

VOICES OF THE WILDERNESS

2026 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE INFORMATION

Sponsored by Alaska Region US Forest Service, National Park Service & US Fish & Wildlife Service

Residencies open to: Art professionals in all media – **visual** (two and three dimensional: photographers, sculptors, painters, etc.), **audio** (musicians, singers, composers), **film** (video/filmmakers), **performance artists**, and **writers** (poets, fiction, essays, storytellers). International artists are welcome to apply.

Residency period: Typically June through August; dates & length of residencies vary.

General Inquiries: grace.corrigan@usda.gov



2012 AIR Susan Watkins painting in Nellie Juan-College Fiord WSA

The *Voices of the Wilderness* artist residency is a unique opportunity. It is modeled after traditional artist residencies...with a twist. Instead of staying at a remote wilderness cabin, our participating artists are paired with a wilderness specialist and actively engaged in stewardship projects, such as research, monitoring, and education. The idea is to give artists a sense of the stewardship behind America's public lands, fostering an artistic exploration of these natural and cultural treasures. The hoped-for result is artwork that communicates something of the meaning of these lands.

Artists in Public Lands

Artists have long contributed to the preservation and interpretation of our public lands. Early examples include George Catlin, Albert Beirstadt, and Thomas Moran, whose nineteenth-century paintings inspired pride in America's wild landscapes and influenced designation of our first parks.

In subsequent generations, artists used song, photograph, poetry and other mediums to celebrate America's public lands. Their work demonstrates that artistic expression plays a vital role in connecting people to the natural world.

Now it's your turn.

Recognizing that today's artists continue to link people to the land, the US Forest Service, National Park Service and US Fish & Wildlife Service are sponsoring *Voices of the Wilderness*, artist-in-residence opportunities hosted in some of Alaska's wildest and most scenic areas.

Your job? It's to be inspired. Experience the wilderness and use your creative energy to bring its voice back to the community.



2012 AIR MK MacNaughton painting in Western Arctic National Parklands

Artist-In-Residence

In the summer of 2026, artists will be invited to participate in our residencies, each opportunity completely different. The purpose is to share with the community artwork that conveys the inspirational and other values of wilderness.

Each artist will be provided the same safety training as other volunteers (may include aviation and boat safety, kayak safety, use of radios and satellite phones, review of Job Hazard Analyses, etc.). The hosting federal agency will provide transportation to and from the field, camping and field gear, and in many cases, food as well.

Travel to and from Alaska is the artist's responsibility. Participants should plan to arrive in Alaska at least one full day prior to a residency to ensure enough time for safety training. Return travel should be planned for a couple days after a residency, as weather sometimes delays the return from the field. Artists are also responsible for their personal gear, including art supplies.



2011 AIR Marybeth Holleman writing in Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror



2013 AIR Sepand Shahab recording sounds in Misty Fjords

As an artist-in-residence, you will experience the wilderness like few others. Traveling alongside a ranger, you might kayak the calm fjords and camp on glacier-carved shores. There will be plenty of time to sit back in your camp chair and absorb the crackling ice bergs and roaring waterfalls. From the water, you might see a bear foraging among intertidal mussels, or seals hauled-out on the ice. On remote beaches, your steps will mingle with the tracks of wolves, bears, birds, maybe even a mink. The wilderness soundscape will embrace you with the screeches of eagles or the songs of whales. Along the way, you'll get a peek at what it's like to care for the land by sharing time with a ranger.

As a volunteer, each artist will assist with some basic ranger duties, which may include boarding a tour boat to provide education, participating in research projects, such as seal counts or climate change studies, walking a beach to remove litter, or other generally light duties. However, an emphasis for the artist will be experiencing the wilderness and exploring how to communicate its inspirational qualities through their artwork.



2024 AIR Claire Giordano painting in Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror

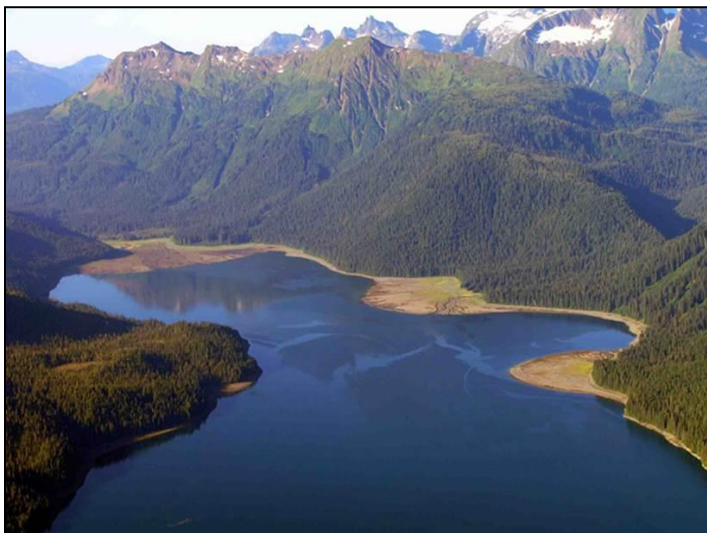
2026 Participating Wilderness Areas:



Kootznoowoo Wilderness Tongass National Forest US Forest Service

The Kootznoowoo Wilderness encompasses the majority of Admiralty Island National Monument near Juneau, Alaska. The indigenous Tlingit of Southeast Alaska know Admiralty Island by the name Kootznoowoo, meaning "Bear Fort" or "Fortress of the Bears".

Kootznoowoo Wilderness is the largest expanse of intact temperate rainforest in the northern hemisphere and is home to one of the densest populations of coastal brown bears and bald eagles in the world. This wilderness area has a rich indigenous history spanning 12,000 years of human presence in the village of Angoon, whose inhabitants rely on the abundance of natural resources found in the lands and waters of the island.



The Artist-in-Residence will be partnered with wilderness rangers at the Pack Creek Bear Viewing Area and surrounding waters of Seymour Canal. The artist will assist with a variety of wilderness stewardship projects which may include wilderness monitoring, bear data collection, marine debris cleanup, trail maintenance, and sharing their artistic experience with visitors to the bear sanctuary. During their time in the field, the artist will stay in a small camping tent or rustic wall tent in the administrative camp on Windfall Island, a short skiff ride or kayak away from Pack Creek Bear Viewing Area.

Artists applying to this residency should be prepared to camp, work, and hike in coastal brown bear habitat with frequent bear encounters. The terrain of this residency includes tidal beaches and old growth forest which is muddy, slippery, and uneven underfoot. Conditions often include extreme levels of rainfall, high wind, and temperatures between 40-60 degrees. Transportation to the wilderness field camp will be by 30ft boat and may include inclement marine weather. Artists will fly into Juneau and depart from the Juneau Ranger District office in Juneau, Alaska.

For questions regarding Kootznoowoo Wilderness and the Voices of the Wilderness program on Admiralty Island National Monument, contact Grace Corrigan: grace.corrigan@usda.gov.



Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area **Chugach National Forest** **US Forest Service**

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. Until Congress determines the next step, the Forest Service is committed to preserving the area's wild character to provide the public outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and inspiration in an undeveloped setting.

Located in south central Alaska on the Chugach National Forest, Prince William Sound is the homeland of Alutiiq, Eyak, and Chugach people, who have lived on and stewarded these lands for thousands of years. The landscape features countless glaciers - the densest concentration of tidewater glaciers in Alaska, some flowing a dozen miles from ice-capped peaks to terminate in cliffs of ice towering hundreds of feet above the water. The history of glaciation is evident everywhere you look, from newly de-glaciated barren hillsides, to ancient moraines just below the water's surface.



Traveling amongst the expansive fiords, you'll look straight up at peaks rising thousands of feet right from the water's edge. Camping alongside the ocean shores you'll be able to follow wildlife tracks, check out glacier ice up close, or take a short hike up to the alpine for an expansive glimpse of the fiords. Diverse wildlife is prevalent in the Sound, including black bears, humpback whales, sea otters, Dall's porpoises, harbor seals and sea lions.

During the residency, artists will be partnered with rangers to participate in various wilderness stewardship duties, which may include marine debris clean-up, trail work, rehabilitation/restoration work, and monitoring projects.

The artist may also be asked to participate in visitor contacts, wilderness character monitoring, and rehabilitation projects, while camping in remote areas of the Sound. The trip will utilize boats for transport, and involve walking remote shorelines on uneven and slippery surfaces. Conditions may be rainy, windy, and cold.

During the residency, there will be plenty of time to experience the solitude and wildness of this place. Artist will fly into Anchorage and depart for the field from the Glacier Ranger District in Girdwood, located approx. 40 miles southeast of Anchorage.

- www.princewilliamsound.org
- US Forest Service: Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area

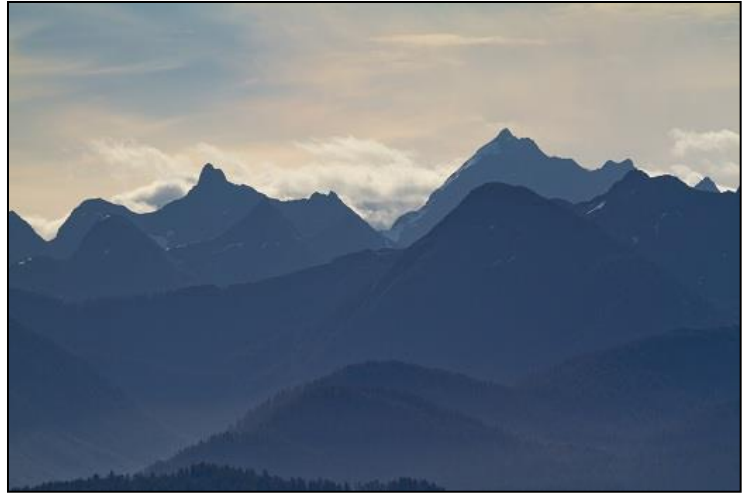
Contact Tim Lydon at the Glacier Ranger District for further questions about Nellie Juan-College Fiord WSA: timothy.lydon1@usda.gov





Sitka Ranger District Wilderness Areas:
South Baranof or West Chichagof-Yakobi Wilderness
Tongass National Forest
US Forest Service

The South Baranof Wilderness Area (319,568 acres) is in the southern portion of Baranof Island (originally named *Sheet'-ká X'áat'l* by the native Tlingit people). Bounded on the west by the Gulf of Alaska, the scenery is stunningly picturesque with granite glacier-scored mountains, long saltwater fiords and hanging lake valleys. On the east side of the wilderness by Chatham Strait, the saltwater coastline is not as rugged and there is a higher snow accumulation over the whole area with over 200 inches of precipitation per year. Permanent snowfields and active glaciers blanket the high country above 2,000 feet, giving way to dense undergrowth in a coastal forest of spruce and hemlock. The wildlife that inhabits this area includes brown bears, Sitka black-tail deer, mink, marten and river otters, as well as eagles and shorebirds. Seals, sea lions, whales, and a large population of sea otters are often seen offshore, and crab, shrimp, herring, salmon and halibut are harvested from the sea.



The West Chichagof–Yakobi Wilderness Area occupies the western portions of Chichagof and Yakobi Islands in the extreme northwest portion of the Alexander Archipelago of Southeast Alaska. The wilderness consists of 265,286 acres of wave-pounded open coastline, remote rivers, forests of old-growth western hemlock and Sitka spruce and uplands of alpine, muskeg, and rare karst cliffs. Sitka black-tailed deer are common here along with brown bears and an abundance of smaller furbearing animals including mink and marten. Migratory waterfowl frequent the more protected bays and inlets in remarkable numbers. Marine mammals include sea otters, Stellar sea lions, and harbor seals.

As an artist-in-residence you will be joining in a unique collaboration between the Sitka Ranger District and the Sitka Conservation Society in monitoring this rarely visited wilderness area. Access will be by floatplane or motorboat. Trips will consist of working from support vessel or basecamp, or by roving monitoring from a sea kayak. Artists should be available for at least a two-week period to allow for adequate weather windows given the area's exposure to the wide-open Pacific Ocean. Artists will depart from Sitka.



- www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3814496.pdf
- www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3814505.pdf
- <https://www.facebook.com/votwsbwildernessartistresidency>
- <http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/bones-tongass-kayaking-west-chichagof-yakobi-wilderness>

Contact Laurent Deviche at the Sitka Ranger District for further questions about the Sitka Ranger District Wilderness area opportunities: (907) 747-4212 or laurent.deviche@usda.gov



Stikine LeConte Wilderness

Tongass National Forest

US Forest Service



In 1980, the United States Congress designated 448,926 acres as the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness. The mighty Stikine River is the lifeline flowing through this wilderness. It is North America's fastest, free flowing navigable river. LeConte Glacier also flows through the wilderness. LeConte is North America's southern most tidewater glacier, depositing icebergs into LeConte Bay. Glaciers have sculpted the granite bedrock into the U-shaped valley of the Stikine River. For centuries that valley has served as a corridor through the Coast Range for wildlife and humans, including native peoples and the rush for gold. The Stikine River valley, with its thick forest and

side sloughs, provides a Wilderness playground for boaters. There are opportunities for tranquil paddling as well as speedy motorboat rides. One moment you may be watching a lone moose or brown bear venturing to the edge of River and the next, meeting a group of fun-loving visitors at Chief Shakes Hot Springs. The wilderness includes the River's estuary with extensive grasslands and delta mudflats as the river reaches the Pacific Ocean. The Stikine-LeConte Wilderness boasts: Kate's Needle at 10,002 ft- the highest peak on the Tongass National Forest; the Stikine Ice fields - the largest ice field on the Tongass National Forest; the world's largest spring concentration of bald eagles (up to 1500); and a major stopover on the Western Flyway with shorebird migration averaging 350,000 birds a day. Stikine has been a major transportation route for centuries, first beginning with Alaskan native inhabitants and later with fur traders and miners. Today the river remains an important transportation route for the United States and Canada. Many outfitters and guides use it for fly-fishing, hunting, and camping but the highest amount of guiding involves high speed jet boating for nature-based sightseeing tours. Commercial fishing industries transport fish for processing and to the market. The river channel is important culturally for subsistence and sport fishing, hunting, and sightseeing. Twelve public use cabins, 16 special-use permitted cabins, a developed hot springs, two hiking trails, and swimming area provide a variety of recreational activities for visitors and the local public along the banks of the river.



An AIR can expect to take a 5-8 day back country trip in between the Stikine River and the LeConte Glacier, traveling by both powered boat and kayak. We will be camping either in a Forest Service cabin (with a wood stove and bed platforms) or in a tent. Camping experience is not necessary, but experience with small craft (kayak) operation is preferred. An AIR will be taking part in a variety of Wilderness stewardship projects, including but not limited to solitude monitoring, campsite inventory, invasive species mapping and management, special use permit monitoring, public outreach and education, and general Wilderness interpretation work. Artist will depart from

Wrangell; once on the island, the Forest Service will be able to provide lodging and transportation.

<https://wilderness.net/visit-wilderness/?ID=579>.

https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3814499.pdf.pdf

Contact Jeremy Padilla at Wrangell Ranger District with questions about the Stikine LeConte Wilderness area opportunities at jeremy.padilla@usda.gov or (907) 874-7515



Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror Wilderness **Tongass National Forest** **US Forest Service**

Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror Wilderness, located 50 miles south of Juneau, is a striking landscape crafted by water, ice, and time. This spectacular Wilderness Area cradles two steep-walled fjords that terminate at three of the most southerly tidewater glaciers in the Northern Hemisphere. Come experience what John Muir called "a wild, unfinished Yosemite," and bear witness to the crescendo of post-glacial succession as old-growth temperate rainforest transitions to the powerful, calving face of a tidewater glacier.

Our stewardship projects here are as various as the characteristics of Wilderness. Artists may assist rangers in monitoring cruise ship emissions, providing shipboard education, treating invasive weeds, recording wildlife, and monitoring solitude and recreation sites.

Each selected artist will accompany a wilderness ranger for approximately eight days. Artists should plan on a trip 10-12 days in Alaska to accommodate training, and trip adjustments due to weather. Artists depart for Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror from Juneau via motorboat. During the field trip, the artist will travel primarily by sea kayak (paddling up to 10-15 miles per day) and will camp in a two-person tent. The climate in Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror Wilderness is often wet and cold, with average summer temperatures hovering in the mid-to-high 50s. As you travel deeper into the fjords and approach glacial termini, temperatures decrease by approximately 5-10 degrees and wind is common.

The selected artist will participate in kayak training in Juneau before departing for the wilderness, and the district will provide all needed kayak and camping gear. Applicants should have backcountry experience and be physically and mentally capable of extended primitive travel and camping in arduous conditions. Prior kayaking experience is beneficial.

- www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3814504.pdf
- <https://www.facebook.com/votwtaftwildernessartistresidency>

For further questions about Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror Wilderness, contact wilderness staff at the Juneau Ranger District: dylan.miller@usda.gov or (907) 789-6224 or Chrissy Post at christine.post@usda.gov

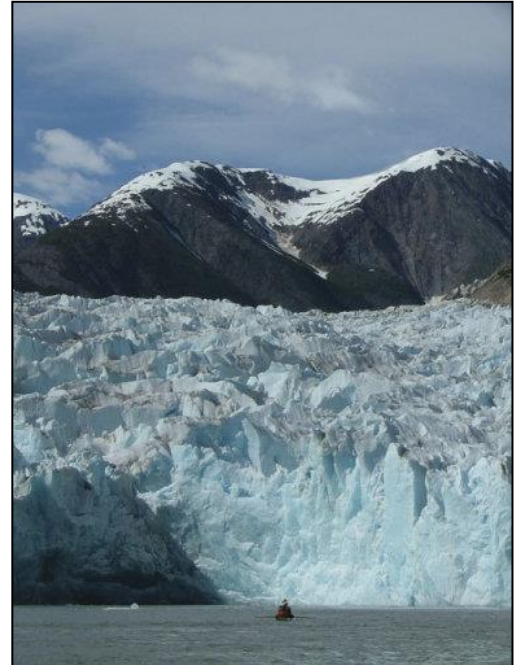


Photo by Irene Owsley, 2012 TAFT AIR

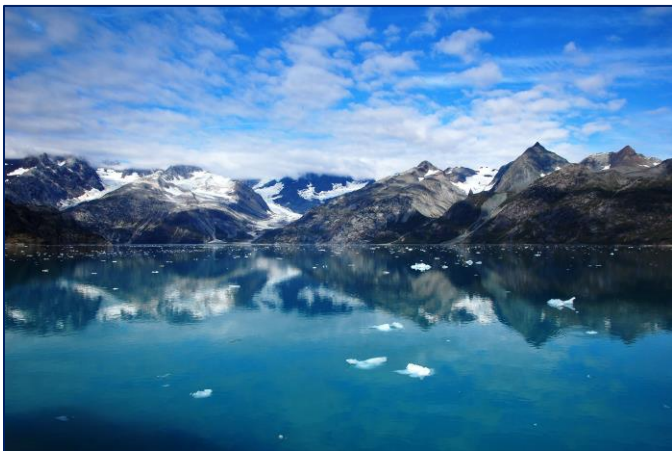


Glacier Bay Wilderness Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve *National Park Service*

Traveling through Glacier Bay today, you pass through areas covered by thousands of feet of ice as recently as 200 years ago. In very few places are the powerful, changing forces of nature more evident than in Glacier Bay. Here we see the full spectrum of pioneer to keystone species emerging from the ice, and a place known as Homeland to the Huna and Yakutat Lingit, who have remained resilient through these changes since time immemorial. Glacier Bay is also a part of the vast Kluane/Wrangell-St. Elias/Glacier Bay/Tatshenshini-Alsek World Heritage Site; together these areas comprise one of the world's largest protected areas. Glaciers, icefields, high latitude, and the diversity of plant and animal life conspire to make this wilderness an ideal, unfragmented living laboratory for scientists and adventurers alike.



3.28-million-acres of Glacier Bay National Park is designated Wilderness.



Surrounded by a spectacular glaciated rim of mountains, Glacier Bay is sheltered by the Fairweather Range to the west and the Saint Elias Mountains on the north. The highest peaks, topped by Mount Fairweather at 15,300 feet, stand almost three miles above the sea and attract intrepid mountaineers. No trails exist; most visitors see the wilderness by boat, and the sea kayaking ranks among the best in the world.

The main bay divides into East and West Arms, which are split into many inlets. The water is dotted with islands, and the paddling goes on and on in eye-aching splendor. Campers share the shorelines with black and brown

bears, moose, bald eagles, among other wildlife. Sightings of humpback whales, sea otters, harbor seals, and sea lions are common.

The selected artist for this residency will spend 1-2 weeks in Glacier Bay, a portion of that in the park's remote wilderness, either via sea kayak or on foot. Remote backcountry experience is preferred.

Artists may receive guidance and support with logistics such as travel planning, gear, or other aspects of their residency, offered with support from our non-profit partner Alaska Geographic. Artists will arrive and depart for the wilderness from the town of Gustavus and the park's headquarters in Bartlett Cove.

Contact Sean Tevebaugh at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve: sean_tevebaugh@nps.gov or 907-697-2653



APPLICATION PROCESS FOR OUR 2026 RESIDENCIES:

How to Apply:

To submit: Applications must be emailed to grace.corrigan@usda.gov; no paper applications will be accepted.

* Include three attachments:

- **2026 application** filled out, *unlocked* PDF format or Word formatted document. All text must be typed.
- **A resume** no more than 2 pages, in either PDF or Word formatted document
- **Six Artistic samples** composed in single PDF or Word formatted document, 5 MB max., six pages maximum (one artistic sample per page). Include caption with a description of each sample.

-For each sample, include descriptions of artwork with title, materials and dimensions of work:

-Visual Artists (i.e., Photographers, Sculptors, Painters, etc.): Six color photos with brief descriptions.

-Writers: Six pages of written examples (prose, short stories, plays or poetry). Samples may include any combination of written work. For instance, your six samples may include: two pages with a poem on each page, two pages taken from one essay excerpt, and one page from another essay excerpt.

-Musicians/Composers: Musicians and composers should include six pages, each with a link to a recording of their work, with accompanying lyrics (or sample of lyrics). Album covers or images may also be submitted in lieu of lyrics. MP3s attachments are not accepted.

-Videographers: If videos are available on-line, please compile a single six-page .doc or .pdf document including URL links on each page, with a brief description of each video (and photo still if possible); video trailers are ideal. If the videos aren't on-line, then submitting six individual video examples is acceptable, as long as the size doesn't exceed 5 MB (emails with large attachments will be rejected).

-Multidiscipline Artists: Send appropriate sample combinations, six color photos with descriptions for each.

* In the 'subject' of the email, **include "VOTW, your last name & your artistic medium, for example, "VOTW: Lydon-Ceramics"**.

• Submit only one application, even if applying to multiple residencies.

• Insufficient materials or incomplete application are causes for rejection, as are an artist's proposed use of a work already in progress as a residency project. **Zip files, Google Documents, Dropbox, etc. will not be considered.**

• Finished artwork and community extensions must be completed and donated within **6 months** of completing your residency.

• The **original artwork** resulting from the residency will be donated to the United States Government, which means that the artist relinquishes publishing and reproduction rights to that work. Prints of original work are not acceptable donations. No Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated work will be accepted.

• Selected artists agree to provide a high resolution, professional quality digital image of their completed artwork to use for publicity and educational purposes.

- Selected artists agree to submit a summary of their community extension and projects/outreach associated as a result of their residency.
- Emailed applications are due by 11:59 PM AK time **March 1, 2026**. Please note that this deadline is strictly enforced; no applications or re-submitted applications, regardless of reason. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application at least a full week prior to the deadline, to receive receipt of confirmation (or – to re-submit an application that requires adjustment).
- Artists will be chosen by mid-April by a panel of professional artists and federal employees. Selections will be based on artistic merit, proposed donations/community extensions, and appropriateness to a stewardship-based wilderness residency. All applicants will be notified of decisions via email. **Unfortunately, we are unable to provide feedback on applications, either before or after being submitted.**
- Please note that due to unforeseen budget constraints in the spring, some residencies may not be offered. If an artist is selected and their residency is cancelled, regardless of the circumstance - artists must re-apply the following year to compete for a VOTW residency (even the same one they were selected for). No “rain checks” will be given.
- Your application is very important to us. If you do not receive a confirmation email stating we’ve received your submission, it may not have been received. Be sure to check your “Sent” box in your email to be sure it was delivered. Please contact Grace Corrigan at grace.corrigan@usda.gov if you don’t receive a confirmation email within a week of submitting your application and supporting documents. If still no response after a 2nd attempt, please follow up by calling (907) 789-6278, as some emails may be blocked or filtered inadvertently.

For more photos and information from our past residencies, visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/votw>

Checklist for 2026 VOTW submission:

Label subject of email: “VOTW_Your Last Name - Your Medium”

*There should be **3 attachments** included in your email to grace.corrigan@usda.gov:*

1. **The filled out 2026 application**
 -Save as “**Application_Your Last Name**”
 -Save as “.pdf or .docx” formatting
2. **Six artistic samples in a single document, 5 MB maximum**
 -One sample per page, not to exceed 6 pages
 -Save as “**Samples_Your Last Name**”
 -Save as “.pdf or .docx” formatting
3. **Resume of no more than two pages, in a single document**
 -Save as “**Resume_Your Last Name**”
 -Save as “.pdf or .docx” formatting

Qualification

Residencies are open to artists of all mediums. Selection will be based on:

- Appropriateness to a stewardship-based wilderness residency
- Proposal for donated artwork and community extension, and willingness to work with the federal agencies to make this program a success
- Artistic merit

- Ability to camp in a remote location and travel by skiff, airplane and sea kayak, and willingness to assist with light ranger duties. (Extensive backcountry/kayaking experience is not necessary for all residencies, just capability.)

Artwork Donations

The goal of the *Voices of the Wilderness* program is to share the scenic beauty and inspirational values of Alaska's wilderness areas, through the talents and reflections of professional artists. Each participant is expected to donate one piece of artwork to the hosting federal agency for use in highlighting the values of our public lands. Donated artwork should be representative of the area and communicate its inspirational or other values.

- Artwork should be delivered to the appropriate agency office within **6 months** of the residency.
- Artwork from visual artists should be framed with glass or otherwise prepared for hanging before donation.
- An electronic, high resolution digital image of the completed artwork must be provided by the artist prior to receiving the donation.

The artwork will be shared with the public through exhibition, publication, websites, or other means. The original work resulting from the residency will be donated to the United States Government, which means that the artist signs over publishing and reproduction rights to that work.

Community Extension

Artists are expected to provide one public presentation within six months of completing their residency, such as a slideshow lecture, demonstration, or workshop that publicizes the program and connects the community to their public lands. Other examples include a performance, explorative hike, or participation in a public lecture. The presentation can be tailored to an individual's medium, interest and experience, but each artist must provide supplies, equipment and logistics for the presentation. Community extensions do not have to take place in the community of the residency.

Collaborative Applications

Two artists are invited to submit an application together only if both are needed to successfully accomplish the proposed project and community extension, though many hosting wilderness areas may not be able to accommodate a pair of artists.

Please note--If artists would like to be considered individually as well for a collaboration, they must submit a separate application geared towards a project and extension conducted by a single artist.

Details on how to submit a collaborative application:

-Label subject of email should read: "***VOTW_Both Last Names – Your Mediums***"

-Submit three attachments in your email:

1. The filled out 2026 application

- List contact information for both artists
- Save as "***Application_Last Name and Last Name***"
- Save as "***.pdf or .docx***" formatting

2. Six artistic samples total (three from each artist) in a single document, 5 MB maximum

- One sample per page, not to exceed 6 pages
- Save as "***Samples_Last Name and Last Name***"
- Submit only six artistic samples total (three from one artist, three from another—or six total if you have collaborative pieces)
- Save as "***.pdf, .docx, or .jpeg***" formatting

3. Resume of no more than two pages, in a single document

-Save as "***Resume_Last Name and Last Name***"

-Save as "***.pdf or .docx***" formatting

-Submit a single two-page resume for both artists showing collaborations, or submit a single page resume for each individual artist

All emailed applications are due to **grace.corrigan@usda.gov** by 11:59 PM AK time **March 1, 2026**

Good luck and thank you for applying!