

Trails Descriptions

For more information on trails in Denali State Park, visit www.alaskastateparks.org.

K'esugi Ridge Trail 1

Access: Little Coal Creek, Ermine Hill, and Cascade Trailheads
Travel Means: Foot
Distance: 22 miles from Little Coal Creek to Cascade Trail Junction (an additional two to four miles are required to reach the ridge)
Elevation Gain: 2,000 feet (north to south)

The K'esugi trail system traces the K'esugi Ridge and is the centerpiece of the park, with miles of rolling alpine terrain offering incredible views of Denali's south face and the heart of the Alaska Range. However, this is challenging country and it is imperative that you come equipped with a map and compass, and know how to use them. You should also be prepared to turn around or hunker down and wait out poor weather. It is best to traverse the trail from north to south and the best time to hike the trail is between late June and mid-September.

The northern end of the K'esugi Ridge Trail is the high point of the trail at 3,550 feet elevation. The route traces the top of the ridge and is exposed to the elements, but the 360° views of the Alaska Range and Talkeetna Mountains on a clear day are worth the climb. After the Ermine Hill Junction, the path drops about 900 feet before ascending past Skinny Lake to the 2,970-foot rounded summit of Golog. The rolling landscape offers good camping and jaw-dropping views of the peaks across the valley. The only restroom and designated campsite along the route is at Skinny Lake. If you plan to descend to Byers Lake, it's worth hiking past the junction to check out Tarn Point, a 2,880-foot scenic lookout about a mile down the trail.

Little Coal Creek Trail 2

Access: Little Coal Creek Trailhead (mile 163.9)
Travel Means: Foot
Distance: 3.3 miles one way
Elevation Gain: 2,200 feet

The trail ascends parallel Little Coal Creek up to the northern end of the K'esugi Ridge Trail. This is the place to start if you want to hike K'esugi Ridge in its entirety.

Ermine Hill Trail 3

Access: Ermine Hill Trailhead (mile 156.5)
Travel Means: Foot
Distance: 3.7 miles
Elevation Gain: 1,000 feet

This trail winds through the woods and over Giardia Creek (hint, hint) before ascending to the ridge in switchbacks. This route provides the easiest access to the K'esugi Ridge Trail.

Cascade Trail 4

Access: Byers Lake Campground (mile 147)
Travel Means: Foot
Distance: 2 miles one way
Elevation Gain: 1,700 feet

Departing from the Byers Lake Loop Trail at the eastern end, this trail ascends steeply past a tumbling waterfall and onto the ridge crest. Tarn Point, a popular viewpoint and day hike destination, can be found a mile down the trail to the west from the trail junction.

Byers Lake Loop Trail 5

Access: Byers Lake Campground (mile 147)
Travel Means: Foot
Distance: 5.3-mile loop
Elevation Gain: <100 feet

This flat lakeside trail features spectacular views of Denali and provides access to three public-use cabins and campsites along the lake. Three bridges, one of them a long suspension bridge, assist hikers across the inlet stream and the outlet stream and offer views of spawning salmon in late July and early August. On the trails a short distance from the campground, an old cabin beckons photographers to capture its slow return to nature.

Upper Troublesome Creek Trail 6

Access: Upper Troublesome Creek Trailhead (mile 137.6)
Travel Means: Foot
Distance: Under construction

Troublesome Creek Trail, from Upper Troublesome Creek Trailhead to the alpine landscape, is impassable due to severe flood damage; however, trail repairs are underway. Contact the area office at (907) 745-3975.

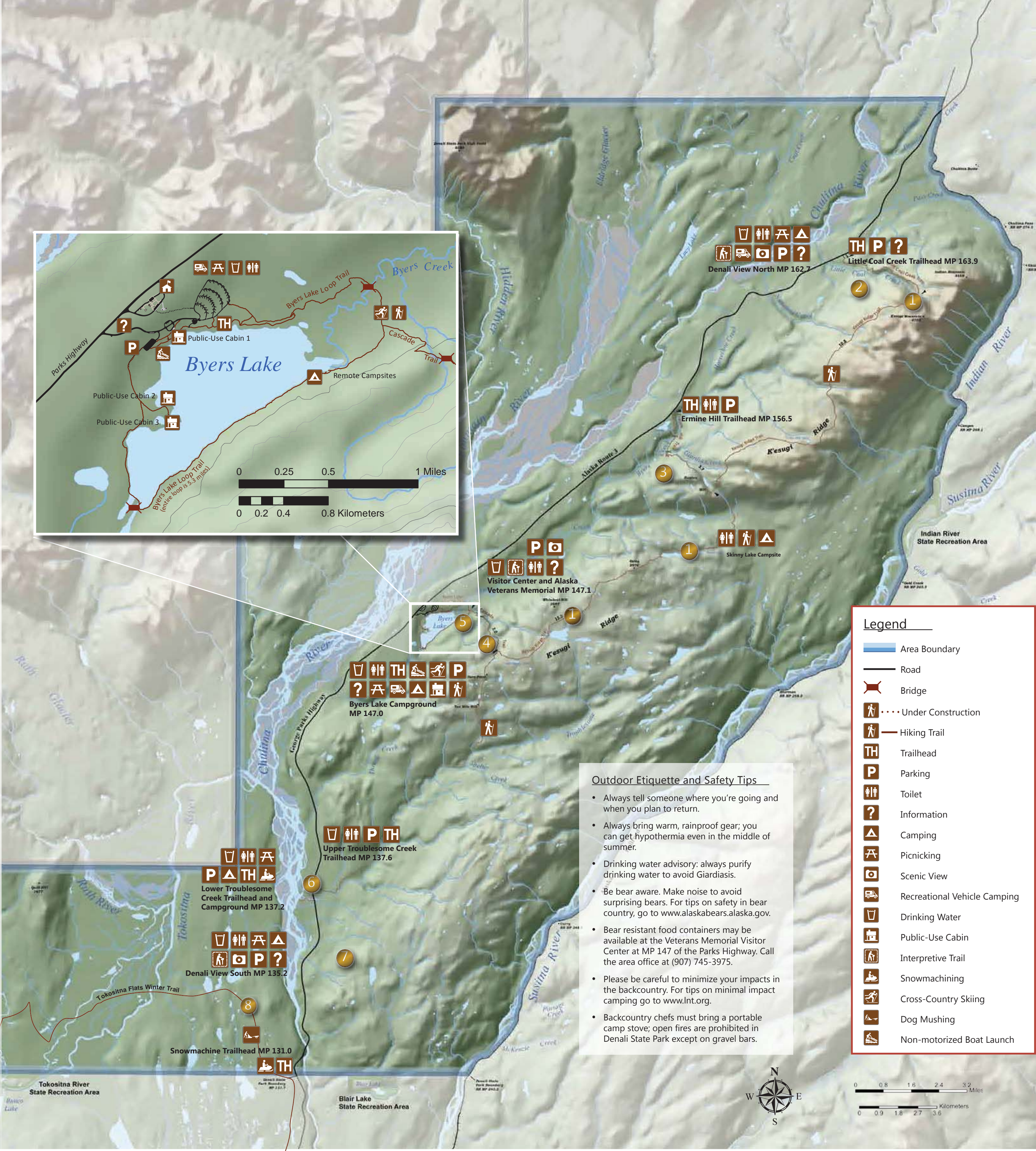
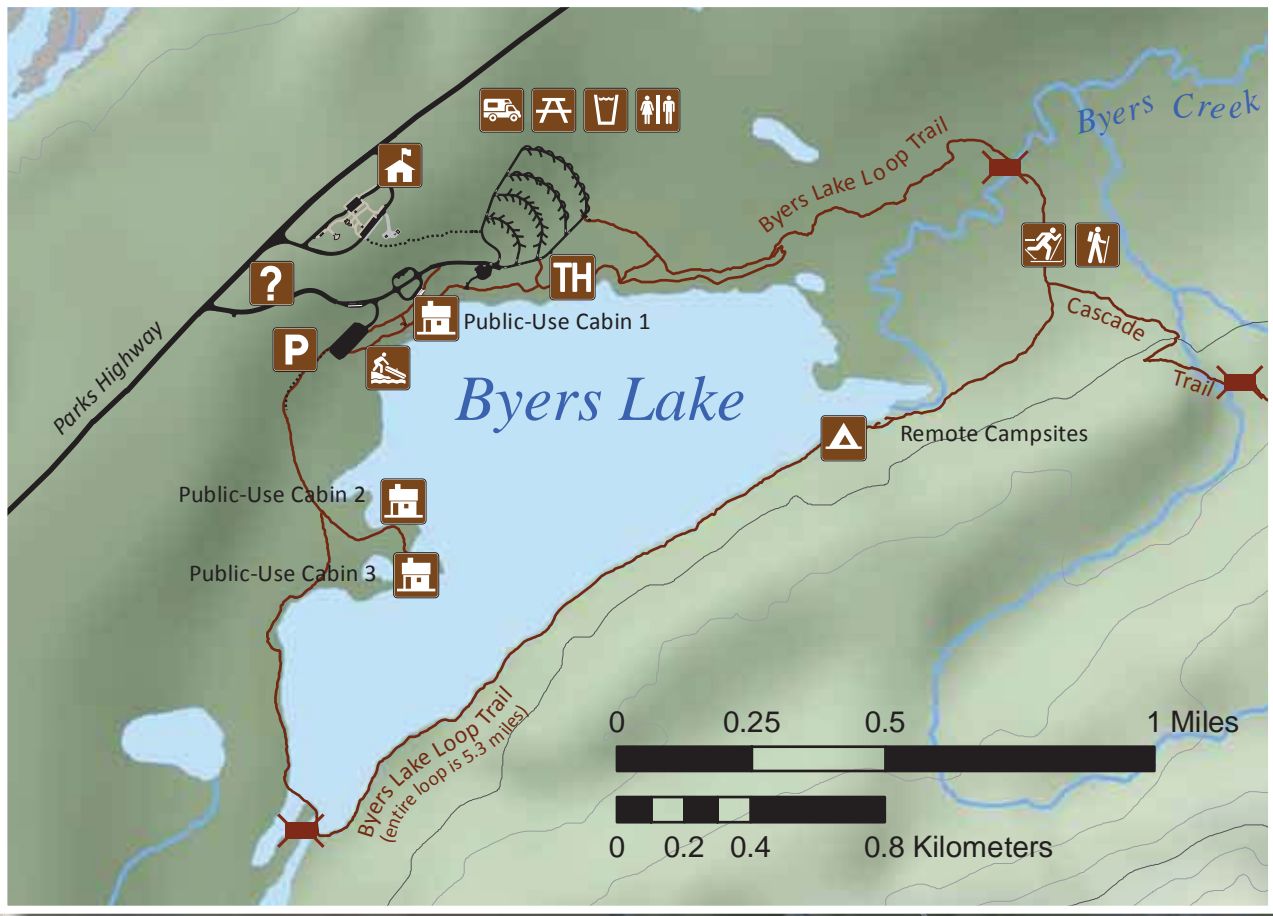
South Denali Visitor Center 7

The South Denali Visitor Center is part of a proposed development plan that will provide a wide range of recreational opportunities in the Curry Ridge region of the park. The facility will offer a unique Denali experience that will accommodate the needs of thousands of tourists.

Tokositna Flats Winter Trail 8

Access: Big Lake
Travel Means: Snowmachine, mushing
Distance: 11 miles one way

The Tokositna Flats Winter Trail is the northern end of the 100+ mile Susitna Valley winter trail system that originates at Big Lake. This 11-mile trail crosses the Tokositna River Flats and is only usable during the winter months. Although it is mostly used by snowmachiners, cross-country skiers and dog mushers also enjoy the trail.



Outdoor Etiquette and Safety Tips

- Always tell someone where you're going and when you plan to return.
- Always bring warm, rainproof gear; you can get hypothermia even in the middle of summer.
- Drinking water advisory: always purify drinking water to avoid Giardiasis.
- Be bear aware. Make noise to avoid surprising bears. For tips on safety in bear country, go to www.alaskabears.alaska.gov.
- Bear resistant food containers may be available at the Veterans Memorial Visitor Center at MP 147 of the Parks Highway. Call the area office at (907) 745-3975.
- Please be careful to minimize your impacts in the backcountry. For tips on minimal impact camping go to www.lnt.org.
- Backcountry chefs must bring a portable camp stove; open fires are prohibited in Denali State Park except on gravel bars.

Legend

- Area Boundary
- Road
- Bridge
- Under Construction
- Hiking Trail
- Trailhead
- Parking
- Toilet
- Information
- Camping
- Picnicking
- Scenic View
- Recreational Vehicle Camping
- Drinking Water
- Public-Use Cabin
- Interpretive Trail
- Snowmachining
- Cross-Country Skiing
- Dog Mushing
- Non-motorized Boat Launch