONS

**STORE ALL FOODS**, beverages, garbage, pet food, and cooking or food storage equipment in a vehicle, food locker, or camper.

**FIRES** are allowed only in established grates. Cutting live vegetation or standing deadwood is prohibited.

**PETS** must be on a leash at all times. Please dispose of feces in garbage cans. Secure pet food inside a vehicle.

**DO NOT FEED** any wild animal, even birds.

## RESERVATIONS

For campground reservations call (877) 444-6777 or recreation.gov.
Fees range from free for remote sites to $30 depending on campground, and $150 for a large group site.

Some campgrounds on the Kenai Peninsula may be closed to the public periodically during the summer to allow for beetle mitigation efforts. Closures will be posted on-site and at www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/chugach/recreation

| Campground Location | # Sites |
|---|---|
| **KENAI PENINSULA** | |
| Coeur d' Alene | 4 |
| Cooper Creek | 26 |
| Crescent Creek | 9 |
| Porcupine | 34 |
| Primrose | 8 |
| Ptarmigan Creek | 16 |
| Quartz Creek | 45 |
| Russian River | 83 |
| Tenderfoot Creek | 35 |
| Trail River | 91 |
| **PORTAGE/TURNAGAIN PASS** | |
| Bertha | 12 |
| Black Bear | 12 |
| Granite Creek | 19 |
| Williwaw | 60 |
| **COPPER RIVER DELTA** | |

Childs Glacier's 11 campsites cannot be accessed via the Copper River Highway due to a bridge closure. Contact the Cordova Chamber of Commerce or Cordova Ranger District for details.

Established camping sites are provided for no fee at Alaganik Slough Recreation Area (4 gravel tent pads) and One-Eyed Pond/18 Mile Recreation Sites (3 gravel tent pads and 3 walk-in tent platforms).



# FIRE SAFETY

- Keep campfires small.
- Build campfires away from overhanging branches, steep slopes, and flammable materials.
- Pile extra firewood away from the fire.
- Keep plenty of water and a shovel on hand.
- Be sure any used matches are out.
- Never leave campfires unattended.
- Extinguish fires completely.
- Never bury a fire, the fire could smolder and catch roots on fire.
- Fires in Prince William Sound should be built below the high tide zone.
- If you see a fire burning out of control call 911.


Trail of Blue Ice

# Trail Guide

## Hiking Highlights

### HOPE POINT TRAIL

The Hope Point Trail has great views of Resurrection Creek Valley, Turnagain Arm, Cook Inlet, Fire Island and the Chugach Mountains. This trail makes a great day hike and adventurous hikers can head off-trail out to other summits in the Kenai Mountains for overnight hikes. The first mile is relatively easy, but quickly increases in difficulty.

### HENEY RIDGE TRAIL

This local favorite is a mere five miles outside the town of Cordova. As you make your way through old-growth forest with massive moss-covered Sitka spruce, you cross the oldest split log bridge in the area and begin to ascend along a series of switch-backs. Views from the switchbacks tantalize you as they come in and out of focus. Two and a half miles later you are rewarded by views of Orca Inlet to the east. If you are still feeling strong, continue another 1.5 miles for a knockout view of the Gulf of Alaska and Kayak Island.

### TRAIL OF BLUE ICE

A walk in the woods that is fun for the whole family is waiting for you in Portage Valley. The wide trail allows for side-by-side strolling and has accessible, smooth surface gravel, pavement, or wood decking. The views are spectacular as you walk along the creek and through the glacial valley. Hike or bike round-trip from Williwaw Fish Viewing Platform to Moose Flats or customize your trip with a 3-mile loop that begins and ends at Portage Lake. The trail is always open, but check-in at the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center for a map of the area and suggestions on customizing your walk.

For more trail, cabin and camping information visit fs.usda.gov/chugach

| KENAI PENINSULA TRAILS | |
|---|---|
| Carter Lake | 3.4 |
| Crescent Creek | 6.2 |
| Crescent Lake Trail | 8.1 |
| Devil's Creek | 10.0 |
| Falls Creek | 3.9 |
| Grayling Lake Trail | 1.5 |
| Gull Rock | 5.7 |
| Bear Lake – INHT | 7.5 |
| Meridian Lakes – INHT | 8.3 |
| Johnson Pass – INHT | 23.0 |
| Lost Lake – INHT | 7.3 |
| Primrose – INHT | 7.5 |
| Ptarmigan Creek – INHT | 3.5 |
| Ptarmigan Lake | 3.6 |
| Rainbow Lake | 0.3 |
| Resurrection Pass | 39 |
| Resurrection River | 16.3 |
| Russian Lakes | 21.8 |
| Victor Creek – INHT | 2.3 |
| **WHISTLE STOP TRAILS** | |
| Grandview Vista | 0.2 |
| Spencer Viewpoint | 1.3 |
| Spencer Glacier | 3.0 |
| Spencer Bench Cabin | 5.4 |
| **GIRDWOOD/PORTAGE TRAILS** | |
| Byron Glacier | 0.9 |
| Crow Pass – INHT | 4.0 |
| Gary Williams Moraine | 0.2 |
| Portage Pass – INHT | 2.0 |
| Trail of Blue Ice – INHT | 5.0 |
| Upper Winner Creek – INHT | 9.0 |
| Williwaw Nature | 1.3 |
| Winner Creek – INHT | 3.5 |
| **COPPER RIVER DELTA TRAILS** | |
| Alaganik Boardwalk | 0.2 |
| Alaganik Slough | 0.4 |
| Alice Smith Intertie | 6.6 |
| Copper River | 1.2 |
| Crater Lake | 2.4 |
| Eyak River | 2.2 |
| Haystack Loop | 1.5 |
| Heney Ridge | 4.1 |
| Lake Elsner | 6.0 |
| McKinley Lake | 2.4 |
| Muskeg Meander | 3.0 |
| Pipeline Lakes | 1.8 |
| Power Creek | 4.2 |
| Saddlebag Glacier | 3.1 |
| Sheridan Mountain | 2.9 |

Mileage provided are one-way distances.
INHT – Iditarod National Historic Trail

# Watchable Wildlife

Although it might seem as if you are alone in the backcountry, careful attention to your surroundings may reveal that you have more company than you thought. While wildlife can be found anywhere on the Forest, the following sites are well-known favorites of wildlife and depending on the season can be a reliable source of rich wildlife viewing.



## EASTERN KENAI

### TERN LAKE

Located at the intersection of the Seward and Sterling highways at Milepost 37. This area hosts a myriad of animals, birds, and fish. Common loons, bald eagles, and Arctic terns share the area with a variety of songbirds and shorebirds. Beavers, river otters, muskrats, and salmon ply the cold, clear waters of Tern Lake. Moose, Dall sheep, and mountain goats can be seen on the surrounding mountains.
**Best viewing:** spring/summer/fall

### MOOSE FLATS DAY-USE SITE

Located at Mile 1.0 on the Portage Highway. This site has a short boardwalk trail along several ponds. It is a good site to observe nesting waterfowl. Moose are also frequent visitors to the area and the boardwalk makes a nice observation post.
**Best viewing:** spring/summer/fall

### WILLIWAW FISH VIEWING PLATFORM

Located at Mile 4 of the Portage Highway. Spawning sockeye, chum, and coho salmon arrive in late July and remain throughout early fall. Visitors may also see a variety of local songbirds, bald eagles, and black and brown bears.
**Best viewing:** spring/summer/fall

## PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

### CROOKED CREEK INFORMATION SITE

Located on the outskirts of Valdez at Mile 0.5 of the Richardson Highway. Pink and chum salmon return to this clear water stream each summer to spawn. Occasionally, black bears can be observed feasting on returning fish. You can view the on-line "Fish Cam" from the comfort of your home in season.
**Best viewing:** summer/fall

## COPPER RIVER DELTA

### HARTNEY BAY

Located at the end of Whitshed Road, approximately 5 miles south of Cordova. From mid-April to mid-May, visitors have the opportunity to view whirling flocks of shorebirds as they rest and refuel on their long journey northward. The rest of the year brings a wide variety of songbirds and marine mammals. In late summer, pink and chum salmon return to spawn.
**Best viewing:** spring/fall.

### ALAGANIK SLOUGH

Located at Mile 17 of the Copper River Highway. An accessible boardwalk leads visitors to stunning views of both the expansive wetlands of the Copper River Delta and the surrounding mountains. A wide variety of wetland animals including trumpeter swans, moose, brown bear, and shorebirds can be seen in the area.
**Best viewing:** spring/fall



# VIEWING SAFETY



## KEEP YOUR DISTANCE
If an animal alters its behavior because of your presence, you are too close. Use binoculars and telephoto lenses to observe animals.

## RESPECT THE ANIMALS
Animals often respond to repeated interference by abandoning homes, nesting sites, and even their young.

## NEVER FEED WILDLIFE
Animals that become accustomed to human food become problem animals that need to be removed from the area. Don't leave backpacks, trash, or food where an animal might find it.

## DRIVE SAFELY
When you see wildlife, stop to view it from a safe pullout, not the roadway. Do not follow animals at a close distance in your vehicle. Be alert for animals crossing the road, especially at dawn, dusk, and night.

# FISHING IN BEAR COUNTRY

## PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE
- Be knowledgeable about bear behavior.
- Avoid fishing during low light conditions or in decreased visibility.

## STAY ALERT WHILE FISHING
- Keep stringers and belongings with you at all times.
- Splashing fish attract bears. If a bear is close enough to notice splashing—stop fishing.
- Do not let a bear get a hooked fish. Cut the line.

## HANDLE YOUR CATCH PROPERLY
- Bleed your fish into the water immediately.
- Pack out fish and process at a fish cleaning station. follow instructions posted at the fish cleaning station.
- Procedures for handling your catch differ for the Russian River.
    - ALL possessions must be within 3 feet of you, all retained fish within 12 feet of you.
    - Do not clean fish on the river beyond a gut and gill.
    - Take fish out whole to clean and dispose of the waste responsibly elsewhere.
    - Pick up more information at the entrance station at the Russian River Campground.

# DON'T HAVE A BAD BEAR DAY!

Most people relish the opportunity to catch sight of a bear during their visit. Make sure any bear sightings are pleasant. **BE BEAR AWARE!**

**WATCH FOR SIGNS** of bears such as tracks and scat.

**MAKE NOISE** to avoid surprising bears in the area.

**TRAVEL IN GROUPS.** Groups are noisier and easier for bears to detect and avoid.

**NEVER APPROACH** a bear. This aggressive behavior on your part forces a bear to react. Harassing bears is illegal and dangerous.

**CONSIDER LEAVING** dogs at home, or keep them on a leash.

**STORE FOOD,** trash, and personal hygiene products in bear-proof lockers or in your vehicle in developed sites. Use a bear-resistant food canister in the backcountry. Never store these items in your tent.

**COOK** and store food at least 100 yards from your tent.

**BEAR SPRAY** has been found to be an effective deterrent in bear country. Become familiar its use before you need it.



## BEGICH, BOGGS VISITOR CENTER

The Begich, Boggs Visitor Center is a world-class facility with interactive exhibits, a classroom and a 200-seat theater showing the film *Retreat and Renewal*. Forest Service interpreters provide programs on the natural and cultural wonders of the Chugach National Forest. Be sure to take a cruise on the MV Ptarmigan for a spectacular view of Portage Glacier.



**HOURS:** May 28 – Sept 5. 9am to 5pm. Call to confirm.
**ACTIVITIES:** Film, exhibits, ranger-led programs, and general forest information
**ADMISSION:** $5.00 for adults [children 15 and younger are free!]
**CONTACT US:** (907) 783-2326



## CROOKED CREEK INFORMATION SITE

The Crooked Creek Information Site near Valdez is perched between Prince William Sound and the forested mainland. The site is a popular place to watch wildlife and spawning salmon. Forest Service interpreters provide information and programs. Interpretive products are available at the bookstore managed in partnership with the Copper River Watershed Project.

**HOURS:** To be determined. Please check our website for the most current information.
**ACTIVITIES:** Viewing platform, exhibits, ranger-led programs, and general forest information
**CONTACT US:** (907) 835-4680

# Backcountry Guide

**BE PREPARED:** Carry extra food, water, insect repellent, a map, compass, pocketknife, waterproof matches, and emergency supplies.

**DON'T** take scented, spiced, or smoked foods with you as they attract bears. Don't drink untreated water. Boil all water or use a filter.

**PACK OUT:** Toilet paper, used sanitary products, and garbage.

**PLAN AHEAD:** Let someone know where you are going and when you will return. Have a backup plan and a flexible schedule.

**TAKE A FRIEND:** Traveling in groups is recommended and reduces risk.

**DRESS PROPERLY:** Synthetic pile or wool fabrics are best. Rain gear is a necessity. Bring a hat and gloves—even in the summer.

**STAY BACK:** Icebergs are unstable and can roll over at any time. Stay away from the face of tidewater glaciers to avoid large, unexpected waves caused by falling ice. Ice caves are also dangerous and can collapse without warning.

# ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS
## (*AND KIDS AT HEART*)!

There are so many cool ways to explore the Chugach National Forest we can't even begin to list them all here! We can, however, share a few of our newest ways to get out and explore!

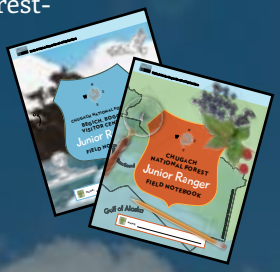
### AGENTS OF DISCOVERY

Have you ever wanted to be a Secret Agent? Well, now's your chance! Download the free *Agents of Discovery* app (available for both Apple & Android) and find the Chugach National Forest mission sites closest to you: Portage Valley and Haystack Trail. In order to play, you'll have to hit the trails to find the challenges and figure out the answers. Don't worry, each mission site has a Secret Agent ready and willing to help you along the way.

Please note that most areas on the forest do not have Wi-Fi, so please download the app and the mission sites before heading out. Wi-Fi is not needed to play the game itself.

### BECOME A JUNIOR RANGER

Check out our Junior Ranger booklets – the forest-wide Chugach National Forest Junior Ranger and the site-specific Begich, Boggs Visitor Center Junior Ranger! Explore your surroundings and use your noggin to answer the challenges. Once complete, bring your booklet to any Chugach National Forest office to become an official Junior Ranger!




### CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST FAMILY FIELD GUIDE

Grab your friends and family and go explore with this fun family field guide! See how many of the common plants and animals of the Chugach National Forest you can find! Who knows, you might just find something new!

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Chugach National Forest**
161 East First Avenue, Door 8
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 743-9500

**Cordova Ranger District**
P.O. Box 280
612 Second Street
Cordova, AK 99574
(907) 424-7661

**Glacier Ranger District**
P.O. Box 129
145 Forest Station Road
Girdwood, AK 99587
(907) 783-3242

**Seward Ranger District**
33599 Ranger Station Spur
(M-23.5) Seward, AK 99664
(907) 288-3178

### VISITOR CENTERS - SUMMER ONLY

**Begich, Boggs Visitor Center**
800 Portage Lake Loop
Portage Valley
(907) 783-2326

**Crooked Creek Information Site**
Mile 0.5 Richardson Highway
Valdez
(907) 835-4680

### OTHER SOUTHCENTRAL CONTACTS

**Alaska Public Lands Information Center**
(907) 644-3661
www.alaskacenters.gov

**Chugach State Park**
(907) 269-8400

**Kenai National Wildlife Refuge**
(907) 262-7021

**Kenai Fjords National Park**
(907) 224-2132

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