



Wildlands Update for Late May

**Alaska
Public
Lands
Information Center**



**Your
Adventure
Starts
Here**

Nature in May

Shorebirds are arriving in Alaska! Other returning birds include diving ducks, sandhill cranes, and trumpeter swans. To learn more about birds migrating to Alaska, go to <http://www.birding.alaska.gov>. Share your sightings on Journey North at <http://www.learner.org/jnorth> or <http://www.eBird.org>. Bears are waking, so please put away your bird feeders and leave well-covered garbage cans out the morning of pickup. May is also the beginning of tourist migration to Alaska; public lands will soon be opening trails and campgrounds!

Road Closures

Highways normally closed for the winter are beginning to open. The Denali Road is open to Mile 15 for private vehicles. The Taylor Highway has flooding from Mile 135 to 138 and there are large chunks of ice in Eagle (5/18/09). The border opens on the Top of the World Highway on 5/20. For up-to-date information visit <http://511.alaska.gov> or dial 511 in Alaska, (866) 282-7577 outside Alaska.

There have been significant changes to websites and to website content this spring. Be sure to check out some the changes listed below.

Campground Openings

Most state campgrounds open May 16; check specifics at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/asp/open.htm>. Chugach National Forest campgrounds will be opening May 21.

Alaska State Parks

Get ready for the summer by purchasing a 2009 Alaska State Park day-use pass at \$40 each or \$60 for two. Boat Launch passes cost \$75 each or \$115 for two. Passes are available on-line or at the AAPLIC (cash only), DNR Public Information Center, Potter Section House, REI, AMH, or Sportsman's Warehouse. Passes waive the daily parking fee only. Passes can also be ordered on-line, by mail and fax at <http://www.alaskastateparks.org>. Consider making a state cabin reservation for the summer by calling (907) 269-8400 or by visiting

the above website. Don't delay; popular cabins fill up fast. Most trails remain uncleared until the end of May. Trail information can also be found on individual park's web pages and at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aktrails/ats.htm>

Chugach State Park

Lots of great hiking areas exist in this park right in Anchorage's backyard. Trails at high elevations may still be wet and muddy. The park has added topography to its trail maps at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/chugach/summer.htm>. The park headquarters at Potter Section House is open Monday-Friday from 10a.m.-4:30p.m., closed at the noon hour. For more information, call (907) 345-5014 or go to <http://www.alaskastateparks.org>

Nancy Lake State Recreation Area

Campgrounds and boat launch will open May 17. For information call (907) 495-6273.

Denali State Park

By the end of May all the Denali State Park campgrounds should be open. For trail descriptions and conditions call (907) 745-3975 or go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/denali2.htm>

Kenai Peninsula Parks

Good trail and cabin information can be found in the various park webpages. For information call (907) 262-5581 or go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/index.htm>.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

In most areas around Alaska, salmon runs will be starting in late May and early June. For the most recent fishing report visit <http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/FishingReports>

All sport licenses are now available to be printed on your home computer. Search for Alaska Fish and Game Online to access the state website. There is also an on-line statewide trip planner for fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing. Check out the monthly publication "Alaska Fish and Wildlife News" at <http://www.wildlifeneeds.alaska.gov>

Bureau of Land Management

The Denali Highway is open; check with your rental car agency for regulations about unpaved roads. The Dalton still has difficult driving at high elevations. For inquiry about being a campground host at one of BLM's four campgrounds call (907) 822-3217.

National Park Service

Denali National Park and Preserve
This year's annual road lottery will be held in June, instead of July! The 2009 road lottery travel dates will be September 18-21. Entries must be postmarked between June 1-30 and mailed to the Denali National Park and Reserve or can be made online at <http://www.pay.gov>

Shuttle buses begin service May 20 to Mile 53 at Toklat. Travel to Eieson Visitor Center begins June 1; to Wonder Lake on June 8. The new visitor center is open 8:00a.m.-6:00p.m. daily with exhibits and a film. Sled dog demonstrations are held at 2:00p.m. daily; catch the shuttle to the kennel at 1:30p.m. at the visitor center. Most of the campgrounds begin full service by the end of May. Riley Campground is open year-round. Call (907) 683-2294 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/dena>

Kenai Fjords National Park

The Exit Glacier Nature Center will be open daily from 9a.m.-8p.m. starting Memorial Day weekend. Ranger-led walks are held at 10:00a.m., 2:00p.m., and 4:00p.m. daily. No reservations are needed; meet at the Exit Glacier Nature Center. Exit Glacier has a 12-site, walk-in tent campground (no fees) on a first-come, first-served basis. The visitor center in the small boat harbor is open daily 8:30a.m.-7:00p.m. beginning May 23. Both visitor centers offer a self-guided Junior Ranger booklet. For more information, call (907) 224-7500 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/kefj>
While in Seward, stop by the Alaska Sealife Center, open from 9a.m.-6:30p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8a.m.-6:30p.m. Friday-Sunday. Visit <http://www.alaskasealife.org>

Fish and Wildlife Service

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
There are several campgrounds and thirteen public use cabins for rent on the refuge. Summer hours for the visitor center begin June 1; open from 8a.m.-4:30p.m. on weekdays and 9a.m.-5p.m. on weekends. For more information, call (907) 262-7021 or go to <http://www.kenai.fws.gov>

Chugach National Forest

Forest service campgrounds open with full services (and fees) on May 21. Begich-Boggs Visitor Center opens May 22 with daily hours of 9:00a.m.-6:00p.m. Check out the guided hikes, interpretive talks, and ice worm safaris. For further information, call (907) 783-2326 or visit the new Forest Service website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach>



The whistle-stop train to Spencer Glacier begins on June 1 due to an unexpectedly heavy winter snowload in the area. The railroad is presently offering a 2-for-1 until May 31, redeemable for travel through September 14. For more information, call (907) 265-2494 or visit <http://www.akrr.com>

Urban Public Lands

Check out the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Activities calendar for fun things to do this summer. Consider "Story Time in the Greenhouse," "Kids Urban Mountain Biking," and the "Alaska Runners Calendar." Visit <http://www.muni.org/parks>

Southcentral Visitor Centers

Eagle River Nature Center

A great point of entry to Chugach State Park, ERNC is located at Mile 12 of Eagle River road and is open from 10a.m.-5p.m. Sundays to Thursdays and 10a.m.-7p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, starting in June. Call

for programs and updates on trails and bear sightings at (907) 694-2108 or go to <http://www.ernc.org>

Campbell Creek Science Center

Join the Anchorage Audubon Society on May 14, 21, and 28 at 6:30a.m.-8:30a.m. for an Early Morning Bird Walk. Front Yard Gardening is offered on May 27 from 7:00p.m.-9:00p.m. Midsummer Night's Science Series begins in June at 7:00p.m. with being Bear Aware. All programs are free. To find out more, visit <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sciencecenter.html>

Begich-Boggs Visitor Center

The visitor center is located at mile 5.5 on Portage Glacier Road. The exhibit area is hands-on for kids and adults alike. Summer hours will be 9a.m.-6p.m. daily. Call (907) 783-2326 or visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach>

Alaska Islands & Ocean Visitor Center (Homer)

Summer hours of 9:00a.m.-6:00p.m. begin Memorial Day. Check out the beach walks, birding, and films at <http://www.islandsandoocean.org>

Alaska Public Lands Information Centers

The *Downtown Anchorage* location is open 9a.m.-5p.m. daily beginning Memorial Day. The center offers movies on the half-hour and a walking tour at 11:00a.m. and 2:00p.m. daily (beginning June 1). Special 2:00p.m. programs include the Alaska Zoo on Thursdays, Dog Sledding 101 on Fridays, and Bird Treatment & Learning Center on Saturdays. Stop by for trip planning, scavenger hunts for kids, and informative exhibits about Alaska. For more information, call (907) 644-3661 or 1-866-869-6887 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/anchAlaskaCenters.gov>

The *Fairbanks center* is operating from the new Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center at 101 Dunkel Drive in downtown Fairbanks. Check out the film offerings, kids events, and special programs. Summer hours begin 5/22 when the center is open daily from 8a.m.-6p.m. For more information, call (907) 459-3730.

The *Tok location* is open daily 8a.m.-7p.m. daily beginning June 1. Call (907) 883-5667.

The *Southeast Alaska Discovery Center* in Ketchikan is open weekdays from 8:00a.m.-5:00p.m. and weekends from 8:00a.m.-4:00p.m. Enjoy the dramatic exhibit rooms, trip planning, and movies. This center charges a \$5.00 entrance fee for adults and children older than 15. For more information, call (907) 228-6220.