West of Juneau in Southeast Alaska, the park and preserve are reached by boat or plane only. Park headquarters is 65 miles from Juneau at Bartlett Cove. It is 55 more miles from there to the tidewater glaciers.

To learn about safety, access, trip planning, lodging, backcountry use, services, activities, current regulations or companies that offer services in the park, contact the park. The free park newspaper The Fairweather also offers this information. Vessel permits are required before entering Glacier Bay from June 1 to August 31. Contact the park at 907-697-2627 or VHF radio—KWM 20 BARTLETT COVE. Reservations are recommended. Some areas are closed or restricted because of bears, nesting birds, humpback whales, or other wildlife activity. Guard against hypothermia even in summer: rain gear, hat, gloves or mittens, and waterproof footgear are essential. Brown/grizzly and black bears and moose must be considered dangerous.

Visiting the Park

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve are prime features of the Inside Passage experience. Their 3.3 million acres are part of the world’s largest protected natural area, a 25-million-acre World Heritage Site under the auspices of the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Glacier Bay was first protected by presidential proclamation in 1925, recognizing its many values for scientific study. The U.S. Congress has designated 2.77 million acres of the park for further protection as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

At Glacier Bay you see geologic processes and phenomena that barely existed in a human lifetime. Compare the map with the 1680 Huna Tlingit fishing camp scene on the front of this brochure. There was no Glacier Bay then. It was a broad valley with a glacier moving down it.

The Little Ice Age came and went quickly by geologic measures. By 1750 the great glacier reached its maximum, projecting into Icy Strait. When Capt. George Vancouver sailed by here in 1794, the glacier had retreated five miles up the beginnings of Glacier Bay that it had gouged out.

Conservationist John Muir first came here in 1879, returning the next year. By then the glacier had retreated 40 more miles upbay since Vancouver’s visit, but the bay’s east arm, including the great inlet named for Muir, still lay beneath a thick covering of glacial ice.

Today you must go 65 miles upbay to see glaciers that reach the bay—a far cry from the glacier’s 1750 maximum. Glacial climate change is exaggerated in the park’s northern regions, as we know what great changes may occur here in another 325 years.

More information

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
P.O. Box 140
Gustavus AK 99826-0140
907-697-2230
www.nps.gov/glba
email glba_administration@nps.gov

The nonprofit Alaska Natural History Association sells books, maps, charts, and videos by mail. Contact the park for a list. Your purchases help support programs offered by the park.

Visit www.visitglacierbay.com for information on Glacier Bay Lodge.

This park and preserve are two of over 390 parks in the National Park System. The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. To learn more about parks and National Park Service programs in America’s communities visit www.nps.gov.