



AMALGA MEADOWS

MASTER PLAN



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Purpose	2
Plan Background & Community Involvement	3
Assessment & Historic Uses	4
Circulation & Connections Plan	5
Impact Zone & Uses	6
Appendix A Park Use Guiding Principles	7
Appendix B Natural History of Amalga Meadows Guide	8



PURPOSE

The Amalga Meadows Master Plan, through community input and involvement, informs management intent of the park with specific areas highlighted for unique considerations. The public outreach process clearly indicated a desire for various zones of management where different uses may be allowed, while still aligning with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan designations for the area. As proposals are made in the future for new uses or services, they will be evaluated through this plan for compatibility. Specific improvements and new facilities are generally not indicated on the plan.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2019, identifies the park area as Conservation Area, defined as “A natural area with recognized environmental qualities of high value, set aside for the protection and management of the natural environment with recreation as a secondary objective.” However the plan designates the Eagle Valley Center within the park as a Developed Natural Area, defined as “A natural setting where evidence of people is obvious but blends in with the natural environment. Uses are primarily passive recreation activities, and areas for group use may be provided. Facilities are for the comfort and convenience of visitors. These areas are intended to serve the entire community.”





PLAN BACKGROUND & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

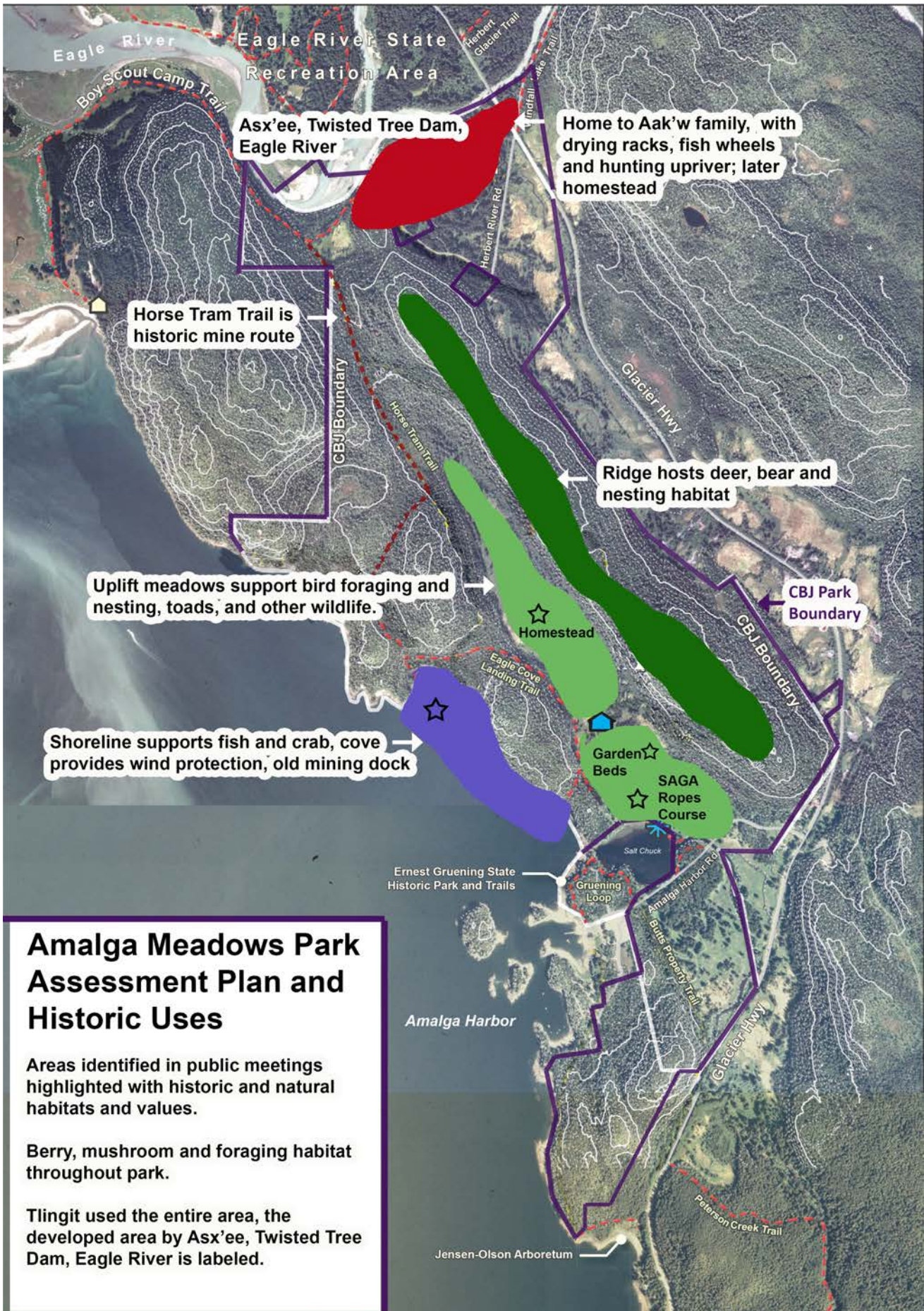
Community work began on this park in the early 2000's shortly after land in this area was transferred to the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ). The Southeast Alaska Land Trust worked to create the "Juneau Green Zone, Breadline Bluff to Sawmill Creek" map. The mapping effort identified ownership of properties along the coast as a first step to plan for future use and protection of this area.

Following this mapping effort, a community process began to develop and an agreement was created between the City and Borough of Juneau Parks and Recreation Department and the State of Alaska Parks Division. Through public meetings and the work of a steering committee, a vision and management intent for the Amalga



Meadows Park and Eagle Beach areas were established and finalized in 2003. The management intent was to consider the area's "existing values, resources, and uses and its tremendous potential to meet public recreation and other interests. The area should offer a diversity of public use experiences and levels of development, from less to more intense." The vision for the area was to create a "premiere recreation, outdoor education and cultural/historic destination for Juneau residents, visitors and youth."

In 2016, a planning meeting was held with the neighborhood and stakeholders of the park to establish goals and a vision for recreational use of the area. In 2019, two community meetings were held to further develop this vision. This plan is informed by the community planning efforts over the last twenty years.

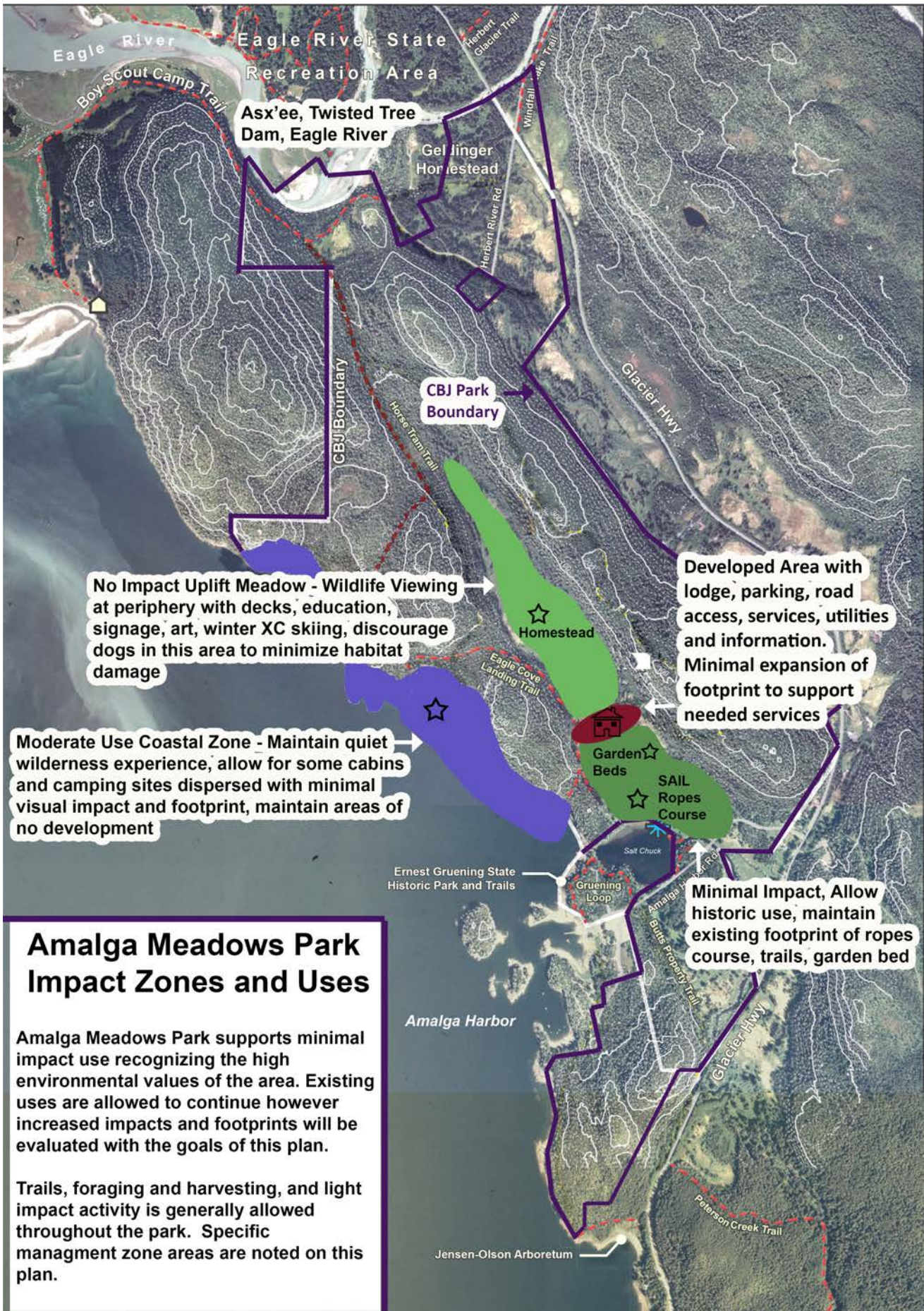




Amalga Meadows Park Circulation and Connections Plan

The Amalga Trail System connects to the Eagle Beach/ Boy Scout Beach Trail Systems via the Horse Tram Trail. This connects to the Windfall Creek Trail and Montana Creek Area.

Improving the Pt. Caroline Trail and creating a connection to the Amalga area will create a southern connection to the Peterson Creek Trail and Spaulding Meadow System.





Welcome



EAGLE VALLEY CENTER *and* AMALGA MEADOWS PARK

The CBJ Parks & Recreation Department invites you to discover the rich history and natural beauty of this special area. This 639-acre reserve is a jewel in Juneau's park system, offering accessible trails to two secluded beaches, a public use cabin, and connections to the Boy Scout Beach Trail. The Eagle Valley Center is a former homestead that provides a unique venue for weddings, retreats, and reunions with overnight accommodations for up to 14 guests.

TO KEEP HARMONY IN THIS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, VISITORS AND GUESTS SHOULD FOLLOW THE PARK'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

Guiding Principles

LEAVE NO TRACE

Pack out what you pack in, including toilet paper.

Tread lightly!

Do not feed the wildlife!

RESPECT THE WILDLIFE

Observe wild animals only at a distance and without crowding other observers.

PETS ARE WELCOME

Please keep pets on a leash or under expert voice command and clean up after them by hauling out solid waste.

RESPECT THE VEGETATION

Harvest resources sustainably and respect animal habitats.

FIRES

Fires allowed within designated fire rings only.

Do not cut live trees for firewood.



No firearms or fireworks on park land

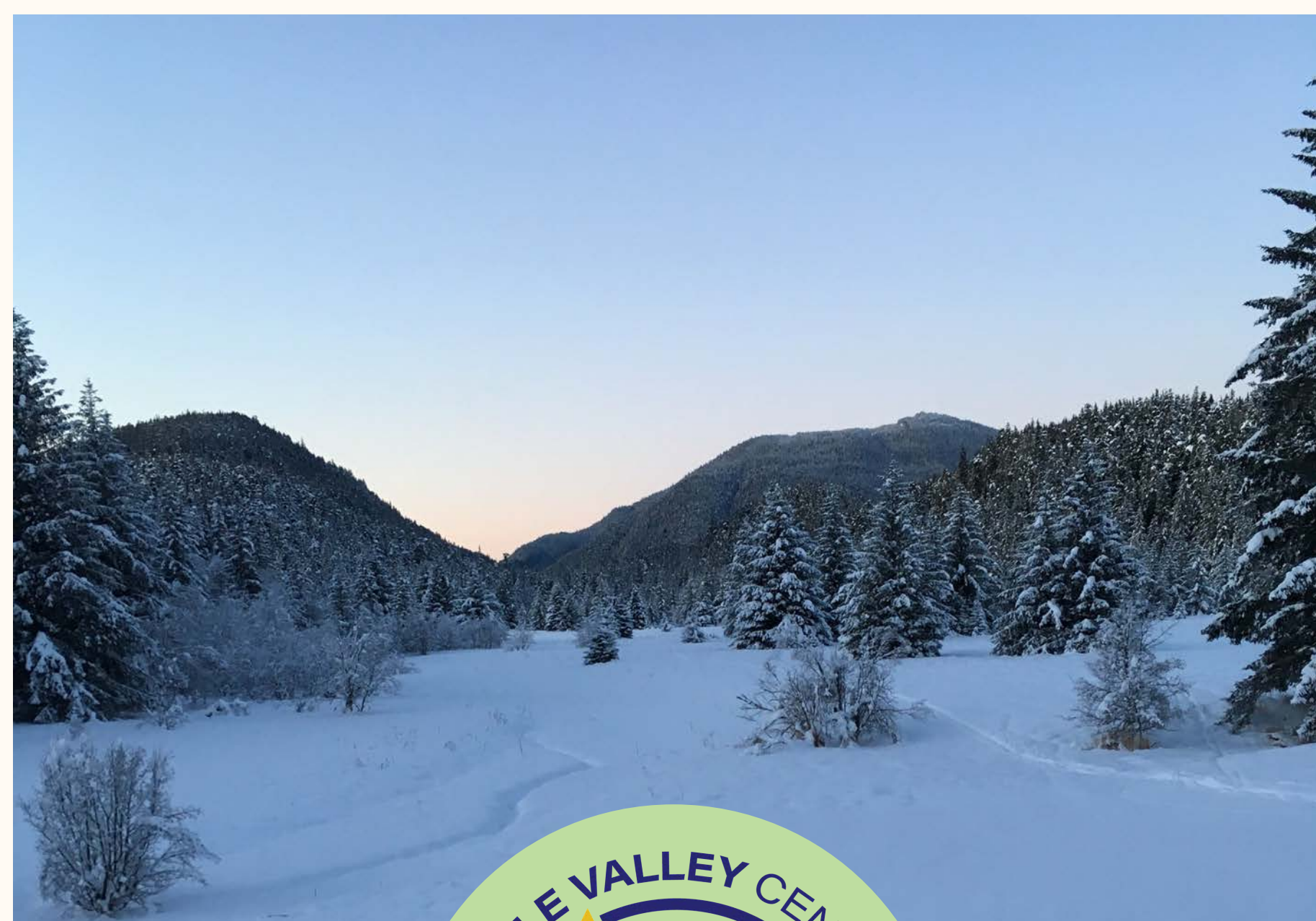
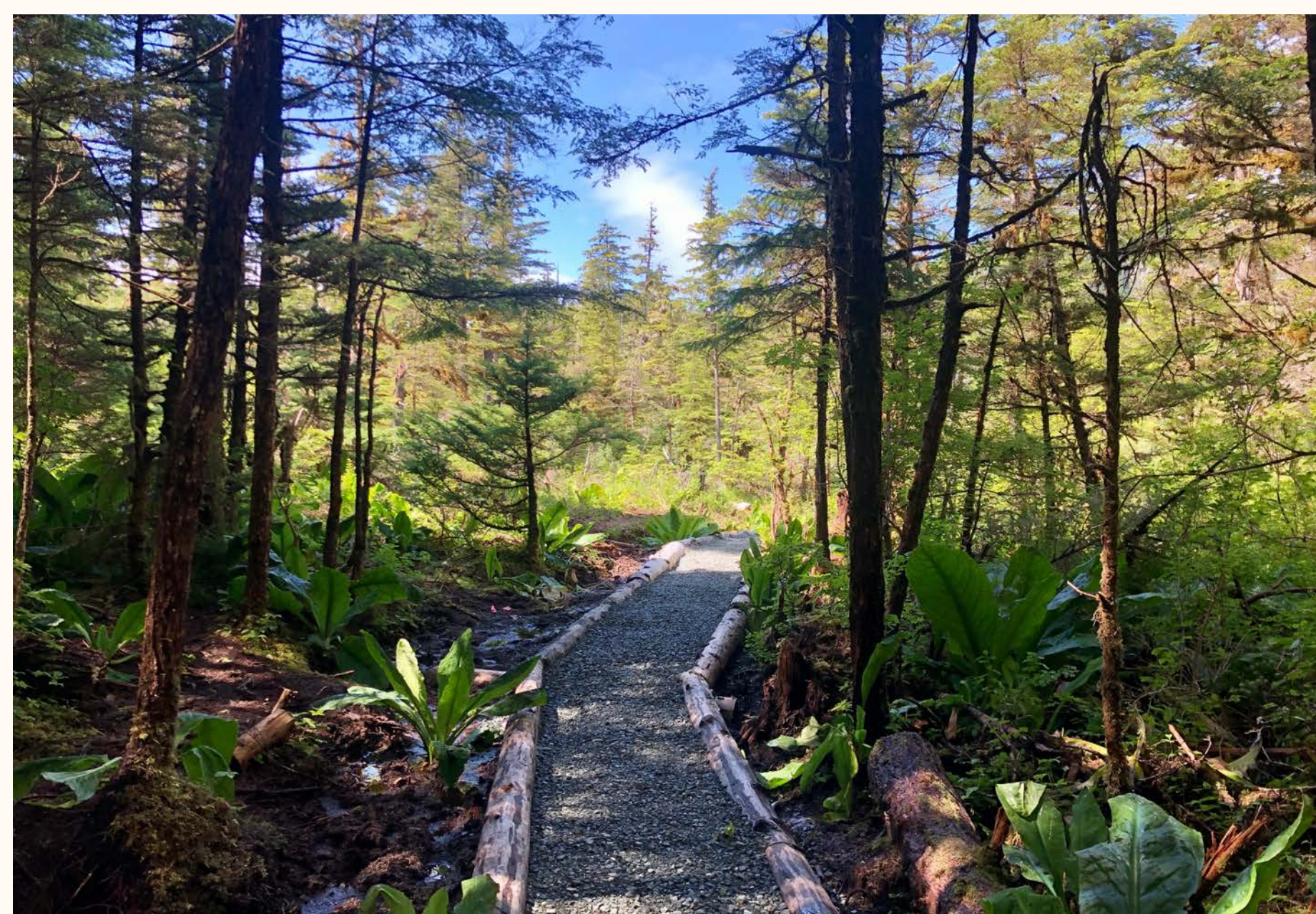


No motorized vehicles on trails



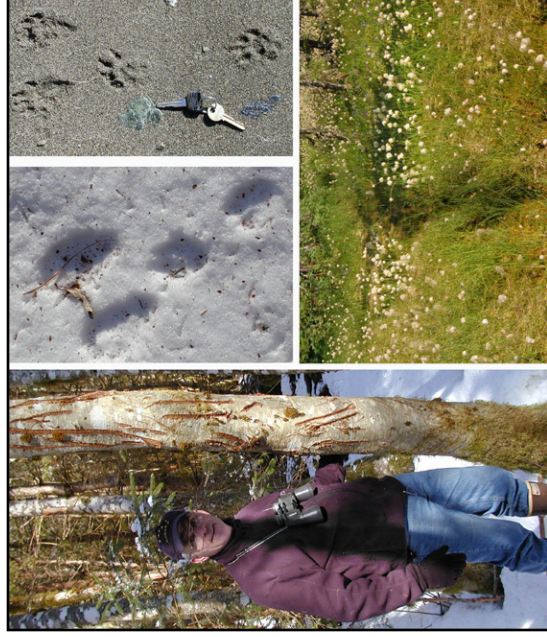
No glass containers

Take only memories and leave only footprints



Natural History of Amalga Meadows

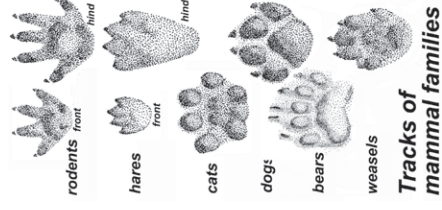
Guide to beach access trails from Amalga Lodge



Amalga animal sign

Clockwise from left:

- Ed Mills with red alder scratch tree. Bears mark trees in areas of intense social interaction, such as prime fishing holes, or where 2 trails come together.
- Snowshoe hare tracks can be found at Amalga Meadows but are more common on Herbert and Eagle Rivers where willow is abundant.
- Tracks of hoary marmot in sand at Eagle River Landing. Most marmots live in subalpine meadows, but some have recently colonized beaches.
- "Hotfoot" trail in cottonsedge meadow, created by bears repeatedly stepping in the same footprints.



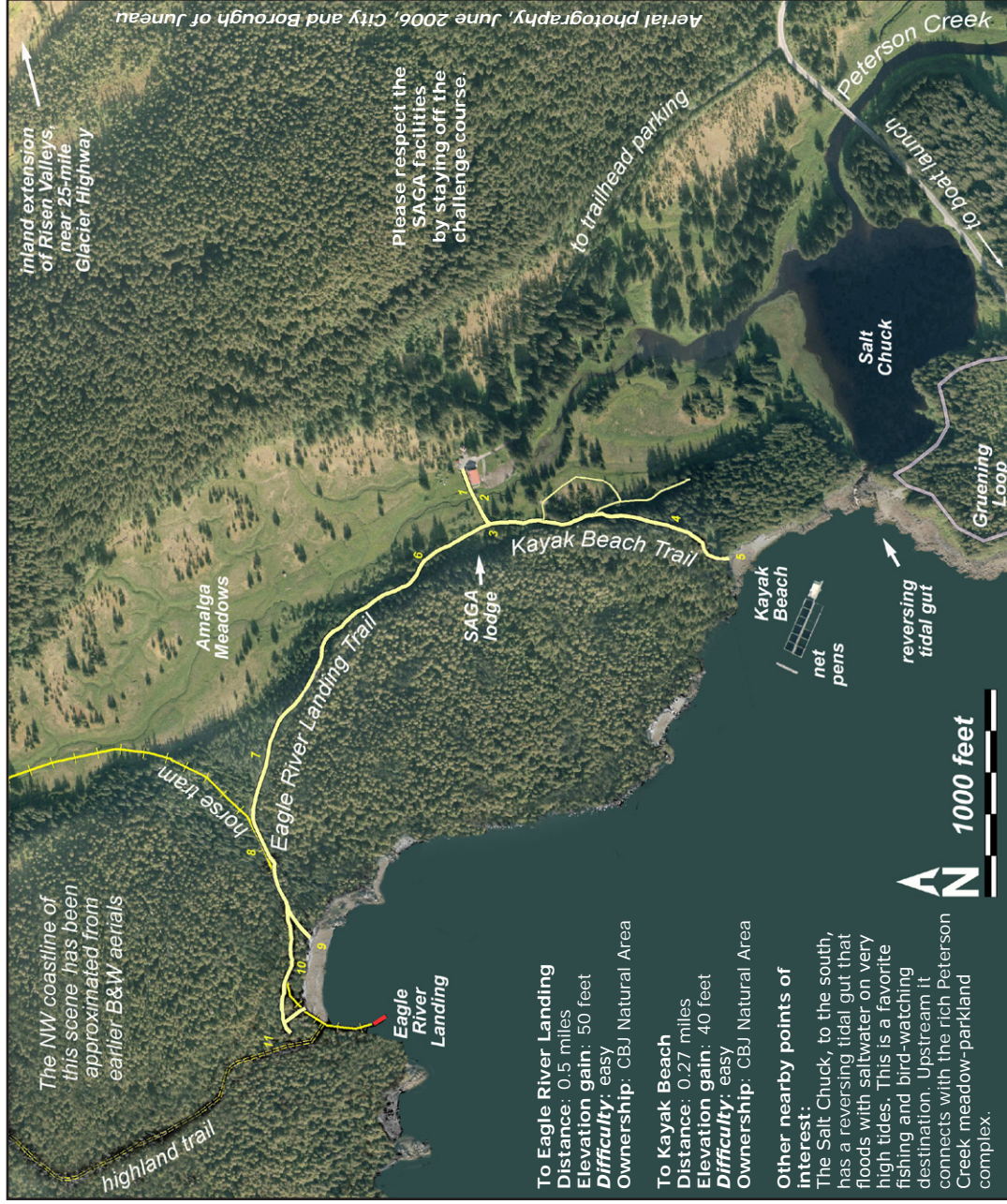
This trail guide is part of a series of interpretive products created in 2010 for trails on CBJ lands by Discovery Southeast. Other creations include natural history signs, a summary guide to CBJ trails and free web products.

Discovery Southeast

Founded in 1989, DSE is a nonprofit organization promoting direct, hands-on learning from nature through natural science and outdoor education for youth, adults, and teachers. Discovery naturalists deepen the bonds between people & nature.
www.discoverysoutheast.org • 463-1500

CBJ Parks & Recreation

The City and Borough of Juneau/Parks & Recreation welcomes you. Parks & Recreation manages 50 miles of trails and fosters innovative stewardship of its diverse resources. Collectively, along with our partners Alaska State Parks, the U.S. Forest Service, Trail Mix and SAGA, 135 miles of trails are managed--connecting our community with Juneau's magnificent landscape. We hope you have a great experience on your trails. Take only memories, leave only footprints. Call Parks & Recreation at 586-5226. • www.juneau.org/parksrec



To Eagle River Landing
 Distance: 0.5 miles
 Elevation gain: 50 feet
Difficulty: easy
Ownership: CBJ Natural Area

To Kayak Beach
 Distance: 0.27 miles
 Elevation gain: 40 feet
Difficulty: easy
Ownership: CBJ Natural Area

Other nearby points of interest:
 The Salt Chuck, to the south, has a reversing tidal gut that floods with saltwater on very high tides. This is a favorite fishing and bird-watching destination. Upstream it connects with the rich Peterson Creek meadow-parkland complex.

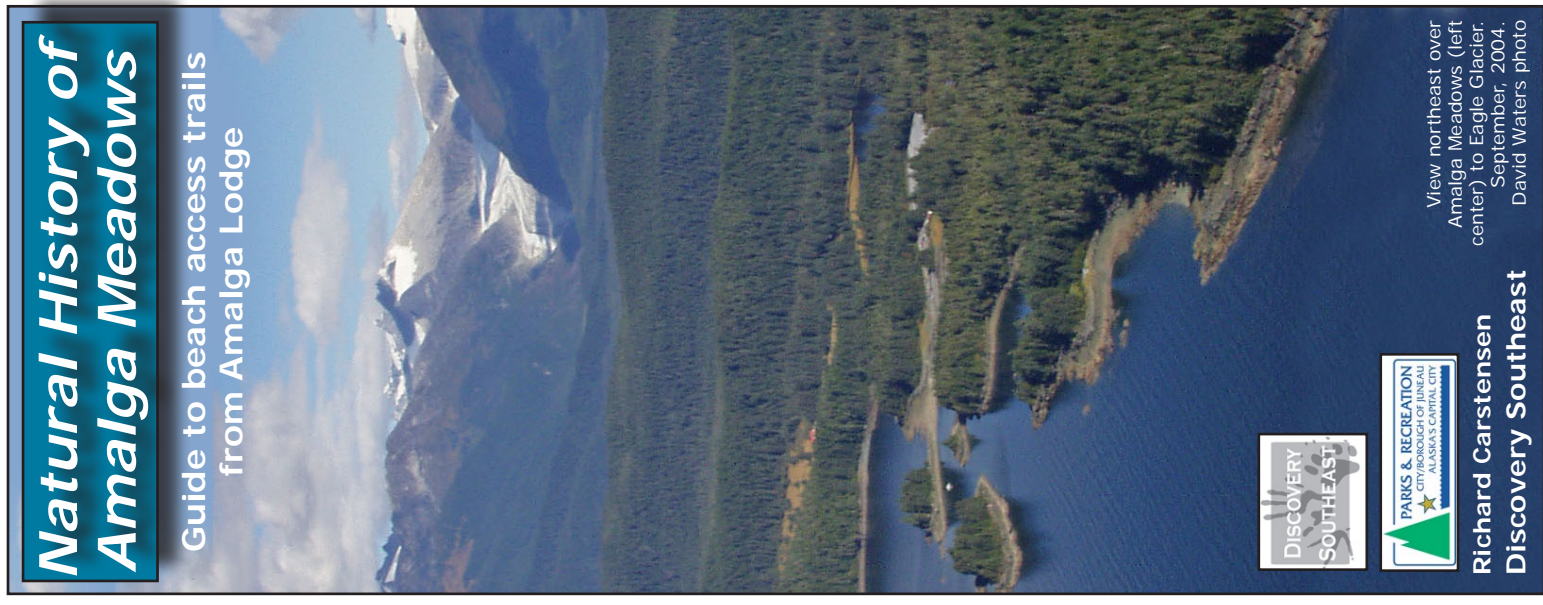
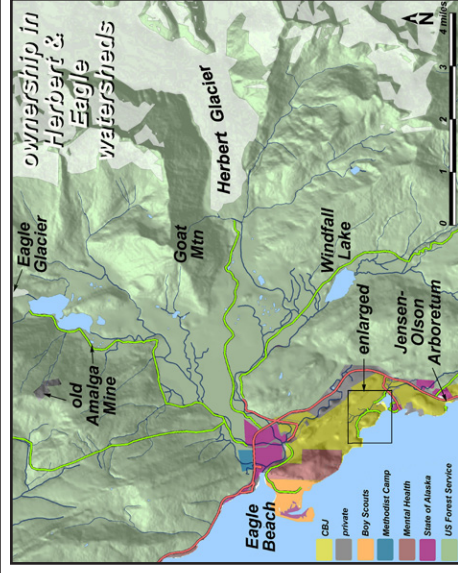
Ask more questions!

Good naturalists constantly ask questions: What makes this soil so wet? How fast are these alders growing? Can fish winter in this creek? Is this excellent or mediocre wildlife habitat?

Here are some "starter" questions to ask yourself each time you enter a new forest type at Amalga Meadows: Is this a young or an old forest? How do you know? If it's *not* a really old forest, why is it young? What disturbance eliminated the previous forest?

Or *was there* a previous forest? What clues does the topography offer you? What geological forces create flat landscapes? How did the history of grazing influence the vegetation of Amalga Meadows?

For more examples of productive sleuthing questions, download *Priming the pump. Socratic method in the field and in print*, in the Fall 2006 Discoveries newsletter. It's on the publications page of our website: www.discoverysoutheast.org



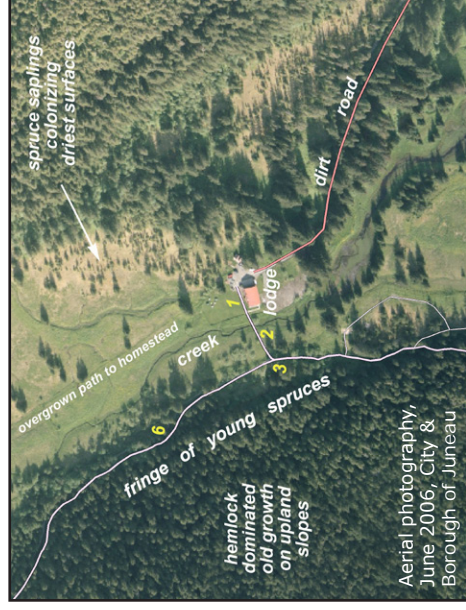
View northeast over Amalga Meadows (left center) to Eagle Glacier. September, 2004. David Waters photo



Richard Carstensen
 Discovery Southeast

Numbered stations

Interpretive stations are marked by numbered posts along trails to Eagle River Landing and Kayak Beach, and are shown in yellow on both aerial photos in this brochure.

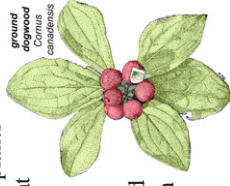


Aerial photography, June 2006, City & Borough of Juneau

3 Intersection. Turn left (south) here to Kayak Beach, to visit stations 4 and 5.



4 Old growth. It only takes a short walk up the trail south of the Challenge Course to leave behind the surfaces exposed to tides during the Little Ice Age. Soon, you're in an all-aged forest with hemlocks many centuries old. The complex canopy intercepts snow, but is gappy enough to admit light to understory plants like ground dogwood that feed deer in winter. Snags and fallen logs provide micro-habitat for wrens and red-backed voles. Diverse fungi both attack and nourish forest trees.



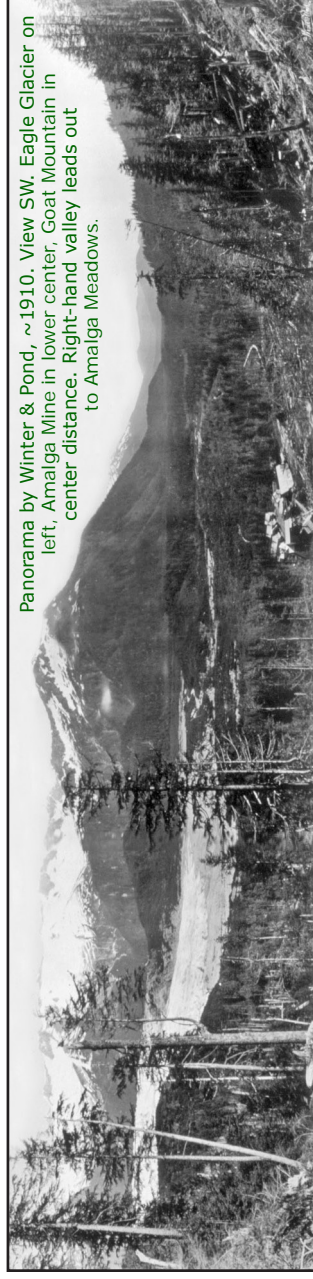
5 Kayak Beach. Most of the beaches north of Amalga Harbor are steep bedrock outcroppings of metamorphosed volcanic greenstone. Good picnic beaches and kayak-launching places are scarce. Exceptions like this little cove are also good places to look for tracks in sand. DIPAC chum salmon often wash up here, attracting black bear, river otter, mink, raven and gulls.



View south along the launch-path at Kayak Beach where SAGA moved boulders for easier access. Salt Chuck tidal gut in center distance.

To complete the tour, return to station 3 and follow the trail north to Eagle River Landing

6 Alders on forest edge. Our trail leaves the raised tidal surface and climbs onto upland slopes. Look for black bear claw marks in mature red alders at the edge of the forest. Alders are early successional trees, not found in old growth. Bear trails just inside the forest envelope Amalga Meadows, giving quick access to one of Juneau's richest foraging sites for herbivores. This new beach access trail follows the old game routes.

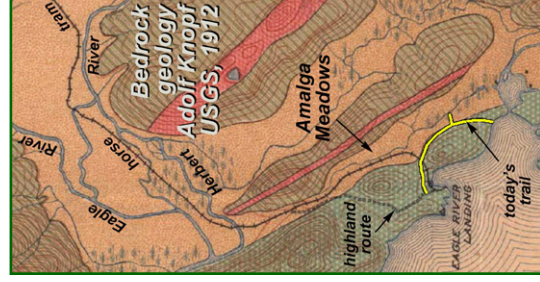


Panorama by Winter & Pond, ~1910. View SW. Eagle Glacier on left, Amalga Mine in lower center, Goat Mountain in center distance. Right-hand valley leads out to Amalga Meadows.

7 Forested wetland. As the trail turns westward into the saddle, it enters scrubby old growth with widely spaced, sparse-crowned trees and many snags. Skunk cabbage indicates poor drainage. This type of forest is common on the ridge separating Amalga Meadows from the ocean. In fact, the largest trees on the trail are not old growth, but younger "uplift spruces" at station 10.

8 Amalga Mine horse tram.

Notice how small the trees are here. At this point, starting down from the saddle, the new beach access trail runs exactly along the old horse tram route between Eagle River Landing and the Mining town of Amalga, 6 miles up-valley. Original old growth was felled along the tram route; the second growth is now a century old. Few stumps from the logging remain. Most rotted long ago.



9 Eagle River Landing.

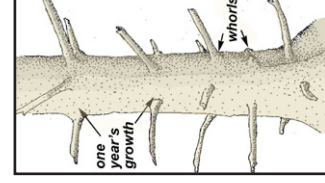
Near the point enclosing the western end of this cove, a deepwater wharf accommodated Juneau-Skagway steamships stopping at the tram terminus.



This is one of the finest south-facing beaches on Juneau's coastline. Otters and even hoary marmots romp here. Note the composition of the beach gravel before moving on to station 10.



Winter hikers can find even more tracks on snow.



10 Uplift spruces. If you were to dig where these big, limby spruces are rooted you'd find the same well-drained gravel composing the beach downslope. Glacial rebound—see Amalga Meadows trailhead sign—has raised this beach about 8 feet since the peak of the Little Ice Age, about 250 years ago.

Young spruces growing in open, sunny locations put out thick branches right at ground level. A century later, after shade from the upper-crown canopy has caused these branches to die and fall, you can still tell the trees were open-grown by the whorls of branch stubs. Knowing that the inter-whorl distance represents one year's growth, step back until you can see almost to the tree top. Holding your fingers about 10 whorls apart, "step up" the tree and estimate its age. Then, estimate how far above extreme high water they are growing. From these observations, you can make your own rough calculation of the local rate of glacial rebound.

11 Highland route. The 1912 USGS bedrock geology map shows alternate routes to Amalga Mine. A narrow-gauge horse tram ran up the meadow, while a more meandering trail followed the coastal ridge. This was probably for hikers only, as horses would have bogged down in the soft peat.



180 degree panorama at Eagle River Landing. Wharf was on west point.

beaches are mostly exposed volcanic bedrock