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Commissioner

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Department of
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Bird Point event welcomes community to see accessible updates

(Anchorage, Alaska) – Alaska State Parks (ASP) is hosting a community-wide event on Sept. 9, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Bird Point along the Turnagain Arm. The public will have the opportunity to participate in volunteer activities, meet parks staff, and be the first to experience the new colorblindness-adapted viewfinders and updated interpretive displays.

Attendees are encouraged to join members of the local community in volunteer activities such as invasive weed pulling, clearing the trail of unwanted overgrowth, and painting. Local Girl Scout Troop 1050 will be helping with the volunteer effort for the national “Girls Scouts Love State Parks” weekend.

At the event, new interpretive panels will be unveiled in addition to the two new EnChroma viewing scopes, adding a unique accessibility feature to this park. Alaska State Parks is the first organization in the state to offer the viewfinders made by SeeCoast Manufacturing and equipped with revolutionary lenses from [EnChroma](#) designed to help those with red-green Color Vision Deficiency (CVD) to experience colors. EnChroma glasses will also be available for the public to try during the event.

Alaska State Parks Interpretation and Education Unit Manager Shawna Popovici spearheaded the initiative to refurbish existing viewers at Bird Point Overlook with the new lenses. The popular designation spot for first-time visitors to Alaska provides stunning 360-degree views of Turnagain Arm. She was inspired by growing up with a mother who experienced colorblindness.

“Chugach State Park is proud to be the first location in Alaska to offer accommodations for colorblind guests,” said Popovici. “We hope to refurbish more of our viewers with EnChroma lenses to allow park visitors with this more common form of colorblindness to more fully experience the splendors Alaska has to offer. Our change in seasons is magnificent for all visitors to see the colorful fall foliage – some for the first time.”

Colorblindness affects:

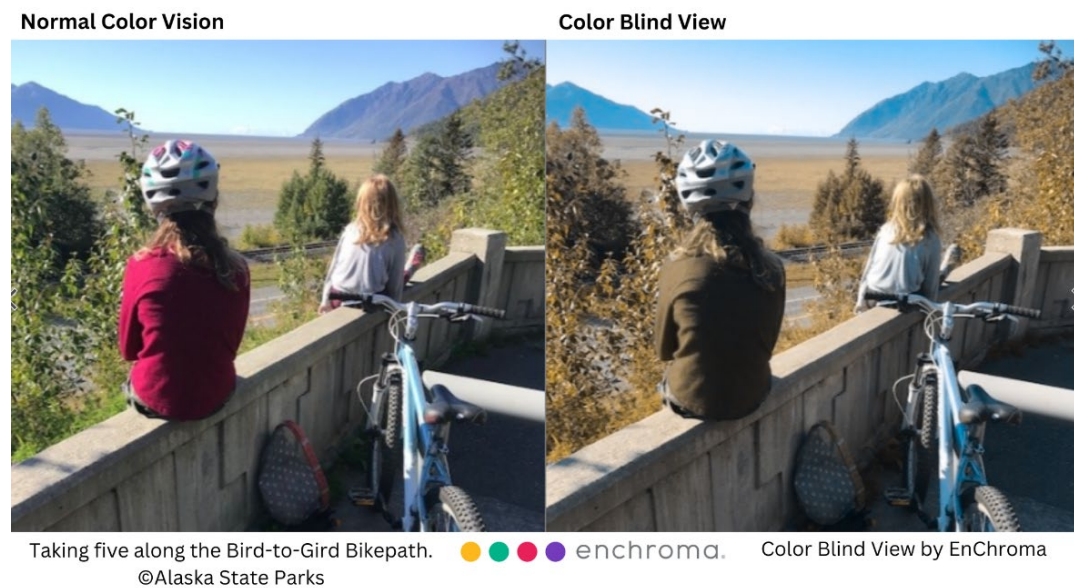
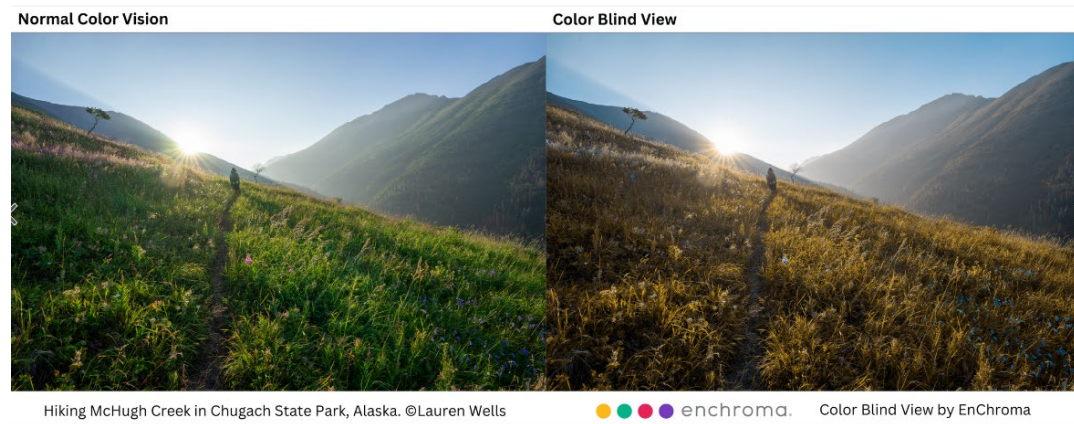
- One in 12 men
- One in 200 women
- 350 million people worldwide
- 13 million in the U.S.

The experience of looking through the viewfinders for a person who is colorblind can vary. Typically, people see a broader array and greater vibrancy of colors immediately or within seconds. Some visitors have a more dramatic experience, depending on the severity of their CVD. For non-colorblind individuals, the colors might not change or just seem slightly enhanced.

“Bird Point in Chugach State Park bursts with colorful foliage that a sizable percent of the population cannot appreciate because they’re color vision deficient,” said Erik Ritchie, CEO of

EnChroma. “We applaud the park for being a leader in promoting accessibility to this wonderful, color experience for color blind visitors, and hope their example will inspire other parks in Alaska, and the nation, to follow suit.”

[Click here](#) for more scenes from Bird Point in Chugach State Park as they appear to colorblind people.



The Division of Parks and Recreation’s mission is to provide outdoor recreation opportunities and conserve and interpret natural, cultural, and historic resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people.

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