National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

DENALI NATIONAL PARK & PRESERVE

Summer 2010
Employee Handbook

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DENALI NATIONAL PARK!

Congratulations and welcome to Alaska's Denali National Park and Preserve. We are glad you will be working with us and we hope you will enjoy it here.

This handbook is designed to provide you with basic information that will help you during your employment and make your time here pleasant and productive. Whether you are new to the area or the National Park Service, or returning for another summer season, you will need to read this handbook. Policies and regulations are frequently being updated, and it is up to you to become informed. Much of the information here may provide answers to the questions you may have, or will direct you to the right person for the answers.

Denali is one of the few remaining examples of pristine wilderness and contains a bio-diversity found only in few other places. Created in 1917, Mount McKinley National Park was set aside by Congress to preserve wildlife in the shadow of Mount McKinley, which, at 20,320 feet is the highest mountain in North America. On December 2, 1980, President Carter signed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) adding additional acres of preserve to the park, increasing the park's size to over 6 million acres. The park was renamed "Denali National Park and Preserve". Our mission is to protect intact, the globally significant Denali ecosystem including their cultural, aesthetic and wilderness values and ensure opportunities for inspiration, education, research, recreation and subsistence for this and future generations.

For additional information, check out our website: http://www.nps.gov/dena

PARK ORGANIZATION

Headquarters for Denali National Park & Preserve is 125 miles south of Fairbanks and 250 miles north of Anchorage. Denali's staff has over 100 permanent and term employees and close to 200 seasonal employees at peak season. The park is organized into eight divisions: Superintendent, Administration, Resource Management which includes Natural, Cultural and Physical Sciences, Rangers, Interpretation and Education, Concessions, Planning and Maintenance.

GETTING HERE

Driving: If you are driving to the park, the Alaska Highway is a long and winding road. You may encounter short sections of road construction, but the bulk of the road is in fairly good condition. Feel free to call for route information and driving tips, or purchase an Alaska Milepost, a publication that tells you what sights and services you will find along the road from the US border through Canada and all of Alaska.

Flying: Fairbanks, 125 miles north, is the closest airport to Denali; Anchorage is 250 miles south. Ground transportation from Fairbanks or Anchorage leaves once a day, in the morning, so you will probably need accommodations for the night. Below is a list of possible transportation and rooms. If you have any further questions please contact your supervisor**.**

Alaska Railroad: Phone 800-544-0552, Website www.alaskarailroad.com

Winter (Till May 11) Weekend Service Only
Sat. leave Anchorage 8:30am arrive Denali 3:55pm
Sun. leave Fairbanks 8:30am arrive Denali 12:30pm

Summer (May 12 – Sept 13) Daily Service
Northbound only on May 12, Southbound only Sept 13
Leave Anchorage 8:15am arrive Denali 3:55pm
Leave Fairbanks 8:15am arrive Denali 12:15pm

If you choose to take the train, your supervisor can assist you to arrange for a discounted ticket and transportation to headquarters and/or housing, about 2 miles from the railroad depot.

Shuttle Services:
Parks Highway Express: Phone 888-600-6001
Email: Info@AlaskaShuttle.com
or
The Alaska Bus Guy
http:// www.alaskabusguy.com

Alaska Yukon Trails: Phone 800-770-7275
Email: alaskashuttle@yahoo.com

Accommodations
Fairbanks Hostel: Phone 907-479-0099
Other Hostels: http://www.hostels.com/en/us.ak.ot.html
Hotels: http://www.alaskatravel.com/alaska-hotels.html

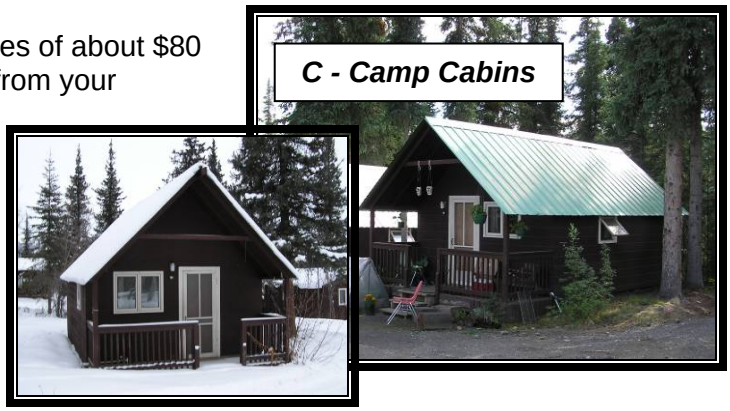
WHAT TO BRING
Denali summers are often cool and damp. Summer temperatures can vary from high 80's F to below freezing. It can snow at anytime.

Essential items:
- Clothing for the great outdoors: Waterproof rain pants & jacket, and comfortable water-resistant hiking boots, 1 or 2 sweaters (wool or fleece), warm jacket (fleece-lined shell), windbreaker, wool or fleece hat, gloves or mittens, wool blend or polypropylene long underwear tops & bottoms (NOT cotton), wool or polypropylene socks.
- Some "summer" clothing: T-shirts, jeans, a pair of shorts, running shoes, cotton socks.
- Towel, pillow, sheets, blankets (or a sleeping bag), toiletries, mosquito repellent or head net.
- Original social security card or birth certificate and photo I.D. such as a driver's license OR your passport are required by a Human Resources officer to verify your citizenship. (Note: you will need a passport if you are coming through Canada on your way to Denali)
- Valid driver's license!

Optional, but highly recommended:
- Earplugs for light sleepers, battery operated alarm clock.
- Extra footwear, gaiters to keep your pants dry, neoprene socks for stream crossings.
- Backpack, tent with rain fly, stove, cook kit, sleeping bag rated to 20°F, sleeping pad, water bottles, water filter, compass, daypack, and first aid kit.
- Binoculars, camera, lots of film (it's expensive here), books, shower shoes, etc.

Optional, if you have the room:
- Bicycle-nice for getting around the local area and seeing the park road. The Park Service has a limited number of bicycles available for shared employee use.
- Cookware-basic cookware and utensils are provided in your cabin (see next page). You may want to bring additional items such as measuring spoons & cups, a crock pot or coffee grinder.
- CD player/radio- reception is very poor in the park, so bring your cd's.

HOUSING
For employees who live in park housing, rental rates of about $80 to $200 per biweekly pay period will be deducted from your paycheck. These are shared duplex units. Employees staying in concessioner units will live in a single room and be required to be on their meal plan. Room and board will cost $210 biweekly.



Your supervisor will discuss what type of housing will be available to you before you arrive at park.

Seasonal residents may NOT keep pets in the park.

Headquarters Area (East End)
If your duty station is Headquarters, and you are assigned housing in CCamp, you will be sharing a 15' x 20' cabin in C-Camp at mile 3 of the park road. Quarters are warm and dry, but are NOT plush. Cabins are furnished with propane heater, stove/oven, refrigerator, cupboards, table, chairs, electricity and two small bedrooms (each with built-in bed, desk, closet, and drawers).

Be aware that the cabins do have a kitchen sink, however, during part of your stay, there will be no running water to these sinks! This housing area was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1938, typical Alaskan-style. Although a cold water system was added at a later date, the water piping is on top of the ground and subject to freezing. Once there are no freezing temperatures at night, cold running water will be turned on to the cabins. This usually occurs by mid-June, but can be later. Residents commonly haul drinking and cooking water from the shower house to their cabins from the time of their arrival until the water is turned on.

C-Camp kitchens will be stocked with the following:
- 4 each: dinner plates, bowls, cups, glasses, forks, knives, spoons
- 1 each: serving spoon, pancake turner, paring knife, butcher knife, sauce pan, frying pan, 9”X13” baking pan, can opener and water igloo container.

C-Camp has a central shower house with showers, toilets, washers and dryers. You don’t need change for the washers and dryers; it’s all part of your housing cost. There is a separate recreation hall with satellite television, DVD player, pool table, ping-pong table, foosball table, soda machine, book exchange, and a volleyball court. There are also two computers available for internet access and you can bring your own computer and plug in to DSL. Wireless may also be available.

C-Camp facilities are for employee use only. C-Camp will be especially full during start-of-season training. Showers, washing machines, and the utility sink will be in constant use. **No guests** please, during this crowded period. After June 1, guests are permitted in C-Camp for short visits.

C- Camp Housing Area Accommodations

Kitchen / Living Area

C-Camp Rec Hall

C- Camp Shower House

Laundry

Toklat (West End)
If your duty station is Toklat, you will be sharing a duplex at the Toklat Road Camp at Mile 52 on the park road. Quarters are warm and dry but are NOT plush. Cabins are furnished with propane heaters, stove/oven, refrigerator, sink with running water (by mid-May), cupboards, table, chairs, electricity and two bedrooms. You will share a common living area and enjoy the privacy of your own bedroom.

Toklat kitchens will be stocked with the following:

- 4 each: dinner plates, bowls, cups, glasses, forks, knives, spoons
- 1 each: serving spoon, pancake turner, paring knife, butcher knife, sauce pan, frying pan, 9”X13” cake pan and can opener

Toklat has a roomy shower house with showers, a bathtub, toilets, washers and dryers. There is also a smaller shower house without the bathtub. This shower house also has washers and dryers.

Toklat’s Recreation Hall is outfitted with satellite television, VCR, paperback book exchange, computer for Internet access and common room, with a small set of free weights. There are large community freezers and refrigerators. Toklat facilities are for employee use only. During start-of-season training, the West District staff will be housed at C-Camp near Headquarters. C-Camp will be especially full during training. Showers, washing machines, and the utility sink will be in constant use. Please, **no guests** during this crowded period.

Igloo and Sanctuary Ranger Cabins
The Igloo and Sanctuary rangers will live in one-room historic cabins situated adjacent to the park road. These log cabins were constructed in the early 1930’s by the Alaska Road Commission. These cabins are often used during the winter by park rangers performing sled dog patrols. The cabins are furnished with cookware and utensils, propane refrigerator, lights and cook stove. The heating stoves are propane at Igloo and Sanctuary. Neither cabin has running water or indoor plumbing; however the views from the outhouses are something to write home about. Speaking of outhouses, you will be happy to know that the permafrost maintains a somewhat odor free environment and the use of Styrofoam seats keeps your bottom comfortable!

Wonder Lake Ranger Station
If you are duty stationed at Wonder Lake, you will occupy the historical ranger station or a small cabin adjacent to the ranger station. The Wonder Lake complex is powered by a propane/solar/battery generator system and has a community shower house, laundry facilities and freezer space. All cabins have water and electricity. The view of Mount McKinley is spectacular!

Kitchens will be stocked with the following:

- 4 each: dinner plates, bowls, cups, glasses, forks, knives, spoons
- 1 each: serving spoon, pancake turner, paring knife, butcher knife, sauce pan, frying pan, 9”X13” cake pan and can opener

TRAVEL IN THE PARK

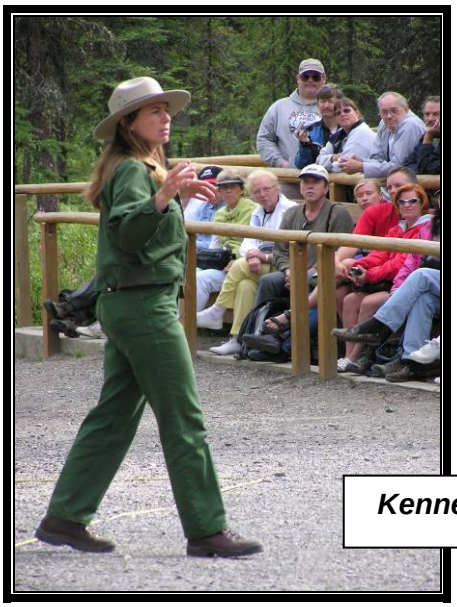
The park road begins at mile 237.8 George Parks Highway (Alaska #3) and ends 92 miles west. The first 15 miles of the road are paved and the remainder is gravel. Most of the activity is found in the first two miles. Facilities in the first 2 miles include the Post Office, Riley Creek Campground, Riley Creek Mercantile, Wilderness Access Center (WAC), Backcountry Information Center (BIC), Murie Science and Learning Center (MSLC), Denali Visitor Center (DVC), Morino Grill, Denali Bookstore, and Train Depot. At mile 3.5 are Park Headquarters, seasonal housing (C-Camp) and the sled dog kennels. Savage River check station is at mile 15. Private vehicle travel is restricted beyond the Savage River check station. If your duty station is beyond this point you will be issued a special road travel permit. Your supervisor will provide you with the details and training on "Rules of the Road." At mile 54 on the park road is the Toklat road camp. Eielson Visitor Center is at mile 66, and Wonder Lake Ranger station is at mile 85. There are several private lodges at the end of the road in Kantishna.

For recreational travel, our concessioner, Doyon/Aramark Joint Venture, operates the **V**isitor **T**ransportation **S**ystem. Within that system are free shuttle buses from the WAC to Savage River check station (mile 15). They are available for visitors and employees alike. Shuttle buses traversing the entire length of the park road originate at the WAC and run from about 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. The last bus returns at approximately 11p.m. It is 11 hours round-trip to Wonder Lake. There are no services available along the road. Passengers may board or get off the bus at any point. Service beyond the Savage Check Station is not free; however, the Park offers an employee access program. See your supervisor for details.

YOUR JOB

Seasonal employees at Denali serve in a wide variety of interesting positions. At the beginning of the season your supervisor will discuss your duties and responsibilities. You will receive written performance expectations and an outline of your training program. Throughout the season, your supervisor will provide you with feedback about your performance. If you have questions about your duties and responsibilities, never hesitate to raise those questions with your supervisor.

You are expected to be at your assigned workplace on time. Habitual or unwarranted tardiness or absence is charged to annual leave or AWOL (absence without approved leave) and may lead to disciplinary action.



Kennel Manager Giving Sled Dog Demonstration

Within approximately 30 days after your entrance on duty, you will receive a Standard Form 50 (Notification of Personnel Action) which shows you a variety of details about the type of appointment you were given. It is important for you to save these notifications for future verification of employment.

Temporary appointments are subject to separation at any time no matter what not-to-exceed date is specified on the Standard Form 50.

UNIFORMS

As an employee of the National Park Service, you may be required to wear a uniform. Check with your supervisor. Uniformed employees receive an allowance to offset the cost of purchasing required items.

PAY

Salaries of General Schedule (GS/GL) employees (i.e., Park Rangers, Interpreters, Visitor Use Assistants and Biological Science Technicians) are based on an annual rate by law. General Schedule employees duty stationed at Denali receive an additional cost of living allowance (COLA), which is currently set at 20.94% of the annual salary and is not subject to Federal taxes along with Locality Pay, which is currently set at 4.72% and is subject to Federal taxes.

Federal Wage System (WG/WL/WS) employees receive hourly rates of pay based on a yearly survey of local wage rates and may vary in different parks and locations. Some temporary Federal Wage System employees are eligible to receive within-grade (step) increases for maintaining satisfactory work performance after serving waiting periods as follows:

From Step 1 to Step 2	26 calendar weeks
From Step 2 to Step 3	78 calendar weeks
From Step 3 to Step 4	104 calendar weeks
From Step 4 to Step 5	104 calendar weeks

WORK SCHEDULE

The standard work schedule consists of five 8-hour days per week. Your actual tour of duty (or work schedule) is based on park needs and is subject to change. A differential is paid for night or Sunday work.

LEAVE

Annual leave is accrued for employees having an appointment of 90 days or more. You will accrue at a rate of four hours biweekly for those with less than three years of accumulated service; six hours biweekly for those over three years but less than 15 years of accumulated service; and eight hours biweekly for those over 15 years of accumulated service. At the end of the season, payment will be made for any unused annual leave. You should receive a lump sum check about five weeks after your employment ends.

Sick leave is earned at the rate of four hours biweekly regardless of your length of service. Unused sick leave is credited to your leave account, and is reinstated to you if you are ever re-employed by the Federal Government.

Your supervisor must approve use of annual and sick leave. In the case of annual leave, approval is governed by the needs of your office. In the case of sick leave, you should be aware of, and follow, the procedures in place for keeping your supervisor informed of your illness or condition while on sick leave.

PAYCHECKS

Pay periods are biweekly and payday is the second Tuesday of the pay period. You will work one pay period before being paid for that time. **You will not receive a paycheck until as much as four weeks from the time you enter on duty. Please plan your finances accordingly.** There are no provisions for a cash advance.

All paychecks are paid through direct deposit to your bank account. After receiving your first direct deposit paycheck, your checks should be automatically deposited every other week.

Federal Income Tax and Social Security (FICA) are deducted from your pay based on information you provide on your W4 form. Quarters rent is also deducted directly from your pay. Sometimes there is a delay and rent may not be immediately deducted, but will be deducted from a future check.

LEAVE AND EARNING STATEMENT

Please be advised that as a seasonal employee, you **will no longer be receiving** the hard copies of your Leave and Earnings Statements in the mail. The Department of the Interior (DOI) has established a new policy for distribution of Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) for all employees of the Department of the Interior. Employees will receive their LES information electronically through the online Employee Express system at www.employeeexpress.gov. You will need a PIN (Personal aExpress. **Please note that your PIN can NOT be requested or made available through Denali Human Resources.** If you do not have your PIN for Employee Express, you may request a new PIN to be mailed to your official mailing address by contacting the Employee Express Help Desk at 478-757-3030 or by logging on the website above and following instructions under "Lost or Forgotten PIN/Request PIN by mail".

It is your responsibility to check your statements carefully for errors in deductions and leave accruals. **If you are living in park housing, be sure that the rent is deducted from your paycheck; otherwise you could end up with a big bill at the end of the season!** If you have a problem interpreting your Leave and Earnings statement, please consult your supervisor or the Human Resources office immediately.

ON THE JOB INJURIES

Our goal is zero employee and visitor injuries. To accomplish this, we need to consider: "Safety First, Every Job, Every Time!" It is every employee's responsibility to work safely at all times. You will be provided training for your job, but make sure you have the information you need to do your job safely. If you have questions about doing your job safely, be sure to ask your supervisor or contact the park Safety Manager.

As a Federal employee, the Federal Employees' Compensation Act entitles you to medical, surgical and hospital care at government expense if you are injured on the job. It is your responsibility to immediately notify your supervisor of even minor on-the-job injuries to insure that he/she documents it and medical treatment can be obtained.

All injury claims must be entered in Safety Management Information System (SMIS) by employee or a designated representative. Contact your supervisor, Divisional Administrative Assistant or the Human Resources office for information on how to enter your injury claim into SMIS.

Injuries and sickness that occur off the job (while in non-pay status) are treated at your expense. There is no government sponsored group health insurance for seasonal employees. There is an optional group plan available to seasonal employees through the Association of National Park Rangers.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

The Protection & Visitor Services Division provides law enforcement and emergency medical services park-wide. Any emergency or motor vehicle accident must be reported immediately. Motor vehicle accidents must also be reported to your supervisor if you are involved. In the field, contact Dispatch (radio call number "700"). Emergencies can be reported from any park phone by dialing 911 or extension 6555. The park's business phone number is (907)-683-2294.

CONDUCT

The booklet "Employee Responsibilities and Conduct" provides information on such topics as on-the-job conduct expectations, outside employment, selling or soliciting, use of government property (including computers), political activity, and soliciting or accepting gifts. This booklet is available via the Internet, or you may obtain a copy of the booklet from the Human Resources office. You are responsible for complying with these expectations, and should consult with your supervisor or the Human Resources office about any questions you may have concerning their application.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

Grievance procedures have been established to provide a means of employee relief when dissatisfaction arises concerning employment, working conditions, or working relationships among coworkers. Employees who have problems or grievances are expected to discuss them first with their immediate supervisor. If the problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved at this level, the matter may be reported to the next higher level of supervision or Division Chief. Final decisions on matters of seasonal employee dissatisfaction lie with the Superintendent.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Denali National Park gives equal consideration in hiring practices, job opportunities, and promotion possibilities to all employees regardless of age, color, sex, handicap, national origin, political, religious, marital status, or other non-merit factors. Employees who perceive that they have been discriminated against based on the above are free to consult with an Equal Opportunity (EO) counselor for guidance and/or resolution of the complaint. Employees can find an EO counselor to help them by calling Regional EEO Manager, Tonyua Abrom at 907-644-3348. Counseling is held in strict confidence, and employees are free from any reprisal in presenting complaints under this procedure.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all employees. This program provides counseling services for any concerns including, but not limited to emotional, marital, family, alcohol/drug use, job problems and legal/financial problems. This service is free and completely confidential. To use this service any time, day or night, just call 1-800-222-0364.

END OF SEASON SEPARATION

Your immediate supervisor will complete an end-of-season performance evaluation. The evaluation will show whether your performance was satisfactory and you can be non-competitively considered for rehire, or not satisfactory, requiring you to compete with others for a seasonal position at Denali. Your evaluation can be used for future applications for federal or non-government employment or considered by prospective employers during reference contacts with your supervisor.

Upon termination, you will be given a copy of Standard Form 8, Notice to Federal Employees about Unemployment Compensation. Further information about your eligibility for unemployment compensation may be obtained from your local unemployment office.

Upon separation all government property must be returned. You will be billed for loss or damage due to negligence. Your supervisor will inspect your quarters for cleanliness, damage and accountable supplies before you leave.

Your official correspondence address will be used for forwarding your final pay statement and W2 forms unless you notify the Human Resources Office before leaving for the season.

LIVING AMONG WILDLIFE

You will be living and working in wildlife country. Denali has a healthy population of moose, black bears and grizzly bears. Bears are extremely dangerous animals that can cause injury and death. It is imperative that food is stored properly, that cleanliness is maintained in and around park quarters and that you observe proper precautions while hiking. Never leave coolers, cans, or any food unattended outside your cabin. Moose are also extremely dangerous, especially cows with calves. Keep your distance and respect their space. You will receive information and training on wildlife encounters when you arrive.

GROCERIES
Plan to buy a supply of food, dish soap, laundry detergent, house cleaning products and personal toiletries to last several weeks. You need to do this **PRIOR** to leaving Fairbanks or Anchorage. There are no stores along the highway. Most employees spend about $250 at this stop. You will not need to buy toilet paper, as it is provided for you.

During the summer, employees often carpool to Fairbanks for groceries, movies, and a taste of the "big city." Locally, there is the Mercantile in the Riley Creek Campground, the Lynx Creek General Store and Canyon Market just outside the park entrance, and the Mt. View store and Miner's Market in Healy. These are 7-11 type stores that carry necessities at a high price. The grocery stores in Healy have a decent selection, including fresh produce, meat and dairy.

PHONE SERVICE AND INTERNET AVAILABILITY
Federal employees are allowed limited use of government phones and internet services. Use is limited to **use on personal time only**, and at no cost to the government. This means a personal calling card needs to be used for all long distance telephone calls. Use of the internet cannot disrupt official park business, such as by using excessive bandwidth. Your supervisor will provide you with additional details.

Cell phone coverage is limited, due to the geography of the land and the limited amount of cell phone service providers for the area. There is no Cell Phone service West of Headquarters. One phone line is located in the CCamp Rec Hall for personal use but a calling card must be used for out-of-park calls.

DSL and wireless are available in CCamp without connecting to the government network but streaming should be limited due to the volume of residents in CCamp. If using the computers in CCamp, no inappropriate material should be downloaded.

PERSONAL VOICE MAIL BOXES
These can be set up for seasonal employees to receive personal phone messages from family and friends. Ask your supervisor for details.

POST OFFICE
The post office is located near the park entrance. Surrounding communities also have postal services.

MAIL for Duty Station: Headquarters
You can contact the local post office in advance (Postmaster, Denali Park, AK 99755 or 907-683-2291) for your personal post office box or make arrangements in person when you get to the park. You can ship packages to Denali prior to your arrival but please do NOT send anything to the park address or to Headquarters! Instead, send to the following:

Name
General Delivery
Denali Park, AK 99755

MAIL for Duty Station: Igloo, Sanctuary, Toklat, Eielson, Wonder Lake
Do NOT send anything to the parks main mailbox! If you use this P.O. Box you cannot submit a change of address. Your address for the season is below. Your mail and packages will be forwarded to you at Toklat and points west.

Name
P.O. Box 1194
Denali Park, AK 99755

RECYCLING
Denali is set up for recycling with a recycle shed, cardboard baler and the ability to recycle aluminum, cardboard, and paper. We hope everyone joins in the effort to keep Denali moving forward to being a model for Environmental Leadership. The recycling shed named the "Over and Over," is located at the top of the maintenance yard, above C-Camp. It should be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

MEDICAL FACILITIES
There are two outpatient clinics, one is located in the Canyon and one is in Healy. Contact Information: The Canyon Clinic 907-683-4433 and Interior Community Health Clinic 907-683-2211. A physician's assistant and registered nurses staff the clinic. Complete medical and dental services are available in Fairbanks or Anchorage. Ambulance service is available in the park and in Healy.

LIBRARIES
The small park library at Headquarters offers an excellent collection of Alaska-oriented materials, natural history books and magazines. A lending library is located at the Tri-Valley School in Healy. It is associated with the University of Alaska.

BANKING
There are several ATM machines in the area, including the Lynx Creek Mercantile and the Salmon Bake restaurant, lodges located just north of the park entrance, and at several locations in Healy, 13 miles north. First National Bank is also located in Healy and can be reached at (907) 683-7755. Staff, SCAs & VIPs can cash stipend checks, personal checks and sometimes paychecks at the local outlet of the Alaska Natural History Association.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES
A variety of worship services are available in Healy. These include but are not limited to Catholic, Baptist, Latter Day Saints, and non-denominational. Consult area phone directories for specific religious services.

EMPLOYEE ACTIVITIES
Activities during the summer include hiking, backpacking, biking, camping, mountaineering, rafting, kayaking, and photography. Fishing is poor in the park but can be very good in other parts of the state. There are very few established trails and hiking can be difficult in the wilderness environment. Other recreational opportunities include satellite TV, DVD player; there are movies that you can borrow in the rec hall, along with a book library, potluck dinners, dances, etc. Two major events are the Pygmy Tundra Buffalo Run (13 miles) and the annual End of Season party.

Tonzona and Yakone Relaxing During a Demo

Denali has 30 Alaskan husky sled dogs that are used on backcountry winter patrols. This is the only National Park in the country that uses sled dogs to help protect the wildlife, scenery and wilderness with in the park. A popular summer interpretive program is the "dog demo", a 30-minute talk and demonstration run using historic equipment. The kennels has an "Adopt a Dog" volunteer program. Employees can adopt their very own sled dog for the summer and during the evening hours come to the kennels and take their dog out on walks (or rather get taken out on a walk by your sled dog) on the park road and help care for the dogs. See the kennels staff for details or call 907-683-9586 to set up an appointment for a test walk. You can visit the kennels online at http://www.nps.gov/dena/planyourvisit/kennels.htm

ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?
You can get a sneak preview of the awesome possibilities for fun and adventure that Denali offers by visiting our website www.nps.gov/dena. The website may also answer many of your questions. You may direct any other questions to us at 907-683-2294. We are looking forward to working with you. Denali is a wonderful place. Plan to make this the best summer you have ever experienced.

Living and Working in the West District of Denali National Park

Life "out west" in Denali National Park can be a rewarding experience for those who desire a remote setting deep in the interior of the Park's road corridor. The close-knit National Park Service community of the Toklat Road Camp has attracted and retained employees for many years. In contrast, some have found the living situation a bit too remote and choose to work in the eastern part of the Park, where amenities are a bit more accessible.

The Toklat Road Camp serves as the hub for operations west of the Teklanika River and houses employees who maintain Park roads and buildings and provide visitor services. There are about 35 employees who call Toklat home for the summer, as well as a smattering of transient residents who base there for short periods of time.

Although Toklat is "only" 50 miles from Park Headquarters, the narrow gravel road requires more than two hours of traversing.

Toklat offers endless opportunities to experience a simpler life found in few places in the United States. There is time to explore Denali's vast wilderness right outside your door, read a good book or two, and, most importantly, develop lifetime friendships with fellow Toklat residents. Toklat has a rich history of potlucks and slide shows at the Recreation Hall throughout the summer. The descriptions below are a start in illustrating life "out west." If you have any questions, please contact your supervisor; he or she will be able to share insights about living in one of the most spectacular places found in America's National Parks.

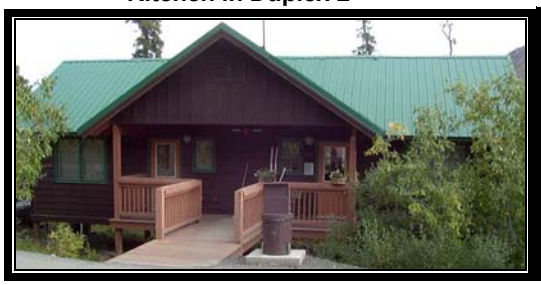
View from Toklat Road Camp

TOKLAT LIFE

Housing: **It's great! Housing is shared duplexes that were built in 1992. Basic dishes, pots, pans, and silverware are provided. This does not include mixing bowls, toasters, cookie sheets, microwaves, coffee machines, etc. You will need to provide your own bed linens, towels, and other items you cannot live without. There is hot and cold running water in each duplex; however, the bathrooms are shared facilities in a separate building with showers and toilets. There are laundry facilities (free washer and dryer). Please be considerate of your housemate and his/her personal space. The housing policy states that employees cannot have any one houseguest for more than eleven nights during the summer.**

Kitchen in Duplex 2

Living room area in Duplex 2



Duplex Style 1

Duplex Style 2

Toklat has a Recreation Hall, which is for the use of Toklat residents and their personal guests only. The Rec Hall has a cooking area and a small carpeted side room with a paperback library, Satellite TV and VCR/DVD players. Guests of residents must stay in their host's personal housing; no overnight stays are permitted in the Rec Hall.

Recreation Hall

Interior of Rec Hall

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Mail:

The West District folks share a post office box (P.O. Box 1194, Denali Park, AK 99755) Mail is shuttled from Headquarters by employees once or twice a week.

Phone:

Due to bandwidth costs, only one or perhaps two phones may be available. This system is in the testing stage. There is NO cell phones service beyond Park Headquarters.

Internet access:

Believe it or not, Toklat has internet access via a satellite dish that "captures" a signal from the southern horizon. The signal is intermittent (about 70% of the time), so be prepared for the system to be down at times. There is marginal bandwidth, and we don't "stream" music or video, as it slows down the performance for other users in camp.

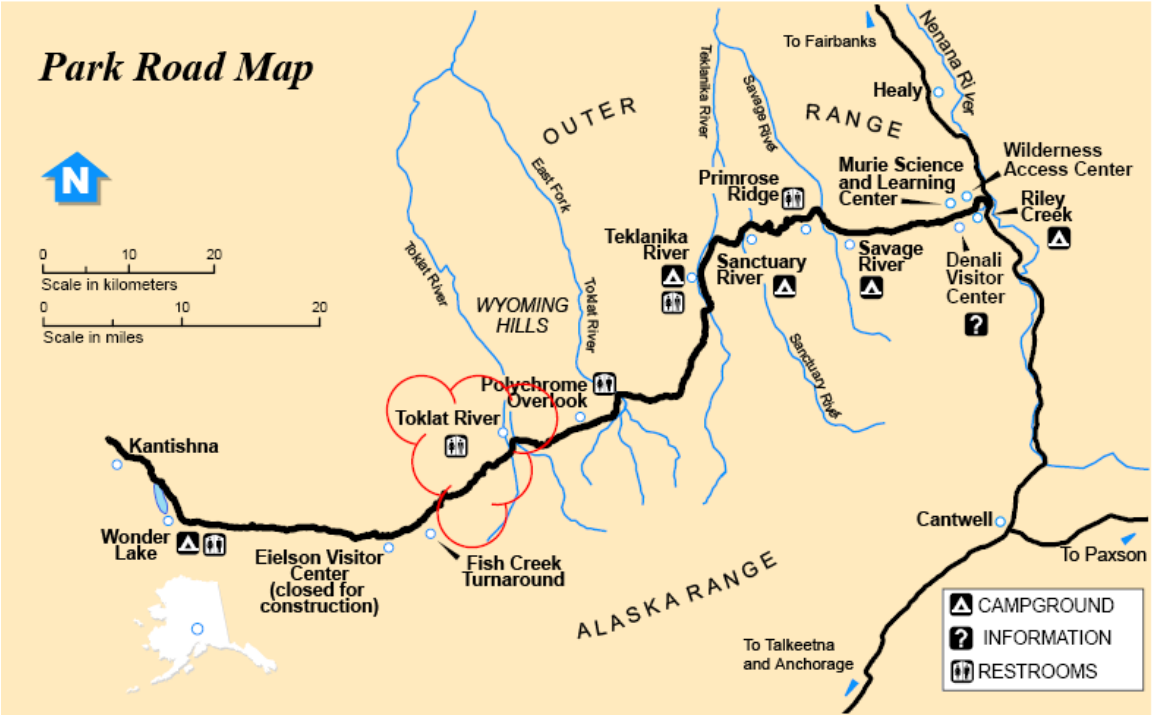
Food:

Bring lots and lots! There are plenty of storage places for food in the road camp. The duplexes have ample storage areas, and there are upright freezers located in the Rec Hall for overflow. There are small grocery stores at park headquarters (Riley Creek Mercantile), just outside the Park entrance (Lynx Creek Store and Canyon Market), and 12 miles north of the park in the town of Healy. However, these are all quite expensive. It would be best to stock up in Fairbanks or Anchorage on your way in. Once you arrive in Toklat, it will be at least an 8-hour round trip (travel time only) to the nearest major grocery stores in Fairbanks.

Final Notes about Living Out West:

Life at Toklat can be a rewarding experience to those who embrace all the qualities of a remote duty station. Common amenities such as close access to stores and restaurants are replaced by opportunities to explore the wilderness right out your front door.

Enjoy the magic of Denali and its West District!


Park Road Map
N
0 10 20
Scale in kilometers
0 10 20
Scale in miles
OUTER
RANGE
WYOMING HILLS
ALASKA RANGE
To Fairbanks
Healy
Nenana River
Teklanika River
Savage River
East Fork
Toklat River
Primrose Ridge
Murie Science and Learning Center
Wilderness Access Center
Riley Creek
Teklanika River
Sanctuary River
Savage River
Denali Visitor Center
Sanctuary River
Polychrome Overlook
Toklat River
Kantishna
Wonder Lake
Eielson Visitor Center (closed for construction)
Fish Creek Turnaround
Cantwell
To Paxson
To Talkeetna and Anchorage
CAMPGROUND
INFORMATION
RESTROOMS