Park History

Believed to be descended from the Chugach Eskimo, the indigenous inhabitants of this area harvested sustenance from Kachemak Bay's diverse riches including fish, shellfish, marine mammals, and birds. Archaeological remains show evidence of thriving culture and traditions, but around 500 A.D. these people left the bay; their motives remain undiscovered. However, Kachemak Bay did not remain untapped by humans for long. By the time of European exploration, the area was the territory of the Dena'ina Athabascans.

Before the establishment of the park, the land "across the bay" was a place of natural beauty, solitude, and recreation for the people of Homer. When Kachemak Bay State Park was designated in June 1970, it became Alaska's very first state park. People quickly took to the park, making it one of Alaska's most loved backcountry destinations, and over the years legislative actions added acreage and a wilderness park. Today, there are nearly 400,000 acres of land within the parks, every one of them the result of concerned lawmakers and grassroots citizen action to preserve and protect this marvelous corner of the Alaskan landscape.

Overlooking Kachemak Bay and Homer Spit
Photo courtesy of Leanne Quirk

For More Information

Homer Ranger Station
(907) 235-7024
Marine VHF Ch. 16

Kenai Area Office
PO Box 1247
Soldotna, AK 99669
(907) 262-5581

www.alaskastateparks.org
www.alaskastatetrails.org

Welcome to

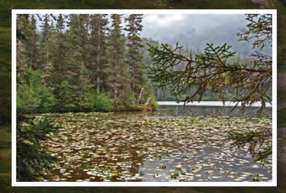
Kachemak Bay

State Park & State Wilderness Park

Grewingk Glacier Lake
Photo courtesy of Emily Lochart

Welcome

Alaska's first state park and only wilderness park together encompass nearly 400,000 breathtaking acres of mountains, glaciers, forest, coastline, and ocean. The park boasts an unmatched variety of habitats, wildlife, and recreational opportunities including: fishing, hunting, kayaking, beachcombing, camping, and hiking on over 85 miles of trails leading into the backcountry. Go where no road can take you, and set your course for one of the wildest and most remote state parks in the wildest and most remote state.



Tutka Lake
Background photo Alpine Ridge
Photos not otherwise credited are courtesy of Alaska State Parks employees

- Backpacking
- Beachcombing
- Berry Picking
- Biking
- Bird Watching
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Clam Digging
- Climbing
- Exploring
- Fishing
- Glacier Traversing
- Hiking
- Horseback Riding
- Hunting & Trapping
- Kayaking

Kite surfing in Kachemak Bay
Photo courtesy of Emily Lochart

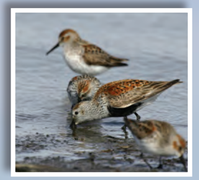
- Mountaineering
- Paddle Boarding
- Photography
- Picnicking
- Public-Use Cabins
- Packrafting
- Relaxing
- Scuba Diving
- Skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Solitude
- Tidepooling
- Surfing
- Tracking
- Whale Watching
- Wildlife Viewing

Alaska State Parks

Area Highlights

Getting There

Access to these parks is by boat or airplane. Air charters, water taxi services, and boat rentals are available in Homer. Check the Kachemak Bay webpage at www.alaskastateparks.org for a list of authorized commercial air and water taxi services.



Sandpipers and dunlin
Photo courtesy of Chuck Young/USFWS

Red squirrel
Photo courtesy of Emily Lochart

Wildlife

Kachemak Bay is a State Critical Habitat Area with estuaries, coves, and fjords that support a myriad of marine wildlife. Rich intertidal zones offer natural classrooms for marine studies. Visitors frequently observe sea otters, harbor seals, porpoises, and various whale species among the waves. On land, you may spot moose, black bears, mountain goats, coyotes, and wolves. Many bird species also inhabit the area, including bald eagles, gyrfalcons, murres, and puffins.

Black bear cubs
Photo courtesy of Emily Lochart

Otter eating a crab
Photo courtesy of Jill Wheeler

Tufted puffin pair
Photo courtesy USFWS

Photo courtesy of Emily Lochart

China Poot campsite

Camping

Camping is allowed in most areas of the park. Several sites throughout the park have amenities for campers including: fire rings, picnic tables, tent platforms, toilets, and bear-resistant food caches. Check the map for campsite locations.

Public-Use Cabins

Six public-use cabins located at Halibut Cove Lagoon, Leisure Lake, Moose Valley, and Tutka Bay are available for rent. Reservations can be made up to six months in advance. For reservations and informational fact sheets for each cabin, visit www.alaskastateparks.org.

Yurt Rentals

Six yurts are available for rent at various locations in Kachemak Bay State Park. A commercial operator maintains and rents these yurts. Each yurt sleeps a maximum of eight people and is equipped with a wood stove. Contact the Homer Ranger Station for more information.

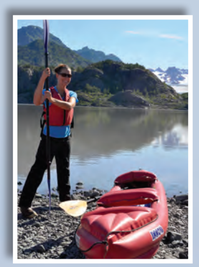
Coalition Bay yurt

China Poot public-use cabin

On the Water

Always wear a life jacket. The bay can be rough at times. When conditions are poor, be patient as the weather often improves in the evening. Carry food and warm clothing for an unexpected overnight. Marine charts show many of the bay's hazards and should be carried by all boat operators. Refer to Nautical Chart #16645, Gore Point to Anchor Point. For more information on safe boating, visit www.alaskaboatingsafety.org.

Dock at Halibut Cove



Grewingk Glacier Lake
Photo courtesy of Brody Reid

Reservations for this popular cabin at China Poot Lake, and others, are first come, first served.

View of Emerald Lake

View from Alpine Ridge Trail

View from Goat Rope Spur Trail

View from Moose Valley Trail

View from Grace Ridge Trail

Legend

- Wilderness Park Boundary
- State Park Boundary
- Road
- Hiking trail
- TH Trailhead
- Cabin
- Campsite
- Scenic
- Drinking water
- Tram
- Ranger
- Toilet

Trail Descriptions

For more information on trails in Kachemak Bay State Park, including detailed camping and water availability, visit www.alaskastateparks.org and www.alaskastatetrails.org

Emerald Lake Loop Trail 1

Access: Grewingk Glacier Trails or Humpy Creek Trailhead
Distance: 12.6-mile loop
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 2,800 feet

This trail accesses beautiful Emerald Lake and its alpine surroundings. The trail climbs to Portlock Plateau for fantastic views of Kachemak Bay. Look for bears and mountain goats on the high ridges.

Grewingk Glacier Trails 2

Access: Glacier Spit Trailhead, Humpy Creek Trailhead or Emerald Lake Loop Trail.
Distance: Grewingk Tram Spur Trail, 1 mile; Blue Ice Trail, 1.9 miles
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 500 feet

Blue Ice Trail offers the only developed access to a glacier in Kachemak Bay State Park. At Grewingk Creek, there is a hand-operated cable car pulley system that requires two people for operation. Caution: Unless properly trained and outfitted for glacial travel, do not climb on ice or in ice caves.

Glacier Lake Trail 3

Access: Glacier Spit Trailhead or Saddle Trailhead
Distance: 3.2 miles one way to Grewingk Glacier Lake from Glacier Spit Trailhead
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 200 feet

This trail crosses flat terrain and ends at the broad, open beaches of Grewingk Glacier Lake. The trail comprises a popular route joined by the Saddle and Grewingk Glacier trails.

China Poot Lake Trail 4

Access: Halibut Cove Lagoon
Distance: 2.8 miles one way to China Poot Lake
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 500 feet

This popular trail gently climbs through the forest and over a low ridge, passing two small lakes where common loons are often seen and blueberries are plentiful in August.

Moose Valley Trail 5

Access: North end at mile 1.0 China Poot Lake Trail or south end at mile 0.8 Poot Peak South Trail.
Distance: 6.7 miles
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 1,200 feet (traveling southward)

This trail passes along the shore of Two Loon Lake, ascends through forested ridges and valleys, and then opens into Moose Valley's meadows. Look for high waterfalls beyond the log footbridge over Moose Valley Creek. Be attentive—tall grasses can obscure trail markers.

Poot Peak Trails 6

Access: China Poot Lake Trail to China Poot Lake
Distance: 4.3 miles North to South Trail loop with summit
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 2,430 feet

There are two routes that branch off the Wosnesenski River Trail to the summit of Poot Peak. The north route is very steep and is not maintained. The south route is not as difficult and is maintained, but it is longer than the north route. Both trails lead to the Summit Spur Trail. Only hikers with rock climbing training should continue beyond this point—climbing the peak is hazardous due to shifting scree and falling rock.

Wosnesenski River Trail 7

Access: China Poot Lake Campsite, Haystack Trailhead
Distance: 11.3 miles one way
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 900 feet

Beginning from the Poot Peak Trail, this route winds through forests, meadows and bogs, up and over a low ridge, and into the Wosnesenski River Valley. The Wosnesenski River is a glacial river, braided with gravel flats on either side; this is a highly scenic area with sweeping vistas of mountains and glaciers, and a spectacular 600-foot waterfall.

Sadie Knob Trail 8

Access: North Eldred Trailhead, South Eldred Trailhead. Please respect private property south of these two trailheads.
Distance: North route, 1.6 miles; South route, 1.9 miles; ridge trail to Sadie Knob, 2.6 miles
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 2,200 feet

This trail accesses an alpine ridge between Sadie Cove and Kachemak Bay. The North and the South routes connect the north and south ends of Eldred Passage—both join the ridge route at Quiet Creek. The trail follows the ridgeline to Sadie Knob where hikers can enjoy superb and expansive 360° views of Kachemak Bay. Caution: Vertical cliffs and rugged country! Clouds often shroud the trail, limiting visibility to under 50 feet making it easy to lose the trail. Wait for clouds to lift so you can spot trail markers in tricky areas.

Grace Ridge Trail 9

Access: North end at Kayak Beach Campsite or south end at South Grace Ridge Trailhead
Distance: 8.9 miles one way
Travel Means: Foot
Elevation Gain: 3,100 feet

This hike offers stunning views of Eldred Passage, Sadie Peak, Cook Inlet volcanoes and beyond. Watch for mountain goats, black bears, and golden and bald eagles.