

### Jumbo Mine

At the fork just outside Kennicott, go right, and switchback uphill toward Jumbo and Bonanza Mines. This route comes close to the top of the mill building, the centerpiece of Kennicott, which makes a nice overlook. The main route continues toward the mines. After about an hour of steady but leisurely climbing, when the main trail makes a very sharp switchback to the right, an obscure, overgrown, hard-to-find trail goes left through the alders. Look hard; the trail goes more or less straight ahead toward Bonanza Creek from the outside of the turn. The first part of this Jumbo Mine trail, an old wagon track, was seriously overgrown by alders at the time of this writing. The trail bed should be clear. The trail leads to Jumbo Mine, high in a cirque at 5,750 feet. The main road continues to Bonanza Mine, a good alternative if you miss the trail.

The side trail to Jumbo Mine crosses Bonanza Creek about ½ mile after it leaves the main trail, and the alders continue on the other side for a short distance. Then the trail breaks out of the alders, and the old wagon track provides generally good walking. Just before Jumbo Creek, scree slides cover the trail, and it is necessary to cross short stretches of steep scree slope. At about 4,700 feet the trail climbs up a massive rock glacier. Water and a possible campsite are at the lower end of the glacier. Follow the remnants of the old track up the rock glacier as it bears right into the cirque below Bonanza Peak (elevation 6,983 feet). Here, if you are lucky, an old building still stands, leaning eerily.

### Bonanza Mine

Follow the directions, above, for Jumbo Mine, but stay on the main trail instead of taking the obscure turnoff to Jumbo Mine. At an intersection near an old tram, take the left fork; the right-hand trail leads to a private cabin at an "angle station" (where the tram cable turned a corner). The upper part of the trail parallels Bonanza Creek and passes a waterfall. Camping is possible near the falls, the first plentiful water source along the trail. In July the slopes are rife with wildflowers. The buildings at Bonanza Mine (elevation 5,950 feet) are mostly collapsed, but the views are spectacular and well worth the climb. The most incredible of the views is from the ridge above the collapsed buildings (6,050 feet).

Because the slope faces south, the climbs to Jumbo and Bonanza Mines can be very hot on a sunny day. Carry plenty of water.

### Other Hikes

Stop at the National Park visitor center in Copper Center or Chitina, or check the Park website (see Appendix) for information on other hiking options in the area, all more difficult than those described here. Ask about Nikolai Ridge. This several-day trip with a spectacular destination requires crossing McCarthy Creek, which can be difficult and dangerous.

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## WORTHINGTON GLACIER OVERLOOK

**Round trip:** 2 miles

**Hiking time:** 2–3 hours

**High point:** 3,400 feet

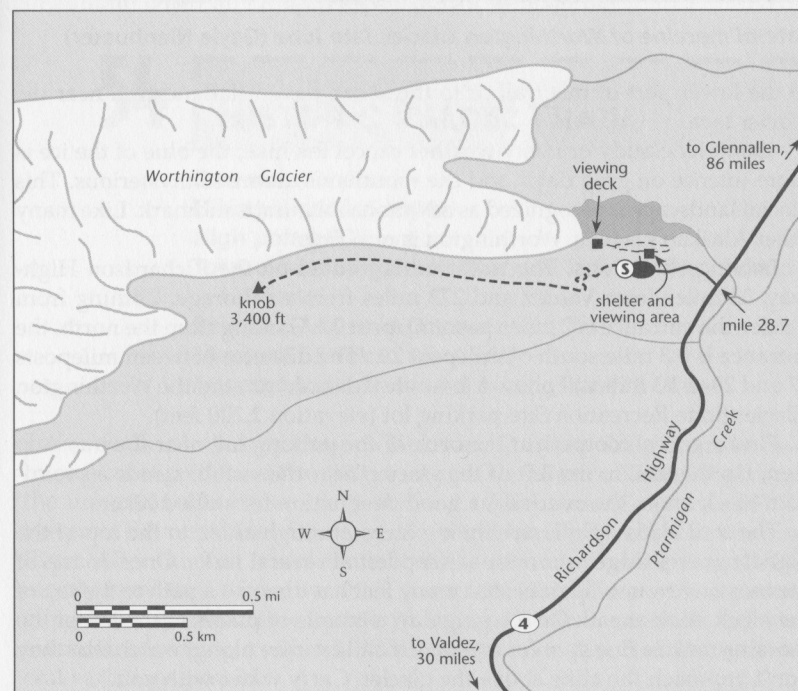
**Total elevation gain:** 1,200 feet

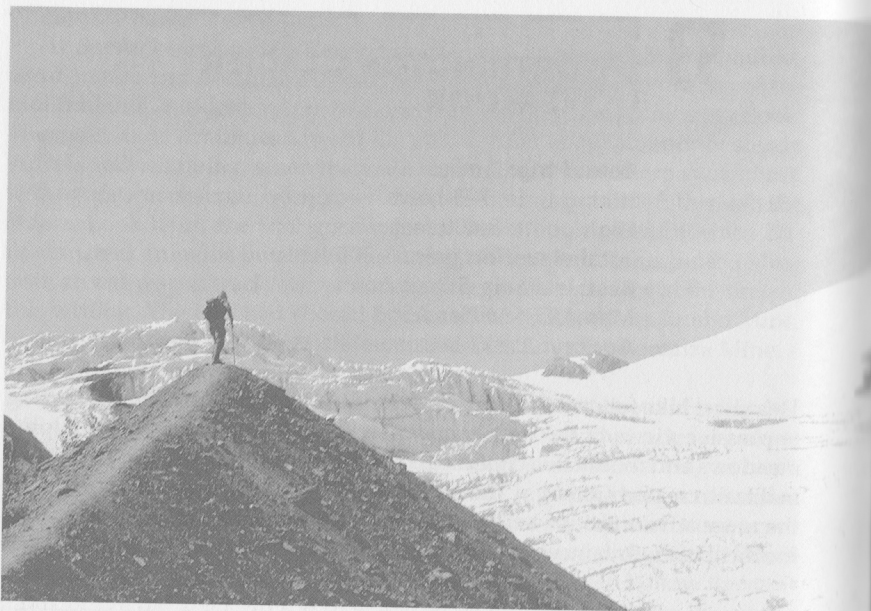
**Best:** late June–September

**Map:** USGS Valdez A5

**Agency:** Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

This short hike follows the lateral moraine of Worthington Glacier, offering impressive views of the deeply crevassed glacier below and of the alpine meadows and mountain wilderness of the Thompson Pass area. This informal trail, created simply by the passage of feet, is a perfect leg-stretcher for the more adventurous visitors to Worthington Glacier and gives a hint of the thrill of mountaineering. Those bothered by exposure will want to stick





Lateral moraine of Worthington Glacier, late June (Gayle Nienhueser)

to the lower part of this trail or to the short, paved flatland trail near the glacier face.

Don't let cloudy or misty weather cancel the hike; the blue of the ice is more intense on gray days, and the mountains are more mysterious. This glacial landscape is recognized as a National Natural Landmark. Like many other Alaskan glaciers, Worthington is receding.

**Driving directions.** The trailhead is located on the Richardson Highway, 33 miles from Valdez and 273 miles from Anchorage. Coming from Valdez the entrance is 2 miles past milepost 27. Coming from the north, the entrance is 0.3 mile south of milepost 29. (The distance between mileposts 27 and 29 is 2.3 miles.) Follow a 0.4-mile side road west to the Worthington Glacier State Recreation Site parking lot (elevation 2,200 feet).

Find a gravel footpath at the back of the parking lot, near the bus-stop sign. Up the trail to the left of the glacier, near the icefall, stands a prominent black knob, the overlook, a good destination for skilled hikers.

The trail leads uphill, steeply in places, through alder, to the top of the highest gravel ridge or moraine. Keep left at several forks. Once on top of the moraine, you will notice that many feet have beaten a path to the top of the black knob ahead. On a sunny day, a couple of places to the left of the moraine make a fine spot for a picnic. If children are along, watch that they don't approach the cliffs above the glacier. Carry water with you.

The more adventurous can continue to parallel the glacier edge, climbing

the moraine as far as is comfortable. The trail is frequently exposed, requiring sure footing and boots with good traction. On rainy days, particularly, the moraine can be slippery; a fall could be serious, perhaps fatal. However, with caution, this little hike is one of the most delightful in southcentral Alaska.

Walking on the glacier itself should be undertaken only by trained and properly equipped mountaineers.

From the parking lot a short, paved, wheelchair-accessible trail offers an alternative leg-stretcher. This trail leads to the right, toward the glacier face. It passes restrooms and a kiosk, then leads to a viewing platform in front of the glacier and just above the lake at the glacier's face. An 1,800-foot loop side trail takes visitors closer to the lake and ends up near the viewing platform. Snow may linger on parts of this trail into July even though the moraine trail is snow free.

Camp at Blueberry Lake State Recreation Site, at mile 24 of the Richardson Highway. If the grade seems too steep at Worthington, look for a flatter but unmarked trail at the back of the Blueberry Lake campground loop (1.5 miles round trip). It leads to a valley overlook along an old telegraph line. The whole Thompson Pass area offers good, easy hiking above tree line on heather and smooth bedrock. The area is exceptionally scenic in autumn when tiny tundra leaves burn a brilliant red.

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### HISTORIC VALDEZ TRAIL

**One way:** 8 miles

**Hiking time:** 4–5 hours

**High point:** 985 feet

**Total elevation gain:** northbound 725 feet, southbound 435 feet

**Best:** mid-May–mid-October

**Maps:** USGS Valdez A5, A6 SE

**Agency:** Alaska Division of Mining, Land, & Water

Take a walk into history through Keystone Canyon, along the route used by seekers of gold more than 100 years ago. The Historic Valdez Trail climbs the mountainside above the south end of Keystone Canyon, and then traverses the west side of the canyon several hundred feet above the Lowe River. After the first initial climb at the south end, it's an easy walk on a mostly level trail through a thick forest of Sitka spruce with occasional glimpses of spectacular waterfalls plunging down canyon walls and misty mountains looming overhead. Access points every 2 to 3 miles make several variations possible.

Built in 1899 by the U.S. Army, this trail offered the first glacier-free,