



Alagnak

Aniakchak

Katmai

Kenai Fjords

Lake Clark

KEFJ: 2015 Spring Update

Lichen Inventory

In early July, the SWAN will collaborate with specialists from North America and Europe on a comprehensive lichen inventory in coastal and alpine habitats across the park. With support from the M/V Serac, the five-member team will survey for coastal lichens from Aialik Bay down to Nuka Bay, exploring old growth forests, rock outcrops, and sloping peatlands. Aircraft supported surveys will occur at alpine sites on the Harris Peninsula and near McCarty Fjord. Many notable and exciting lichen discoveries are expected, so stay tuned!



NPS researchers investigate cliff-dwelling lichens in Coleman Bay. Photo: NPS/J. Walton

Marine Nearshore

We are well into the second year of a sea otter study in partnership with USGS. We will continue to examine sea otter dependency on mussels as a food source. Our previous work showed that mussel abundance and sizes across the Gulf of Alaska vary considerably from year to year. If sea otters depend on mussels as a primary food source, fluctuations in mussel populations may adversely affect sea otter populations in KEFJ. During the low tide in June, the nearshore marine monitoring crew will be along the KEFJ coastline on the USGS R/V Alaskan Gyre. This crew will collect additional data to support the sea otter project while completing our overall monitoring data collection for the summer season.



Sea otter resting in a kelp bed. Photo: NPS

Bald Eagles

Eagle-eyed observers will take to the air this May to survey the KEFJ coastline for bald eagle nests. We will conduct two surveys to improve estimates of nest occupancy and availability for bald eagles in KEFJ. Surveys this spring will implement lessons learned from last year's effort and allow us to refine the Network-wide protocol. The goal of the bald eagle monitoring program is



Bald eagle perched in a spruce tree. Photo: NPS

to develop rigorous survey methods to track nest occupancy and productivity across SWAN.

2015 SWAN Field Plans in Kenai Fjords

All dates are flexible and subject to change based on weather and other conditions

April

Harding Icefield Mass Balance Study
Dates: April 19 - May 1, exact days TBD
Contact: Peter Kirchner, Chuck Lindsay

May

Weather Station Maintenance - McArthur Pass & Harding Icefield
Dates: May 17 -30, exact days TBD
Contacts: Peter Kirchner, Chuck Lindsay

Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring

Dates: May 11-15 and 18-22

Contacts: Tammy Wilson, Laura Phillips

June

Marine Nearshore Monitoring
Dates: June 13-22
Contact: Heather Coletti

July

Lichen Inventory
Dates: July 4-13
Contact: James Walton

August

Freshwater Monitoring
Dates: August 15-31
Contact: Krista Bartz

Weather Station Maintenance - Pederson Lagoon
Dates: August 1-3, exact days TBD
Contacts: Peter Kirchner, Chuck Lindsay

Recent Publications

Chuck Lindsay. 2014. Weather Station Maintenance in Southwest Alaska Network Parks: 2014 Hydrologic Year Summary.

Burchiel et al. 2014. Image interpretation and classification of landcover change in LACL and KEFJ between 1954 and 2009. Natural Resource Report.

Loso et al. 2014. Alaska National Park Glaciers: Status and Trends. NR Technical Report.



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<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/swan/>