

Protect Park Resources

Artifacts and old structures are numerous at Caines Head. Do not disturb, damage or remove artifacts.

Please leave items of interest in place for others to enjoy.

Trash collection is not provided. Pack out what you pack in. When latrines are not available, bury human waste away from trails and sources of drinking water.

Open fires are permitted only on ocean beaches, preferably below mean high tide. Fires elsewhere must be in a portable stove, metal-bottomed container or designated fire site.

Fishing and hunting regulations may be obtained from the Department of Fish & Game.

Discharge of firearms is prohibited within 1/2 mile of developed facilities. Target shooting is prohibited in all state parks in Alaska, unless otherwise specified.



Many marine birds live near Caines Head, as well as seals, sea otters, whales, sea lions and porpoises. Land lubbers include mountain goats, brown and black bears, wolves, wolverines, marmots, coyotes and porcupines.

Historic photos by Frank Mirabele * Other photos by Robert Angell



Caines Head was named for E.E. Caine, owner of the steamship company that brought the first permanent settlers to Seward in 1903. It was established as a state recreation area in 1971 and is a popular destination and stopover for hikers and boaters.

Emergencies & Information

Be prepared to handle emergencies yourself. The recreation area is staffed seasonally by a ranger and volunteers who are not always available. If you need assistance or information, please contact one of the following:

Fire, Police or ambulance: 911

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary: CB 9, VHF 16
Alaska State Troopers: CB 9, 911, 224-3346
Seward Harbormaster: CB 9, VHF 16, 224-3138
Coast Guard Cutter Mustang: VHF 16, 244-5202
Caines Head Ranger: VHF 16 WTTY2186
Seward Ranger Office: 224-3434

Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation
Kenai/Prince William Sound Area Office
P.O. Box 1247
Soldotna, AK 99669
(907) 262-5581

For general park info and to make reservations, contact:
DNR Public Information Center (PIC) 10-5 weekdays
550 W. 7th Ave., Suite 1260
Anchorage, AK 99501

(907) 269-8400, TDD: 269-8411

Fax: 269-8901;

www.alaskastateparks.org

Caines Head

State Recreation Area

& Thumb Cove State Marine Park



Division of Parks
& Outdoor Recreation
June 2002



Alaska Department of
Natural
Resources

Caines Head SRA

Caines Head, the scenic site of an abandoned WWII fort, can be reached by boat or on foot from Seward. The massive headland rises 650 feet above Resurrection Bay, against a backdrop of rolling alpine meadows and sharp peaks, giving way to a sweeping view of the North Pacific Ocean.

The shale-covered, forest-framed beaches of Caines Head have long been stopping points for boaters and anglers. But early in WWII, as the territory of Alaska was attacked and occupied by Imperial Japanese ground forces, Caines Head and other Resurrection Bay vantage points became strategic spots for defending the Port of Seward. The port was the southern terminus of the Alaska Railroad, a critical supply line for the war effort and for Alaskans.

Visitors are invited to explore the remains of Fort McGilvray, the South Beach Garrison and the many natural attractions of this 6,000-acre state recreation area.

Trails & Historic Attractions

The 4.5-mile Coastal (Intertidal) Trail leads from Lowell Point to the recreation area, ending at North Beach.

Sections of this trail are accessible only at low tides of four-foot or lower. Historic trails following old Army roads take hikers to Fort McGilvray and on to South Beach.

North Beach is marked by the remains of an Army dock built in 1941. The pier survived the 1964 Good Friday earthquake and tsunami, but the land in this area dropped five feet. The deck of the old pier was eventually destroyed by waves. This beach is the main landing and anchorage in the recreation area but the old pier is no longer safe. **Stay clear of the pier and do not attempt to tie up to its pilings.**

There are picnic shelters, campsites and latrines near the main trail at North Beach. A ranger station is located near the north end of the beach. The **Callisto Canyon Public Use Cabin** is located between Derby Cove and Tonsina Point. The **Derby Cove Public Use Cabin** is near the

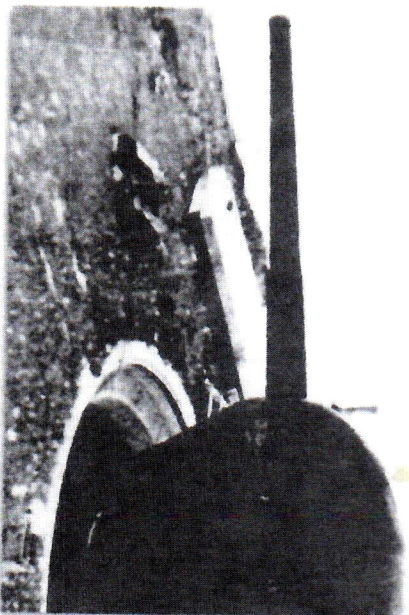
beach at Derby Cove, the beach north of the ranger station and campsites.

From North Beach, historic roadbeds lead to Fort McGilvray and South Beach. To reach the fort and sweeping vistas of the bay, take the left fork, one mile south of the North Beach Trailhead. Along the way, explore the remains of the old ammunition magazines and the bog meadows with their unique forms of plant life. The right fork leads 1.5 miles to South Beach.

Fort McGilvray, once the strategic command center, is perched on a 650-foot rocky cliff that offers dramatic views of Resurrection Bay. Here are the firing platforms of the two six-inch guns that once sat ready to defend the Port of Seward. The fort is open to explore, but take a flashlight to find your way through the maze of underground passages and rooms. **Danger: The cliffs around the fort are dangerous. Stay on the concrete pads and trails.**

South Beach is a garrison ghost town with remains of the utility buildings and barracks that were home for the 500 soldiers stationed here from July 1941 to May 1943.

All historic structures at Caines Head are in various stages of decay. They are not safe and need to be preserved.



One of the two six-inch guns mounted at Ft. McGilvray to guard the Port of Seward during WWII.



Soldiers at South Beach Garrison during WWII. Construction was one of the most difficult, expensive, and hazardous defense projects of WWII. The fort was ordered abandoned in April 1944, soon after completion, and was dismantled in 1947.

Outdoor Safety

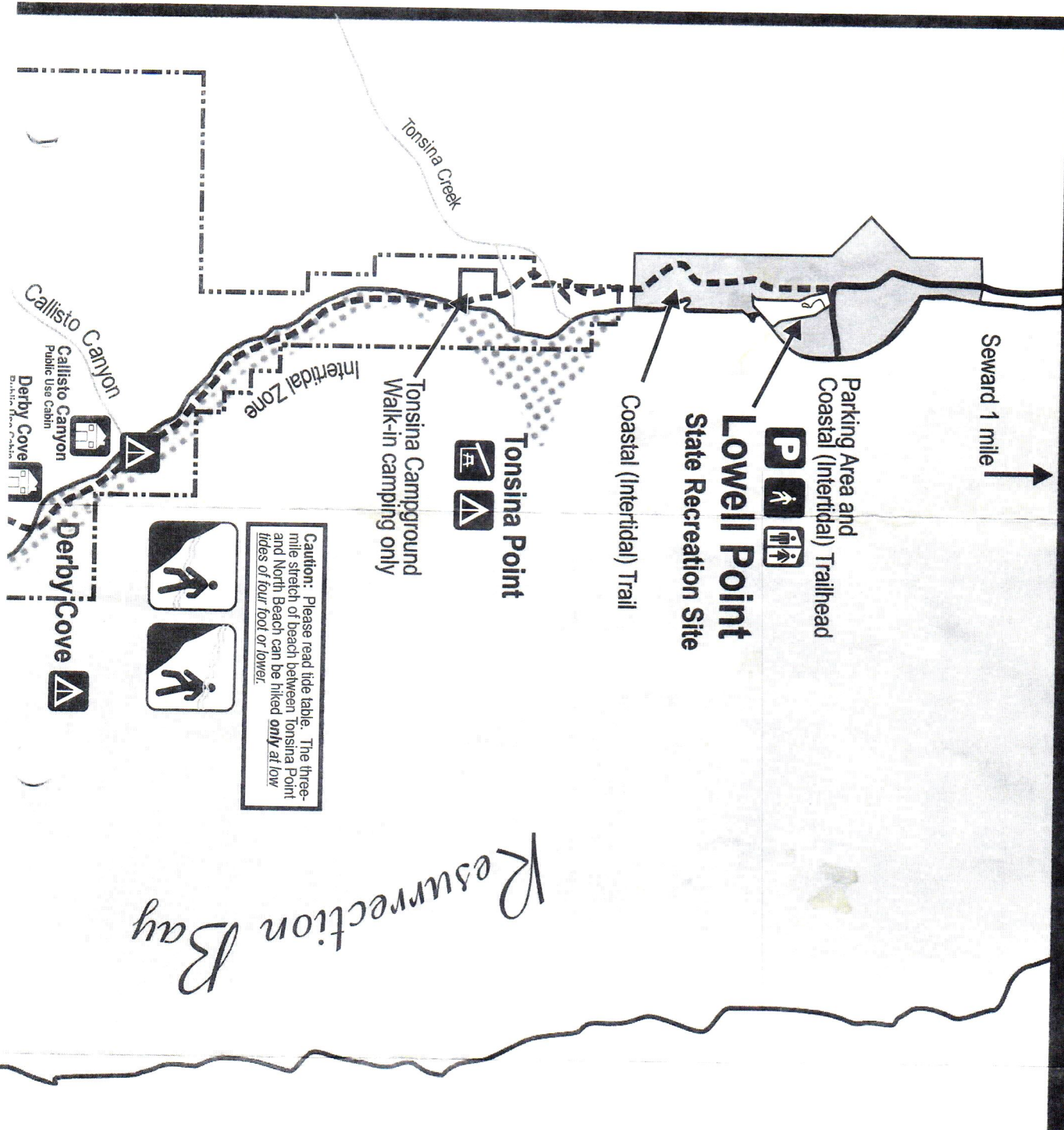
Weather is the key to planning a trip to Caines Head, as Resurrection Bay is subject to severe and unpredictable weather. On clear summer days, calm seas usually prevail until mid-morning when the day breezes begin, commonly from the south at 15 to 20 knots with seas of three to six feet. The annual rainfall in Seward is more than 60 inches, so prepare for wet, cool weather. Bring warm clothing, rain gear and enough food for an unexpected overnight stay due to bad weather.

Tides are generally mild at Caines Head, with an average high of 8.3 feet to a seasonal extreme high of 16 feet.

Drinking water is scarce at times; there are few year-round sources. All water must be appropriately filtered or boiled at least five minutes to avoid ingesting parasites common to Alaskan surface waters.

Bears and other wildlife can be dangerous. Keep a clean camp and wash food odors from your hands and clothing. Never cook or take food into your tent and store food away from camp, suspended high in a tree. **Do not camp on game trails.**

Caines Head State Recreation Area & Thumb Cove State Marine Park



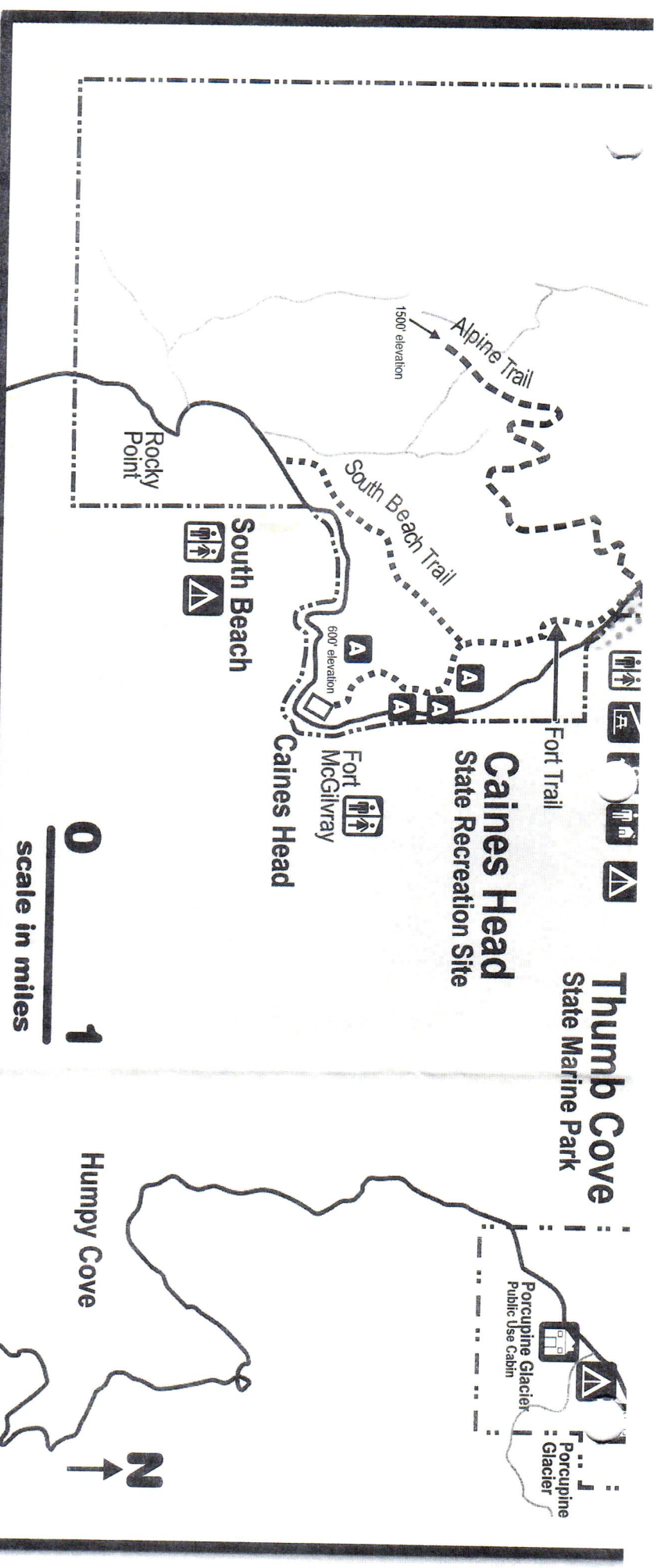
Distances by land:

Lowell Point to North Beach.....	4.5 mi.
Tonsina Point to North Beach.....	3 mi.
North Beach to Fort McGilvray.....	2 mi.
North Beach to South Beach.....	2.5 mi.
North Beach to Alpine.....	3 mi.

Distances by water:

Seward small boat harbor to North Beach.....	7 mi.
North Beach to South Beach.....	4 mi.

	Park Boundary
	Road
	Trails
	Private Property
	Public Use Cabins
	Ranger Station
	Latrine
	Camping
	Picnic Shelter
	Anchorage
	Parking
	Intertidal Zone
	Hiking
	Ammunition Magazine



Access: Caines Head SRA

Caines Head State Recreation Area is accessible from Lowell Point by foot via the Coastal (Intertidal) Trail or by boat.

Coastal (Intertidal) Trail: There is parking at Lowell Point, south of Seward, but vehicles may have to be left in Seward when road conditions are poor.

It is important to time your trip around the tides. The three-mile stretch of beach between Tonsina Point and North Beach can be hiked **only** during a plus 4 foot or lower tide. Leave Seward at least two hours before low tide to avoid becoming stranded along the way.

The 4.5-mile trip takes the average hiker two to three hours. Most hikers to North Beach stay overnight. Plan to stay at least until the next low tide.

Respect private property. The land along both side of the first mile of the Coastal Trail is private property. Please stay on the designated trail.

Thumb Cove State Marine Park

Caines Head State Recreation Site



Warning: It is not possible to hike the beach between Lowell Point and Tonsina Point due to steep cliffs. Please stay on the designated trail.

By boat: Visitors with large boats can anchor off North Beach and dinghy ashore. Smaller boats may be brought up on shore clear of high tide line.

Access: Thumb Cove SMP

Access to Thumb Cove State Marine Parks is by boat only and is located on the eastern side of Resurrection Bay. Thumb Cove is one of the bay's most scenic and popular anchorages. The spectacular rock faces and waterfalls of this cove offer the mariner a peaceful respite from the bay's afternoon wind and waves.

Two other State Marine Parks, Sandspit (also known as the Fox Island Spit) and Sunny Cove, are located on the eastern side of Resurrection Bay on Fox (Renard) Island. Safety Cove and Driftwood Bay State Marine Parks are located in Day Harbor.

Public Use Cabins

Alaska State Parks operates four public use cabins within Resurrection Bay. The **Derby Cove** and **Callisto Canyon Public Use Cabins** are located in Caines Head SRA on the west side of Resurrection Bay. Derby Cove cabin is located approximately 100 yards back from the beach in the forest. A small trail leads back from the north side of the beach. These cabins can be reached by the Coastal (Intertidal) Trail or by boat. No mooring buoy is provided at the cabins. Within Thumb Cove SMP are the **Porcupine Glacier** and **Spruce Glacier Public Use Cabins**. The Spruce Glacier cabin is wheelchair accessible but requires assisted-access from the water landing to the beach berm at the end of the boardwalk.

For more information on reserving these cabins, contact any of the addresses listed on the other side of this brochure, or check our website at: www.alaskastateparks.org

Use of any Alaska State Park Public Cabin requires a fee to be paid and a valid permit to be in that person's possession.