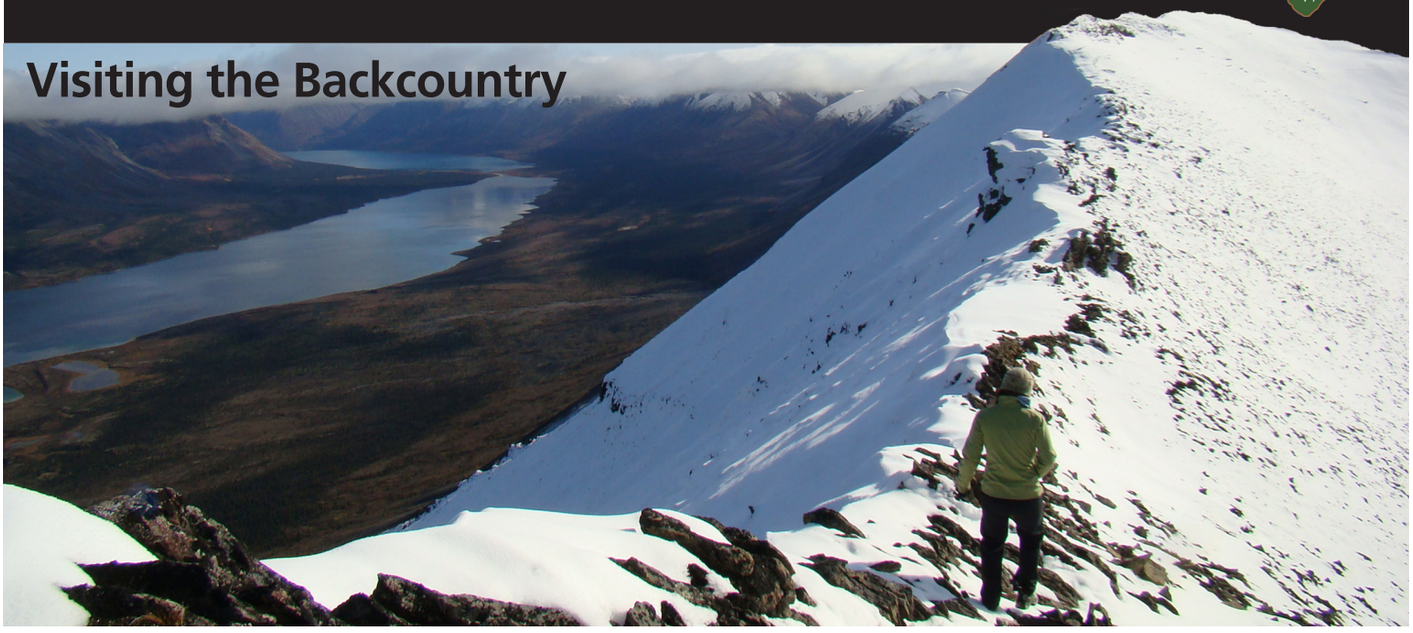
Lake Clark

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lake Clark National Park & Preserve

Visiting the Backcountry



Know Before You Go

Lake Clark National Park is a wilderness park, exceptionally remote and isolated. For any wilderness trip, we caution that visitors and hikers must be knowledgeable and prepared. Adventures in the park demand self-sufficiency and advanced backcountry skills. Help, if any, may be days away.

Wilderness Travel

Over half of Lake Clark National Park and Preserve is congressionally designated Wilderness. It is managed to retain the natural diversity, primeval character and unspoiled influence of the region. All camping is primitive; there are no facilities or designated campgrounds. Backcountry permits are not required, however there are rules and regulations governing one's behavior in all national park areas. You should be familiar with those rules and regulations as well as Leave No Trace practices in order to minimize your impact.

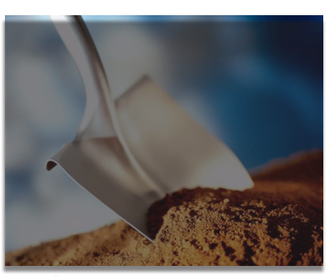
Lake Clark is a trailless wilderness and you can go where you like. There are no maintained trails, except for the short trail to Tanalian Falls from Port Alsworth. The Telaquana Trail, which appears on some maps, is in fact only a route.

Be prepared for the possibility of inclement weather delaying a scheduled pick-up, maybe even by days. Carry extra food and fuel. Always leave your itinerary with a friend or relative who can notify us if you are overdue.

Backcountry Camping

Being prepared and knowing the rules are keys to successful backcountry travel:

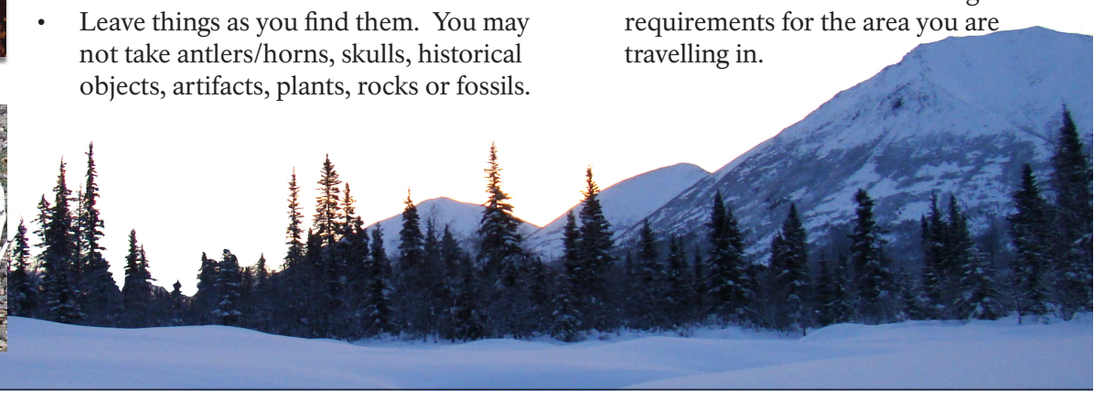
Pack out all trash.



Bury human waste.

Burn only dead & downed wood.

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover foods and litter.
- Properly dispose of human waste. Dig a hole at least six inches deep and 100 feet away from any freshwater source. Toilet paper and hygiene products should be burned or packed out as trash.
- Minimize campfires. If you do make a campfire, only dead or downed wood may be used. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out fire completely, then scatter cool ashes. Chainsaw use is prohibited in the park and preserve.
- Leave things as you find them. You may not take antlers/horns, skulls, historical objects, artifacts, plants, rocks or fossils.
- Camps may remain in one place for a maximum of 14 days at which time it must be moved a minimum of two miles
- Hunting is not allowed in the park. It is allowed in the preserve with proper state licenses. Be sure you know all the related rules and regulations, land status and boundaries.
- Remember you are in bear country. Avoid camping in areas frequented by bears or near bear travel corridors. Consider using a portable electric fence to discourage bears from entering camp
- Be familiar with the food storage requirements for the area you are travelling in.



Remember you're in BEAR COUNTRY

Both black and brown bears live in the Lake Clark region. It is very important to be "bear aware" while travelling in the backcountry.

- **Stay Constantly Alert**
  Use your ears, eyes, and even your nose to detect the presence of a bear. The sooner you are aware of the bear, the more time you both will have to react appropriately.

- **Be Visible, Make Noise**
  A surprise encounter with a bear is dangerous and can be terrifying. However, you can reduce the potential for such encounters. Avoid surprises by traveling in open areas with good visibility. Make noise as you walk, particularly in thick brush, or when round a blind corner— talk, clap, and sing. Be extra alert in windy conditions or near noisy streams or beaches that may mask your sounds. When possible, travel with the the wind at your back.

There are many publications available to provide more information about safety in bear country, please contact the park staff for assistance.

- **Safety in Numbers**
  The larger your group is, the less risk of a bear attacking. Stay together as a group, particularly if visibility is poor.

- **Avoid Bears Whenever Possible**
  If you see a bear and it does not see you, change your course to avoid the bear or move out of the area slowly. Never approach a bear, even from your boat or kayak. Approaching bears is dangerous and can cause undue stress and disturbance to the bear increasing the risk of attack.

- **Store Food Properly**
  Keep all food and scented items under your immediate control at all times. While camping, keep a clean camp and store food appropriately.

- **Report Bear Encounters**
  If you have an encounter, report it to a park ranger, or your guide or air taxi operator as soon as possible. This will alert others and enable park staff to respond appropriately to the situation if necessary.

Food Storage Requirements

In designated areas of the park, including within 1/2 mile of the coast line of Cook Inlet, within 1/2 mile of the shore line of Telaquana Lake, Turquoise Lake, Upper and Lower Twin Lakes, and Crescent Lake, you *are required* to store all food and beverages, food and beverage containers, garbage and harvested fish in a bear resistant container (BRC) or secured--

- within a hard sided building or lockable and hard sided section of a vehicle, vessel, or aircraft; OR
- by caching a minimum of 100 feet from camp, suspended at least 10 ft. above the ground and 4 ft. horizontally from a tree trunk or other object on a line or branch that will not support a bear's weight.

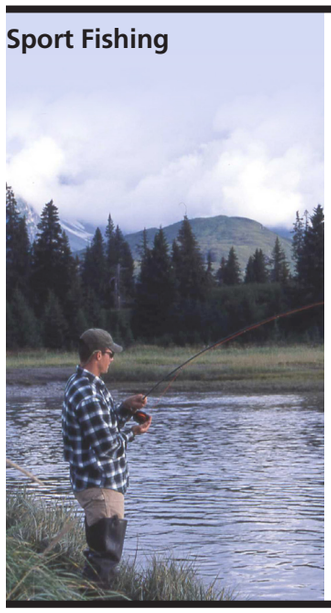
The park offers bear resistant containers for temporary use to the public. The containers are free and can be picked up at the visitor center in Port Alsworth.

This regulation does not apply to food that is being transported, consumed or prepared for consumption. Clean dishes and cooking equipment free of food odors are not required to be stored in a BRC, but it is recommended.

A bear resistant container is defined as an item constructed to prevent access by a bear, and does not include coolers, tents, dry bags, stuff sacks, plastic packing containers or unmodified kayaks.

The intent of these regulations is to prevent bears and other wildlife from obtaining food and garbage and becoming food-conditioned, and also to protect you and the park wildlife.

Sport Fishing



Some of the most pristine fishery resources and finest opportunities for sport fishing exist at Lake Clark. Anglers can fish for arctic grayling, lake trout, rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, and several species of salmon. Park regulations require a State of Alaska fishing license and compliance with all state fishing regulations.

The National Park Service encourages visitors to help preserve native species by practicing catch and release fishing. Catch and release fishing improves native fish populations by allowing more fish to remain and reproduce in the ecosystem, which in turn provides an opportunity for increasing numbers of anglers to enjoy fishing and to successfully catch fish.

Tips for Catch and Release Fishing

- Use barbless hooks or flatten the barbs for easier and less damaging removal.
- Land your fish carefully. Avoid playing fish to exhaustion and use a net to lessen handling and potential injury to the fish.
- Handle your catch properly. Use wet hands or gloves, and never touch the gills. Use needle-nosed pliers or similar tools to remove the hook. If the hook cannot be removed, cut your line as close to the hook as possible.
- Only take the fish out of the water for a quick photograph and then gently return it to the water, oriented into the current. Hold fish until it swims away on its own.

Find out more

The National Park Service publishes several in-depth brochures on subjects of interest to backcountry travelers. More safety information and maps are also available. Please contact the Park Headquarters in Port Alsworth if you'd like more information or visit the park's web site.

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