



Upper Noatak Valley, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve

Information

For information about individual parks, contact them directly (see back of this brochure) or visit the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov/akso/index.cfm. For information about national parks or other public lands in Alaska, visit or contact the Alaska Public Lands Information Centers in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, and Tok, or visit their homepage at www.AlaskaCenters.gov.

- Anchorage: 605 West Fourth Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501-2248, 907-644-3661 or 866-869-6887
- Fairbanks: Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center, 101 Dunkel Street, Suite 110, Fairbanks, AK 99701-4848, 907-459-3730 or 866-869-6887
- Ketchikan: Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, 50 Main Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901-6659, 907-228-6220
- Tok: P.O. Box 359, Tok, AK 99780-0359, 907-883-5667 or 888-256-6784.

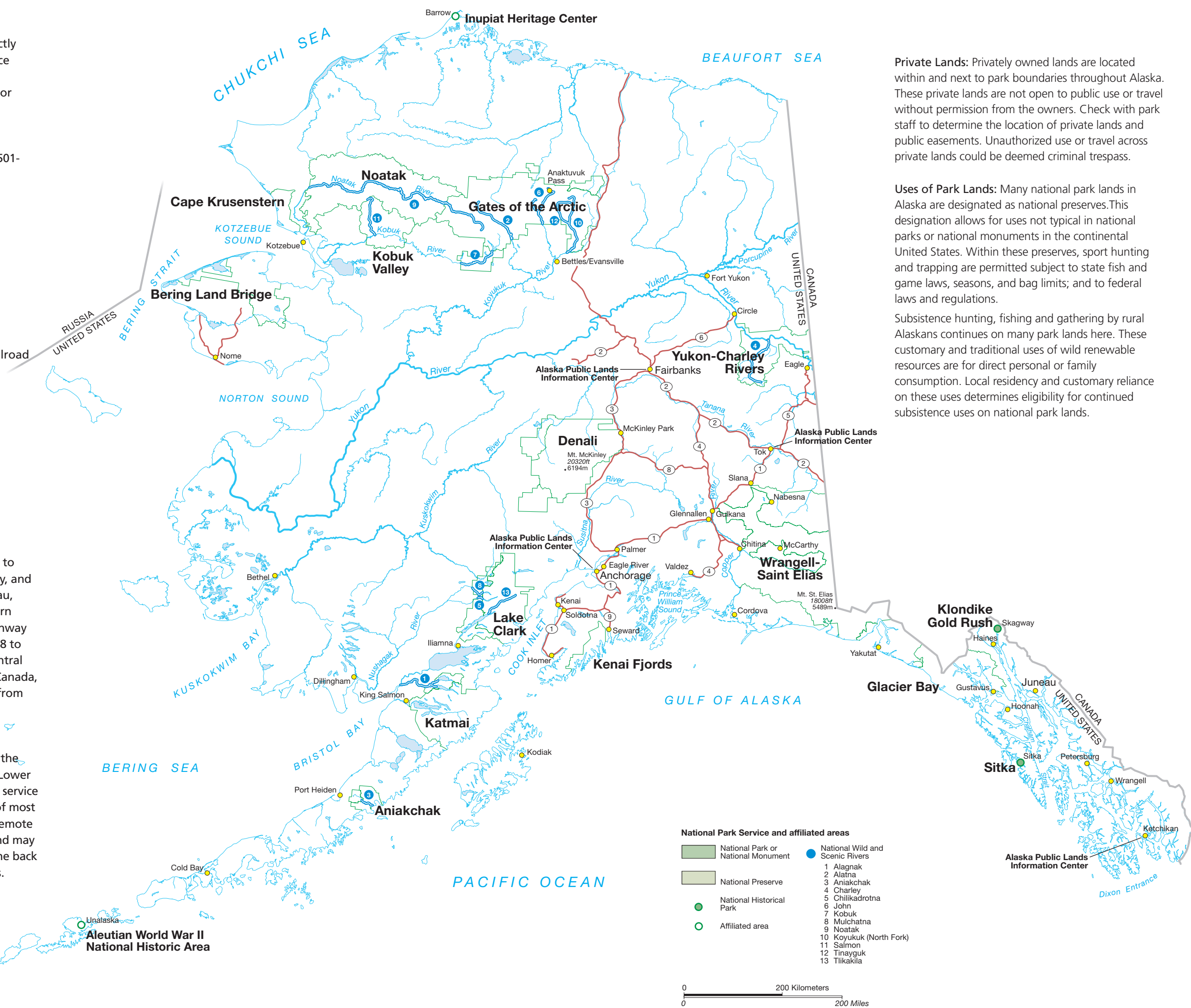
Tourist information is available from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, P.O. Box 110804, Juneau, AK 99811-0804, www.travelalaska.com. For information about ferry or railroad travel in Alaska, contact:

- Alaska Marine Highway System, P.O. Box 112505, Juneau, AK 99811-2505, 800-642-0066, www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs
- Alaska Railroad Corporation Passenger Services, P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, AK 99510-7500, 800-544-0552, www.alaskarailroad.com.

Travel Tips

Alaska's immense size can make travel to and through the state challenging. Some planning is necessary. Just getting to Alaska can be an adventure involving travel by air, highway, and sea. Commercial airlines serve Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and other towns, while cruise ships ply Alaska's southeastern waters through the Inside Passage. The Alaska Marine Highway transports people and vehicles on ferries from the Lower 48 to towns in Southeast Alaska and between points in Southcentral Alaska. The Alaska Highway, paved in Alaska and most of Canada, is open and maintained year-round. It extends 1500 miles from Dawson Creek, British Columbia, to Fairbanks, Alaska, and provides a land link with roads to the south.

Once in Alaska, you may have several options for travel to the park lands. Unlike most National Park Service areas in the Lower 48, most in Alaska are not accessible by road. Scheduled air service to towns and villages will put you within air-taxi distance of most of these hard-to-reach parks. Experiencing Alaska's more remote treasures can require significant time, effort, and money and may involve air or boat charters, rafts, kayaks, and hiking. See the back of this brochure for access information for individual parks.



Private Lands: Privately owned lands are located within and next to park boundaries throughout Alaska. These private lands are not open to public use or travel without permission from the owners. Check with park staff to determine the location of private lands and public easements. Unauthorized use or travel across private lands could be deemed criminal trespass.

Uses of Park Lands: Many national park lands in Alaska are designated as national preserves. This designation allows for uses not typical in national parks or national monuments in the continental United States. Within these preserves, sport hunting and trapping are permitted subject to state fish and game laws, seasons, and bag limits; and to federal laws and regulations.

Subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering by rural Alaskans continues on many park lands here. These customary and traditional uses of wild renewable resources are for direct personal or family consumption. Local residency and customary reliance on these uses determines eligibility for continued subsistence uses on national park lands.

Our Lasting Frontier

The United States purchased Alyeska—the Great Land—in 1867 in a transaction known as Seward's Folly, doing little to reveal the awesome character of this place. The rush for gold that followed created its own colorful images of heroic daring and fortunes won and lost by scalawags. At times, the haunting beauty of the Far North overshadowed the miner's quest for gold. Dreams of quick riches often gave way to making peace with the land and settling in.

The chronicles of explorers and naturalists provide a contrasting mix of impressions: a barren arctic wasteland teeming with herds of caribou; uninhabitable terrain that proved to be the ancestral homeland of cultures harkening back to the end of the last ice age; and winters of deadening cold giving way to balmy summers that draw migratory birds from every state and continent of the world. Alaska has the biggest moose, biggest bears, tallest spruce,

and rivers thick with salmon, yet it is our nations' most fragile environment. Could all these descriptions come from one state?

Alaska recalls our sense of adventure reminiscent of an earlier time in our westward expansion when uncharted frontiers helped shape the American image. The inspiring landscapes of Alaska fired our ancestors' spirits through risk and hardship. Alaska also offers further proof of a uniquely American idea, born at Yellowstone in 1872, that certain places are special, above the marketplace, and worthy of lasting protection. The first national park area in Alaska was established in 1910 at Sitka in commemoration of the Tlingit culture and early European settlers of Russian America. By the time Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park was established in 1976, such well-known landmarks as Mount McKinley (1917), Katmai (1918), and Glacier Bay (1925) had entered the rolls.

Statehood in 1959 brought an entitlement to the state of 106 million acres of public lands potentially rich in oil and gas, minerals, and coal. Congress settled similar claims from Alaska's Native people in 1971 by awarding them nearly 44 million acres of federal land and more than \$962 million. Amid such rapid change, our Last Frontier could have easily slipped away, as did our first. The push to preserve more land continued.

After years of intense debate and pressure from President Carter, Congress finally passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980. The act more than doubled the size of the National Park System nationwide. It established 10 new units of the National Park System in Alaska and expanded Glacier Bay, Katmai, and Mount McKinley (renamed Denali). Alaska now contains more than 54 million acres in national parks, or 13 percent of the state's 375 million acres.

Alaskan in scale, with towering mountains, vast glaciers, wild rivers, and bountiful wildlife, these parks also reflect the human values of the Last Frontier. Many of the new parks were created, in part, to protect lands used traditionally by Alaska Natives. Consequently, rural Alaskans continue to engage in hunting, fishing, and gathering within these park areas. National preserves were established to allow for the continuation of sport hunting and trapping.

Alaska's National Parks also protect a vast sweep of history, from the artifacts of the first North Americans found in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve and other northwestern parks to the buildings and belongings of the turn-of-the-century gold seekers in Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. For present and future generations, the National Parks in Alaska comprise the finest natural and cultural resources in public ownership—an enduring frontier for all the world.

