



Alaska Wildland Adventures

TRIP ITINERARY FOR THE SAINT LOUIS ZOO ALASKA GRAND JOURNEY JULY 19-30, 2006

July 19, Wednesday

Arrival: This day is unguided. Make your airline reservations to arrive in Anchorage, Alaska the day before your trip begins and overnight at the Aspen Hotel Anchorage located at 108 East 8th Avenue in downtown Anchorage. Your hotel is included in your trip price. On arrival, self-shuttle by using the hotel's courtesy shuttle (direct phone to hotel in the baggage claim). Tomorrow (July 20th), your Trip Leader will meet you (and your luggage!) at 8 a.m. in the lobby of the hotel.

July 20, Thursday

Day 1: Meet your Trip Leader and fellow Saint Louis Zoo travelers at 8 a.m. in the lobby of the Aspen Hotel Anchorage. This morning we will have an "orientation breakfast," and then visit the Alaska Zoo for a private tour. In the afternoon enjoy a scenic drive south along Turnagain Arm and through the Chugach National Forest to the seacoast town of Seward. Upon arrival, visit the Alaska SeaLife Center for a private behind-the-scenes look at this new research facility. There will be time to explore the town on your own this afternoon. This evening dinner and overnight at the Seward Windsong Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

July 21, Friday

Day 2: After breakfast, meet our boat for a full day tour of the Kenai Fjords National Park. We will go further into the park than most visitors are allowed to travel, our destination today being the Northwestern Glacier. The tour includes visiting a tidewater glacier and searching for marine wildlife such as sea otters, puffins (and many other bird species), harbor seals, Steller sea lions and whales. We will be dropped off early evening on our own island for an overnight at Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge on Fox Island. Spend the rest of the evening exploring Fox Island or relaxing in your private cabin, and dinner. **(B, L, D)**

July 22, Saturday

Day 3: After breakfast, transfer by private boat back to the town of Seward. Travel to our launch site on the Kenai River in Cooper Landing and gear up for a scenic raft trip into the heart of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Along the way, watch for moose, bald eagles and other bird species, and salmon. The Kenai River is famous for its salmon, and with luck, you may witness their incredible spawning runs. A delicious picnic lunch will be served along the river or on the shore of Skilak Lake. Arrive at Kenai Backcountry Lodge in the late afternoon and settle into your overnight accommodations. **(B, L, D)**

July 23, Sunday

Day 4: Spend a full day exploring the remote wilderness of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Hike a secluded trail and travel through several fascinating ecological communities. At the top of the trail, explore the tundra and enjoy splendid views of the lake and surrounding wilderness. Or explore the lakeshore by boat, stopping for scenic views and short walks. Return to the lodge in the afternoon and enjoy the wood-fired sauna or simply relax at the lodge. Depending on the weather, options for the evening may include an exploration of the lake by sturdy touring kayak or a fireside natural history presentation by one of the lodge's guides. Overnight at Kenai Backcountry Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

July 24, Monday

Day 5: Cross the lake in the morning, and say farewell to the Kenai Backcountry Lodge. Travel by road north through the Chugach National Forest to Girdwood, a quaint ski town surrounded by hanging glaciers and rugged mountain peaks. Choose from a variety of afternoon activities: guided hiking, gold panning, biking the local trails, or relaxing at the four-diamond Alyeska Prince Hotel. Ride the tram to the top of Mt. Alyeska for a delicious dinner at the acclaimed Seven Glaciers Restaurant. **(B, L, D)**

July 25, Tuesday

Day 6: Begin the journey north through the scenic Chugach State Park to Talkeetna, gateway to the Alaska Range. Add on an optional flightseeing tour of Mt. McKinley (Denali) and its adjacent glacial canyons, or wander through “downtown” Talkeetna and learn about mountaineering and Talkeetna’s history. Overnight in Talkeetna. **(B, L, D)**

July 26, Wednesday

Day 7: After breakfast, continue traveling north to Denali National Park and stop for lunch at the Denali Park entrance. After lunch, board the Kantishna Roadhouse private bus and embark on a 5-6 hour Denali wildlife drive through the park. Watch for caribou, moose, Dall sheep, grizzly bears, resident and migratory birds, and (weather permitting) Denali itself. Upon arrival at the Kantishna Roadhouse, have dinner and settle into your cabin accommodations. **(B, L, D)**

June 27 and 28, Thursday and Friday

Days 8 and 9: Enjoy two full days of exploration and hiking in the Kantishna region of Denali National Park. The activities available include guided hiking, natural history programs, gold panning, dog sled demonstration, and mountain biking. Optional add-on flightseeing tours may be offered during your stay at the lodge. However, this activity is weather and space-dependent. Overnight at Kantishna Roadhouse. **(B, L, D)**

July 29, Saturday

Day 10: Following an early breakfast, embark on a return Denali wildlife drive and watch for wildlife while heading for the entrance of the park. Board the Alaska Railroad back to Anchorage and enjoy a farewell dinner en route, arriving at approximately 8:30 p.m. Transfer to the Aspen Hotel Anchorage for your final overnight, and bid farewell to your Trip Leader and fellow travelers. Overnight in Anchorage. **(B, L, D)**

July 30, Sunday

Departure: This day is unguided. Continental breakfast is included at the Aspen Hotel. Transfer to the Anchorage Airport, using the hotel complementary shuttle service and return home.

Note: We do not expect any major changes from this schedule. However, in the spirit of adventure, we allow our itinerary to remain flexible so that we may take advantage of spontaneous events.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Packing:

Each guest will be provided with a medium sized duffel bag so that you can consolidate your luggage for Days 2-4. These days will be spent at remote wilderness lodges: Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge on Fox Island (Day 2), and Kenai Backcountry Lodge (Days 3-4). Your Trip Leader will provide you with a packing list and request that you consolidate your necessary gear for the lodges into one medium-size duffel bag per person. Your remaining luggage will be stored safely for you.

Cabin and Lodge Accommodations:

We have purposely arranged for rustic accommodations to enhance the Alaskan experience and the travel value. The Yukon Cabin Tent and Log Cabin accommodations at Kenai Backcountry Lodge and the cabins at Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge at Fox Island have heat and propane lights, but no on-demand electricity. All of the other accommodations have heat and electricity. Although cabin and room styles vary, Alaska Wildland Adventures makes every effort to obtain rooms with two beds.

Bathroom Facilities:

At our Kenai Backcountry Lodge, the bathhouses are separate from the Yukon Cabin Tents and Log Cabins. The bathhouses are exceptionally clean and modern with hot water, flush toilets, and showers. For the rest of the trip, private bathroom facilities will be in each room or cabin.

Kenai Backcountry Lodge:

Occasionally, due to high winds, we are unable to cross the lake at scheduled times. Alternative activities and accommodations have been planned for this uncommon occurrence. Usually, we are able to get across later in the day if the winds subside, but please be prepared for a possible change in schedule.

Sea Kayaking at Fox Island:

While staying at Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge on Fox Island (Day 3), you may have the option of taking a two-hour evening sea kayaking trip in the protected waters of Resurrection Bay (instruction included). These trips are offered by an independent operator and are booked on a space-available, weather dependent basis. If you are interested in sea kayaking, reservations may be made directly with the sea kayaking operator that evening. Trips cost an additional \$79-\$89 per person (subject to change), payable directly to the sea kayaking service by traveler's check or cash. (Sea kayaking reservations may not be booked by Alaska Wildland Adventures or made in advance.)

Road Travel:

Travel from the Kenai Peninsula to Denali National Park includes two days of road travel. Although air travel for this portion of the trip may seem sensible, we have elected to travel by road because variable weather would disrupt several trips each summer, and add expense. We have invested in spacious wide body "mini-coach" vehicles to make the road travel as comfortable as possible. While traveling through Denali National Park, we will be on board the Kantishna Roadhouse private bus. This 95-mile drive through the park offers spectacular scenery and excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

Flightseeing:

While overnighing in Talkeetna (Day 6) and at the Kantishna Roadhouse (Days 7-9), you have the option of taking a flightseeing tour of Denali (Mt. McKinley). These trips are offered by independent operators and are booked on a space-available, weather dependent basis. If you are interested in flightseeing, reservations may be made directly with the operator that day. Trips cost an additional \$125-\$175 per person (subject to change), payable directly to the operator by traveler's check, credit card or cash. (Reservations may not be booked by Alaska Wildland Adventures or made in advance.)

Trip Cost:

Trip cost includes pre- and post- night hotel in Anchorage, welcome breakfast, pick-up and return transportation to Anchorage, best of gear and equipment, meals as noted above in detailed itinerary, lodging and full guide services during your entire stay.

Trip cost does not include flightseeing, sea kayaking at Fox Island, beer, wine, liquor, or gratuities to staff.

Alaska Railroad:

The Alaska Railroad requires guests 18 years of age and older to provide photo ID. Your guide will ask for your driver's license or passport number prior to your ride on the Alaska Railroad. This will help expedite the check-in process.

Gratuities to Staff:

First, we firmly believe that a gratuity is not to be “expected,” but “deserved.” The amount is a matter of personal preference; we offer the following guidance only because we are frequently asked for it. We suggest \$10-\$15 per guest per day. Most guests extend their gratuity to the Trip Leader toward the end of the trip in their own way. Please make checks payable to the Trip Leader, not to Alaska Wildland Adventures. Gratuities are shared by all Alaska Wildland Adventures employees who work all or part of the trip.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Arrival Evening: (888) 506-7848 – Aspen Hotel Anchorage

Day 1: (907) 224-7116 – Seward Windsong Lodge

Day 2: (907) 224-8086 – Kenai Fjords Tours Office
(leave message for Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge on Fox Island)

Days 3-4: (907) 595-1279 – Alaska Wildland Adventures’ Kenai Riverside Lodge
(leave message for Kenai Backcountry Lodge)

Day 5: (907) 754-1111 – Alyeska Prince Hotel

Day 6: (907) 733-9500 – Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge

Days 7-9: (907) 224-8086 – Kantishna Roadhouse

Final Evening: (888) 506-7848 – Aspen Hotel Anchorage