

WAYPOINTS



News and stories from Alaska's public lands



Sheridan Glacier, Chugach National Forest, photo by Josh Latham

Reflecting on an Incredible Year

2024 has been a remarkable year of growth and inspiration for Alaska Geographic, a year marked by powerful collaboration, education, and partnership. We're proud of supporting vital research, education, and connecting people across the state with Alaska's public lands.

Here are a few highlights.

Ethnography and Wildlife Research

In **Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve**, researchers forged valuable partnerships with local guides and hunters to study Dall sheep populations. This community-driven approach, supported by Alaska Geographic, has enriched ongoing population studies with essential local knowledge. The work will continue into the spring and summer of 2025.

Coffee With A Scientist

Our popular 'Coffee With A Scientist' program at the **Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center** brought refreshments and enlightenment to weekly sessions. From Little Brown Bats to the environmental challenges facing Southcentral Alaska's ecosystems, these gatherings help facilitate meaningful connections between scientists and the public.

Cultural Connections

This year, we were honored to support cultural celebrations around the state, including a partnership dinner with the **Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge** and **Koniag Corporation**, honoring Alaska Native peoples of the Kodiak region. In **Klondike Gold Rush National**

Historic Park, AK Geo funds supported the *Jilkaat Kwaan* Dancers' performance on Junior Ranger Day. We supported Klondike Gold Rush, Denali, Wrangell-St. Elias, and regional NPS rangers' travel and attendance to the "Working with Indigenous Knowledge and Culture in Interpreting Lands, Water, and Wildlife" workshop in Anchorage.

In Wrangell-St. Elias, **Lake Clark National Park and Preserve**, and **Western Arctic National Parklands**, we provided support for Subsistence Resource Committee meetings. **Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve's** First Plume education program connected fourth and fifth-grade students from the community of Hoonah to their Homeland. Additionally, the park hosted visiting teachers from their Sister Park, the **West Norwegian Fjords World Heritage Site (WHS)**.

Supporting Our Partners Across Alaska

Our partnerships across Alaska's public lands yielded remarkable achievements this year. At **Denali National Park and Preserve**, we enhanced visitor experiences through audio/visual equipment upgrades and supported comprehensive interpretive training. The park's centennial celebration of a century of weather observations at the Denali Kennels included an impactful symposium highlighting climate science which brought scientists and artists together to interpret and inform participants about climate change in the north.

Our support in the Western Arctic National Parklands brought communities together through tundra tours, solstice celebrations, and interpretive programs. These gatherings strengthened local bonds and deepened connections to the land. Meanwhile, at the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, we helped bring nature into homes worldwide by funding the installation of a **live-streaming bear camera** inspired by the success of the bear cameras at Brooks Falls in **Katmai National Park and Preserve**.

Through our support of various programs, the **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve** saw increased community engagement. From Junior Ranger activities to interpretive events and creative workshops for underserved youth, these initiatives helped forge lasting connections between people and place.

Empowering Education and Outreach

Education remained the heartbeat of our mission throughout 2024. Our youth programs flourished, with robust support for **Kodiak Salmon Camp**, summer aviation camps in Fairbanks, four weeks of Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Summer Camp, and hands-on activities like compass building at Bering Land Bridge. These experiences sparked curiosity and built confidence in young public land supporters.

Alaska Geographic plays an important role in supporting visitor services across Alaska's public lands. From training resources for staff and volunteers to speaker honorariums, we're helping our partners fill the gap and bring you informative and knowledgeable presenters and guides.

Innovation for the Future

Looking toward tomorrow, we've supported innovative approaches to conservation and education. Denali's research capabilities expanded with new geospatial data collection tools, including state-of-the-art equipment for studying climate impacts.

Many parks and refuges rely on Alaska Geographic funding to support their Distance Learning Programs. Without AK Geo's support for software and equipment, **Kenai Fjords National Park** and Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve would not be able to reach virtual students and adult learners from around the world with their award-winning programming.

Join Us in Making 2025 Even Stronger

Looking back at 2024, we celebrate these achievements, which have deepened our connections to Alaska's landscapes, culture, and wildlife. The success of our programs and initiatives stands as a testament to the power of collaboration between our talented staff and board, dedicated partners, and you, our generous supporters.

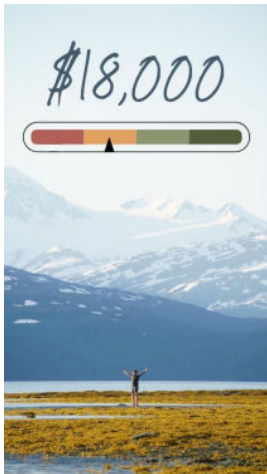
As we plan for an impactful 2025, we remain committed to our vital mission: ensuring Alaska's public lands continue to inspire, educate, and thrive for generations to come. Your support makes this work possible. We invite you to help us reach our fundraising goal and continue building these essential connections between people and Alaska's remarkable

public lands.

With Gratitude,
Andy Hall

Exciting Opportunities to Support and Engage with Alaska Geographic's Education Programs!

We're excited to share multiple initiatives that provide opportunities to support, get involved, and grow as educators on Alaska's public lands!



Help Us Reach Our Goal!

Our goal is \$18,000, and we've already raised over \$6,000—thank you to everyone who has contributed so far!

Your donation will help fund education programs that connect Alaska's teens with the natural world, build leadership skills, and inspire environmental stewardship.

Every contribution empowers the next generation of environmental leaders.

To learn more or donate, please:

Visit our
Website

Volunteer with Our Spring Watershed Education Project

We are excited to announce a volunteer opportunity with our Watershed Education Project (WEP) this Spring!

WEP is an exploratory, place-based learning program for 4th-grade students in the Anchorage School District. The goal is to teach students about the interconnectedness between the Chester Creek watershed and the salmon that rely on this ecosystem for key parts of their lifecycles.

Volunteers will help guide students as they investigate whether nearby streams can support the salmon lifecycle, using outdoor field studies and scientific inquiry.

If you're interested in volunteering with us or would like more information about the program, please sign up using the link



below:

Sign Up
Here



Photo from Kenai Fjords Floating Teacher Workshop, 2023

New Teacher Course Offerings for 2025

Join us for immersive professional development courses designed to inspire teachers and connect their students to nature.

In Denali National Park and Preserve, join an Alaska Project Learning Tree educator to learn strategies to connect your students to the world around them by exploring the boreal forest and tundra or take a deeper dive into a course focused on fire ecology in Alaska. In Katmai National Park and Preserve, engage with scientists and park rangers while developing lesson plans focused on ocean issues and scientific research along the Katmai coast. In Prince William Sound, experience glaciers, whales, sea lions, and shorebirds by kayak and on foot while learning about the area's natural history and environmental challenges.

These courses offer hands-on, place-based learning experiences that will provide teachers with new ideas, renewed inspiration, and activities to bring the natural world into their classroom. *Registration for 2025 courses will open on February 5 at noon Alaska time.*

For more details and information, please visit our course offerings via our website:

Teacher
Opportunities

Get ready!

Our summer 2025 teen education programs will be live on our website by the end of this month, with applications for these multi-day trips opening on February 10th!



2025 Denali Field Courses: Now Online

Scholarships Available for Teachers!

Start planning your summer trip to Denali by browsing our [field course page](#). Learn more about Denali's renowned wildlife such as bears and wolves or focus on something smaller such as wildflowers, mushrooms, or insects.

Find these topics and more on [our website](#) and mark your calendar for February 5 - registration opens at noon Alaska time!

Attention teachers! All our courses are accredited through the University of Alaska Anchorage for professional development credit, AND scholarships are available to help fund your learning adventure in Denali!

Please [visit our teacher scholarship page](#) to learn more. The deadline to submit scholarship applications is January 29.

RECENT AID TO PARTNER

Your support in the form of in-store purchases, donations, and membership allows us to give back to our public land partners. Read on to learn more about recent projects funded by Alaska Geographic.

Ice Lantern Walk



Alaska Geographic was pleased to provide support for the Beluga Slough Ice Lantern Walk at Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge in Homer, Alaska. With ice lanterns lighting the way, over 360 people came out to walk the trail in the dark, warm up at the fire, make s'mores, drink hot chocolate and make ornaments. Concerns that the weather might be too warm for the ice lanterns were allayed by a window of perfect temperatures and light snow blanketing the ground. It was a charming and successful event!

Alaska Geographic works in support of our agency partners:



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