

Post-Conference Tour #3
Kenai Peninsula
May 7th-May12th

Trip Leader: Valerie Barber ffvab@uaf.edu or (907) 474-6794

Program Cost: \$700 per person (double occupancy: single participants willing to share a room will be assigned a roommate or get a friend to sign up)
\$950 per person (for individuals wishing a single room)

A minimum of 8 (maximum of 10) participants are needed for the tour. We will be renting a 15-passenger van with roof rack. If there is enough interest we will rent 2 vans.

Program Summary and Itinerary

Spend 5 days (5 nights) exploring the beautiful Kenai Peninsula with unforgettable scenery, abundant wildlife, and something for everyone. Fly to Anchorage on May 7th and be picked up at the airport and deposited you to your room. You will have the day to yourself in Anchorage to explore the city. There are plenty of sites to see and shopping to do. We will leave from Anchorage early Saturday morning and travel down to Portage Glacier where we'll spend time in the Begich Boggs Visitors Center learning about the rapid retreat of the glacier over the last 2 decades and watching a short film on "Voices from the ice". Box lunches will be provided. Although the glacier has retreated out of site, there are icebergs floating on the lake that have calved off the glacier. We'll continue south to Seward where we will spend 2 nights. We will tour the Alaska Sealife Center where we'll get a behind the scenes tour of the science being conducted at then center and we'll visit the Harding Icefield at Exit Glacier where you can hike right up to the glacier. We'll embark on a Kenai Fjords National Park boat tour for spectacular views of glaciers and wildlife and enjoy lunch on board. There will be time to walk around and explore the city. On day 3 we will take a leisurely drive to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge in Soldotna, exploring along the way. We will learn a bit about the geology of the Kenai Peninsula and possibly examine some exposed outcroppings. We will visit an historic Russian Orthodox Church and learn about the history of Russians in Alaska. Some other possible sites we might visit include Moose Exclosure plots (Moose habitat management) along the Sterling Highway, the Juneau Creek forest regeneration site, the Russian River Campground reforestation effort and the Swanson River Oil field. At the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge in Soldotna, we will get an overview and tour of the spruce bark beetle epidemic that killed over 1.4 million acres of spruce forest in the 1990's and a review of climate change and forest history from an ecologist at the reserve. We will spend the night in Kenai or Soldotna. The next day we will travel down to Homer, and along the way visit Clam Gulch State Recreation Area for some scenic views and a chance to stretch the legs and maybe dig a clam or two. We will arrive in Homer where the afternoon can be spent exploring the spit and watching the migration of millions of seabirds, taking a boat tour to Bird Island, Halibut Cove or Kachemak Bay, fishing for halibut, kayaking or just relaxing (costs on your own although prices will be supplied). On the fifth day, we will drive back to Anchorage with a stop in Girdwood where we'll lunch at the famous Aleyeska Bakery and then take an exciting tram ride to

the top of Mt. Aleyeska for a commanding view. We will arrive back in Anchorage around 5pm. (Times and places subject to change).

Program Cost Will Include the Following

Meals are not included in the price unless specified (Most lunches are included). The price of the museum, the Kenai Fjords trip, the Sealife Center and the tram are included in the cost. The price does include hotel reservations the night before the trip begins, and then for the 4 nights of the tour (5 nights total). You are responsible for hotel cost upon return to Anchorage although I will be happy to make those reservations for you if needed. If you need a ride to the airport the night we return, I will be happy to take you there.

Important When Making Flight Reservation

Since this tour originates in Anchorage, it is extremely important that when you make your plane reservations to Fairbanks, you ask for a layover in Anchorage on the return flight. This will usually not cost you as most airlines allow for one layover a trip. Plan on flying to Anchorage sometime Friday, May 7th.

What to Bring

Luggage: A soft-sided suitcase or duffle bag is best. Try to restrict your luggage to one piece around 50 lbs and a daypack. I can arrange safe storage of excess baggage in Anchorage or you can leave it at the airport for a small fee.

Clothes: Layers are best as temperatures can fluctuate from 20-60 degrees.

- Turtleneck or medium weight long sleeved shirts

- Wool or fleece sweater

- Short sleeved t-shirts

- Jeans or comfortable pants

- Shorts

- Sleeping clothes

- Medium weight polarfleece or pile jacket

- 2 piece wind/waterproof suit with hood

- Fleece gloves and hat

- Light-medium wt. long underwear top/bottom (silk or polypro)

- Wool/wool blend socks

- Bathing suit

- Hiking boots- light to medium weight waterproof

- Comfortable shoes/sneakers

Miscellaneous:

- Binoculars

- Camera & film

- Video camera & batteries

- Ear plugs

- Sun glasses

Sunscreen
Travel alarm clock
Water bottle
Trip journal'diary
Personal toiletries

Websites of Interest:

<http://www.aktourguide.com/>

<http://www.kenai.fjords.national-park.com/>

<http://www.us-national-parks.net/state/ak.htm>

<http://www.alaskasealife.org/>

<http://www.halibutcove.com>

<http://www.wunderground.com/US/AK/Anchorage.html>

<http://www.lands-end-resort.com/>