



United States Department of the Interior

KENAI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

P.O. Box 2139
Soldotna, Alaska 99669-2139
(907) 262-7021



IN REPLY REFER TO:
15-004

May 27, 2015

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

TELEPHONE: (907) 262-7021

EMAIL: kenai@fws.gov

SUBJECT: Refuge Celebrates Grand Opening of Visitor Center in Soldotna

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge will celebrate the Grand Opening of your new Visitor Center on Saturday, May 30, from 1:00- 5:00pm. At the top of Ski Hill Road in Soldotna, the new Visitor Center sits tucked into the hillside surrounded by boreal forest. The building features a sod roof, solar panels, cozy fireplace and floor-to-ceiling windows offering sweeping views of the Refuge.

A state-of-the art exhibit hall welcomes visitors new and old to explore the Refuge from “Icefield to Ocean”. Representing the nearly 2 million acres of diverse habitats found on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, the exhibits are designed to be experienced. Climb into a beaver lodge, test your hand against the size of a brown bear’s paw, and listen to the calls of local birds. Then contribute to our wall of comments and art by answering the question, “How are you connected to the Kenai Refuge?”

The Center opens with a celebratory ribbon cutting at 1 PM on Saturday, May 30th. After the doors open visitors are invited to explore the new exhibits; visit two of the Refuge’s non-profit partners, the Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges and Alaska Geographic at their information tables; and have fun with Refuge staff at the kid’s activity zone. At 2:00pm, the Kenaitze Jabila’ina Dance Group will perform, followed by the Del Dum Drummers. Cabin historian Gary Titus will lead a draw-knife presentation at the restored Elwell Cabin adjacent to the Visitor Center at 3:00pm. At 3:30pm, come watch a special “behind the scenes” presentation by project contractors and exhibit designers. The day’s finale, a hot dog picnic from 4:00- 5:00pm at the Center’s South Terrace Amphitheater rounds out the day. Music will be provided at the barbeque by locals Myke Ables and Tony Prior.

For additional information, please contact Matt Conner at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge office during regular business hours at (907) 262-7021.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

XXX