

Backcountry Trip Planner



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The Park

The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve, together with adjacent National Parks and Wildlife Refuges in both U.S and Canada, is part of the world's largest contiguous piece of internationally protected land, recognized by the United Nations as a World Heritage site. The park is six times the size of Yellowstone, includes 10 of the 15 highest peaks in North America and the nation's largest glacier system. The mountains, high alpine tundra and wide river valleys offer unique opportunities for backcountry travelers to enjoy an incomparable wilderness experience.

The Flight

Flying over impressive glaciers, through colorful jagged mountains and along wide glacial rivers to a remote destination is an experience you'll never forget. On the way, your pilot will be able to point out hiking routes and identify exciting geographic features. We've carefully chosen landing areas offering access to the most spectacular regions of the Park. The individual headsets provided allow you to talk to the pilot as you fly to a backcountry destination of your choice.

How to Choose your Trip

While offering incredible views and stunning solace, traveling in the Wrangell-St. Elias wilderness can be unexpectedly challenging. Many hiking routes involve river crossings, steep and rugged terrain, and require honed backcountry navigation skills. We recommend that you choose your trip carefully, keeping in mind the following:

- **Your experience level.** Routes starting at one point and ending at another are the most challenging. Base camp excursions allow you to become acquainted with the Wrangell-St. Elias wilderness without the pressure of reaching a specific destination. Hikers less familiar with Alaska terrain may also opt to hire a local guide. Traveling alone is not recommended.
- **Duration of your trip.** Inclement weather can foul even the best-planned flight schedules. Remember to allow at least one extra day.
- **Cost.** Wrangell Mountain Air offers a wide variety of trips. Prices are per person, roundtrip from McCarthy, Alaska.

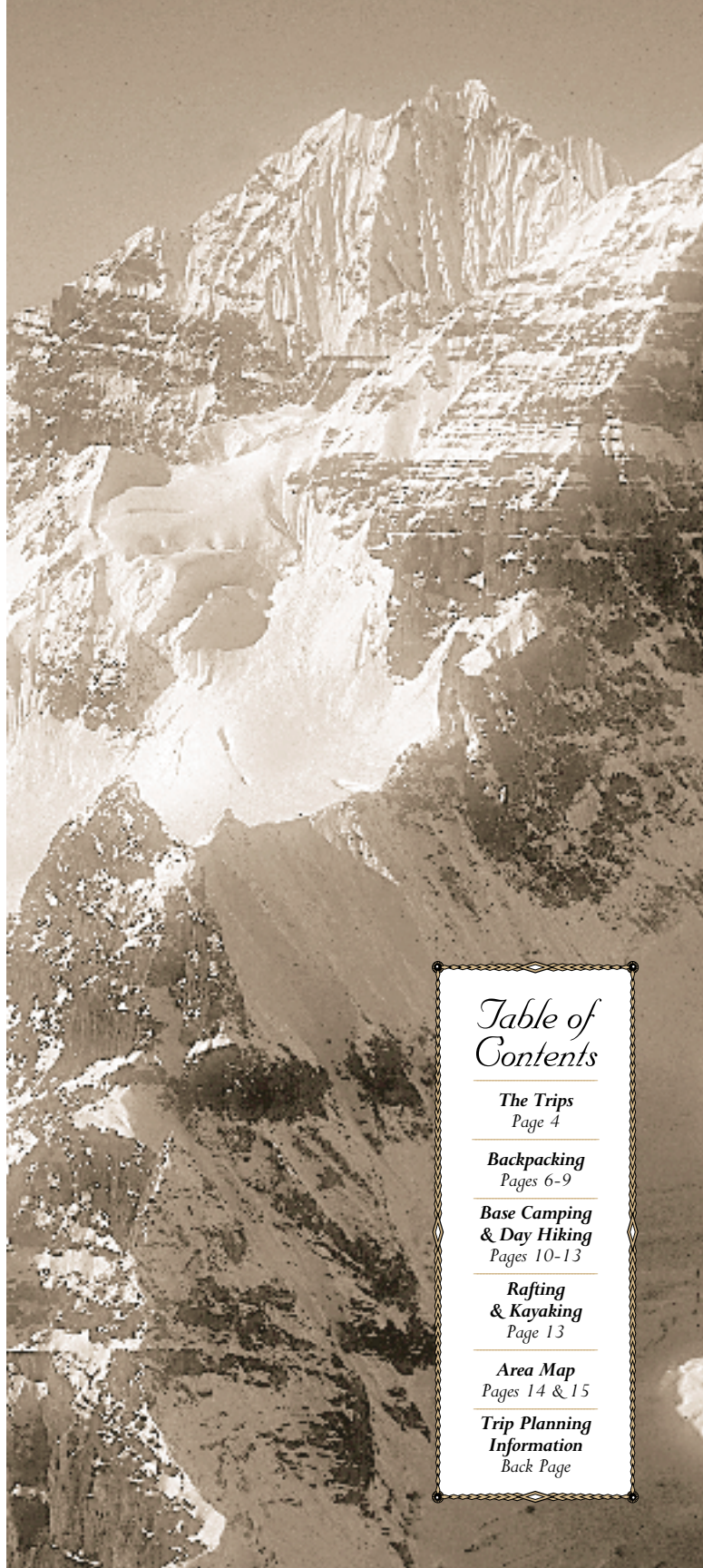


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The Trips

Choose among the following types of trips:



FLY-IN DAY HIKING

Fly out in the morning and enjoy a day hiking alpine meadows, exploring remote river valleys, seeking out blue glacial ice and waters or just savoring the solitude of remote wilderness. We can schedule a pick up in time for dinner.

WILDERNESS BACKPACKING & BASE CAMPING

On the way to your drop off point, enjoy a scenic flight up glacial valleys and past nameless mountains. Once you reach your destination, establish a base camp for day hiking, travel a loop exploring surrounding mountains or hike via a suggested route to another airstrip.

RIVER RAFTING & KAYAKING

Whether arranging your own rafting trip or hiring a local guide service, floating through the Park is a terrific way to discover the grand scale of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. Fly your party and equipment into a remote location and experience the thrill of a whitewater run or relax on a scenic float. Watch for a wide variety of wildlife as you float through some of the most rugged terrain in North America.

CUSTOM TRIPS

Plan a trip based on your experience level, budget and desired means of travel. You may want to combine rafting, hiking and glacier travel, or arrange to have your pilot drop off/pick you up at some other specified location. Combination custom trips often involve rigorous travel and technical equipment. Local guides may be recommended, depending on your level of experience.

GUIDED TRIPS

Local guides are available. A guide experienced in the Wrangell-St. Elias wilderness will enhance your ability to safely explore and enjoy exciting terrain you might have never visited on your own. Upon request we will provide you with our recommendations of experienced local guides for the type of trip that you desire.

River & Glacier Crossing Seminar

Some wilderness travelers may find that certain challenges such as river and glacier crossings can be a bit intimidating. If you are interested in a route that includes such crossings but prefer to travel as an unguided group, plan a day of training before you are scheduled to depart on your trip. An experienced guide will take you out on the Root Glacier for a hike on the ice that will not only be educational but a lot of fun. Visit our website for more information.



Backpacking



Wrangell-St. Elias is a wilderness park without maintained trails and a great variety of challenging terrain. The trips listed below traverse a wild, dynamic, awe inspiring land by routes which may or may not have discernable trails. Distance quickly becomes irrelevant in this varying terrain, so we have supplemented rough mileage estimates with recommended travel time in days. We suggest studying the appropriate USGS maps before making your final choice.

All flights originate at McCarthy unless arranged otherwise

Difficulty level rating: ★ Easy ★★ Moderate ★★★ Strenuous ★★★★ Extreme

THE GOAT TRAIL

★★★ to ★★★★★

Maps: McCarthy C-3, C-4, B-4

25 miles, 5-8 days

This classic Alaskan hike follows the geographic division between the Wrangell and St. Elias ranges and along an historic route leading from McCarthy to the Chisana gold fields. A scenic flight takes you to the Skolai landing strip (4500') where a day or two allows you to explore 'Hole in the Wall' Glacier or hike the alpine bench overlooking Russell Glacier which provides spectacular vistas of the University Range (16,421'). From Skolai, the route climbs over 6000' Chitistone Pass, through Chitistone Gorge and descends to follow the Chitistone River down to the landing strip at Glacier Creek. Steep cliffs interrupted by waterfalls border this canyon, which is home for black and grizzly bears, wolves, wolverine, red fox and mountain goats. Hikers may opt to travel in the reverse direction, beginning at Glacier Creek and ending at Skolai.

This route may involve difficult river crossings and traverses steep, exposed scree.

SKOLAI TO WOLVERINE MOUNTAIN

★★★

Maps: McCarthy C-3, C-4

18 miles, 4-8 days

This variation of the Goat Trail allows you to remain at high elevations and avoid the larger river crossings on the Chitistone. After landing at Skolai, you'll follow the same route over Chitistone pass and along the gorge. At the top of Chitistone Falls, you will turn up a small creek valley leading into high alpine meadows, surrounded by hanging glaciers on one end and the impressive views of Mt. Bona (16,421') and Mt. Churchill (15,640') on the other. Watch for caribou, Dall sheep, mountain goats, grizzlies, wolves, and wolverine.

This route involves traversing steep exposed scree, loose talus, minor stream crossings and wet tundra (depending on the time of year).

BEAVER CREEK TRAIL (Horsfeld to Chisana)

★ to ★★★★★

Maps: McCarthy D-2, Nabesna A-2, A-3

20 miles, 4-8 days

A scenic flight through Chitistone Pass will take you across the divide to the north side of the Wrangells. The Horsfeld landing strip at 3500', in the Nutzotin Mountains, is above tree line in open tundra country, allowing excellent wildlife viewing opportunities. The trail follows gentle terrain along Beaver Creek and leads to the historic Chisana (Shushanna) gold district - site of the last great Gold Rush in 1913. History buffs may enjoy searching the area for old cabins and artifacts (not to be removed from the Park please). An extra day or two will allow for a day hike up Carl Creek or grayling fishing at Beaver Lake. The trail at Beaver Lake continues to the settlement of Chisana. Rustic lodging is available at Chisana, and a restored historic cabin is also available for public use.

This route follows a well defined trail most of the way, although it may disappear in tundra tussock or be overgrown. It may be wet in certain areas and crosses several streams that vary greatly in size throughout the season.

CASTLE PEAK ROUTE

★★★

Maps: McCarthy C-6, C-7

10-12 miles, 3-5 days

This is a nice three to four day trip that passes through some lovely terrain. The route is mostly straight forward with a few key points to watch out for. The area just over the pass is especially nice around the lakes where there are lots of good spots to camp. An option to extend the route to Kuskulana Pass is also included for those feeling more adventurous.

This hike involves extended side-hill traversing of steep grassy and rocky slopes, as well as stream crossings.

CASTLE PEAK TRAVERSE

★★★

Maps: McCarthy C-6, C-7, C-8

28 miles, 7-10 days

From the Lakina River, the route crosses the valley by way of the toe of the Lakina Glacier, and continues up Mill Creek along the base of Castle Peak. A steep climb takes you to a high pass at 6000', about 1000' above the valley floor. On a very clear day, view Mt. St. Elias (18,008'), Mt. Logan (19,850') and the countless unnamed peaks standing before them. A traverse following the tracks of Dall sheep along the high ridges leads to the final destination at Kuskulana Pass. From the open alpine country of this pass, enjoy excellent day hiking in several directions and opportunities for viewing bears, Dall sheep, wolves, foxes and eagles.

This continuation of the Castle Peak Route is recommended for experienced and/or guided backpackers seeking additional adventure and views of the region's highest Mountains.

SKOLAI PASS TO NIZINA GLACIER

★★★

Maps: McCarthy C-3, C-4

28 miles, 7-10 days

After a spectacular flight through the Nizina and Skolai valleys, scoping your prospective route along the way, you will land at Skolai Pass (4500') and find yourself surrounded by massive peaks and impressive glaciers. On the other side of Skolai creek, the route follows an old trail along the valley to Frederika Glacier. With attentive route finding, you will travel the Frederika's ice highway, enjoying the bold scenery of the alpine environment. A rigorous climb on the back of an unnamed glacier leads to a lofty pass and stunning views of the Rohn and Regal Glaciers. Descending the green alpine basin before you takes you to the Rohn Glacier. Once again strapping on crampons, you cross the Rohn and Regal Glaciers below the magnificent Chimney Mountain. Enjoy views of Mt. Regal (13,859') and it's blue icefalls on the last day of this trip, while traveling down the Nizina Glacier to the airstrip near terminus of the Nizina Glacier.

This excursion involves traveling on glaciers and requires specialized knowledge and equipment. It is recommended only for backcountry travelers trained and experienced in glacier travel or as an adventurous guided trip.

SOLO CREEK TO CHISANA

★ to ★★★★★

Maps: McCarthy D-2, D-3, Nabesna A-3

27 miles, 4-6 days

Imagine you are a gold seeker in 1913 rushing to Chisana. Follow a historic trail through open tundra to this once booming frontier town. After a beautiful flight through Chitistone Canyon and over the White River, you will land at 3600' near Solo Creek. Passing several small lakes, you climb gradually to a height of 5000', then head down to Geohenda Creek and along its rocky bank to Chisana. Caribou frequent the rolling green country, as well as grizzlies, wolverine, wolves, and many interesting ground-nesting birds such as the quivering snipe. A public use cabin is available along the trail and in Chisana.

The trail crosses several streams including Geohenda creek and can be quite wet in the flat tundra.

PYRAMID PEAK TRAVERSE

★★★

Maps: McCarthy B4, B5

22 miles, 4-5 days

This is an interesting route that moves through a variety of terrain. It starts out in an alpine valley then moves to a high traverse culminating in a ridge walk up and over the shoulder of Andrus Peak. Fantastic views wait at the top of the surrounding peaks, cliffs and glaciers. From there it's down Rex Creek where there are numerous cabins and other mining era relics including the remains of Chititu Camp.

ICEBERG LAKE TO ROSS GREEN LAKE

★★★

Maps: Bering Glacier D-4, 5, 6 C-4, 5, 6

17 miles, 4-6 days

This exciting route begins at a lake nestled in a valley just recently vacated by glaciers. Beginning at Iceberg Lake, follow the shore to an unnamed tributary glacier that joins the Tana Glacier. The route maneuvers across 10 miles of undulating glacier ice surrounded by jagged mountain ridges. Revel in the solitude of this remote landscape and the incredible views in all directions. Crossing the Tana Glacier to the east brings you to the edge of the glacier near the banks of Granite Creek. Follow this spectacular valley to the landing strips below Ross Green Lake. If your crossing went too quickly you may want to explore the rugged terrain of Thompson Ridge looming high above Ross Green Lake.

This excursion involves traveling on glaciers and requires specialized knowledge and equipment. It is recommended only for backcountry travelers trained and experienced in glacier travel or as an adventurous guided trip.

SEVEN PASS ROUTE

★★★

Maps: Bering Glacier: D-6, D-7 / McCarthy: A-6, A-7
18-35 miles, 5-8+ days

Virtually untouched by human presence, this is a remote hike through classic Wrangell terrain; massive glacier carved valleys, cascading waterfalls, and hidden alpine lakes. Reminiscent of the Skolai Valley and the Goat Trail, The Seven Pass Route will challenge and amaze you with a constantly changing landscape. Three different options allow for varied backcountry skill levels and trip lengths, but all will leave you with a truly unique wilderness experience.

Hikers should be prepared for changing weather, steep and rough terrain, minor stream crossings and remote route finding. Depending on the route option you choose, glacier travel may be involved. If the full route is done, a guide may be advisable.

ALLIE'S VALLEY TO BREMNER MINE

★★★

Maps: Bering Glacier D6-7, McCarthy A7 **18-20 miles, 4-6 days**

This route begins in the lush Allie's Valley where you might be tempted to linger a day before pushing on to your destination. After going up and over the first pass, the trip joins up with the Seven Pass route, after all the glacier crossings. You will travel through inviting, green valleys and across rocky and barren high passes. A wide variety of terrain awaits the adventurous trekker on this trip which concludes in the historic, Bremner gold mining district. Allow a little time on the end of the trip to explore the ruins of the Yellowband mine site.

BREMNER MINE TO TEBAY LAKES

★★★

Maps: McCarthy A-7, A-8, Valdez A-1, A-2 **45 miles, 6-7 days**

The trip from Bremner Mine to Tebay Lakes is an amazing adventure through virtually untouched Alaskan wilderness. A panoramic flight unveils views of the Wrangell and St. Elias Mountains on your way to the abandoned Bremner mine. You may want to spend a day or two here exploring the ruins of the Lucky Girl and Yellowband Mines where relics of the 20's and 30's await your discovery. The route from Bremner to Tebay Lakes traverses a variety of terrain, including many aspects of a classic Alaskan wilderness trek. After winding through rugged mountains and wandering a series of valleys the route descends into the valley filled with the beautiful Tebay Lakes. Enjoy some Rainbow Trout fishing before your bush plane pick-up. While mountaineering skills are not necessary for this trip, it is recommended for strong backpackers with excellent route finding skills.

TEBAY LAKE TO TANA RIVER

★★★★

Maps: Bering D-6, McCarthy A-7, A-8, Valdez A-1, A-2
85 miles, 12-14 days

This is a combination of the two trips listed above and to our knowledge has never been done although Bremner to Tebay and Tebay to Tana have been done at different times. It is recommended only for highly skilled and experienced backpackers seeking a very unique adventure. Starting from Tebay Lake this trip traverses approximately 85 miles of rugged Alaska wilderness to the Tana River. The route will involve glacier and stream crossings. At times the route may require crossing steep and exposed terrain. The beginning and end of this trip involves bush whacking. While this trip offers a grand adventure it should only be undertaken by the most experienced and best prepared wilderness travelers.

TANA RIVER NOTCH

★★★

Maps: McCarthy A9, A7, B8 **20 miles, 4 days**

This is a challenging route that makes a great four day trip. The route moves from a wide lush valley, to a lovely alpine lake just below the first pass. You will then continue over an easy glacier crossing, followed by two more passes. The trip ends at a lovely lake perched high above the Tana River. This is a great trip if you want to see a wide variety of beautiful country but don't have time for a longer trip.

STEAMBOAT HILLS

★

Maps: McCarthy A8, A7, B8, B7 **18 miles, 3-4 days**

Move over gently rolling terrain through a series of beautiful emerald green lakes nestled among rocky peaks and rolling plateaus. Opportunities for side hikes abound, including dramatic ridge walks with panoramic views of the surrounding valleys and the Chitina River. Mountain sheep are frequently sighted all over this area. By late July the slopes are a lush green on this enchanting route. There are no glaciers or difficult stream crossings on this trip.

MT. WRANGELL TREK

★★

Maps: Valdez D1, D2 **16 miles, 3-4 days**

A great little trip through beautiful country right on the flanks of Mt. Wrangell with views of Blackburn as well. Start on easy tundra and hike up to Cheshnina Falls. From there you will cross Cheshnina Glacier on an easy flat section. From there the route moves through lonely talus strewn ridges and down onto a wide open tundra plateau. Enjoy the changing views of Wrangell as it reveals itself on your trip.

HANAGITA TRAVERSE

★★★

Maps: McCarthy A7, A8, B8 **40 miles, 4-7 days**

A challenging route that begins at Steamboat Hills, travels through the Hanagita and Klu River valleys, then moves to high country passes among rugged peaks. One of the more interesting options on the trip is to hike up the valley and camp at the base of Hanagita Peak near thunderous waterfalls and lush rolling hills. The country in the vicinity of Shovel Peak provides a dramatic conclusion to a great trip before dropping down to Bremner mine strip on Golconda Creek.

NUTZOTIN TRAVERSE

★★

Maps: McCarthy D1, D2, Nabesna A1 **30 miles, 5-6 days**

A beautiful flight through Chitstone and Skolai Passes leads you to the starting point of this trip in the Nutzotin Mountains. The route begins on open tundra. After crossing Beaver Creek you pass through a stand of timber where old cabin sites remain. Crossings of two passes will take you into the high country with views of the surrounding mountains. After a crossing of the North Fork (canyons to explore) you ascend a high ridge. A wonderful hike down the crest of a wildflower-covered ridge brings you to a large, secluded lake. Bear and caribou can be spotted on the route. This is a great early season trip when other routes are still snow bound.

WOLVERINE TO DOUBTFUL CREEK

★★ to ★★★

Maps: McCarthy C4 **11-13 miles, 3-4 days**

This is a good trip if you want a short point to point route. The route moves from the high country at Wolverine down to the foot of the Nizina Glacier and the start of the Nizina River.

WOLVERINE CIRCUMNAVIGATION

★★

Maps: McCarthy C4 **11-13 miles, 3-4 days**

This route option is not traveled that often though it makes a nice alternative to simply base camping at Wolverine. The trip takes you all the way around a big mesa and presents a wide variety of terrain for such a small area.

SOUTHERN PARK TRAVERSE

★★★★

Maps: McCarthy A6-8, B7, B8, Bering G1, D4-7, C4-7
85-95 miles, 12-14 days

If you have already completed several rugged Alaskan backcountry trips and are looking for a more extreme challenge, then this is the trip for you.

This route begins at the east end of Steamboat Hills and continues all the way to Iceberg Lake and then, for good measure, adds a little jaunt across the Tana Glacier to Ross Green Lake. This is a long, and at times, difficult and challenging route, but for the experienced and prepared adventurer, truly the trip of a lifetime. You will pass through some of the best country that the park has to offer. There are two airstrips along the route that offer good re-supply points. This trip would require significant planning and preparation but offers a highly rewarding wilderness experience.

Hikers should be prepared for changing weather, steep and rough terrain, minor to major stream crossings and remote route finding. Glacier travel will be involved. Wildlife encounters are possible. If the full route is done, a guide may be advisable.

CUSTOM TRIPS/UNEXPLORED ROUTES

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve encompasses roughly 20,000 square miles of wilderness and much of it still remains unexplored. Adventure options for the imaginative traveler are endless. Custom trips can combine mountain climbing, glacier hiking or ice climbing, river rafting and fishing. Call us if a custom trip is what you are looking for.



Base Camping & Day Hiking

Many fly in destinations in the park provide opportunities for day hiking from the comfort of a fixed camp or exploring the country hiking in a loop and returning to the same airstrip. Because of the limited amount of trails and routes in this wilderness park, base camping is an excellent way to enjoy the backcountry.

Please be aware that base campers will have a much larger impact on an area than continually moving hikers. Please know and follow the NPS guidelines for minimum impact hiking and camping.

**Traverse routes to some areas are also available. See descriptions under 'backpacking'.*

ALLIE'S VALLEY*

Map McCarthy A-6, A-7

The flight across the rugged Chugach mountains take you to this beautiful remote valley. Surrounded by hanging glaciers at the end of a long alpine valley, you will feel like the only persons on earth. From here you can explore your valley, or cross a pass and check out the headwaters of another valley. The options are virtually endless. Look for moose, bear and possible wolves as well as Dall sheep.

CHIMNEY MOUNTAIN

Maps: McCarthy C-4, C-5

Fly up the amazing Nizina River Valley and land at the base of this spectacular peak perched above the confluence of the Rohn and Regal Glaciers. Day hike the high country and enjoy views of towering peaks and massive glaciers in all directions. Keep your eyes open for the local inhabitants. You will be wandering the summer range of mountain goats and Dall sheep.

HORSFELD

Maps: McCarthy D1-D2, Nabesna A1-A2

A spectacular flight through Chitstone Pass follows a historic route between the Wrangells and the St. Elias Mountains. Horsfeld landing strip (3500' in the Nutzotin Mountains), is above tree line in open tundra country, allowing excellent opportunities to watch for wildlife and enjoy views in all directions. There are day-trip hikes in all directions. A loop hike is possible following Klein Creek to its source and crossing a pass to descend Carl Creek to the Beaver Creek Trail. Lakes and valleys to the north invite exploration or cross Beaver Creek and explore the hills and mountains to the south. The variety of terrain ensures that there is something interesting and challenging for hikers of all abilities. This part of the park is seldom visited.

BREMNER MINE*

Map McCarthy A-7

Located in a narrow valley at 3000', the Bremner mine is a collection of 1920's and 30's era buildings and artifacts from a small scale, hard rock gold mine. Surrounding mountains offer intriguing routes for day hiking or backpacking in a loop. Take a gold pan along for some recreational gold mining. A public use cabin is available on a first come, first serve basis.

CHISANA (pronounced Shu-shan-na)

Maps: Nabesna A-3

Gold was discovered in the hills and this log cabin town sprang up nearly overnight. The year was 1913 yet today this town still exists and offers the rare experience of a frontier town in a rugged mountain setting. From Chisana you can day hike or hike a loop through the hills where gold was discovered, or head off across the tundra to another airstrip for a later pickup. In Chisana you can stay at a log cabin the National Park Service renovated or at a local B&B. Enjoy the friendly atmosphere and clean mountain air at this fly in only, remote Alaskan town.

HUBERTS LANDING

Map McCarthy A-2

Land near the toe of the Chitina Glacier, which feeds the region's largest river. Here the river bar of the braided waters is three miles wide, and is home to moose, wolves, coyotes and even bison. Climbing moderate slopes behind the strip on a clear day allows views of Mt. Logan (19,850'), the second highest peak in North America. Take the route along the Chitina Glacier to Ram glacier for an enjoyable excursion to a secluded campsite with exquisite views. There is a public-use cabin available near the strip on a first come, first serve basis.

DONOHO LAKES

Maps: McCarthy C-6

Just a short plane hop from McCarthy, this is an ideal place to get away for a day or longer. Surrounded by the Gates, Kennicott and Root Glaciers, this alpine oasis is right in the middle of some of the best views around. To the North is Mt. Blackburn (16,390'), the highest peak in the Wrangells. To the East, Donaho Peak towers over the lake basin. Enjoy some day hiking or head out for a longer adventure.

DOUBTFUL CREEK

Map: McCarthy C-4

Located near the lake at the Nizina Glacier terminus, this location offers a variety of hiking terrain and expansive views dominated by nearby Nizina and Chimney Mountains. Follow the river bank upstream, along the glacier margin where blue ice is exposed by calving, seek out waterfall fed rock pools off of Moonshine Creek or ascend Doubtful Creek into the higher country.

TEBAY LAKES

Map Valdez A-1, A-2

Land in open meadows at the end of a lake-filled valley. Encompassed by hanging glaciers and jagged mountains, enjoy rainbow trout fishing in the blue alpine waters. You can day hike two miles to a large waterfall or pick your way up the rocky, green slopes to higher elevations.

THE FOSSE

Map McCarthy C-6

Tucked neatly between the Kennicott Glacier's lateral moraine and the base of the adjacent mountain, this landing strip offers a variety of amazing glacier views and exploring options. Hike along the flat fosse terrain, climb the green alpine slopes above or walk along the Kennicott Glacier.

GLACIER CREEK

Maps: McCarthy B-4

Fly in to the mouth of the Chitstone Canyon and land at the Glacier Creek airstrip. Surrounded by jagged peaks, glaciers and rivers, take advantage of the National Park Service public use cabin or camp on the dryas bars of the Chitstone River. From the airstrip you can hike the Chitstone canyon, climb to alpine meadows or access the Twaharpe Glacier. The awesome scenery of this secluded place will astound you.

ROSS GREEN LAKE*

Map Bering Glacier D-4, C-4

Located at the base of jagged Thompson Ridge, innumerable surrounding peaks compose an exciting alpine landscape. From the landing area on a sand bar near Ross Green Lake, explore along Granite Creek or climb to higher elevations. See long open views of Tana Glacier to the west, stretching from the giant Bagley Icefield, which lies just 5 air miles away to the south.

HIDDEN CREEK LAKE*

Map McCarthy C-6

Colorful limestone cliffs border this canyon whose waters fill the glacier-dammed Hidden Lake. A scenic flight over the Kennicott Glacier brings you to a landing strip inside the valley. From here, hike leisurely to the lake and watch for icebergs calving from the face of the Kennicott Glacier or follow the tracks of Dall sheep and mountain goats to the higher elevations.

ICEBERG LAKE*

Map Bering Glacier C-6, D-6

Near wide views of massive Bagley Icefield, this landing strip offers a variety of hiking terrain. Enjoy easy hiking along the lake; access the nearby white ice of Tana Glacier or climb steep slopes to higher elevations. Glaciers spilling from hanging valleys, the roaring creek and calving ice all accompany the stunning solitude.

KUSKULANA PASS*

Map McCarthy C-7

Follow the ancient trails of Dall sheep along the rolling alpine slopes of 5000' Kuskulana Pass. On a clear day, find sweeping views of towering Mt. Blackburn (16,390') and distant giants Mt. Logan (19,850') and St. Elias (18,008').

MT WRANGELL PLATEAU

Maps: Valdez D-1

Take a hike along the lower slopes of Mt. Wrangell. The broad, trundle plateau gives you unobstructed views and easy access to the icy Western side of this 13,887' peak. On a clear, windless day you may catch a glimpse of the steam plume rising lazily from this active volcano. Hiking is easy to moderate on alpine tundra, and good camping spots can be had near small lakes and numerous clear streams. For the alert backcountry traveler, this location offers good opportunities to see caribou, Dall sheep, wolves and bears.

MACCOLL RIDGE

Maps: McCarthy A-4, A-5

Land on a ridge at 5000' with views in all directions. Hiking here is unlimited on the alpine ridges and meadows. See the Wrangell Range to the North and Mt. Logan and St. Elias to the South. Below the braids of the Chitina River wind their way through the beautiful landscape that goes on forever. Savvy observers will have the opportunity to watch Dall sheep, mountain goats, bears and possibly wolves. The rolling terrain offers opportunities for base camping as well as a multi-day exploration of the ridge.

MILE HIGH CLIFFS

Map McCarthy B-5

From the fuzzy dryas covered Nizina River bar, behold the spectacle of massively folded and twisted limestone cliffs 2400' above. Enjoy easy hiking along the flat bar whose braided waters originate from Nizina Glacier ten miles away. A clear stream flows from the base of the cliffs often attracting grizzly, black bears and an occasional moose.

NIKOLAI PASS

Map McCarthy B-5

In the alpine country of Nikolai Pass, look to Mt. Blackburn (16,390') in one direction, the snowy University Range (16,421') in the other, and the glacial waters of Nizina River 2400' below. Hike along rolling slopes toward the base of Sourdough peak, or explore nearby remains of old Nikolai Mine. Great photo opportunities.

NIZINA GLACIER

Maps: McCarthy C4, C5

Land at the end of a glacial lake filled with icebergs from nearby Nizina Glacier. The views from the lakeshore are outstanding and there is a public use cabin tucked into the woods about a half a mile from the airstrip. This area offers casual hikes along the lakeshore and gravel bars along the Nizina River as well as routes up Nizina Mountain to alpine areas above tree line. This spot has it all; glaciers, rivers, mountains and a snug cabin in pretty setting.

WOLVERINE MOUNTAIN*

Map McCarthy C-4

Located on an alpine bench above Chitstone Canyon, this 5000' home for Dall sheep and mountain goat, is an excellent spot for day hiking and backpacking. View the snowy amphitheater of the University Range from nearby higher terrain.

SKOLAI PASS*

Map McCarthy C-3

From the landing strip at 4500', behold Russell Glacier spilling rocky ice into the gravelly expanse of the White River bar. Exploring the alpine terrain, views of Hole in the Wall Glacier, icy University Range (16,421') and grazing caribou.

STEAMBOAT HILLS

Maps: McCarthy A-7, A-8, B-7, B-8

This is a delightful area for base camping, especially for families. You will be surrounded by a magical, almost pastoral landscape of rolling hills sprinkled with tiny lakes that sparkle like freshly cut emeralds nestled among velvety green pillows. At the periphery of the central hill country is a ragged ridge line of rugged crags and peaks that form a dramatic backdrop to the gentler terrain of our route. One of the highlights of this route is the opportunity for viewing the many Dall sheep that inhabit the area. The wide open terrain makes them easy to spot from afar. But bring your telephoto lens if you want to get up close and personal with these elusive animals.

PEAVINE BAR

Maps: McCarthy B4, B5

It is a short but very scenic flight to Peavine Bar near the mouth of the Chitstone Canyon. The airstrip is tucked along side the river with vertical limestone cliffs of Chitstone Canyon towering 3000' above. Just beside the airstrip are two public use cabins. Hiking is limited here by the Chitstone River but views are great and there is ample room to wander on short hikes from the cabin. Watch for Dall sheep on the cliffs above and black and grizzly bears on the gravel bars along the river. A great place to spend a couple of days.

NUGGET CREEK

Maps: McCarthy C8, C7

Although accessible from the McCarthy Road the flight from McCarthy is spectacular and well worth the price of the trip. There is a nice public use cabin a short hike from the airstrip where you will have an awesome view of the Kukulana Glacier with 16,000' Mt. Blackburn in the background. Hike along the Kukulana Glacier lateral moraine or hike up the old trails to higher elevations for some panoramic views of the big mountains seemingly within a stones throw. Here you will have an opportunity to view Dall sheep, bears and an occasional eagle. This makes a great 2 to 3 day trip.

River Rafting & Kayaking

Floating the waterways of the Wrangell-St. Elias is an excellent way to enjoy the vast beauty of the region. Running rivers, one is able to access country, which can be otherwise impenetrable. Traveling silently, boaters often see more wildlife than hikers. The rivers are glacial in source. They are fast, and extremely cold, thus requiring extra skill and great caution. Andy Embick's book 'Fast and Cold' is highly recommended for more information on the following trips. Local guides are available.

Prices for the following trips are dependent on the number of boats and gear. Floating to take out points at Chitina or Cordova can extend all of these trips. Please call for a quote.

HUBERT'S LANDING TO NIZINA RIVER

3-5 days

Class II

Land at the toe of the Chitina Glacier, which feeds the headwaters of the Copper River's largest tributary. Floating for 60 miles from here the braided Chitina River forms a bar three miles wide. You will be continually joined by churning waters flowing from ice covered giants looming far above the valley. Watch for moose, wolves, grizzly, black bears and bison, which roam the flat Chitina River banks.

NIZINA GLACIER TO CHITINA RIVER

2-3 days

Class III

Where Nizina Glacier crumbles into braided waters, begin a float through awe inspiring, cliff-bound terrain. Long tails of waters fall from massively folded and twisted limousine cliffs. After an exciting white water finale through Nizina Canyon, take out at the confluence with the Chitina River.

KENNICOTT RIVER TO CHITINA RIVER

1-2 days

Class III

With Kennicott Glacier and Stairway Icefall behind you, load rafts at the Kennicott River footbridge into bubbling Class III rapids. A mellow float guides you into braided Nizina River. But waters soon boil again, squeezing through narrow rock-walled Nizina Canyon before reaching the take out at the confluence with the Chitina River.

TANA RIVER TO NIZINA CONFLUENCE*

2-4 days

Class IV+

Flowing from giant Tana Glacier, the Tana River has some of the area's most challenging water. Rushing past sand dunes created by the near desert environment, huge waters tumble into narrow Tana Canyon, and join the Chitina River in forested flats. Take out below the confluence with Nizina River.

***Guided trip is recommended. Only persons with advanced whitewater skills should attempt this trip.**



▲ Mount Sanford
16237

▲ Mount Drum
12010

▲ Mount Wrangell
13887

○ Chisana

WRANGELL MOUNTAINS

NUTZOTIN MOUNTAINS

LONG GLACIER

NABESNA GLACIER

CHISANA GLACIER

BEAVER CREEK

COPPER RIVER

▲ Regal Mtn
13845

ROHN GLACIER

▲ Mount
Blackburn
16390

KENNICOTT GLACIER

REGAL GLACIER

KUSKULANA RIVER

GATES GLACIER

W. FORM GLACIER

NIZINA GLACIER

SKOLAI PASS

WHITE RIVER

Chitina

Kennicott

CHITISTONE CANYON

RUSSELL GLACIER

McCarthy

CHITINA RIVER

SAINT ELIAS MOUNTAINS

▲ Mount Churchill 15638
▲ Mount Bona 16421
▲ University Peak 14470

TEBAY LAKES

HANAGITA VALLEY

MAC COLL RIDGE

KUTLAN GLACIER

BREMNER RIVER

TANA RIVER

HAWKINS GLACIER

BARNARD GLACIER

CHUGACH MOUNTAINS

CHITINA GLACIER

COPPER RIVER

BREMNER GLACIER

TANA GLACIER

LOGAN GLACIER

BALDWIN GLACIER



▲ Mount Steller
10617

▲ Mount Miller
8875

BAGLEY ICE FIELD



AREA MAP

BERING GLACIER

GRANITE CREEK

JEFFERIES GLACIER

Trip Planning Information

The information listed below may be helpful in planning your Alaskan backcountry adventure. The National Park Service has information about the park as well as publications about stream crossings and travel in bear country. They can also supply trip itineraries for some of the trips listed in the Trip Planner.

Two books we highly recommend are “Hiking Guide to Wrangell-St. Elias National Park” by Danny Kost (available at www.alaskaANHA.org). and *Fast and Cold: A guide to Alaska Whitewater*” by Andy Embick (available at Borders or Amazon.com). The books are full of information relevant to hiking and rafting in Alaska by two men with extensive experience in Wrangell-St. Elias.

Visit our website at www.WrangellMountainAir.com for our most current information about our fly-in backcountry trips and our other services in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

MORE INFORMATION:

Wrangell St. Elias National Park Service

P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573
(907)-822-5234
<http://www.nps.gov/wrst>

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Phone: 907-786-7011
Email: gfdurocher@usgs.gov

Alaska Atlas & Gazetteer

DeLorme Mapping
Freeport, Maine 04032
(Book of maps for Alaska)
www.delorme.com/atlasgaz/

BOOKS:

*Fast and Cold: A Guide to
Alaska Whitewater*
Andrew W. Embick

Wrangell-St. Elias
George Herben

*Hiking Guide to Wrangell-
St. Elias National Park*
Danny Kost

Glaciers of North America,
Sue Ferguson

*A Field Guide to Alaska's
Wildflowers*
Verna Pratt

Peterson Guide to Western Birds
Roger Tory Peterson

Soft Paths
B. Hampton

*Mountain Wilderness, An
Illustrated History of Wrangell-
St. Elias National Park.*
William R. Hunt
