

KFRC is committed to the preservation, enhancement and management of the North Pacific marine ecosystem and its resources. Spaces are leased to three primary fisheries research agencies, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the National Park Service. The 25,000 square foot complex provides continuous seawater for wet lab research involving Alaska crab and other species.

The Interpretive Center provides educational and interactive overviews on wildlife, marine life, commercial fishing and fisheries research programs found throughout the Kodiak Archipelago. Examine graphic information panels, photographs of local wildlife and marvel at the 19' Cuvier's beaked whale skeleton which floats suspended over the main lobby.

A 10-foot diameter, 3500 gallon cylindrical aquarium and open "touch tank" comprise the lower level, offering visitors a popular hands-on interactive experience with some of Kodiak's most fascinating tide pool creatures. The aquarium and touch tank are open to the public Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM; extended hours are planned for the tourist season and admission is free.

Kodiak Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center

402 Center Street and Mission Road. (907) 487-2600. Website: www.kodiakwildliferefuge.org. Free admission, open year round. Information may also be obtained by writing the Refuge Manager, KNWR Administrative Offices, 1390 Buskin River Road, Kodiak, Alaska 99615.

Although Kodiak refuge is remote, the brand new Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center is conveniently located in downtown Kodiak. It features interactive exhibits, trip planning resources and the Alaska Geographic bookstore and gift shop. The refuge orientation film and other selections are shown daily and upon request. In addition, the refuge staff offers interpretive programs for visitors and assistance to schools and other groups interested in outdoor classroom experiences.

US Coast Guard Base and Kodiak Launch Complex

Ranked as the largest US Coast Guard Base in the world and central to North Pacific operations, the 'Coasties' base occupies the old WWII Kodiak Naval Operating Base. The Coast Guard manages over 22,000 acres of land, of which 700 acres are set aside for the Base. All government, military and retired personnel and their dependents can utilize the MWR program established on the Base for lodging, restaurants, boat rental, camping, fishing equipment plus RV parking. For lodging and RV Reservations, call the 24-hour hotline at (907) 487-5446 Ext. 1 or see their website at www.kodiakmwr.com.

In 1998, the Kodiak Launch Complex completed construction on 3,100 acres of state-owned land at Narrow Cape. The \$40 million facility is the only commercial rocket launch facility for sub-orbital and orbital space launch vehicles owned and operated by the Alaska Aerospace Development Corporation. KLC is the only spaceport in the United States that does not share a site with the military or NASA.

Maritime Legacy

Kodiak Maritime Museum is currently a "museum without walls." The KMM began its voyage in 1996 when its founders launched a nonprofit corporation to recognize Alaska's rich maritime heritage by preserving first hand accounts and artifacts of this illustrious and dramatic part of the state's history.

While strolling through downtown Kodiak, visit the Shelikof Avenue boardwalk overlooking bustling St. Paul's Harbor. KMM's unique Waterfront Enhancement Project consists of 14 full color interpretive panels that tell the centuries' old story of



Kodiak Bear
photo by:
Fabrice Simon

"Kodiak's Bond with the Sea." Created to pay tribute to the island's mariners and the community's working waterfront, the stories illustrate Kodiak's natural history, depict a Coast Guard rescue and the raw, unnerving power of a winter storm as experienced aboard an ice-laden Bering Sea crab vessel.

The "Kodiak Waterfront Guide - A Bond with the Sea" is a handy, take-away booklet focusing on Kodiak's maritime heritage and seafood and fishing industries. The KMM owns the original watercolors commissioned for the waterfront signs and has incorporated them into the 32-page full color guide.

The museum also conducts special tours of the harbor. Called "Bow to Stern: An Inside View of Kodiak's Working Harbor," the guided tour encompasses the set of interpretive signs. Tour reservations must be made ahead of time by calling the museum office at (907) 486-0384.

The museum also has three satellite exhibits; two are located at the Kodiak College and another at Key Bank on the downtown mall. These exhibits focus on two eras in Kodiak's maritime history - the use of salmon fish traps and crab fishing. The fish trap exhibit includes several historic photos of fish traps,

salmon can labels from that era and a model of a fish trap. The crab fishing exhibit includes preserved king crab, gear used for crab fishing and rare photos of crab fishermen on the deck of a Bering Sea crab boat. The exhibit at Key Bank provides a broad overview of the industry.

A strong oral history project called "Fish Tales, Petroglyphs and Kodiak Pioneers" allows old-timers a forum to talk about their lives and how Kodiak grew from a small fishing village to one of the top fishing ports in the country. Videos can be purchased at all the museums in town. Visit www.kodiakmaritimemuseum.org for more information.

Natural Disasters

In 1912 Mt. Novarupta, located on the Katmai Coast of the Alaska Peninsula erupted, blotting out the sun for two days and blanketing Kodiak with 13 to 18 inches of ash. Kodiak's 400 residents briefly escaped to sea on a ship that was in port fueling, but soon returned to find ash drifts several feet high and spawning salmon dieing in ash-filled streams. Even after nearly 100 years, the ash remains as topsoil and in crooks of tree branches where it settled and is now covered with moss.

Kodiak Treks
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