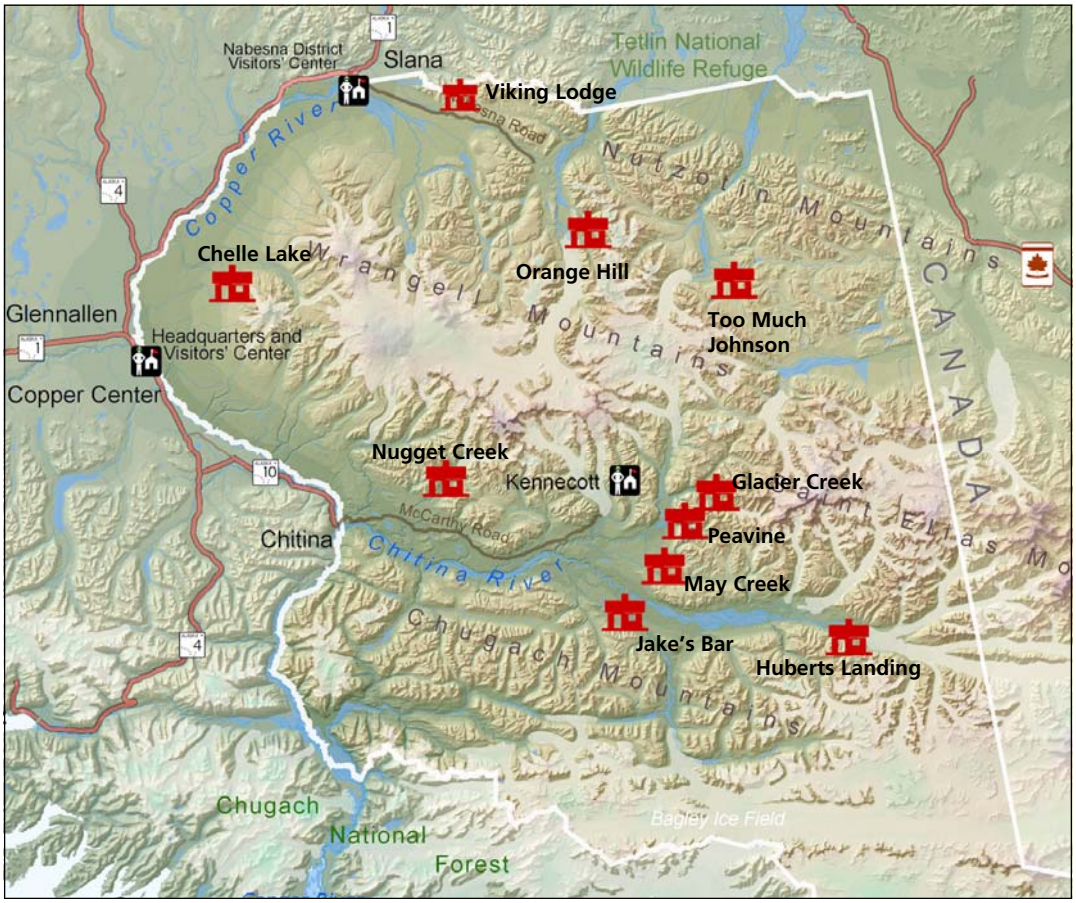
Public Use Cabins

Currently, there are 13 public- use cabins located within Wrangell- St. Elias. Most of these cabins were old mining, trapping, or hunting cabins that are located on public land and have been restored by the National Park Service. All of these public use cabins are available to everyone on a first- come, first- served basis, and with the exception of Esker Stream Cabin near Yakutat, and Viking Lodge Cabin along the Nabesna Road, presently do NOT require reservations and are not reserve- able. These are very remote locations and require hikers/campers to make appropriate plans. Many of these cabins are accessible only by aircraft.

All cabins have a woodstove and bunks. You must bring all personal belongings that you will require, including sleeping and dining equipment. Please leave cabins set up for emergency use and cleaner than when you arrived. Replenish any firewood stored in the cabins for the next user. Although you may not plan on staying in a cabin, it is good to know where they are located in case of emergencies. Generally, these cabins are located near an airstrip, old road, or trail. Please do not remove or relocate any artifacts or deface these historic buildings.



Nugget Creek Cabin

N61.626122, W143.713382
Refer to USGS Maps: McCarthy 1:250,000;
McCarthy 1:63,360 (C- 8)

Nugget Creek Cabin is 15 feet by 19 feet in size and contains a woodstove, table and chairs, fire extinguisher, outhouse, and four standard twin wooden bunks. This cabin is on the north side of Nugget Creek at about 3,000' elevation. Nugget Creek feeds into the Kuskulana River about 1/4 mile downstream from the cabin. The cabin is situated in the flat river bottom amongst a forest of spruce and aspen. The location is suitable for off- trail hiking to the terminus of the Kuskulana glacier. A trail extends for 1.5 miles beyond the cabin to access the old mine sites at the 3,800' elevation on the bench above Nugget Creek.

It can be reached using a 14- mile trail suitable for ATV, foot, horse, or mountain bike or by small airplane at a 900' gravel airstrip approximately 200 yards from the cabin. Water can be carried from nearby Nugget Creek.

Attracted by Ahtna reports of float copper, prospectors began examining the Kuskulana River and its tributaries about 1899. James McCarthy was one of the first to examine Nugget Creek, named for a two- ton copper nugget which prospectors had discovered in the stream bed. McCarthy staked numerous claims in the vicinity and built a small cabin, only the sill logs of which remain. Alaska Consolidated Copper eventually acquired McCarthy's claims, but although the company mined property on Nugget Creek for about a decade, it was a wasted effort. Nugget Creek's entire production consisted of two carloads of high- grade ore shipped prior to 1916, and 160 tons of hand- sorted ore shipped after. The company's failure to locate additional ore eventually forced it to abandon its effort in 1919.

This public use cabin was built in 1966 by Tom Byron, who intended to homestead the area. It was subsequently improved by Jerry E. Coppess, who owns a nearby claim. It is now owned and maintained by the National Park Service.

Chelle Lake Cabin

N62.192154, W144.866446
Refer to USGS maps Gulkana 1:250,000; Gulkana 1:63,360 (A- 2)

Chelle Lake Cabin is 24 feet by 36 feet in size and contains four standard twin- size wooden bunks, a kitchen area, a table with bench, a woodstove, fire extinguisher, informational bulletin board, and a pit toilet.

This cabin is available to everyone on a first- come, first- served basis. Maximum stay limit is 14 days.

This cabin is located on the east shore of Chelle Lake in a mixed spruce forest on the west slope of Mt. Drum at an elevation of about 3,200' and is accessed by aircraft via an extremely rough 800' gravel airstrip. Water may be obtained from Chelle Lake, but must be treated and allowed to settle. The cabin location permits off- trail hiking/exploring in the direction of Mount Drum and fishing in Chelle Lake.

There are numerous bugs; head nets are strongly encouraged during June, July, and August. Obtain firewood from dead and down wood. This location is a 20 acre site surrounded by private lands. Avoid trespassing on private property.

Extremely rough 800' gravel strip

Orange Hill Cabin

N62.212042, W142.848128
Refer to USGS Maps: Nabesna 1:250,000; Nabesna 1:63,360 (A- 4)

Description: Rustic Cabin, 12x16, sleeps up to 2 people. Includes two standard twin sized wooden bunks, table with benches, a wood stove, fire extinguisher, informational bulletin board, and pit toilet. Water is NOT available.

This public use cabin is available to everyone on a first- come, first- served basis. Maximum stay is 14 days.

Access: Air via nearby 700' gravel airstrip. **CAUTION:** Airstrip is being heavily eroded and shortened each summer by a bend of the Nabesna River! Snowmachine access in winter.

Terrain: This cabin is located in the Nabesna River valley approximately 13 miles southeast of Nabesna, or approximately 20 miles by snowmachine trail from the Nabesna Road. The cabin is in dense spruce forest near the Nabesna Glacier. Airstrip is located near the cabin.

Recreational Opportunities: Short area hikes with access to the Nabesna Glacier.

Specific considerations: Area has numerous bugs. Headnets area strongly encouraged during June, July, and August. Obtain firewood from dead and down wood.

700' Airstrip is being actively eroded by the Nabesna River! Use Extreme Caution!

Glacier Creek Cabin

N61.455, W142.375
Refer to USGS maps, McCarthy 1:250,000;
McCarthy 1:63,360 (B- 4)

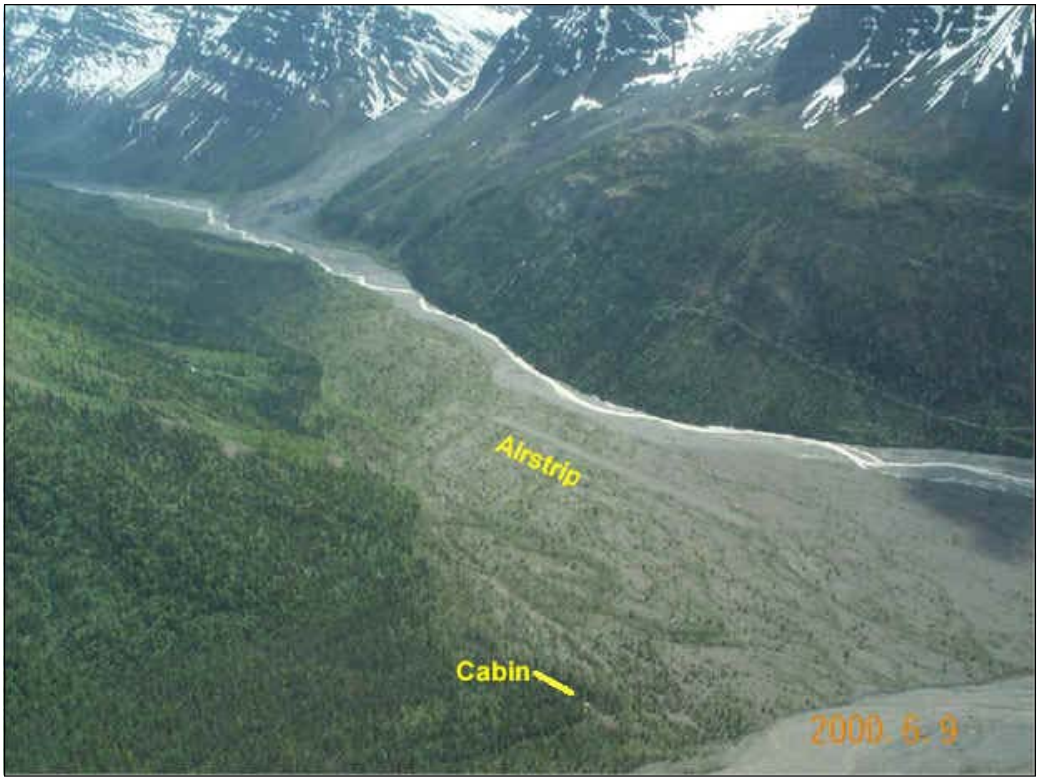
The Glacier Creek cabin is 8 feet by 10 feet in size and contains a woodstove, 2 standard twin- size wooden bunks, fire extinguisher, informational bulletin board, and pit toilet. Water is available from Glacier Creek or the Chitistone River but must be treated and allowed to settle.

This cabin is situated 18 miles east of McCarthy, about 1/2 mile south of the Chitistone River.

Accessible by airstrip, it is situated in an extremely scenic area surrounded by towering cliffs and sparkling glaciers.

It offers excellent opportunities for hiking up Glacier Creek, the Chitistone River, or Toby Creek.

There are numerous bugs; headnets are strongly encouraged during June, July, and August. Obtain firewood from dead and downed wood.



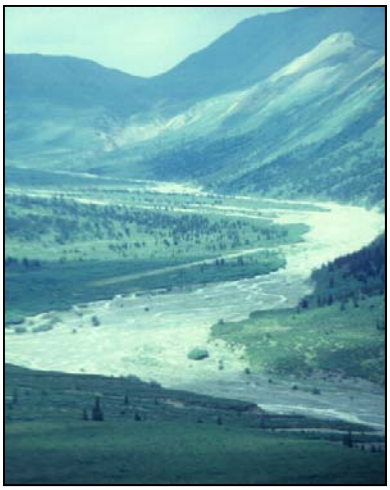
Too Much Johnson Cabin

N62.065789, W142.042072
Refer to USGS Maps: Nabesna 1:250,000; Nabesna 1:63,360 (A- 3)

Too Much Johnson Cabin is 11 feet by 15 feet in size, sleeps up to two people. Cabin contains 2 standard twin- size wooden bunks, a table and chairs, a wood stove, fire extinguisher, info bulletin board, and pit toilet. Water is not available near the cabin, but from a seasonal spring located 1/4 mile northeast of the cabin on Chathenda Creek.

The cabin is located in the historic mining settlement of Chisana.

Recreational Opportunities: Excellent opportunity for extended treks along the Chisana River or the Gold Hill historic mining district, situated 10 miles to the northwest.



Special considerations: There are numerous bugs; head nets are strongly advised during June, July, and August. Obtain firewood from dead and down wood. Chisana is residentially occupied, private lands are scattered around the area.

Today, Chisana enjoys a seasonal population of about twenty- five. A few persistent placer miners continue to work the district's creeks. The spiritual heirs of the stampeders, they continue their predecessor's quest, ever searching for that one rich strike. There are bed and breakfasts and guide/outfitters in this area that is accessible only by small aircraft. Some adventurous hikers retrace the steps of the early stampeders and make the trek from Chisana to McCarthy. This is a difficult route and should only be attempted by experienced backcountry travelers.

As you hike around Chisana you will see ruins of structures and historic artifacts throughout the area. Please don't remove or relocate anything. They provide important clues to the story of the people who followed the lure of gold to Chisana. Many of the historic structures are located on private property. Public easements are marked, so please respect private property while at the site. The National Park Service has restored four log buildings (including Too Much Johnson Cabin) in the original townsite.

May Creek Cabin

61.2332266, - 142.676546
Refer to USGS maps: McCarthy 1:250,000, McCarthy 1:63,360 (B- 5)

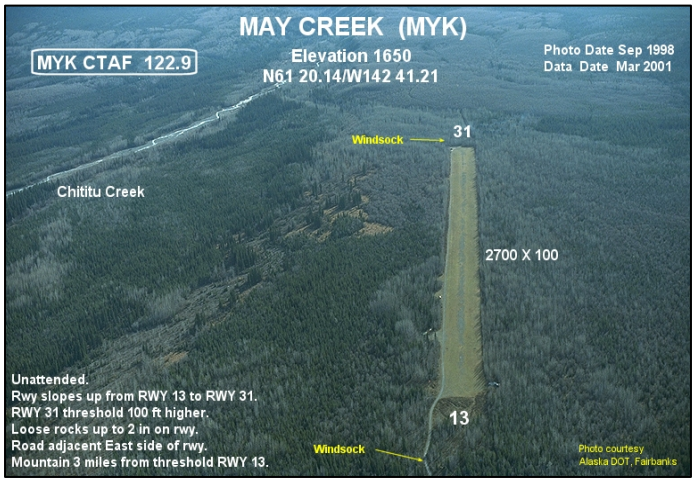
Description: Rustic Cabin, 14x16, sleeps up to 3 people. Includes 1 standard twin- size wooden bunk, and 1 standard double wooden bunk, a table with bench, a wood stove, fire extinguisher, informational bulletin board, outside picnic table, and pit toilet.

Access: Air only via nearby 2,700' turf airstrip. The cabin is located near the southeast corner of the airstrip.

Terrain: This cabin is located in a mixed spruce and aspen forest in the Nizina River valley near Young Creek at an elevation of 1,650'. The cabin is located between May and Chititu Creek, approximately 11.5 miles southeast of McCarthy.

Recreational Opportunities: Short area hikes, amazing wildflowers, especially near the airstrip.

Specific considerations: There are numerous bugs. Headnets are strongly encouraged during June, July and August. Obtain firewood from dead and down wood. The airstrip is frequently used as a staging area and may have other users.



Peavine Cabins

N61.452471, W142.486578
Refer to USGS Maps: McCarthy 1:250,000; McCarthy 1:36,360 (B- 4)

Description: 2 Rustic cabins.

Peavine #1 is 20x24, handicap accessible, sleeps up to 6 people. Includes six standard twin- sized wooden bunks, a table with benches, a wood stove, fire extinguisher, info bulletin board, and a pit toilet.

Peavine #2 is 14x16, sleeps up to 3 people. Includes 1 standard twin-sized wooden bunk, 1 standard double wooden bunk, a table with benches, a wood stove, fire extinguisher, info bulletin board, and a pit toilet.

Access: By aircraft via nearby 1650' gravel airstrip. Winter by snowmachine.

Terrain: Cabins are located 14 miles east of McCarthy on a gravel bar of the Chitistone River surrounded by towering cliffs.

Recreational Opportunities: Spectacular scenery, short local hikes along old mining trails on nearby hillsides.

Specific considerations: There are numerous bugs. Head nets are strongly encouraged during June, July, and August. Obtain firewood from dead and down wood.

Jake's Bar Cabins

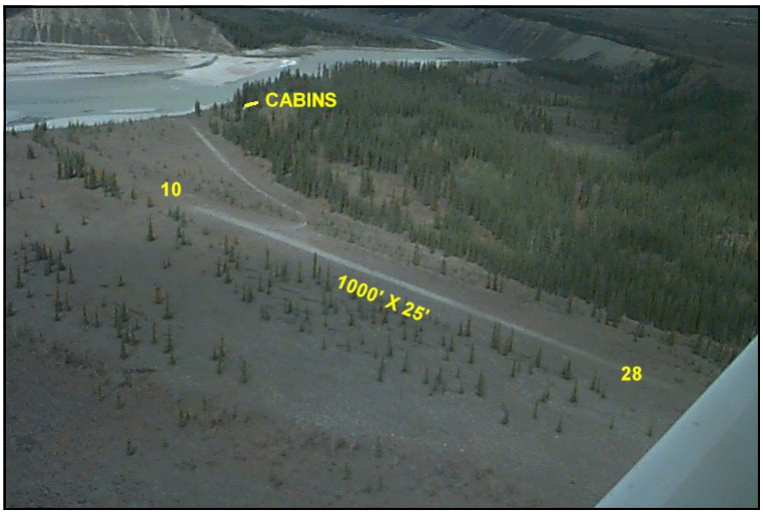
N61.223188, W142.891789
Refer to USGS maps- McCarthy 1:250,000; McCarthy 1:63,360 (A- 6)

Jake's Bar Cabins 1 and 2 are located together. One cabin is 9 feet by 13 feet and contains a woodstove and two bunks; the second cabin is 6 feet by 9 feet in size and contains a wood-stove and two bunks. These cabins are located on the north shore of the Chitina River about 15 miles south of McCarthy at about 1,000' elevation.

Access is by float on the Chitina River, or by aircraft via the nearby 1000' gravel airstrip.

Water can be obtained at a small spring located 100 feet downstream of the cabin, or by settling the glacially- silted Chitina River water. There are no developed trails at Jake's Bar, but it is possible to hike both up and down the river.

There are numerous bugs. Headnets are strongly encouraged during June, July, and August. Obtain firewood from dead and downed wood. River rafters occasionally dock on the nearby shore.



Hubert's Landing Cabin

61.027, -141.631
Refer to USGS maps-McCarthy 1:250,000; McCarthy 1:63,360 (A-2)

Rustic Cabin, 15' X 16'. Sleeps up to 2 people. Includes 2 standard twin-size wooden bunks, a wood stove, fire extinguisher, informational bulletin board and a pit toilet. Water is available from local hillside creeks but must be treated.

Access: By air at a very rough gravel airstrip 900' long.

Terrain: This cabin is nestled in a glacial valley on the upper Chitina River. It is located on an alluvial surrounded by mixed spruce forest.

Recreation Opportunities: Hiking, and starting point for river trips.

Specific Considerations: There are numerous bugs; headnets are highly recommended during the months of July and August. Obtain firewood only from dead and downed wood.

Viking Lodge Cabin

Refer to USGS maps: Nabesna 1:63,360 (C- 5)

This cabin requires a reservation.
Reservations can be made six months in advance of your first night of stay by phoning the Slana Ranger Station at (907) 822- 7401. The maximum stay in the cabin is 14 days. Recommended occupancy of the cabin is four persons.

Description:
This structure was built in the early 1970s by Thor Brandt- Erickson, a homesteader of Danish descent, and named Viking Lodge. The Erikson family still lives in this cabin for a time each summer. The cabin has 2 plywood bunks, a small kitchen table and chairs, a barrel wood stove, and a large loft area. The cabin was refurbished for public use by the National Park Service in 2000, and is in good condition. There is a new outhouse and water is usually available from a nearby stream.

Access:
Viking lodge is located about 1/4 mile north of the Nabesna Road. The trailhead and parking area is located at approximately mile 22.5 at the Rock Lake Turnout. The trail is an easy 10- minute walk through a spruce forest. ATV use is not allowed for access, but snowmachines may be used during winter.

Specific Considerations:
Clean the cabin and take all food with you upon departure. Burying garbage is prohibited. There are numerous bugs. Headnets are strongly encouraged during June, July, and August.

Esker Stream Cabin

Refer to USGS maps: Yakutat 1:63,360 (D- 5)

This cabin requires a reservation and use fee of $25 per night. Reservations are arranged through the Yakutat Ranger Station. Reservations can be made six months in advance of your first night of stay by phoning the Yakutat District Ranger Station at (907) 784.3295. Payment can be made by credit card, money order or international money order. The maximum stay in the cabin is 14 days. Upon payment, a special use permit will be issued to the trip leader, who must have the permit in possession during the entire stay. Recommended occupancy of the cabin is four persons.

Description: Rustic cabin, sleeps four. Includes two standard twin- sized bunkbeds, oil stove, table with bench, pit toilet.

Access: Access to the cabin is accomplished by a wheel plane beach landing. Planes generally land on the opposite side of Little Esker Stream from the cabin, and it is therefore recommended that you bring hip boots for the stream crossing. Because of harsh winter storms in the area, the cabin was constructed in a protected area away from the beach, approximately a quarter mile from where planes can land.

Specific Considerations: The cabin contains an OIL stove. Kerosene or K1 commercial grade fuel is recommended, though commercial grade fuel can also be used. These fuels are available for purchase in Yakutat and air taxis will carry them to the site for you. Fuels are considered hazardous cargo and can not be flown into Yakutat via Alaska Airlines.

If you intend to hunt in the area and anticipate hanging meat in the event of a successful hunt, please bring tarps with you to protect the area beneath the meat. Take these tarps with you when you leave. Clean the cabin and take all food with you upon departure. Burying garbage is prohibited.