



Public Use Cabins in Alaska

Alaska has over 200 public cabins available for recreational use. Located in diverse and spectacular landscapes, they are accessible by boat, floatplane, or hiking trail. A few are accessible by road. Careful planning and research is your insurance for a safe and unforgettable experience in Alaska's magnificent public lands.

- **Cabin Facts:** Cabins are rustic, either frame or log, with an average size of 12' by 16' and most can comfortably sleep 4 people. They are equipped with the bare essentials -- wooden bunks, wood or oil stove, table and benches, and outhouse. None have plumbing. Bring your own food, cooking equipment, sleeping bags, and sturdy outdoor clothing. Most cabins have an axe saw, but bring your own just in case. Firewood may not be readily available. Some cabins have cookstoves -- you supply the fuel. Some lakeside cabins have a rowboat -- bring your own personal floatation device.
- Once you decide which area or cabin interests you, contact the managing agency (see "Additional Information"). Be specific about your interests (boating, hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, hunting, etc.) Ask for any available brochures, maps, information handouts and application forms. Most brochures describe the reservation system, weather, access, wildlife, safety, and the topographic maps of the area.
- **Reservations:** Each land-managing agency has its own reservation system. Some cabins are first-come, first-served, while others are offered by lottery. Advance reservations vary from 30 to 190 days. Most require payment with application, and fees range from \$10 to \$75 per night. The maximum stay varies from 3 to 30 days depending on the season and location. Cabin permits may not be used for commercial enterprises.
- **Transportation:** Most cabins are located in remote backcountry areas. Your trip to and from the cabin could be an adventure in itself! For listings of boat and taxi services, locate the community nearest the cabin. Be prepared for weather delays by having an alternate plan and extra food.
- **Maps:** Get U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps and a compass, and know how to use them! (See "Additional References" for provider). Most public information brochures do not have enough detail to accurately locate your position. *Please note:* Topographic maps of Alaska are 10 to 40 years old. Trails, cabins, roads, and even some villages shown on maps may no longer exist. Check with the land managing agency if you have questions.
- **Private Property:** Much of Alaska's backcountry contains mining claims, private lands,

trapping cabins and fish camps. Respect all private property and avoid disturbing such sites, even if they look abandoned.

- **Safety Precautions:**

Bears: Black and brown bears inhabit most of Alaska. Read all bear safety information provided and follow the proper procedures for camping and hiking in bear country to reduce the chances of a confrontation. Firearms are not allowed in some parks; check with the managing agency before you go. A red pepper-based aerosol spray that is highly effective in repelling bears is available in many sporting goods stores.

Water: The public use cabins do not have running water. Drinking water should either be carried in or collected from a local water source. Boil, filter, or chemically treat all water from lakes and streams before drinking. *Giardia*, an intestinal bacteria that can cause great discomfort, is widespread in Alaska. Glacial rivers are full of silt which can clog filters: let the water sit overnight so the silt settles out or filter it first through a clean cloth.

Contact Information:

Tongass National Forest
Forest Service Visitor Center
(907) 586-8751, fax 586-7928

Chugach National Forest
(907) 271-2500, fax 271-2599 or
toll-free 1-800-478-8737 (within Alaska)

Bureau of Land Management
Steese-White Mountains District
(907) 474-2352, fax 474-2282

Alaska State Parks
Department of Natural Resources
(907) 762-2261, fax 762-2535

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
(907) 487-2600, fax 487-2144

Kenai Fjords National Park & Preserve
(907) 224-3175, fax 224-7100

UAF Map Office
(907) 474-6960, fax 474-2645

Alaska Public Lands Information Center
(907) 459-3730, fax 459-3729

Cabin Locations & Managing Agencies:

U.S. Forest Service:

The **Tongass National Forest** in Southeast Alaska has 150 cabins available.

The **Chugach National Forest** in Southcentral Alaska has 50 cabins.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

BLM manages 9 cabins in the one million-acre **Steese-White Mountains National Recreation Area**. These cabins are primarily designated for winter-use because most of the trails are in wetlands unsuitable for summer travel.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge offers nine cabins on the emerald island of Kodiak.

Alaska State Parks:

The state park system offers public cabins in the following areas: **Nancy Lake State Recreation Area** north of Anchorage, **Kachemak Bay State Park** on the Kenai Peninsula, **Shuyak Island State Park** near Kodiak Island, **Chena River and Quartz Lake State Recreation Areas** near Fairbanks, **Oliver Inlet and Grindall Island State Marine Parks** in southeast Alaska.

National Park Service:

Kenai Fjords National Park & Preserve has four public use cabins available.