

2016 Summer Fun at Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

by Candace Ward



Join award winning cinema photographers, Kennan and Karen Ward, for a free showing of their new Big Sur film—Redwoods to the Sea—on Saturday, June 4, at 11 AM at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center.

On Saturday, June 4, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge kicks off our summer programs with a very special program. At 11 AM, cinematographers Kennan and Karen Ward will share their 90 minute film—Big Sur—Redwoods to the Sea. The film shares the fascinating stories of the wildlife and people of this rugged, wild land. Of special interest is the incredible high definition visual clarity of the cinematography done with red 4K HD cameras and aerial drone camera work. Other attractions include the story of reintroduced endangered Condors raising their first young born in the wild in over 35 years.

Before and after the film, Karen and Kennan will share their experiences as photographers and cinematographers in wild places around the world including many years in Alaska from southeast Alaska to the arctic and even on our own Kenai Peninsula. In our visitor center book store, their beautiful Alaska wildlife posters and grizzly growth charts are available for sale. Sale proceeds are used to support the Refuge's nature education programs.

On Sunday, June 5, at 2 PM celebrate National Trails Day with Ranger Nick Longobardi, who will

guide you for a 2-mile hike on the Refuge Visitor Center Centennial Trail. Wear comfortable closed-toed shoes, dress for the weather, and bring your insect repellent. No dogs on this hike.

During the June 11–12 weekend, visit the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service booth at the Kenai River Festival at Soldotna Creek Park for hands-on fishy fun for kids of all ages.

Beginning in mid-June and running through mid-August, Refuge staff will host a variety of wildlife and cultural interpretive programs every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Every Thursday at 2 PM, from June 16 to August 4, participate in the Family Explorer Program. These hands-on exploration programs are specially designed for families. June programs in the series are Fire in the Forest (June 16), Be Bear Aware (June 23), and Wetland Dipnetting (June 30).

On Fridays at 1 PM, from June 17 to August 12, join Refuge staff on afternoon Discovery Hikes lasting 2–2½ hours in the Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area. Wear comfortable hiking boots, bring water and insect repellent, and dress for the weather. No dogs on these

hikes. For the first two hikes, meet staff at the trail head—Hidden Creek Trail (June 17) and Hideout Trail (June 24).

On Fridays at 2 PM, from June 17 to August 19, enjoy the Tale of Two Cabins. Are you curious about the historic Andrew Berg and Elwell cabins at the Refuge Visitor Center complex? Learn more about Refuge and Kenai Peninsula history as Refuge staff lead tours of the cabins and share the lost stories of our early settlers.



Join Ranger Michelle Ostrowski and other educational and outreach staff for some summer fun at Kenai National Wildlife Refuge!

On Saturdays at 2 PM, from June through Labor Day, join us for the Saturday Showcase. These programs highlight the variety of attractions on the Refuge. The first month's programs are Wetlands & Woods Nature Walk (June 4), Sockeye Fishing for Beginners (June 11), Wildflowers of the Kenai (June 18), and Nature Photo Safari (June 25).

On Sundays at 2 PM, from June 17 to August 21, come out on a ranger-led Fitness Hike on the Visitor Center Centennial Trail. This hike is designed to move at a steady pace over two miles of rolling woodlands. Wear comfortable closed-toed shoes, dress for the weather, and bring your insect repellent. No dogs on this hike.

Please contact us at the Refuge Visitor Center for specific programs in July and August at 260-2820. Also, monthly program schedules are available at the Visitor Center and are posted on our website (<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/kenai/>). If you would like to be put on a listserv for Refuge programs, contact Michelle Ostrowski at 260-2839 or michelle_ostrowski@fws.gov.

We look forward to you joining us for summer fun at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge!

Candace Ward leads the Refuge's Information and Education Program and has been a park ranger for over 30 years. For more information on educational programs, contact the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center daily from 9 AM to 5 PM at 260-2820.