

The Wagon Road

(with access to the Toe of the Kennicott Glacier)

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve



Access: The Wagon Road is a trail that can be accessed near the McCarthy Museum or from Kennecott Mill Town. This trail can be used to access the toe of the Kennicott Glacier.

Distance: 4.5 miles one-way from McCarthy to Kennecott Mill Town.

Time: 1-3 hours one-way

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

Difficulty: Easy to moderate

Highlights: From the toe of the Kennicott Glacier, there are excellent views of Mt. Blackburn, Mt. Rime and the Atna and Parka Peaks, the Kennicott and Gates Glaciers, as well as the Stairway Icefall. Along the Wagon Road, you will pass the historic Kennecott cemetery approximately one mile from Kennecott.

Route: These directions are from McCarthy to Kennecott Mill Town. A map is located on the back of this handout.

Follow the main road north from the McCarthy Museum toward Kennecott Mill Town for approximately 1000 feet until you see a turnoff to the left. This turnoff is just past a red and white building (the Tony Zak community center). If this turn is missed, there are two more side roads further down the road where you can access the wagon road. There are few signs on these roads because this area is private property. Please respect land owners and their property by staying on the road to insure you are not trespassing. Please reference the map on the back of this handout.

Go straight on the Wagon Road to reach Kennecott Mill town in about 4.5 miles. It is a pleasant trail slowly ascending through the forest, with some views of the mountains and the old Kennecott graveyard. The Wagon Road is also a nice (but rocky and bumpy) bike ride.

Toe of the Kennicott Glacier: To reach the toe of this glacier, follow the directions to the Wagon Road from the McCarthy Museum. After about 3/4 miles on the Wagon Road, the trail will fork - turn left to travel on a trail towards the face, or "toe" of the Kennicott Glacier. The trail ends at the terminal moraine and expanding meltwater lake of the Kennicott Glacier. Distance is 1.5 miles one way from the McCarthy Museum. One may hike and explore along the glacier for several miles. The area is wide open, free of trees, and suitable for primitive camping. There is a bear resistant food storage box at the camping area, proper food storage is required. Please practice Leave No Trace principles while camping.



Hazards: Travel with caution near and around glacial melt pools. The fine glacier silt may look dry but it can be very slippery. The melt pools are also extremely cold. There are numerous bears in this area. Take standard precautions for hiking in bear country. All food must be stored in Bear Resistant Food Containers, which can be borrowed from any park visitor center or in bear resistant food storage containers at specific camping locations, please reference the map.

Bikes are allowed on this trail. If you plan to bike, please use caution as the trail is narrow and rocky. Depending on weather, it can be wet with large puddles. This is a multi-use trail. Be aware of other users. **Shaded areas indicate private property. Please stay on the trail through these areas.**

Notes: Dryas plants are plentiful here. Please avoid stepping on this delicate vegetation. These dandelion-look-alike members of the rose family have a root system which is very easily destroyed when stepped on.

