

America's State Parks Western Conference

Girdwood, Alaska~ May 4-8, 2026

Alyeska Resort 401 E 6th Ave, Anchorage, AK 99501

Monday, May 4

8:00 am to 4:00 pm	Pre-conference activities
12:00 noon	Vendor set up begins
4:00-	Check-in and Registration begins
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm	Director's Meeting
6:00 – 8:00 pm	Vendor Reception open- Drinks and Light Appetizers

Tuesday, May 5

7: 30 am to 9:30 am	Conference Registration and Breakfast – Alyeska Resort café opens at 7:00 / coffee in rooms
8:00 am to 9:00 am	Welcome- DNR Leadership, NASPD Leadership, TBD Matt Wedeking, Ian Thomas Thank you to our sponsors, housekeeping
9:00 to 9:45 am	Keynote- Jen Cureton, Canadian Parks Council: Philanthropy in Parks: Meaningful Connections & Powerful Partnerships
9:45 am to 10:15 am	Break- vendor meet and greet -Sponsor intro
10:15 am to 11:00 am	Unique Partnership Opportunities in Alaskan Land Management: Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) / Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA): –Jim Walker
11:00 to 12:00	Panel: The Power of Partnerships to Accomplish Objectives (Jen Cureton-Host) Share overview and benefit of a variety of unique partnerships, Alaska State Parks partners: Panel with Judy Caminer, Chugach Park Fund; Ryan Thomas, Greatland Trust; TBD- Aspira; TBD -Placeholder
12:00 to 1:00	Alyeska Lunch- Sponsored by Tyler Tech Grab extra layers for the rest of the day, and head to bus
1:15 pm	Motor-coaches-pick up depart to Eklutna
2:30 pm	Arrive at Eklutna (Chugach State Park) / Eagle River Campground (Swap ½ group at a time) Pete Panarese -former Chugach state Parks Superintendent; TBD- Placeholder

4:15 pm	Transport to Williwaw
5:00 pm	Williwaw: Dinner at Williwaw meet ASP Staff, presentation by Sponsor- BRANDT
7:00 pm	Motor-coaches depart for Hotel via- BORETIDE
Wednesday, May 6	
7:30 am to 9:30 am	Breakfast at Alyeska Resort
8:00 am to 9:15 am	The Staircase of Stewardship: Growing the Next Generation of Park Stewards <i>Hosted by Ky Harkey -The Visitor Experience; Sarah Webber- AZ State Parks; Chris Padgett, TN State Parks; Meredith Gutierrez. Anchorage Park Foundation -YEP Program; Shawna Popovici, Manager of Interpretation- Alaska State Parks; Claire Leclair, Chugach Park Fund</i>
9:15 am to 9:30 am	Vendor break
9:30 am to 10:30 am	Maximizing Revenue for our Parks: Creative Strategies <i>Matt Wedeking: Hiring, Recruiting and Maintaining staff; KJ Shah- Kaizen: Generating Revenue with Reservation partners, Nikki Potter: Managing an effective Permitting team</i>
10:30 am to 11:00	Break
11:00 to 12 noon	Partnering with the Federal Government to Accomplish Objectives <i>Rys Miranda, ASP Design & Construction; Sarah Meitl, ASP Office of History & Archaeology; Danette Berkovitz, ASP Grants Manager</i>
12:30 pm	Depart for Wildlife Center
1:00 pm	Lunch at Wildlife Center- begins with presentation by SPONSOR: Kaizen LUNCH: Alaska Regional Highlights Superintendents (Regional Managers) highlight their region for 10 minutes each
2:30 pm to 4:30 pm	Walk around Wildlife Center**Time with bear feeding schedule
4:30 pm	Motor-coaches depart for Girdwood VISIT Portage -Stop at Girdwood Brewing
6:00 pm	Dinner on own at Girdwood Brewing Company (food truck options)
8:00 pm to 8:30 pm	Coaches to Alyeska Resort

Thursday, May 7

7:30 am to 9:30 am	Breakfast at Alyeska Resort
8:00 am to 9:00	Preview: "Use Day" At the Intersection of DEMAND and SUPPLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring DEMAND for Outdoor Recreation – The Explore Act • Federal Agency: NPS / LWCF case study on visitor use statistics • State Agency: Alaska DPOR case study on cell phone mobility data

9:00 am to 10:15 am	Interactive group activity around Demand concepts, with facilitators Kristin Pace (NPS Alaska Region and Don Forgione NASPD) Wrap up DEMAND – Preview SUPPLY
10:15 am to 10:45 am	Break
10:45 am to 12:15 am	Panel Discussion SUPPLY – Using GIS as data platforms for Outdoor Recreation (TBD- Invite reservation platform vendors) Interactive group activity around SUPPLY concepts
12:15 pm to 1:15 pm	Lunch at Alyeska Sponsor: CAMIS, Guest Speakers
12:30 pm to 1:15 pm	Play and Places – Dr. Katie Ringsmuth Data, Standards, and Alignment –Rob Southwick
1:15 pm to 2:30 pm	Concurrent Session – State Park Law Enforcement / Compliance
1:15 pm to 2:30 pm	Concurrent Session – The “USE DAY” Key to Unlock Socioeconomic Benefit Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LWCF presents case study on Texas using GIS cell phone mobility data to tell story of health benefits from outdoor recreation • Southwick and Associates present how Use Day generates Economic Benefit Data • Interactive Activity around Socioeconomic benefit presentations
2:30 pm to 2:45 pm	Afternoon Break- Sessions rejoin afterwards
2:45 pm to 3:30 pm	The Importance of COMMUNICATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jen Cureton - How to move emotion into action • Rodney Franklin (Texas State Parks) Case study – communication plan is the blueprint to achieve success • Paul McCormack – Wrap Up – next steps, national conference, webinars
3:30pm to 4:30 pm	Break Before Reception
4:30 pm	Reception – sponsor
5:30 pm	Closing Awards Dinner at Alyeska- Sponsor ASPIRA
7:00 pm	Evening Entertainment
Friday, May 8	Safe Travels – Homeward bound or in Alaska
Saturday, May 9	(Seward Alaska optional full day tours) Full day guided fishing trip Full day guided tour of Kenai Fjords National Park Registration through Saltwater Safaris

