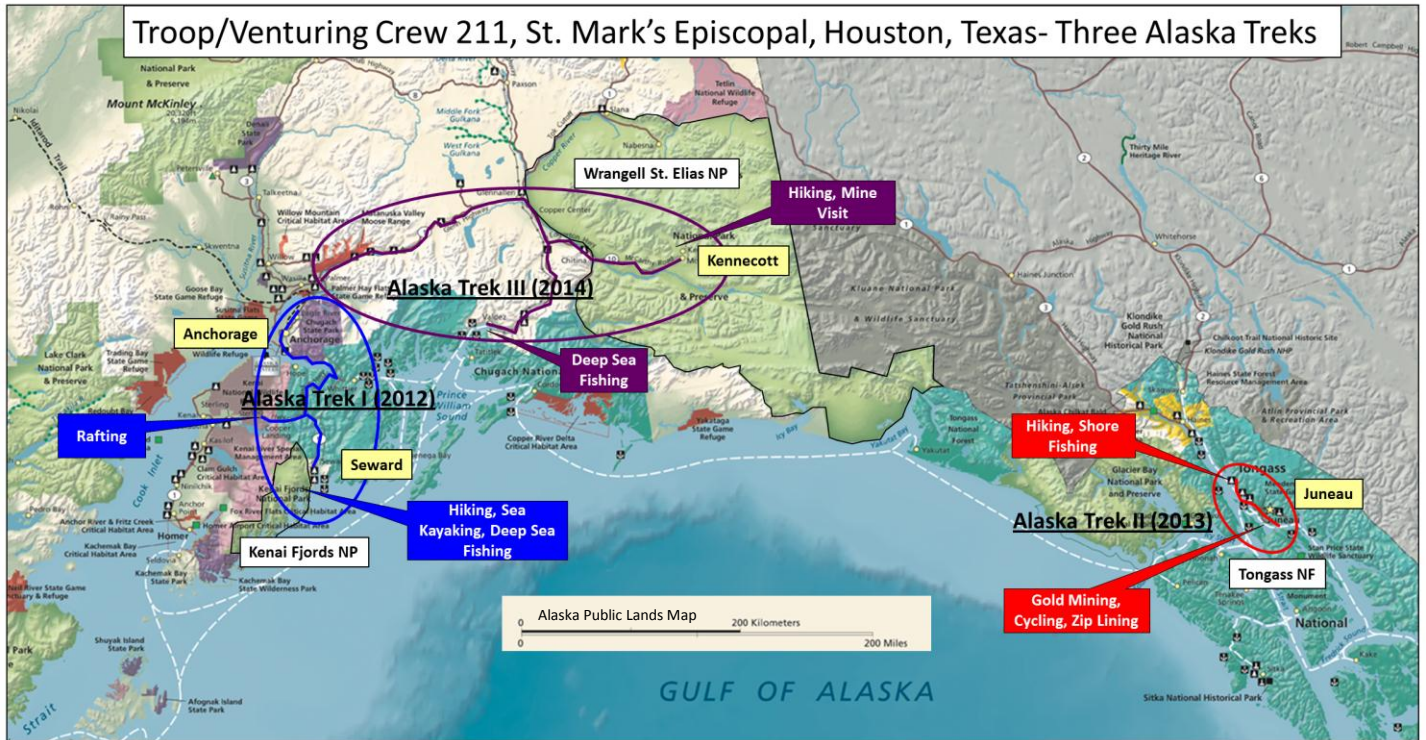


St. Mark's Episcopal Church BSA Troop/Venturing Crew 211 (Houston, Texas) Three High Adventure Treks to Alaska (2012-14)

Steve Adiletta September 2014

This is a summary of three high adventure treks to Alaska taken by the St. Mark's Episcopal Church Boy Scout Troop/Venturing Crew 211 of Houston, Texas during the summers of 2012 to 2014. The maps shows the routes and, along with the photos, some of the activities during each of the treks. These treks were organized with the help and support of the Great Alaska Council in Anchorage, Alaska for which we are grateful.



Troop 211 Alaska Trek I (Kenai) July 2012

Trek members: Matthew Adiletta, Steve Adiletta, Wade Burton, Dale Fitz, Lihan Fitz, Jared Lehmann, Jake Long, Lynn Long, Jonathan McAllister, Robert McAllister, Ryan Morris, Doug Morris, Dean Neubek, Ben Neukomm

Trek activities: Sea Kayaking, Deep-sea Fishing and hiking in Kenai Fjords National Park; and rafting in Chugach National Forest.



Kayaking Aialik Bay, Kenai Fjords NP



Hiking Harding Icefield, Kenai Fjords NP



Deep Sea Fishing, Kenai Fjords NP

Our first trek to Alaska was to the rain forest environment south of Anchorage where the coastal mountains are draped in glaciers and capped with icefields. We rafted the Kenai River and then camped in Seward where we explored Kenai Fjords National Park. The weather was cool, overcast and intermittently rainy for much of the trip but the trekkers were properly prepared despite the dramatic change from the Houston Gulf Coast area.

Sea Kayaking around Aialik Bay and the hike over the Harding Ice Field were spectacular within Kenai Fjords NP, and really showcased an Alaska adventure at its best. The Exit Glacier hike and the Kenai River rafting were quite good as well. Deep sea fishing for salmon was wonderful with the whales swimming around us; every Scout caught a fish!

Troop 211 Alaska Trek II (Juneau) July 2013

Trek members: Matthew Adiletta, Steve Adiletta, Jim Brigman, Max Brigman, Wade Burton, Andrew Hollenberg, Jared Lehmann, Patrick Lehmann, Jake Long, Mackenzie Thomas

Trek activities: Hiking, Shore Fishing, Gold Mining, Zip Lining and Cycling in Chugach National Forest.



Shore Fishing, Tongass NF



Seeking Gold, Mendenhall Glacier, Tongass NF



Hiking Mount Roberts, Tongass NF

Our second Alaska trek was to southeast Alaska near Juneau where coastal mountains, glaciers and gold mines combined to make a great high adventure in a rainforest environment. We hiked up Mount Roberts, hiked to Mendenhall Glacier, cycled and zip lined through the rainforest, and learned the geology of gold mining both in the field and in mines. Shore fishing for salmon made for some great experiences and wonderful dinners!

The Eagle River base camp on the coast north of Juneau was the best camp we've ever experienced anywhere in the world. In fact, getting to get to the base camp was an adventure in itself since there are no roads a 2 mile hike through the rain forest is needed to reach the Eagle River camp on the coast. This hike was viewed as part of our high adventure which the Scouts and adults enjoyed as bald eagles, salmon and seals were all around us.

Troop/Venturing Crew 211 Alaska Trek III (Kennecott) August 2014

Trek members: Matthew Adiletta, James Adiletta, John Adiletta, Justine Adiletta, Steve Adiletta, Anthony Dayao, Gregory Dayao, Jonathan McAllister, Robert McAllister, Grant Neubek, Janet Sisolak, Mikayla Sisolak, Mike Sisolak, Sean Sisolak

Trek activities: Hiking and Mine Touring in Wrangell St. Elias National Park; and deep sea fishing near Valdez.



Hiking Bonanza Peak, Wrangell St. Elias NP



Hiking to Stairway Icefall, Wrangell St. Elias NP



Kennecott Copper Mine Tour, Wrangell St. Elias NP

Our third Alaska trek was to the boreal forest and massive Wrangell Mountain Range in eastern Alaska with a side trip to Valdez for some deep sea fishing for salmon. Our hikes and mine tour in Wrangell St. Elias NP were glorious as the sun popped out to reveal incredible vistas of glaciers spilling out of towering mountains. The trekkers were individually pleased to accomplish these strenuous and challenging hikes.

After staying in tents and cabins the previous two treks, we elected to stay in lodges which were most welcome after long days of vigorous hiking up and down scenic ridges. While the bathrooms were separate from the rooms, it was nice to be able to take a hot shower! We prepared a wonderful salmon and fish dinner with our catch on the penultimate night enjoying a picturesque sunset.

Overall these were wonderful high adventure treks and the highlight of the author's scouting experience!