



Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Alaska Department of Natural Resources

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Trails in Chugach State Park

Note: The trail numbers below corresponds to numbers in blue circles on the park map.

[Click here to access the park map.](#)

Also see the pages on [Eklutna Lake](#), [Hillside](#), and [Turnagain Arm](#) for additional trail information.

1. Eklutna Lakeside Trail

Access: Eklutna Lake Trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot, bicycle, ATV's on Sunday through Wednesday only, and snowmobiles when snow levels are adequate. Motorcycles are prohibited.

Distance: 12.7 miles or 21.8 kilometers one way to Eklutna Glacier.

Elevation Gain: 300 feet or 91 meters.

Difficulty: Easy - abandoned roadbed with bridges.

Special Features: Trail follows lakeshore for 7 miles, then onto glacial gravel bars. Last mile is footpath through glacial debris. Views of steep canyon walls, waterfalls and Eklutna Glacier. Wildlife includes Dall sheep, mountain goats, pikas.

Winter: Good skiing. Trail now groomed for skiing. Snowmachines are allowed on valley floor when snow conditions are adequate to protect underlying vegetation. Climbers with glacier experience access the "Eklutna Traverse" from this area.

[Eklutna Lake Trail Map](#)

2. Twin Peaks Trail

Access: Eklutna Lake Trailhead

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 2.5 miles one way to tree line and trail's end.

Elevation Gain: 1500 feet or 457 meters.

Difficulty: Difficult - steep trail, and in some areas, loose footing.

Special features: Trail climbs into sheep country. Spectacular view of lake below. Good berry picking in fall. Open tundra invites exploration.

[Eklutna Lake Trail Map](#)

Eydlu Bena Loop Trail *(This is a new trail and is not marked on the map.)*

Access: Eklutna Lake Trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 1.5 miles from trailhead to Eklutna Lakeside Trail, 2 miles to return to trailhead

Elevation Gain: 300 feet.

Difficulty: Easy to moderate, steep in sections.

Special features: Trail loops around to mile 0.5, Eklutna Lakeside Trail. Mostly a forest hike. Groomed for skiing in winter.

3. Bold Ridge Trail

Access: Mile 5, Eklutna Lakeside Trail

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 3.5 miles or 5.6 kilometers one way to trail's end at tree line.

Elevation Gain: 2500 feet or 762 meters.

Difficulty: Difficult - steep trail.

Special features: Spectacular view of Eklutna Lake below and Bold Peak. Good berry picking in fall. Open tundra beyond allows exploring of high valleys and ridges.

[Eklutna Lake Trail Map](#)

4. East Fork Trail

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Access: Mile 10.5, Eklutna Lakeside Trail

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 6.5 miles or 10.5 kilometers one way to back of valley and open tundra.

Elevation Gain: 700 feet or 213 meters.

Difficulty: Moderate - trail is narrow and stream crossings not bridged.

Special Features: Wilderness character, woodland vegetation, small lake.

[Eklutna Lake Trail Map](#)

5. Thunderbird Falls Trail

Access: Mile 25, Glenn Highway, Thunderbird Exit, follow signs one mile to trailhead parking.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 1 mile or 1.6 kilometers one way to view of Thunderbird Falls.

Elevation Gain: 100 feet or 30 meters.

Difficulty: Easy - rolling terrain with boardwalk and viewing areas.

Special Features: Birch forest on steep hillside overhanging Eklutna Canyon. Views of 200 foot high Thunderbird Falls.

Winter: Often, the falls freeze, producing ice sculptures.

[Thunderbird Falls Trail Map](#)

6. Peters Creek Trail

Access: Mile 21, Glenn Highway, Peters Creek Exit, follow city map uphill to Malcolm Drive and trailhead. No signs.

Travel Means: Foot, bicycles allowed first 5 miles, snowmobiles when snow levels are adequate.

Distance: 5 miles or 8.1 kilometers one way to end of abandoned roadbed. Unmarked, un maintained trail continues up valley 11 miles to tree line and open tundra.

Difficulty: Moderate - old roadbed has steep muddy sections and unbridged stream crossings; unmarked trail beyond can be easily lost.

Special Features: No trailhead parking. Private property along first quarter mile of trail. Be respectful of local landowners. Quiet area, nice views of wooded valley first 5 miles.

Winter: Skiing is excellent, and when snow conditions are adequate to protect underlying vegetation, much of the valley is open to snowmobiles.

7. Rodak Nature Trail

Access: Eagle River Nature Center.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 2/3 mile or 1 kilometer loop.

Elevation Gain: 100 feet or 30 meters drop from parking area.

Difficulty: Easy - trail is graveled with seating.

Special Features: Viewing deck at salmon rearing stream. Interpretive signs.

Winter: Trail usually packed for winter walkers. Feeders at Center attract birds and squirrels. Other wildlife includes sheep, moose, coyote. Handicap Accessible.

[Rodak Nature Trail Map](#)

8. Albert Loop Trail

Access: Eagle River Nature Center.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 3 miles or 5 kilometers loop.

Elevation Gain: 100 feet or 30 meters drop from parking area.

Difficulty: Easy, though seasonal muddy spots.

Special Features: Mixed forest to gravel bars of glacial Eagle River. Trail guide booklet available.

Winter: Trail usually packed for winter walkers, skiing. Many wildlife tracks.

[Albert Loop Trail Map](#)

9. Historic Iditarod (Crow Pass) Trail

Access: Eagle River Nature Center, or from Girdwood take Crow Creek Road to road end and Crow Creek Trailhead (managed by Chugach Nat'l. Forest).

Travel Means: Foot only.

Distance: 26 miles or 50 kilometers one way. See Special Features for shorter hike options along this trail.

Elevation Gain: 2500 feet or 762 meters to pass from Crow Creek Trailhead, 3500 feet or 1067 meters to pass from Eagle River Trailhead.

Difficulty: Easy to difficult.

Special Features: Trail follows historic Iditarod supply route. Mining ruins, spectacular views of peaks, glaciers. Much wildlife. Excellent day hikes from either end or spend a few days and hike trail length. Unabridged stream and river crossings can be difficult. Shorter hikes from Nature Center include: to Echo Bend (easy), 3 miles one way; to Heritage Falls (easy, large falls across river), 4.5 miles one way; Twin Falls (moderate, stream crossings, beaver ponds, waterfalls), 9 miles one way. This area closed to hunting, rich in wildlife - moose, beaver, bears, sheep, eagles. Hikes from Crow Creek include: to mine site (moderate, steep) 2 miles one way; to Crystal Lake and USFS cabin (moderate, steep, spectacular, reservations required for cabin) 3 miles one way; to pass and Raven Glacier (moderate, spectacular) 4 miles one way.

Winter: From Nature Center to Eagle Glacier or Ford site: Skiing on river surface, gravel bars up valley is often very good, avalanche free, overflow prone. From Crow Creek to Eagle Glacier or Ford Site: Very avalanche prone. Not recommended.

[Crow Pass Trail Map](#)

10. River Trail At North Fork

Access: Eagle River Road, mile 7.4, North Fork access.

Travel Means: Foot, snowmobile when snow levels are adequate.

Distance: 3/4 mile or 1 kilometer to river.

Elevation Gain: None.

Difficulty: Easy.

Special Features: Cross bridge over North Fork to reach main fork of Eagle River. Good fishing access.

Winter: Travel on North Fork is dangerous because of thin ice. Snowmobiles use this trail to reach better ice on river and area open to snowmobiles. Beware of thin ice, open water on main channel, too.

11. South Fork Valley Trail

Access: Hiland Road to mile 7.5, then right, follow signs 0.5 mile to trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 6 miles or 10 kilometer one way to Symphony and Eagle Lakes.

Elevation Gain: 400 feet or 122 meters.

Difficulty: Easy, with boardwalk over some of the muddy areas, and a bridge at stream crossing. Wet areas near lakes.

Special features: Limited parking area. Please do not block access for local residents. Most of trail is in open tundra, with spectacular view of surrounding peaks. Lakes at back of valley were dammed by rockslide.

Winter: Trail crosses avalanche prone slopes.

12. Arctic to Indian (Ship Creek Valley)

Access: Pullout on Ski Bowl Road, 3/4 mile below ski area, across from gated military road.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 22 miles or 35 kilometers one way to Indian, first 3 miles are drop to valley floor.

Elevation gain: 1000 feet or 305 meters drop to valley floor, 1000 feet or 305 meters gain to Indian Pass.

Difficulty: Difficult. Steep, very muddy, 10 miles of unmarked route with unabridged stream crossings.

Special Features: No parking area. First 1.7 mile is on military land. Use respectfully. Designated wilderness, spectacular scenery. Wolves, bears, moose, beaver.

Winter: Popular spring ski traverse, route is unmarked and ends with steep icy descent. 2-3 avalanche prone areas along route.

13. Near Point Trail

Access: Prospect Heights Trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot. Bicycles allowed first 3 miles.

Distance: 3 miles or 5 kilometers one way to old homesite, then steep narrow trail 1 more mile to Near Point.

Elevation Gain: 1900 feet or 580 meters.

Difficulty: Moderate.

Special Features: Views of Alaska Range, Anchorage, Cook Inlet. Granite boulders near top were carried by glacier from the Talkeetna Mountains.

Winter: Easy X-country skiing first 3 miles.

14. Wolverine Peak Trail

Access: Prospect Heights Trailhead, Mile 2 of Near Point Trail.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 5.2 miles or 8.4 kilometers one way to summit.

Elevation Gain: 3380 feet or 1040 meters.

Difficulty: Easy to moderate.

Special Features: Views of Alaska Range, Anchorage, Cook Inlet. Plane wreckage near summit. Good berries in fall. Moose, sheep and arctic ground squirrels.

15. Middle Fork Trail to Williwaw Lakes

Access: Prospect Heights Trailhead, Mile 1.3 of Near Point Trail.

Travel Means: Foot. Bicycles allowed first 3 miles.

Distance: 6.5 miles or 10.5 kilometers one way to largest lake.

Elevation Gain: 1600 feet or 490 meters.

Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Some muddy areas.

Special Features: Spruce woods and mountain hemlock groves give way to open tundra and jewel-like alpine lakes, backed by sheer face of Mt. Williwaw.

Winter: Good skiing. In Williwaw Valley, stay on valley floor to avoid avalanche prone areas.

[Hillside Trail Map](#)

16. Glen Alps to Williwaw Lakes

Access: Glen Alps Trailhead, Powerline Trail 3/4 mile to Middle Fork Loop Trail.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 6 miles or 10 kilometers one way.

Elevation Gain: 740 feet or 226 meters.

Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Several wet areas, simple route finding.

Special Features: Spruce woods and mountain hemlock groves give way to open tundra, jewel-like alpine lakes.

Winter: Good skiing. In Williwaw Valley, stay on valley floor to avoid avalanche prone areas.

[Hillside Trail Map](#)

17. Anchorage Overlook Trail

Access: Glen Alps Trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot, wheelchair accessible.

Distance: 1/4 mile or 0.4 kilometer loop.

Elevation Gain: 53 feet or 16 meters.

Difficulty: Easy. Paved trail and gravel trail.

Special Features: Sitting area and viewing deck with views of Anchorage, Alaska Range, and Cook Inlet. Good for sunsets. Windy. Wheelchair accessible.

[Hillside Trail Map](#)

18. Powerline Trail to Indian

Access: Glen Alps Trailhead or Indian Trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot, bicycle.

Distance: 11 miles or 17.6 kilometers one way.

Elevation Gain: 1300 feet or 396 meters from Glen Alps, 1960 feet from Indian.

Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Bikers beware steep descent into Indian from the Pass.

Special Features: Open tundra area, good berries in fall.

Winter: Pass and steep walls on both sides extremely avalanche prone, valley floor is good skiing. Part of area on Glen Alps side of pass open to snowmobiles (access at Upper Huffman) when snow conditions are adequate to protect underlying vegetation.

[Hillside Trail Map](#)

19. Flattop Mountain Trail

Access: Glen Alps Trailhead, use stairs.

Travel Means: Foot, some scrambling.

Distance: 1.5 miles or 2.4 kilometers one way.

Elevation Gain: 1300 feet or 396 meters to summit.

Difficulty: Difficult. Steep, some scrambling. **Be careful - falls have resulted in injuries and fatalities.**

Special Features: Most often climbed peak in Alaska. Hikers above can kick down rocks. Good views of Alaska Range, Cook Inlet, Turnagain Arm, Anchorage. Mountain hemlocks, tundra.

Winter: Area is avalanche prone. Several deaths.

[Flattop Trail Map](#)

20. Rabbit Lake Trail

Access: No public access because of private property. Alternative route available - see McHugh Lake Trail below.

21. Turnagain Arm Trail

Access: Potter Trailhead - Seward Hwy, Mile 115; McHugh Creek Trailhead - Seward Hwy, Mile 112; Rainbow Trailhead - Seward Hwy, Mile 108; Windy Corner Trailhead - Seward Hwy, Mile 106.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: Potter to McHugh - 3.3 miles; McHugh to Rainbow - 4.2 miles; Rainbow to Windy - 1.9 miles. Total of 9.4 miles one way.

Elevation Gain: 250-700 feet or 75-210 meters from parking areas to generally level of trail on hillside above.

Difficulty: Most is easy, Rainbow to Windy is moderate.

Special Features: Trail parallels the highway and railroad below, following support route created during building of railroad in 1910's. Good views of Turnagain Arm, coastal vegetation, first spring wildflowers. Sheep at Windy Corner.

22. McHugh Scenic Overlook

Access: McHugh Creek Picnic Area, middle parking lot.

Travel Means: Foot, wheelchair accessible.

Elevation Gain: 40 feet.

Difficulty: Easy. Trail is paved, with handrails and seating.

Special Features: Good views of Turnagain Arm, wind sculpted trees. Handicap accessible.

23. McHugh Lake Trail

Access: McHugh Creek Trailhead, Mile 112 Seward Hwy. Hike northwest toward Potter on Turnagain Arm Trail approximately 1/2 mile, McHugh/Rabbit Lakes Trail heads northeasterly up McHugh Creek Valley.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 7 miles or 11.4 kilometers one way.

Elevation Gain: 2750 feet or 876 meters.

Difficulty: Moderate.

Special Features: Beautiful Rabbit and McHugh Lakes are framed by alpine tundra and the rugged Suicide Mountain peaks. Loop trip is possible for experienced hikers using Ptarmigan Pass to Powerline Trail. Old trail up Rabbit Creek Valley crosses private land, so there is no public access from Lower Canyon Road.

24. Falls Creek Trail

Access: Falls Creek Trailhead, Mile 105 Seward Hwy.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 1.5 miles or 2.4 kilometers one way to tree line and trail's end.

Elevation Gain: 1450 feet or 442 meters.

Difficulty: Moderate. Steep.

Special Features: Trail follows pretty creek through lush woods. Poisonous baneberry is abundant at trailhead. Routes through open tundra invite exploring. Good access to Suicide Peaks (technical climb).

[Falls Creek Trail Map](#)

25. Indian Valley Trail

Access: Indian Creek Trailhead, Mile 102 Seward Hwy. West of Turnagain House, turn to mountains and drive 1.4 miles to road end and trailhead.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 6 miles or 10 kilometers one way to Indian Pass.

Elevation Gain: 2100 feet or 640 meters.

Difficulty: Moderate. Steep. Streams are bridged.

Special Features: Good trail, tall trees in lower valley, tundra in pass area. Scenic.

Winter: Part of "Arctic to Indian" ski traverse. Avalanche prone areas near the pass. Steep icy decent.

[Indian Valley Trail Map](#)

26. Bird Ridge Trail

Access: Bird Ridge Trailhead, Mile 100.5 Seward Hwy.

Travel Means: Foot.

Distance: 1.5 miles or 2.4 kilometers to trail's end above tree line. Route continues along ridge crest.

Elevation Gain: 2500 feet or 760 meters to trail end at ridgecrest.

Difficulty: Moderate. Steep, some scrambling.

Special Features: First snow free spring hike, first wildflowers. Good views of Turnagain Arm. Exposed and windy.

[Bird Ridge Trail Map](#)

27. Indian to Bird Bike Path

Access: Communities of Indian, Bird, or Bird Creek Campground.

Travel Means: Foot, bicycle.

Distance: 3 miles or 5 kilometers from Indian to Bird.

Elevation Gain: none.

Difficulty: Easy. Paved.

Special Features: Good views of Turnagain Arm. Wheelchair accessible.

[Bird to Gird Trail System](#)

28. Bird Creek Trail

Access: Bird Creek Trailhead, Mile 101 Seward Hwy. Turn toward mountains and go 0.6 miles to park trailhead and gate.

Travel Means: Foot, bicycle, ATV, snowmachines when snow levels are adequate.

Distance: 5.5 miles or 9 kilometers one way to old road end at 500' elevation. Bikes and ATV's stop here. Un maintained unmarked route continues up valley, often overgrown, another 9.5 miles to Bird Pass.

Difficulty: Easy to road end, then difficult. Seasonal muddy areas.

Special Features: Main trail follows creek up valley floor. Large trees, waterfall at mile 14. Fork to right at 0.7 mile leads to Penguin Creek. ATV's and bikes may also use side trails (from old logging and seismic exploration) up to 500' elevation.

Winter: Often good skiing. Open to snowmachines when snow conditions are adequate to protect underlying vegetation.

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