



Trail Condition Report

Caines Head State Recreation Area

May 1st, 2024

Overall Conditions: A landslide that occurred in January 2022 is still partially blocking the Coastal Trail that connects Tonsina Point to Caines Head State Recreation Area. The slide is located along Resurrection Bay between Tonsina Point and Callisto Canyon. Hikers are urged to use caution and cross the landslide at their own risk.

Additionally, a contractor is working on the North Fork Bridge of Tonsina Creek and the Tonsina Cabin. Please exercise caution around machinery and work sites. Contacts and information regarding these projects are posted at the Tonsina trailhead.

Please tread lightly as trail treads are saturated with runoff and can be easily damaged! Spring seems to have finally sprung in CHSRA. Snow, ice, mud, and running and/or pooling water is the name of the game on area trails. Additionally, there are numerous down spruce tops, alder and cottonwood limbs impeding trail corridors, after the heavy snow this winter. Staff will be working to clear all trails of debris over the coming month. Snowshoes may benefit hiker's looking to explore the trails out at CHSRA, such as the Fort Trail or Rainforest trail. As always, ice cleats are highly recommended for travel on any Seward area trails. See attached trail breakdown for specific concerns and conditions.

Bears: Bear sign has been reported as of late throughout the greater Seward area. Please travel bear aware and carry a deterrent. If you see a bear while hiking please report it on the "bear sighting" sheet on the last page of this document.

Public-Use Cabins:

- ✦ There is a new website for reservations that still uses the Reserve America platform, but is specific to Alaska State Parks. It can be found at: www.alaskastateparks.reserveamerica.com.
- ✦ **Callisto Canyon cabin is closed due to flood damage**
- ✦ **BE ADVISED:** Access to Derby Cove cabin may require a stream crossing depending upon seasonal snow melt and/or periods of heavy rain. In addition, this cabin is tide dependent and most easily accessed during a low tide of +3ft or lower.
- ✦ Please refer to the Seward area tide tables when booking your stay and be familiar with the tide cycles for the duration of your stay at either of these cabins. Tide Tables are available here: <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/noaatidepredictions.html?id=9455090&legacy=1>.
- ✦ **The Tonsina Point Cabin is not** tide dependent although it may require hiking above the mean high tideline during large tide cycles or active storm surges. Go to: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspcabins/index.htm> for cabin information.

Tent Platforms:

- ✦ There are currently five tent platforms in CHSRA. They are free to use and are first come, first serve.
- ✦ Four are located at North Beach near the day-use shelter. They can be accessed from the day-use shelter area or from a short trail leaving the beach. The beach access is designated with a camping sign. **The two newest platforms built by local Eagle Scouts feature ridge and eave poles for a tarp/rain cover!**
- ✦ The fifth tent platform is located at South Beach. It can be accessed from a short trail near the information board at the southern terminus of the South Beach trail or from the east end of the beach. A camping sign designates the beach access.

How to Get There:

- ✦ CHSRA trails and public-use cabins are accessed by foot from Lowell Point State Recreation Site (LPSRS), located 2.5 miles south of Seward. Follow the Seward Highway into Seward where it becomes Third Avenue. Follow Third Avenue to the end and take a right onto Railway Avenue. This becomes Lowell Point Road. Travel 2.5 miles to Lowell Point and turn right onto Pinnacle View Road, then make an immediate right to the upper parking lot for Lowell Point State Recreation Site and the Tonsina Trailhead. The trail to Tonsina Point and the Coastal Trail to Caines Head State Recreation Area starts at the southwest corner of the upper parking lot. Or continue along Pinnacle View Road and turn right into the lower parking lot for LPSRS and trail to Lowell Point Beach. A trail connects the lower and upper parking lots from behind the lower parking lot latrine to the south side of the upper parking lot.
- ✦ CHSRA trails and cabins can also be accessed by boat via water taxi (**except October-April**). Follow this link for a list of authorized commercial water taxi services: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/kenai/cainesheadtaxi.htm>

Advisory:

- ✦ **CHSRA is bear country and carrying bear spray or other deterrents is encouraged, as is a review of safely travelling and camping in bear country. Information regarding bear safety can be found at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/safety/bears.htm>.**
- ✦ The Coastal Trail is the beach between Tonsina Point and Derby Cove. It also provides the only foot access from Lowell Point State Recreation Site, upper parking area trailhead to the Caines Head trails south and west of Derby Cove (Overland, Alpine, Fort, South Beach, and Rainforest Loop).
- ✦ **The Coastal Trail is only passable during a low tide of +3ft or lower; the beach rocks and outcroppings can be very slick due to biofilm, water, and seasonal ice.**
- ✦ As per Alaska State Parks regulations, all firewood collected for use at public use cabins must be from **dead and down trees. Firewood is often scarce and wet; visitors are highly encouraged to bring their own wood.** The Tonsina Point Cabin has an oil heater that burns kerosene or diesel only.
- ✦ Treat all water in the park by filtration, boiling, or water purification tablets.
- ✦ Please use **LEAVE NO TRACE/PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN** ethics to minimize your impact while in the recreation area. Check out www.lnt.org for more information.

Trail Breakdown: Conditions and Concerns

Tonsina Point Trail	<p>High use. Please do not cut switchbacks! Expect packed snow and ice along with areas of running and/or pooling water. Ice cleats are recommended! Please keep your pets on a leash. A contractor is working on the North Fork Bridge of Tonsina Creek and the Tonsina Cabin and there may be intermittent bridge closures. Contacts and information regarding this project are posted at the Tonsina trailhead.</p>
Coastal Trail	<p>The beach between Tonsina Point and Derby Cove, it is only passable during a low tide of +3ft or lower. Beach rocks and outcroppings can be very slick due to biofilm and seasonal ice. A landslide is still partially blocking the Coastal Trail that connects Tonsina Point to Caines Head State Recreation Area. The slide is located along Resurrection Bay between Tonsina Point and Callisto Canyon. Hikers are urged to use caution and cross the landslide at their own risk!</p>
Overland Trail	<p>Moderate use. Please do not cut switchbacks! Expect muddy conditions with areas of running and/or pooling water. Staff will be working to clear this trail of hazard trees this week.</p>
Alpine Trail	<p>Moderate use. Trail is not marked for winter travel and may be very challenging to follow. Expect deep snow and difficult travel. Avalanche terrain exists on the upper half of this trail, please travel prepared and exercise caution in this area.</p>
Fort Trail	<p>High use. Expect running and/or pooling water, deep snow near the upper half of the trail and mud. Reports of a lot of down alder and spruce in trail corridor. Staff will be working to clear this trail in the coming weeks.</p>
South Beach Trail	<p>Moderate use. Expect areas of running and/or pooling water, snow, and ice. Overhanging or down spruce and alder is likely. Be aware of “holes” opening in the trail tread approximately .75 miles after Fort Trail Jct.</p>
Rainforest Loop Trail	<p>Moderate use. Trail is not marked for winter travel! Markers and flagging exist only between South Beach and the Alpine Trail Junction. Trail can be difficult to follow and navigates a stream bed for a ¼ mile on south side, which may be hazardous to travel after heavy rain. Expect areas of running and/or pooling water, deep snow, ice and down trees.</p>

