

EDGERTON HIGHWAY/ MCCARTHY ROAD

CONNECTS: Richardson Hwy. Jct. to McCarthy, AK

Length: 93 miles Road Surface: 40% Paved, 60% Gravel

Season: McCarthy Road not maintained in winter

(See map, page 487)



| Distances in miles | Anchorage | Chitina | Fairbanks | Glennallen | McCarthy | Valdez |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|------------|----------|--------|
| Anchorage | | 255 | 362 | 187 | 314 | 308 |
| Chitina | 255 | | 313 | 67 | 60 | 120 |
| Fairbanks | 362 | 313 | | 249 | 372 | 366 |
| Glennallen | 187 | 67 | 249 | | 127 | 121 |
| McCarthy | 314 | 60 | 372 | 127 | | 179 |
| Valdez | 308 | 120 | 366 | 121 | 179 | |

The Edgerton Highway (Alaska Route 10) is a scenic paved road leading 33.5 miles east from its junction with the Richardson Highway (Alaska Route 4) to the small town of Chitina, gateway to the McCarthy Road to McCarthy and Kennicott. The gravel McCarthy Road leads 59.3 miles east from Chitina, across the Copper River, and dead-ends at the Kennicott River, about 1 mile west of the settlement of McCarthy. Total driving distance from the Richardson Highway turnoff to the end of the McCarthy Road is 93 miles.

This corner of Alaska is drawing an increasing number of visitors each year, and with good reason. Chitina has several picturesque old buildings and a growing number of services. The town of McCarthy retains many of its original structures and all of its original flavor. Nearby Kennicott offers solitude, scenery and the historic Kennecott Mine. All of this is surrounded by the wilderness of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

Food, gas, lodging and 2 full-service

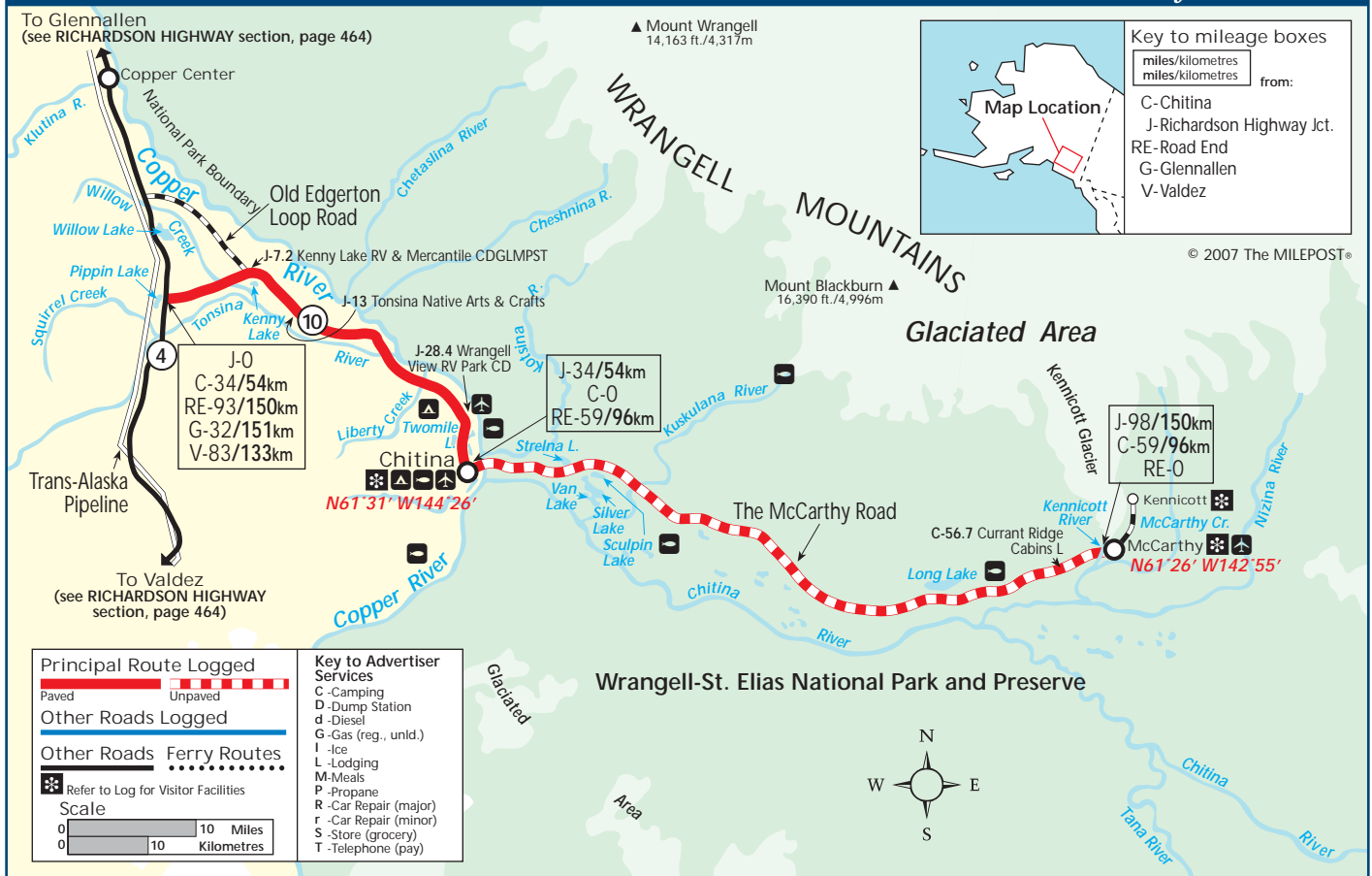
Major Attractions:



*Copper River,
Kennicott/McCarthy,
Wrangell-St. Elias
National Park &
Preserve*

EDGERTON HIGHWAY/McCARTHY ROAD

Richardson Highway
to McCarthy, AK



RV parks are available along the Edgerton Highway to Chitina. (Diesel fuel is available at Kenny Lake Mercantile.) There is informal camping along the McCarthy Road and paid parking and camping near the end of the road. Food and lodging are available in the McCarthy/Kennicott area. See the road logs this section for more detailed information.

Named for U.S. Army Major Glenn Edgerton of the Alaska Territorial Road Commission, the Edgerton Highway—known locally as the Edgerton Cutoff—provides access to homesteads in the Kenny Lake area and to the salmon dip-net fishery on the Copper River at Chitina. A popular seasonal activity for many Alaskans, details on the Copper River personal use dip-net fishery are posted at the ADF&G web site (www.adfg.state.ak.us). Updates are also available by phone in summer at (907) 267-2511 in Anchorage; 459-7382 in Fairbanks; or 822-5224 in Glennallen.

The McCarthy Road follows the right-of-way of the old Copper River & Northwestern Railway. Begun in 1907, the CR&NW (also referred to as the “can’t run and never will”) was built to carry copper ore from the Kennecott Mines to Cordova. It took 4 years to complete the railway. The railway and mine ceased operation in 1938.

The McCarthy Road is recommended for those who like adventurous driving. Passenger cars, pickups, vans, campers and small RVs regularly traverse the McCarthy Road in the summer and early fall. A few big rigs make the trip as well. (For those who don’t like adventurous driving, Wrangell

Mountain Air provides twice daily air service to McCarthy/Kennicott from Chitina.)

Road conditions on the McCarthy Road improved significantly in 2006 with a major road improvement project. However, motorists should still take their time on this road (we recommend 30 mph or less), watch for sharp rocks, railroad spikes, no shoulders, narrow sections of road, soft spots, washboard, potholes and a few “roller coaster” curves. Flat tires can occur: Carry a spare. Motorists with large vehicles or trailers should exercise caution, especially in wet weather. *We did not get cell phone service on the McCarthy Road, although we did have service in McCarthy/Kennicott.*

The National Park Service ranger station in Chitina has information on current road conditions and also on backcountry travel in Wrangell–St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

There is no vehicle access for visitors across the Kennecott River from the end of the McCarthy Road. The main course of the Kennecott River is crossed by a pedestrian bridge that also accommodates bicycles and 4-wheelers. It is about a 15-minute walk to McCarthy or an easy 5-mile bicycle ride to Kennicott from the footbridge. Several vans and small buses offer shuttle service between the footbridge, McCarthy and Kennicott.

Emergency medical services: Between the junction of the Richardson and Edgerton highways and McCarthy, contact the Cross Road Medical Center in Glennallen, phone 911 or (907) 822-3203.

Edgerton Highway Log

Distance from junction with Richardson Highway (J) is followed by distance from McCarthy Road junction at Chitina (C).

ALASKA ROUTE 10 EAST

J 0 C 33.6 The Edgerton Highway leads east from the Richardson Highway.

Junction of the Edgerton Highway (Alaska Route 10) and the Richardson Highway (Alaska Route 4). Turn to **Milepost V 82.5** on page 470 in the RICHARDSON HIGHWAY section for log of Route 4.

Excellent view of Mount Drum (to the northeast), a 12,010-foot peak of the Wrangell Mountains. Mount Wrangell (elev. 14,163 feet) and Mount Blackburn (elev. 16,390 feet) are visible straight ahead.

Steep downhill grades next 2 miles east-bound.

J 4.5 C 29.1 Begin bike path eastbound.

J 5.1 C 28.5 Kenny Lake Fire Station to south on Alpine Way.

J 5.2 C 28.4 Kenny Lake School to the south.

J 5.3 C 28.3 Paved turnout to south.

J 5.7 C 27.9 Wellwood Bed and Breakfast, phone (907) 822-3418, www.wellwoodcenter.com.

J 7.2 C 26.5 Kenny Lake R.V. & Mercan-



Beaded moccasins on display at Tonsina Native Arts & Crafts. (© Sharon Nault)

tile to north with grocery store, cafe, gas, diesel, laundromat, showers, lodging, camping and pay phone.



Kenny Lake R.V. & Mercantile. See display ad this section.

J 7.3 C 26.3 Junction with Old Edgerton Loop Road (gravel), which leads 8 miles through homestead and farm country to the Richardson Highway at **Milepost V 91.1**.

End bike path eastbound. Begin bike path westbound.

J 7.5 C 26.1 Kenny Lake community hall and fairgrounds. **KENNY LAKE** (pop. 369) is an unincorporated agricultural community located along the Edgerton Highway between about Mile 1 and Mile 17. **Radio:** KCAM (Glennallen).

Accommodations in the Kenny Lake area at Kenny Lake R.V. & Mercantile, **Milepost J 7.2**; Wellwood B&B, **Milepost J 5.7**; and **Copper Moose B&B** (www.coppermoosebb.com).

The **Kenny Lake Fair**, held on a Friday

evening and Saturday in August, is an enjoyable family event with games, food and crafts booths and local entertainment. The Kenny Lake Fair was first held in 1973 as part of the school carnival. It is sponsored by the Kenny Lake Economic Development Council.

J 7.7 C 25.9 Long double-ended paved rest area to south.

J 9.3 C 24.3 Kenny Lake Community Chapel to south.

J 9.6 C 24 Golden Spruce Cabins to north; lodging, cafe, espresso, ATM.

J 10.3 C 23.3 Wegners Country Store.

J 12.3 C 21.3 Paved parking area to south for **Tonsina River Trail**. Well-marked 2-mile BLM trail leads south through woods to a picnic site overlooking the Tonsina River. Rated easy. Private property borders this trail.

J 12.5 C 21.1 Paved parking area to north for **Copper River Trail** (not signed in 2006). This BLM trail is 7 miles round-trip and recommended as a good trail for bird watchers. The trail is fairly flat and marshy, winding through dense vegetation to end at the Copper River. Use caution along the Copper River; it is very swift and cold.

J 12.9 C 20.7 Turnoff to south for access to **Tonsina Native Arts & Crafts**; a very nice shop, open May to September.

Tonsina Native Arts & Crafts. See display ad this section.

J 13 C 20.6 Fresh produce may be available at a roadside stand here in summer.

J 14.6 C 19 Farming area; most fields are planted in hay.

J 17.7 C 15.9 *Steep (8 percent) downhill grade next 1.2 miles eastbound.* Views of the Copper River and bluffs to north.

J 18.4 C 15.2 *Watch for falling rock from cliffs.*

J 19.3 C 14.3 Tonsina River bridge.

J 20.6 C 13 *Highway begins steep 1.5-mile downgrade eastbound. Slow for rough patches in road.*

J 21.6 C 12 Paved viewpoint to north with sweeping view of Copper River. View of Wrangell Mountains to north on clear day (Mount Blackburn and Mount Wrangell are nearest). Bison roam above the bluffs across the river.

J 21.9 C 11.7 *Begin long winding downhill (and uphill) grades eastbound.*

J 23 C 10.6 Small gravel turnout to north.

J 23.4 C 10.2 Liberty Falls Creek BLM trailhead to south.

J 23.6 C 10 Liberty Creek bridge (8-ton load limit) and turnoff for **Liberty Falls State Recreation Site**. Access road is narrow and steep in places. The campground is just south of the highway on the banks of Liberty Creek, near the foot of the thundering falls. Very scenic spot; worth the stop. Loop road through campground (large RVs and trailers check road before driving in); 10 sites, toilets, no water, camping fee \$10/vehicle, day-use fee. Berry picking; *watch for bears.*



J 27.1 C 6.5 *CAUTION: Slow for frost heaves.*

J 28.4 C 5.2 Side road leads 0.1 mile to **Wrangell View RV Park** (electric hookups, dump station) and Chitina Tribal Community Health Clinic (open to public); 0.2 mile to Chitina DOT/PF maintenance station; and 0.4 mile north to Chitina Airport.

Private Aircraft: Chitina airport, elev. 556 feet; length 2,800 feet; gravel;

Kenny Lake Mercantile & RV Park

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*Guests: Ask about picking your own diamond willow sticks.
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Kenny Lake Hotel
Beautiful View of Wrangell Mtns.
4 Rooms w/In-room TV - Shared Bathrooms

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OPEN YEAR ROUND

Secure RV parking - Stay at our place and take your towed vehicle to McCarthy or Valdez.
Pickup point for Back Country Connection's van service to McCarthy & Kennicott.

Mile 7.2 Edgerton Highway
Kenny Lake, Alaska
Gateway to Wrangell St. Elias National Park

Sharon Forster
HC 60 Box 326
Kenny Lake, AK 99523

907-822-3313

email: kennylake@evalaska.net
[Http://www.kennylake.com](http://www.kennylake.com)

Tonsina Native Arts & Crafts

Kenny Lake Area - Mile 13 Edgerton Hwy

Alaskan Native Crafts Made Here

May-Sept.

Hours 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Dean & Ada Wilson-Owners

Closed Sunday

unattended.



Wrangell View RV Park. See display ad this section.

J 29.4 C 4.2 Small gravel turnout by Three Mile Lake.

J 29.6 C 4 Paved turnout by **Three Mile Lake**; good grayling and rainbow fishing (stocked by ADF&G).



J 30.6 C 3 Large gravel parking area to south at east end of **Two Mile Lake**; good grayling and rainbow fishing (stocked by ADF&G).



J 31.7 C 1.9 One Mile Lake (also called First Lake). Access road at east end of lake.

Chitina



J 33 C 0.6 Chitina Post Office. Chitina is located 120 miles northeast of Valdez, and 66 miles southeast of Glennallen.

Population: 132. **Emergency Services:** Phone 911 for all emergency services. Copper River EMS, phone (907) 822-3671; Chitina Clinic, phone (907) 823-2213; Copper Center Clinic, phone (907) 822-3541; Cross Road Medical Center in Glennallen, phone (907) 822-3203; Chitina Volunteer Fire Department, phone (907) 823-2263 or 823-2250; Alaska State Troopers in Glennallen, phone (907) 822-3263.

Visitor Information: The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Chitina Ranger Station is housed in the historic Ed S. Orr Cabin (1910). It is operated by the Chitina Chamber of Commerce and staffed by volunteers during the summer; phone (907) 823-2205. Visitors may also stop by the Park's main visitor center and park headquarters at **Milepost V 106.5** Richardson Highway, 9 miles south of Glennallen, which is open year-round; phone (907) 822-5234; www.nps.gov/wrst/home.htm.

Climate: Temperature extremes from -58°F to 91°F; average snowfall 52 inches, annual precipitation 12 inches. **Newspaper:** *Copper Valley Bi-Weekly*.

Chitina is the gateway to the McCarthy Road and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and it is also Alaska's "Dip Netting Capital." Alaskans come by the hundreds to participate in the seasonal dip-net salmon fishery on the Copper River, and almost as many non-Alaskans come to watch. Motorists stop in Chitina to eat, rest, hike, bike, fish, picnic or spend the night at Gilpatrick's or local bed and breakfasts. And it's only going to get more popular as more people discover this scenic corner of Alaska.

Services in Chitina have grown in recent years, with the restoration of the historic (1914) **Gilpatrick's Hotel Chitina** the most recent example. There are also a post office, grocery, 2 gas stations, a convenience store,



Gilpatrick's Hotel Chitina and Spirit Mountain Artworks, downtown Chitina.

(© Sharon Nault)

cafe, restaurant, mechanic and several tire repair services. Fresh drinking water is available at the Chitina Volunteer Fire Hall (requires 2 quarters). Dump station and camping at **Wrangell View RV Park**, which is located just off **Milepost J 28.4** Edgerton Highway on the airport access road.

Chitina (pronounced CHIT-na) was established about 1908, at the northern terminus of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway as a railroad and mining supply town for the Kennecott Copper Mines at McCarthy. At its height in the 1930s, the town consisted of a general store, a movie theater and several hotels, bars, restaurants and dance halls, much of it owned by a surveying engineer for the mines named Otto Adrian Nelson.

When the mine and railroad were abandoned in 1938, Chitina became a ghost town. Pioneer bush pilot "Mudhole" Smith bought the Nelson estate in 1963 and sold off the townsite and buildings.

Today, several original buildings remain and a few have been restored. The false-fronted building that houses **Spirit Mountain Artworks** was restored by owner Art Koening, a jeweler, between 1978 and its

Wrangell View R.V. Park

Full Hookups & Dump Station
(Mile 28.4 Edgerton Hwy.)

O'Brien Creek Store

(Mile 2.7 Copper River Hwy.)
Open June-September
Phone: 907-823-2223

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Visitor Information

Chitina 1 Stop

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www.hotelchitina.com info@hotelchitina.com

CHITINA ADVERTISERS

Gilpatrick's Hotel Chitina .Ph. (907) 835-5542

Hem Charters.....Ph. (907) 823-2288

O'Brien Creek Store.....Ph. (907) 823-2223

Spirit Mountain

ArtworksPh. (907) 823-2222

Wrangell View R.V. Park...Ph. (907) 823-2223

www.SpiritMountainAlaska.com

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN ARTWORKS

Main Street, Old Town **CHITINA** (907) 823-2222 or 235-1014

Since 1978 - Fine Alaskan Art & Quality Crafts - Nat'l Historic Site



View from the middle of the Kuskulana Bridge, Milepost C 17.2 McCarthy Road.

(© Sharon Nault)

opening in 1986. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

A big attraction here is the **Copper River** dip-net salmon fishery, coinciding with the seasonal salmon run (reds, kings or silvers). The dip-net fishery for salmon runs June through September (depending on harvest levels), with scheduled opening dates and hours announced throughout the season. *This fishery is open to Alaska residents only.* Special regulations and permits apply. Check with ADF&G recorded information line in Anchorage at (907) 267-2511; in Fairbanks at (907) 459-7382; and in the Glennallen area at (907) 822-5224. Local residents ask that you clean your fish in the river, not in the lake.

Edgerton Highway Log

(continued)

J 33.4 C 0.2 Junction with O'Brien Creek Road/Copper River Highway; gas station.

O'Brien Creek Road/Copper River Highway provides access to the Chitina sub-district personal use dip-net salmon fishery on the Copper River between O'Brien Creek and Haley Creek. (Check with ADF&G for season, regulations, public access points and other permit details.) **O'Brien Creek Store** and river access at Mile 2.7 (steep and narrow downhill to O'Brien Creek). A DOT travel advisory at turnoff warns of "*narrow road, rock slides, creek crossings, sharp curves and steep dropoffs.*" Inquire locally for current road conditions.

J 33.5 C 0.1 Chitina Wayside; state-maintained rest area with large paved parking lot, public restrooms, phone, covered picnic table. Across the road is Trout/Town Lake.

J 33.6 C 0 Junction with McCarthy Road (log follows).

McCarthy Road Log

The McCarthy Road is a gravel road built along an old railway line. Field editor Sharon Paul Nault encourages motorists to "drive slowly. Watch for sharp rocks, ease through sections of deep potholes, and don't

power around corners when there's a chance of meeting someone on the curve." Posted speed limit is 35mph. *Watch for road construction in summer 2007.*

Keep in mind that much of the land along the McCarthy Road is privately held. Use signed public access points only for off-road activities. Local residents have also asked that visitors please help protect water sources from contamination.

Distance from Chitina (C) is followed by distance from road end (RE).

ALASKA ROUTE 10 EAST

C 0 RE 59.3 Gravel turnout to east. McCarthy Road begins at the first gravel break at a narrow rock cut. No road maintenance east of here between Oct. 15 and May 15. Sign reads: "McCarthy Road: Road ends at Kennicott River—62 miles. Limited vehicle services. Drive at your own risk. Check locally for road conditions and services beyond this point."

Watch for frost heaves, potholes, washboard and loose rocks next 13 miles eastbound.

C 0.2 RE 59.1 Turnout with view of the Copper River.

C 0.8 RE 58.5 Turnout with view of the Copper River (Chitina-McCarthy) bridge.

C 1.3 RE 58 Copper River (Chitina-McCarthy) Bridge, mid-span. This 1,378-foot steel span, designed for year-round use, cost \$3.5 million. It re-established access across the river into the McCarthy-Kennicott area when it was completed in 1971.

Entering Game Management Unit 11 eastbound, GMU 13D westbound.

View from bridge of fishwheels on the Copper River. Dip netting and fishwheels are permitted upstream of the bridge as part of the Glennallen subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery permit. Fishwheels are not allowed downstream of the bridge in the Chitina permit area.

C 1.4 RE 57.9 Turnoff to southeast for campground with 12 treed sites, some picnic tables, firepits and toilets. (Fresh water available at fire hall in Chitina; dump station at RV park on Chitina airport road). Turnoff to northwest for access to fishing and informal camping and vehicle parking on gravel bars along the **Copper River**; portable toilets.

Fishing for red and king salmon; king salmon tag return box located here.



C 1.6 RE 57.7 Signs on road read: "Entering Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Preserve Boundary 21.5 miles," and "Much of the land along the road is privately owned. For land ownership information, contact Chitina Village Corp. (907/823-2223), Ahtna Inc. (907/822-3476) or the National Park Service (907/822-5234)."

Expansive views as road climbs above Copper River eastbound. *Pavement ends, gravel begins eastbound. CAUTION: Narrow, winding road with steep dropoff and no guardrail.*

C 1.9 RE 57.4 Watch for falling rock, especially if it is raining.

C 3.3 RE 56 Gravel turnout.

C 5 RE 54.3 Gravel turnouts next mile eastbound.

C 6.9 RE 52.4 Large gravel turnout.

C 7 RE 52.3 Road narrows. View of Chitina River.

C 10.1 RE 49.2 Public fishing access via 0.3 mile trail north to **Strelna Lake**; rainbow trout and silver salmon. (Private property adjacent trail.)



C 10.8 RE 48.5 Turnout to north for parking and signed pedestrian public fishing access to **Silver Lake** and **Van Lake**; good rainbow trout fishing. Road access south to private property (formerly Silver Lake campground).



C 12 RE 47.3 Sculpin Lake signed public fishing access to south; pedestrian access only. *Please respect private property.* Good rainbow trout fishing (stocked).



C 14.3 RE 45 Airstrip adjacent road.

C 14.5 RE 44.7 Gravel road; sign reads "Strelna Lephyr Cabin 2 miles."

C 14.8 RE 44.5 Large stream in culvert.

C 16.9 RE 42.4 Turnouts with views of Kuskulana River and bridge; good photo op.

C 17.2 RE 42.1 Kuskulana Bridge, mid-span. *NOTE: 1-lane bridge, yield to oncoming traffic.* This old railroad bridge (built in 1910) is approximately 525 feet long and 238 feet above the river. It is a narrow 3-span steel railway bridge with solid wood decking. Turnout and gravel pit parking at east end of bridge. Also steep access road at end of bridge leads down to parking and primitive camping. *CAUTION: Banks above canyon are unstable and extremely dangerous. DO NOT STAND TOO CLOSE TO THE EDGE!*

Before this bridge was rehabilitated in 1988, **MILEPOST®** field editor Sharon Paul Nault used to refer to it as "the biggest thrill on the road to McCarthy." At that time, many of the bridge planks were missing and motorists could glimpse the river below through the gaps in the decking.

C 17.9 RE 41.4 Primitive camping spot.

C 18.3 RE 41 Improved (2006) road next 0.2-mile eastbound has eliminated what was a hairy, single-lane drive around what locals called "hug-a-boulder bend."

C 19.2 RE 40.1 Turnout.

C 23.7 RE 35.6 Turnout.

C 24.6 RE 34.7 Rough turnouts both sides of road.

C 25 RE 34.3 Lou's Lake to north; silver salmon and grayling fishing.



C 25.7 RE 33.6 Small turnout across from grassy pond.

C 26.6 RE 32.7 Private airstrip.

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE



View from the top of Kennecott mill tour. (© Sharon Nault)

Wrangell-St. Elias is the largest unit in the national park system, encompassing 13.2 million acres of wilderness. Formed by the Wrangell, St. Elias and Chugach mountain ranges, the park contains 9 of the 16 highest peaks in the United States, including Mount St. Elias (18,008 feet), the second tallest peak in the United States. Other major peaks in the park—all dormant volcanoes—are Mount Wrangell (14,163 feet), Mount Blackburn (16,390 feet), Mount Sanford (16,237 feet) and Mount Drum (12,010 feet).

The park also contains the largest concentration of glaciers on the continent. One of these, Malaspina Glacier, is North America's largest piedmont glacier, a type formed when 2 or more glaciers flow from confined valleys to form a broad fan- or lobe-shaped ice mass. Malaspina Glacier covers an area of about 1,500 square miles—larger than the state of Rhode Island. It has been designated a national natural landmark. Hubbard Glacier, which flows out of the St. Elias Mountains into Disenchantment Bay, is one of the largest and most active glaciers in North America.

Also located in the park are Chitistone and Nizina canyons. Both have been described as exceeding the scale of Yosemite Valley in California, with an even greater variety of geological wonders. There is a spectacular, 300-foot waterfall in upper Chitistone Canyon, and the lower canyon has sheer walls rising 4,000 feet above the river.

Although the scale of the park seems overwhelming, for motorists the choices of how to visit Wrangell-St. Elias are relatively few. Road access to the northern section of the park and preserve is from Slana on the Tok Cutoff via the 43-mile Nabesna Road. The major road access to the east side of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park is via the Edgerton Highway/McCarthy Road.

The Kennecott area is one of the major centers of activity in the park, perhaps because it contains one of the park's best known attractions: the huge complex of barn-red buildings that make up the Kennecott mill, now a national historic landmark. The mill was built in 1907 by Kennecott

Copper Corporation (an early day misspelling made the mining company Kennecott, while the glacier and river are Kennicott).

The National Park Service purchased many of the mill structures (although several are still privately owned), and work is under way to stabilize the site. Most of the buildings are locked for visitor safety. Narrated tours of the mill are available from St. Elias Alpine Guides. The National Park Service conducts daily summer ranger programs at the Kennicott Visitor Center and offers daily illustrated programs in the recreation hall in Kennicott.

The Kennecott mines, including 70 miles of subterranean tunnels, are up near the ridge top (behind present-day Kennicott Glacier Lodge), and were connected to the mill by aerial trams. The mine operated from 1911 until 1938.

While copper mining inspired some of the early prospectors to travel to the land that is now Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, it was the discovery of gold in Chisana (pronounced Shooshana) that began the last great gold rush in Alaska. In 1913, thousands of stamperers made the treacherous journey through rugged country by whatever means possible to reach the newfound mining district. Chisana soon became known as "the largest log cabin town in the world." It was a short boom, lasting only a few years, but an important part of the history of this area.

Recreational opportunities in Wrangell-St. Elias include hunting, fishing, expedition mountaineering, backpacking/hiking, cross-country skiing, rafting/kayaking and wildlife observation. All hunting, fishing and trapping must be done in accordance with state laws and regulations.

Navigable rivers in the park include the Copper and Chitina rivers. It is also possible to float several other streams in the park, such as the Nabesna and Kennicott rivers. Several guides and outfitters offer a variety of trips in the park and preserve.

Hikes follow unimproved backcountry routes consisting of mining trails, historic routes, stream beds, shorelines, game trails

and open country. For many hikers, hiring the services of a local guide will make the trip safer and more enjoyable. In general, the areas above treeline afford the easiest hiking and best views. These areas are often accessed by charter plane to one of the many "bush" landing strips in the park.

The Park Service cautions that visitors to the Wrangell-St. Elias backcountry must be self-sufficient; sources of assistance are frequently many miles away. Wilderness travel and survival skills are essential.

There are 10 cabins available for public use within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The cabins are available on a first-come, first-served basis; the park does not have a cabin reservation system.

There are no designated campgrounds within the park/preserve; wilderness camping only. No permits are necessary for camping or backpacking although voluntary registration is requested.



Visitor Information: The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Visitor Center complex is located at Milepost V 106.5 on the Richardson Highway. The visitor center theater and exhibit hall are open daily in summer and on weekdays in winter.

Park information is available intermittently on the Edgerton Highway/McCarthy Road access at the historic Ed S. Orr Cabin in Chitina, and at the McCarthy Ranger



Station information kiosk at Milepost C 58.5 McCarthy Road. The Kennicott Visitor Center is located at the Train Depot in Kennicott and is open daily in summer.

At the northern end of the park, information is available daily during the summer and weekdays during the winter at the Slana Ranger Station at Mile 0.2 Nabesna Road off the Tok Cutoff.

For more information, contact Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Park Headquarters, P.O. Box 439, Copper Center, AK 99573; phone (907) 822-5234, fax (907) 822-7216; www.nps.gov/wrst/home.htm; email wrst_interpretation@nps.gov. Or phone the ranger stations at Slana (907/822-5238), Chitina (907/823-2205), Kennicott (907/554-2417) and in Yakutat (907/784-3295).



Loading and unloading luggage carts is a visitor ritual at the Kennicott River pedestrian bridge. (© Sharon Nault)

- C 26.9 RE 32.4 Chokosna River bridge.
- C 27 RE 32.3 Turnouts next mile east-bound as road narrows in places.
- C 28.8 RE 30.5 Good views of old Gilahina Trestle.
- C 29 RE 30.3 *Steep grades both directions down to river crossing.* Gilahina River bridge (1-lane); parking at both ends. Large gravel parking area south of bridge; a National Park Service foot path leads a short ways up the Gilahina River and under the old wooden railroad trestle. Primitive camping area.
- C 29.1 RE 30.2 Large double-ended gravel turnout.
- C 29.5 RE 29.8 Parking area to south; primitive campsite.
- C 34.7 RE 24.6 Turnout to north.
- C 35.4 RE 23.9 Access to lake to south.
- C 38.1 RE 21.2 Road crosses small

- creek bed.
- C 42.8 RE 16.5 Small turnout with view.
- C 43.8 RE 15.5 *Road narrows eastbound* to Lakina River bridge.
- C 44 RE 15.3 Turnout.
- C 44.1 RE 15.2 Lakina (pronounced "lack-in-aw") River 1-lane bridge; maximum height 13'2". Access to river at east end.
- C 44.2 RE 15.1 Ice cream, espresso and outhouse.
- C 44.3 RE 15 Long Lake Wildlife Refuge sign; shooting prohibited (eastbound sign). Road narrows eastbound as it follows shoreline of Long Lake.
- C 45.8 RE 13.5 Turnout with access to **Long Lake**; a beautiful spot. Fishing for lake trout, silver salmon, grayling, Dolly Varden, burbot.

- C 47.4 RE 12.1 Road makes "roller coaster" turn. There are a few more of these roller coaster sections of road before you reach the end.
- C 47.8 RE 11.5 Large gravel turnout overlooking lake.
- C 48.6 RE 10.7 Small turnout.
- C 51 RE 8.3 Large gravel turnouts both sides of road. A number of man-made rock structures, similar to the "innukshuks" or cairns made by the Inuit, show up here in summer.
- C 52.4 RE 6.9 Turnout.
- C 56.7 RE 2.6 **Currant Ridge Cabins.** See display ad this section.
- C 58.2 RE 1.1 Small turnout.
- C 58.5 RE 0.8 Turnoff to north for National Park Service McCarthy Ranger Station, an information kiosk with personnel available according to posted hours. Public toilets near kiosk. Tire repair business and airstrip to south. The airstrip provides good photo opportunities for shots of surrounding mountains.

- C 58.6 RE 0.7 McCarthy B&B.
- C 58.7 RE 0.6 Glacier View Campground; camping and outdoor cafe (only food service at this end of the bridge). Glacier View is also the first of 3 paid parking areas east-bound. ▲
- C 58.9 RE 0.4 Visitor information cabin (operated by local businesses) to north; paid parking, shuttle to footbridge.
- C 59.1 RE 0.2 Kennicott River Lodge cabins and hostel.
- C 59.2 RE 0.1 Base Line; paid parking and camping. ▲

C 59.3 RE 0 The Kennicott River, which flows from Kennicott Glacier to the Nizina River. **Kennicott River pedestrian bridge** crosses main channel of the Kennicott River, providing access to the road on the other side of the river that leads to McCarthy and Kennicott. *There is no vehicle access for visitors across the river.* (Residents pay an annual fee to use a restricted service bridge downstream.) Pedestrians, bicycles and 4-wheelers can cross the footbridge here. Luggage carts are available on the other side of the bridge. Walk or bicycle the mile to McCarthy. Kennicott is about 5 miles from the bridge. The lodges and flying services run shuttles on the half-hour between the bridge, McCarthy and Kennicott; cost is \$5 one-way. Use the courtesy phones by the bridge to call businesses in McCarthy and Kennicott. Pay phones are located at the west end of the footbridge; on the front of McCarthy Lodge; and on the road below Kennicott Glacier Lodge. Local calls are free; for long-distance use a credit card.

Visiting motorists should use 1 of the 3 paid parking areas at the end of the road unless they are certain they can legally park in a "free" spot. There's no garbage service at the end of road, so please carry out your trash. Pet owners note: If you bring your dog, bring a leash. There are many loose local dogs in the McCarthy/Kennicott area.

Look for the old hand-pulled, open-platform cable tram next to the pedestrian bridge. Before the state constructed the footbridge across the Kennicott River in 1997, travelers had to haul themselves across the river on the tram.

CAUTION: Do not attempt to wade across this glacial river; strong currents and cold water make it extremely treacherous.

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McCarthy/Kennicott



Located 314 miles from Anchorage, McCarthy is about 1 mile by road from the end of the McCarthy Road at the Kennicott River pedestrian bridge; Kennicott is about 5 miles by road from McCarthy.

Population: 70. **Emer-**

gency Services: Chitina Health Clinic, phone (907) 823-2213; Copper Center Clinic, phone (907) 822-3541; Cross Road Medical Center in Glennallen, phone (907) 822-3205; Alaska State Troopers in Glennallen, phone (907) 822-3263.

Elevation: 1,531 feet. **Climate:** Temperature extremes from -58°F to 91°F; average snowfall 52 inches; annual precipitation 12 inches. **Radio:** KCAM (Glennallen), KSKO 87.0, KXKM 89.7, IAM 95.3 (local).

Private Aircraft: McCarthy NR 2, 1 NE; elev. 1,531 feet; length 3,500 feet; gravel; unattended, unmaintained. This is a busy airstrip in summer.

The 2 settlements in this area, McCarthy and Kennicott, both originated with the establishment of the Kennecott Mines Company in 1906. (An early day misspelling made the mining company Kennecott, while the glacier and river are Kennicott). The mining town of Kennicott, perched on the side of Bonanza Ridge next to Kennicott Glacier, housed the mine offices, homes, a hospital, school and a movie theatre.



McCarthy has a number of small businesses serving summer visitors.

(© Sharon Nault)

McCarthy, almost 5 miles away, sprang up to provide the miners with more housing, saloons, a newspaper, stores, hotels, restaurants and a red-light district.

Today, Kennicott and McCarthy support a small year-round population of home-

steads, as well as businesses that serve summer visitors.

Transportation

Transportation: Air—Charter service to and from airstrip near McCarthy.

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McCarthy airstrip is a good place to get photos of the surrounding mountains. (© Sharon Nault)

Wrangell Mountain Air also offers 3 scheduled flights daily between Chitina and McCarthy, phone (907) 554-4411. **Van**— Shuttle service between McCarthy and Kennicott via Wrangell Mountain Bus from Wrangell Mountain Air office; 1-way fare \$5/adults, \$2/dogs; phone (907) 554-4411.

Lodging & Services

McCarthy has the McCarthy Lodge, Ma Johnson's Hotel and Lancaster's Backpacker Hotel (description follows) as well as the Potato diner, the McCarthy Mercantile (a grocery store that also serves ice cream) and other small businesses. Accommodations and services in Kennicott are more limited. Food and lodging is available at Kennicott Glacier Lodge (ask about daily meal specials); overnight accommodations also available at Kennicott Cottages and Kennicott B&B; descriptions follow.

McCarthy Lodge, Ma Johnson's Hotel, Lancaster's Backpacker Hotel. McCarthy Lodge, rave reviews for gourmet dining. Ma Johnson's restored "living museum" Hotel. McCarthy Store-Deli-Bakery; Nugget Liquors, Mountain Arts one-of-a-kind gifts. Golden Saloon for food entertainment, meet the locals. The center of services and activities in Wrangell-St. Elias. www.mccarthy lodge.com. (907) 554-4402. Open year-round. See display ad this section.

Kennicott Glacier Lodge, located in the middle of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, offers the area's finest accommodations and dining. For 20 years the Kennicott Glacier Lodge has provided 25 clean, delightful guest rooms, with 2 living rooms, a spacious dining room and restaurant. From the 180-foot front porch you get a panoramic view of the Wrangell Mountains, Chugach Mountains and Kennicott Glacier. The new "South Wing" has 10 large guest rooms, each with a private bath in the room; a unique luxury in a remote lodge. The homemade food, served family-style, has been called "wilderness gourmet." Guest activities at this destination lodge include glacier trekking, flightseeing, photography, alpine hiking, historical and nature tours, and rafting. Open May 18 to Sept. 8, 2007. Phone 1-800-582-5128. www.KennicottLodge.com. See display ad this section. [ADVERTISEMENT]

Kennicott Cottages, 3-bedroom cottage rental at 16 Silk Stocking Row in the National Historic District. Includes kitchen, hot showers, outhouse. Access to hiking, biking and tours in McCarthy, Kennicott and Wrangell Mountains. Nightly and weekly rates, advance reservations required. See www.alaska.net/~kennicott/, email KennCott@netscape.net or call (907) 345-7961. [ADVERTISEMENT]

Kennicott B&B. New B&B centrally located within the National Historic District of Kennecott with a spectacular view of the glacier. We offer 2 clean and quiet suites (in a relatively bug free area of the park) complete with kitchens, queen-sized beds

and private bathrooms. Price discounts for longer stays. Phone (907) 554-4500 summers; (907) 554-4420 or 554-4436 off-season. www.kennecottbb.com. [ADVERTISEMENT]

Camping

Private campgrounds are located on the west side of the pedestrian bridge at Base Line parking lot and Glacier View Campground. Check with local National Park Service staff regarding camping and permits; there are no designated campgrounds within the surrounding national park and preserve, wilderness camping only.

Attractions

McCarthy Museum, located in the old railway depot, has historical artifacts and photos from the early mining days (if closed, inquire at McCarthy Lodge about access). A self-guided walking tour brochure of McCarthy is available at the museum.

Wrangell Mountains Center is headquartered in the old hardware store in McCarthy. The Center is a private non-profit institute dedicated to environmental education, research, and arts in Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve. They present a number of educational programs in the summer; check the bulletin board at the center or visit www.wrangells.org.

Guided mine hikes and narrated tours of Kennicott mine buildings are offered by St. Elias Alpine Guides in conjunction with the National Park Service. Fly-out alpine hiking available from Wrangell Mountain Air.

St. Elias Alpine Guides offers full and half day hikes on nearby glaciers with professional guides. Those looking for unique Alaskan adventure can try ice climbing with a full day beginner lesson. Historic tours inside the Kennecott mill building available daily. Call for information and reservations (888) 933-5427 or (907) 554-4445. www.steliasguides.com. See display ad this section. [ADVERTISEMENT]

Wrangell Mountain Air provides 3 scheduled flights daily between Chitina and McCarthy-Kennicott as an alternative to driving the McCarthy Road. Just park your car or RV at the Chitina Airport and enjoy a spectacular flight with world-class vistas of 16,000-foot peaks, 25-mile-long glaciers and massive icefalls. Day trips and overnight lodging available. Guided Kennicott Tours, glacier hikes, ice climbing and river rafting are just some of the unique experiences you will find in the area. Wrangell Mountain Air specializes in flightseeing tours of the Park, fly-in backpacking and rafting trips as well as day hiking. Aircraft are high wing for unobstructed viewing and equipped with intercoms and individual headsets for each passenger. Call toll free for reservations and information, 1-800-478-1160 or (907) 554-4411. Email: info@WrangellMountainAir.com. Visit our web site at www.WrangellMountainAir.com. See display ad this section. [ADVERTISEMENT]

Slide presentations and other programs are presented by the National Park Service in summer. Inquire at the park visitor center in the Kennicott Train Depot.

A popular day hike from Kennicott is the Root Glacier Trail. The easy to moderate 3-mile round trip takes you from Kennicott townsite along the lateral moraine of the Kennicott and Root Glaciers to the toe of the glacier. Allow 2 to 4 hours to hike. Also makes a good mountain bike trip, according to the Park Service. Check with Park personnel about other area hikes.

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