

Take a **HIKE** in your National Forest



Trail of Blue Ice

Chugach National Forest
Glacier Ranger District (907) 783-3242
Begich, Boggs Visitor Center (907) 783-2326

USGS Map: Seward D5 & D6
Trip Time (one way): 3 hours
Difficulty: Easy
Condition: Excellent
Public Use: Heavy
Recommended Season: all year
Length (one way): 5 miles
Elevation Gain: 30 feet

Recreational Opportunities

Trail offers an *easy walk, bike ride or ski* outing for all ages. It passes through spruce forests full of migratory song birds in early summer/late fall, crosses salmon streams teeming with spawners in late summer, and ties into the Williwaw Nature Trail. Large cottonwood trees loom overhead in places, and dense alder and willow thickets are found elsewhere. Low-bush cranberries are abundant along some stretches of the trail. Views of surrounding mountains and glaciers vary with each twist and turn of the trail.

Wildlife includes black and brown bears, snowshoe hare, eagles, moose, migrating birds, and salmon.

Hunting for big game is closed in Portage Valley.

Fishing is open in all ponds except Upper & Lower explorer ponds are closed during spawning salmon season. Regulations vary for all other waters. Contact Alaska Department of Fish and Game for hunting and fishing specifics/regulations.

Trail Access

At Mile 79, Seward Highway (49 miles south of Anchorage), turn onto Portage Glacier Road. This trail is accessible from several locations.

Trailhead/Access location miles from Seward Highway

- Moose Flats Day Use Area 1.5
- Explorer Glacier Pullout 2.5
- Five Fingers 3
- Williwaw Salmon Viewing Area 4
- Begich, Boggs VC
Lake-Shore Parking Lot 5

Trail Description

The trail stays on the valley floor, creating a fully-accessible route linking all the developed recreation sites in Portage Valley. At the lake end of the trail, a 700' long section climbs slightly steeper than accessibility guidelines allow. An alternate route along the road shoulder can be used to avoid this grade. The alternate route joins where the trail crosses at the intersection of Portage Lake Loop Road and Byron Glacier Road. From this point, trail has a well maintained paved surface to Williwaw Campground. Most of the trail is a wide gravel footpath with boardwalks and bridges. Brush is cleared away from trail, reducing the chance for surprise wildlife encounters.

Special Considerations

Trail is closed to motorized vehicles all year. Avalanche run-out areas are located where the trail is close to the mountain slopes (between Williwaw Campground and Five Fingers). Minimize your exposure in these sections when avalanche hazards are possible.

Portage Valley is known for windy, wet weather. Be prepared for rapid weather changes. Use caution with all wildlife. Boil surface water for 5 minutes before drinking. Remember, pack it in, pack it out! You can contact a U.S. Forest Service office to receive more detailed information on safety precautions.



United States
Department of
Agriculture



Forest Service
Alaska Region
Chugach National Forest

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