



Protecting National Parks from Mining Threats – Alaska

Mining on Public Lands and National Parks in Alaska

Celebrated for their scenic beauty, abundant wildlife and cultural resources, Alaska's national parks—from Denali to Wrangell St. Elias—are places to be protected and stewarded for future generations to experience. This is why national parks and newly designated conservation areas prohibit *new* mining claims within their boundaries. Yet, there are **137 places** where mining activities remain possible within the boundaries of a national park or monument in Alaska.



Unlike every other public land use, the specific location of mining claims is largely left up to the claim holder's choice. This drastically limits the ability of Alaska's public land managers, like the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service, to protect high value conservation areas. **It is also over 25-percent of mining claims in Alaska (over 1,800 total claims) are located within 30 miles of national parks and monuments in Alaska.**

While a mine claim does not guarantee an active mine will develop, it is an exceedingly easy first step; a mine claim has a nominal annual fee and few restrictions considering potential harm to surrounding landscapes or communities. As a result, the claim system directly threatens clean air and water, wildlife habitat, connectivity and cultural resources conserved by parks and monuments. In 2023, **3.2 million** people visited Alaska's national park sites, contributing **\$2.3 billion** in economic benefit to the state. Meanwhile, mine claim holders paid less than \$10 per acre to possess public lands with a mine claim. Commonsense changes to mining laws are essential to protect Alaska's national parks, monuments and local economies.

IMPROVING THE CLAIM SYSTEM TO PROTECT PARKS

National parks are places that bring us together even in divided times. Poll after poll shows Americans overwhelmingly support protecting national parks on both sides of the political aisle, united behind clean air, clean water, and healthy wildlife. NPCA is committed to securing bipartisan victories for the parks with commonsense mining law reform and mobilizing park supporters to protect these cherished landscapes. Now, more than ever, our parks need your help.

For more information:

Beau Kiklis

Associate Director

Energy and Landscape Conservation Program

bkiklis@npca.org



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SPOTLIGHT

Alaska's National Parks

From Glacier Bay and Lake Clark National Parks to Denali and Gates of the Arctic National Parks and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Alaska's national park lands are encroached upon by mining claims, including within their boundaries. Industrial scale mining and its associated infrastructure threatens clean water and fish wildlife populations that unite communities across the state.

ALASKA'S MINING CLAIMS BY THE NUMBERS

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CLAIMS LOCATED ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS	492,178
CLAIMS ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS IN ALASKA	6,918
CLAIMS WITHIN 30 MILES OF ALASKA'S NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS	1,891
CLAIMS INSIDE ALASKA'S NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS	137