



View of men riding in Model T Ford with banner, Valdez-Fairbanks Trail, Valdez, Alaska.
AMRC-b62-1-a-83, Cray-Henderson Collection

History

The Northern Area is steeped in history important to the development of Interior Alaska. For thousands of years, this region was home to Tanana Athabascans. When Europeans arrived, most contact with Alaska Natives was tied to trading posts and government explorations. Big Delta began as a trading post and, for the next 100 years, served as a transportation and communication hub for weary travelers, prospectors, traders, and military personnel.

What would the region's history be without tall tales of streams filled with gold? Prospectors rushed into Alaska after news spread of the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897. Due to this influx of people, the U.S. Military started construction of the Valdez-Eagle Trail in 1899. In 1902, Felix Pedro's gold strike, caused a stampede to the Fairbanks and Chena areas.

Today, when you drive through the Northern Area, you are more than likely following historic routes. The Richardson Highway is Alaska's oldest highway, designed to link the coast and the rich resources of the interior. The Alaska Highway is the result of an incredible effort during World War II when over 1,600 miles of pioneer road were built during one short construction season.



Rika's Roadhouse, as seen from the riverbank.
Photo courtesy of The Harold Washburn Collection



Compeau Trail
Photo courtesy of Justin Wholey
A Division of the
Department of Natural Resources



Welcome to

Northern Area Alaska State Parks

Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Tok Vicinity

Welcome

With over 400 square miles of land dedicated to outdoor recreation and natural and cultural history, Northern Area Alaska State Parks provide plenty of room to play and learn. During long summer days, head outside to float rivers and streams, cool off in one of the many lakes, go camping with family and friends, hike through forests and over hills, or take in some of Alaska's history at Big Delta State Historical Park featuring Rika's Roadhouse.

Don't even think about following the bear's example and sleeping through winter! The parks in this area beckon visitors to enjoy the snow and invigorating cold air. Try your hand at ice fishing, ski on groomed trails, snowmachine on fresh powder, go skjoring with your pooch, or enjoy the dazzling winter scenes as you hike along in snowshoes.



Harding Lake
Photo by Robert Angell

Northern Highlights

With 16 state parks spanning from Fairbanks to Tok, the Northern Area is ideal for a summer road trip. It also offers great platforms for launching into winter fun—the sky is the limit!

Each park has something different to offer outdoor enthusiasts throughout the year.

Summer in this inland region is very warm and perfect for water-based activities as nearly every park is located near a water body.

Fall brings with it opportunities to hunt for moose, bear, and other animals; loads of sweet, juicy berries for the picking also draw people outdoors.

Winter settles in with a blanket of snow inviting skiers, sledders, dog mushers, and snowmachiners to enjoy the northern lights.

Spring flows in with break-up, new buds and leaves, and thousands of migratory birds, beckoning hibernating people to get out and stretch their legs.



Harding Lake
Photo by Robert Angell



Stiles Creek Trails in Chena River-SRA
Photo courtesy of Lona Boyarsky



Angus Creek Valley
Photo courtesy of Brooks Ludwig



Moose calf
Photo by Robert Angell



Female mallard and ducklings
Photo by Robert Angell

Alaska State Parks

Wildlife

Wildlife of all shapes and sizes can be found throughout these parks, from water-loving mink to forest-dwelling lynx, and from bugle-sounding sandhill crane to willow-munching moose. Please remember that wildlife is wild no matter how docile they may seem, so appreciate them from a distance. Keep your cameras and binoculars handy—you never know what you will see!



Sandhill Crane
Photo by Robert Angell



Delta-Clearwater River
Photo courtesy of Justin Wholey

River Floating

Most parks in the Northern Area are first-rate boating destinations. Many are also prime locations for river floating adventures. When floating, watch for obstacles and avoid them well in advance to prevent disaster. Wear a life jacket—it can be the difference between life and death if your boat capsizes or you fall overboard.

Pleasant Patches

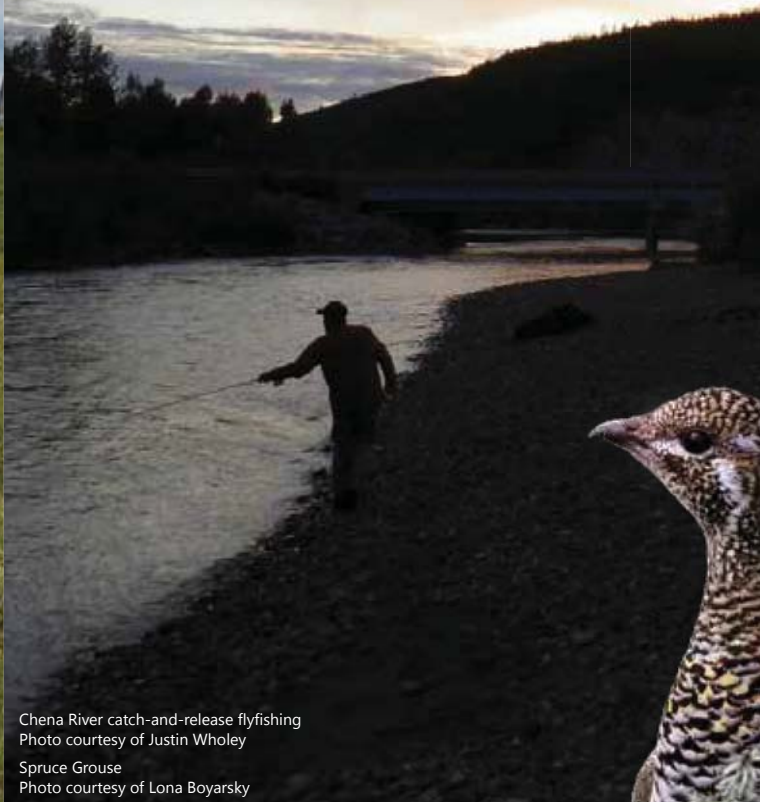
Interior Alaska is famous for its wild berries—you just have to know where and when to look. Blueberries, raspberries, crowberries, bearberries, low-bush cranberries, and black and red currants all start to ripen around the end of July. Alaskans can be very secretive about their favorite berry patches, so scope out fields and slopes, grab a bucket, and go explore—you might hit the berry bonanza!



Photo courtesy of Megan Piersma

Fishing and Hunting

Many parks in the Northern Area offer fishing opportunities. Fishers can catch king, chum, and silver salmon, Arctic grayling, rainbow and lake trout, northern pike, burbot, Arctic char, sheefish, and various whitefish. Hunting is also popular in some of these parks. Be sure to check the fishing and hunting regulations beforehand at www.adfg.alaska.gov.



Chena River catch-and-release flyfishing
Photo courtesy of Justin Wholey

Spruce Grouse
Photo courtesy of Lona Boyarsky



Lower Angel Creek public-use cabin
Photo courtesy of Niki Potter



Nugget Creek public-use cabin
Photo courtesy of Brooks Ludwig



Upper Angel Creek public-use cabin



Hunt Memorial public-use cabin



Colorado Creek public-use cabin



Glatfelter public-use cabin
Photo courtesy of Justin Wholey



Fishing Lake public-use cabin
Photo courtesy of Bill Evans



Chena River public-use cabin

Public-Use Cabins

In the Northern Area parks, there are 13 public-use cabins each with basic furnishings such as sleeping platforms, a wood stove, kitchen counter, shelves, table and benches, and an outdoor latrine. You may have to pack in your own firewood and drinking water or water-purifying system. The Birch Lake, Salcha River, and Quartz Lake cabins double as volunteer housing in summer. Cabins have a fee and reservations are required. Visit www.alaskastateparks.org.



1

Upper Chatanika SRS

This is a popular camping area for highway travelers and Fairbanks residents and it is the launching site for an all-day float on the Chatanika River.

2

Lower Chatanika SRA

This is the end point of the float trip from Upper Chatanika SRS and is a popular destination for camping, fish spearing, traditional fishing, and ice fishing.

3

Chena River SRS

Chena River SRS, also known as Chena Wayside, is a 29-acre, urban, riverside park situated within Fairbanks.

4

Chena River SRA

Chena River SRA encompasses 397 square miles of forests, rivers, and alpine tundra where you can enjoy water-, land-, or snow-based activities, depending on the season.



Granite Tors at Chena River SRA



Quartz Lake SRA
Photo by Robert Angell



Quartz Lake SRA
Photo by Robert Angell



Angel Rocks Trail
Photo courtesy of Justin Wholey



Rosehip Nature Trail
Photo courtesy of Lona Boyarsky

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Quartz Lake SRA

Quartz Lake SRA is a 600-acre park that borders two lakes and attracts large crowds of people with its varied recreational opportunities such as camping, fishing, and boating, and winter sports including snowmachining and dog mushing.

9

Big Delta SHP

Rika's Roadhouse is the centerpiece of Big Delta SHP, but you may also want to check out the rest of the historic homestead, telegraph, and the river and road. These resources made Big Delta crucial to the development of interior Alaska.

10

Delta SRS

Delta SRS is a popular campground for people traveling between Fairbanks and Tok. It provides a wilderness feel while being conveniently close to Delta Junction.

11

Clearwater SRS

This little jewel of Alaska State Parks lies tucked next to the crystalline waters of the Delta-Clearwater River where Arctic grayling, whitefish, and salmon await your lure. This is also a lovely place to begin your floating adventure as the Delta-Clearwater River provides access to the Tanana and the Goodpastor rivers.



Little Lost Lake at Quartz Lake SRA
Photo by Robert Angell

12

Donnelly Creek SRS

This is a scenic campground where moose, bear, porcupine, beaver, and snowshoe hare are sometimes seen. During summer, the Delta bison herd can be observed on their calving grounds across the Delta River.

13

Fielding Lake SRA

This rustic alpine campground lies above tree line in the Alaska Range next to Fielding Lake where natural populations of Arctic grayling, burbot, and lake trout provide excellent fishing opportunities.



Rainbow at Angel Rocks to Chena Hot Springs Trail
Photo courtesy of Joe Lujan

Legend

State Parks*

Road

Lakes

Accessible

ATV

Baseball

Biking

Camping

Cross-Country Skiing

Dog Mushing

Drinking Water

Dump Station

Fishing

Fishing Pier

Hiking

Horseback Riding

Interpretive Trail

Jet Skiing

Motor Boat Launch

Non-motorized Launch

Parking

Picnic Shelter

Picnic Table

Public-Use Cabin

Ranger Station

Recreational Vehicle

Snowmachining

Toilet

Water Skiing

*State Recreation Site (SRS), State Recreation Area (SRA), State Historical Park (SHP)

Campgrounds

The 16 parks in this region are home to 20 campgrounds; each has rustic campsites with fire rings, picnic tables, and nearby water and latrines. Campground hosts can answer questions, and firewood may be available near the host's site for a small fee. All campgrounds are ADA accessible. Nearly all campgrounds in this area are near water and are ideal base camps for early morning or late night fishing trips.

Fees

Fees are charged for the use of some developed facilities in Alaska State Parks. Fees can be paid at the time of use, or frequent visitors can save money by purchasing an annual parking pass. Annual passes are available in the parks, at the Northern Area Alaska State Parks Office, and at the DNR Public Information Center, both located at 3700 Airport Way, Fairbanks. Passes can also be ordered online at www.alaskastateparks.org.