

MAP & INFORMATION

Mendenhall Glacier

Visitor Center



Tongass *National Forest*



Welcome to the Mendenhall Glacier

Come explore the beautiful Mendenhall, Alaska's most accessible glacier. Take time to walk the shore of Mendenhall Lake to a thundering waterfall or explore forest trails to stunning overlooks.

In this recreation area you can leave footprints on soil that was under ice just decades ago. Trail options include easy, paved pathways or challenging climbs to match any ability; one easy trail crosses a salmon stream where bears are occasionally viewed. The first Forest Service Visitor Center in the nation was dedicated here in 1962 to promote the "understanding and enjoyment of glacial phenomena" and today offers the best view of the glacier coupled with enriching exhibits and film.

Mendenhall Glacier is one of 38 large glaciers that flow from the 1,500 square mile expanse of snow and ice known as the Juneau Icefield. As the glacial ice accumulates seasonally, gravity pulls the ice down valleys. Slowly and steadily the glacier scours bedrock, grinding everything to powder or transporting huge boulders (erratics) on its 13-mile path to Mendenhall Lake.



Have you ever connected a whale to a glacier?

Glaciers contribute vast volumes of freshwater to land and marine environments. Southeast Alaska's glaciers alone discharge enough water to fill 40 million Olympic-sized swimming pools. By grinding mountains into fine particles, glaciers provide our oceans with

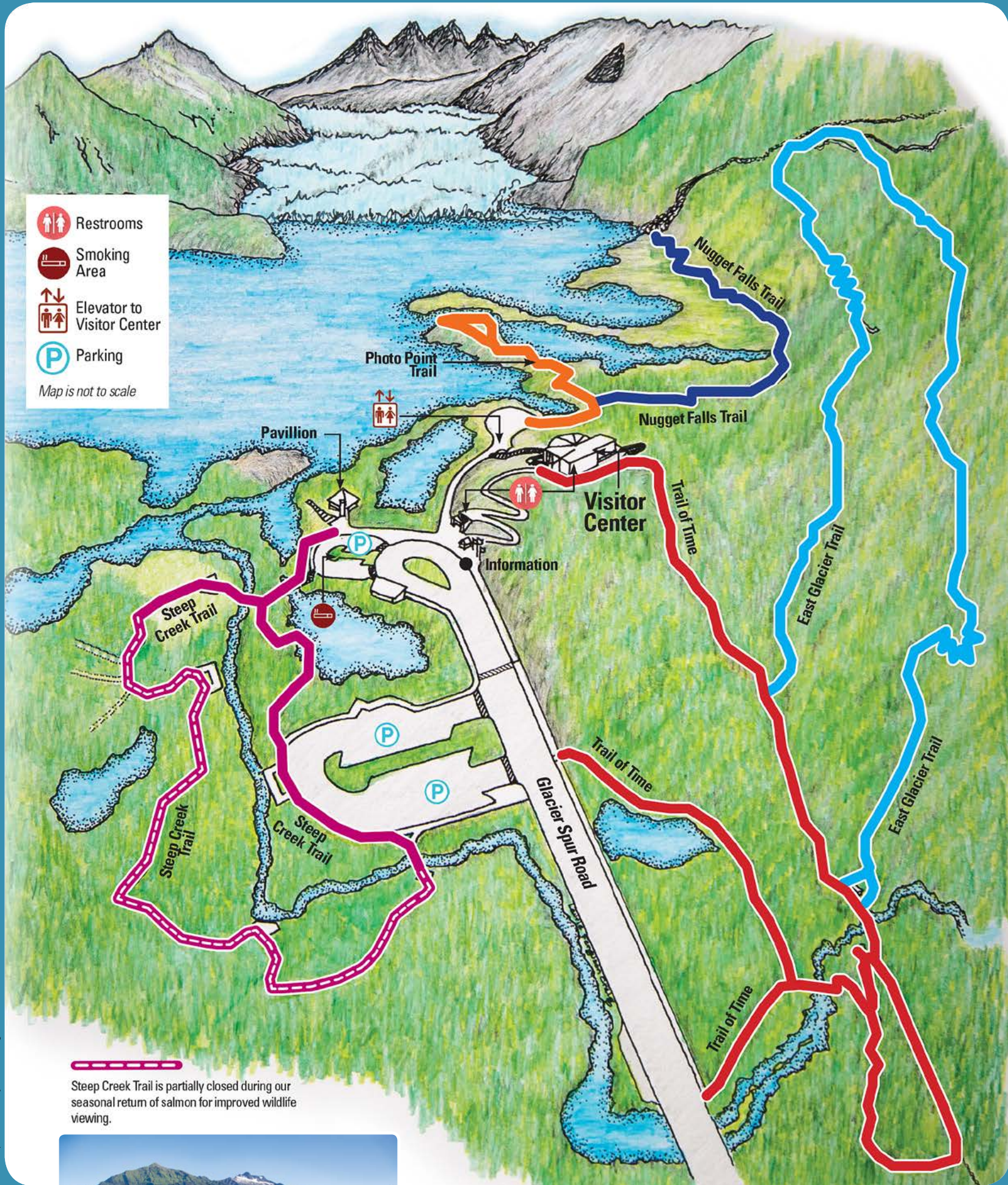
a variety of nutrients including nitrogen, phosphorus and unique ancient organic carbon, all of which contribute to the productivity of marine food webs. Swimming at the top of this food web are the whales that frequent Auke Bay and the Juneau area.



Why is it melting?

The accelerated melting of ice in modern times is a dramatic and persistent reminder of large and potentially disruptive shifts underway from our warming climate. Alaska's melting glaciers represent an up-close and personal connection to climate change. Glaciers have always provided for humans, from recreation and aesthetic beauty to water for drinking, agriculture, or electricity. Today they are compelling us to consider the connectedness of nature, the fragility of ecosystems, even the composition of the air we breathe.





Map illustration by Laurie Craig



SHORT WALKS & HIKES AROUND THE MENDENHALL GLACIER

What's there to do at the Visitor Center?

- ▶ **WATCH** our 15 minute movie *Landscape of Change*.
- ▶ **LEARN** about the glacier, surrounding landscape, and wildlife.
- ▶ **RELAX** in the glacier observation area.
- ▶ **BROWSE** the Alaska Geographic Bookstore (May – September).

Trail Information

Photo Point

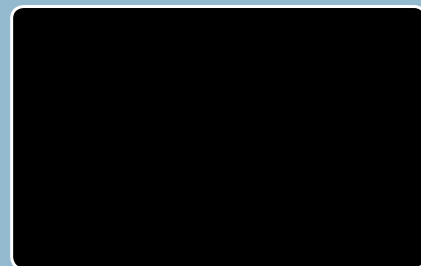
Length: 1/3 mile (.5 km) round trip
Time: Approximately 15 minutes
Difficulty: Easy; paved

Nugget Falls

Length: 2 miles (3.2 km) round trip
Time: Approximately 1 hour
Difficulty: Moderate; gravel

Trail of Time

Length: 1 mile (1.6 km) loop
Time: Approximately 30 minutes
Difficulty: Moderate; paved & gravel



Steep Creek

Length: 1/4 (.4 km) mile loop
Time: Approximately 20 minutes
Difficulty: Easy; paved & raised boardwalk

East Glacier

Length: 3.5 mile (5.6 km) loop
Time: Approximately 2.5 hours
Difficulty: Challenging; gravel, rock, & stairs

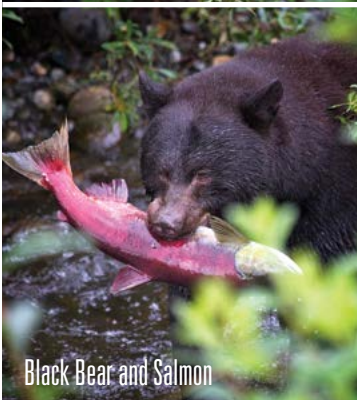




Mountain Goat



Porcupine



Black Bear and Salmon



Bald Eagle



Beaver

Have a wonderful and safe visit.

Please

- ▶ Smoke in designated areas only.
- ▶ Walk bicycles on paved trails.
- ▶ Keep dogs on leash.

Bear Safety

Black bears frequent this area. Help keep bears wild and people safe.

- ▶ Stay on designated trails.
- ▶ Do not take food or flavored beverages outdoors.
- ▶ Give bears plenty of space. Do not approach or run from bears.

Visitor Center Hours

Open Daily

May–September

8am–7:30pm

Open Limited Hours

October–April

FEE AREA

Mendenhall Glacier fees are used here to improve your experience.

907.789.0097

www.mendenhallglacier.net

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All photos by Matt Knutson