

Bonanza Mine Trail

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve



Access: Start from the Kennecott Mill Town, on the Root Glacier Trail. After about a 1/2 mile, the Bonanza Mine Trail splits to the right. Trail is signed.

Distance: Approximately 4.5 miles one-way, 9 miles round trip.

Time: 6-8 hours round-trip



Maps: Trails Illustrated map of Wrangell-St. Elias, USGS McCarthy 1:63,360 (B5,B6,C5)

Difficulty: Strenuous. Trail is steep. 3,800 feet elevation gain from the Kennecott Mill Town.

Highlights: On a clear day, spectacular vistas of the Chugach Mountains, Mt. Blackburn, and the Kennicott Glacier can be seen from almost the entire route, particularly from above tree line.

Route: To reach Bonanza Mine, walk through the Kennecott Mill Town towards the Root Glacier. About a half mile beyond the visitor center the road will split. The trail to the Root Glacier will continue straight. To get to the Bonanza Mine turn right and hike up the hill. At the top of the first switch-back, turn left following the road up the hill. If you reach the top of the mill building, you have missed the turn. The road is steep. Approximately one mile up there is a directional sign for the Bonanza and Jumbo mines; stay on the main road to the **right**, to continue to the Bonanza Mine. This road, constructed in the 1950s and 1960s was an industrious effort to extract the remaining copper ore from the Bonanza Mine site. It goes almost to the mine itself. Follow this road approximately 3.5 miles to the breakover tram tower. The Bonanza Mine buildings can be seen from the breakover tower. Follow the path that continues towards the mine buildings from the tower. This path is steep and loose in places.

Hazards: The buildings at the Bonanza Mine have not been stabilized and historic artifacts are scattered on the landscape. Please explore the site with care and do not enter the buildings. Mining and explosives experts have combed the historic mine structures in an effort to remove any abandoned explosives. However, if you find any abandoned explosives **DO NOT TOUCH** them. Please report them to a park ranger as soon as possible. Take standard precautions for hiking in bear country.

Notes: ATV access to this area is limited to private property owners along the route and their guests in the process of accessing their property. If you are traveling with an ATV please leave it at the Kennicott River and visit the mines on foot.

The historic site at the Bonanza Mine begs for exploration as one might imagine miners living and working high on the ridge line. Please explore the area with care being mindful of the hazards that exist and taking care to leave things as you find them so that others may explore the Bonanza Mine in the future.

The entrance to the mine has been restricted for your safety. When Kennecott closed the mine in 1938, the company pulled out the support system in the tunnels in order to process the high grade copper ore it was made of. The mines are unstable and prone to collapse. For a spectacular view of the University Range in the St. Elias Mountains continue beyond the mine buildings to the top of the ridge.

Please remember:

The Bonanza Mine and the other historic sites at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve are part of our nation's historic heritage. The buildings and the artifacts are protected by the National Park Service. The removal of artifacts from the site and the destruction of historic buildings are prohibited. Please allow others to explore them in the future.

