

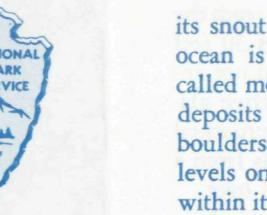
GLACIER BAY

NATIONAL
MONUMENT

Alaska



Glacier Bay NATIONAL MONUMENT



Glacier Bay is a wilderness of snow-clad peaks and branching tidal inlets. It contains one of the world's most spectacular displays of glaciers, extraordinary scenery, and abundant wildlife.

On the scenic coast of southeastern Alaska, about 100 miles northwest by boat from Juneau, is Glacier Bay National Monument, established on February 26, 1925. It contains nearly 3,600 square miles and extends about 90 miles at its widest point and some 70 miles north to south. The bay itself is about 50 miles long. It is fed by glaciers that descend from towering mountains clothed in perpetual snow.

THE GLACIERS

The monument contains over 20 tremendous glaciers and many others almost equally impressive. They illustrate all stages, from actively moving ice masses to those that are nearly stagnant and slowly dying. The famous Muir Glacier, one of the most active on the Alaska coast, has a sheer face rising some 265 feet above the water, and is nearly 2 miles wide. Most of the eight fiordlike inlets of the bay terminate at one or more similar ice cliffs.

These glaciers are rivers of ice, hundreds, sometimes thousands of feet deep, which flow slowly down the mountain valleys because of the great weight of the snow and ice constantly accumulating at their sources, high in the mountains. Along the southeast coast of

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

Cover: Air view of Tarr Inlet and the Grand Pacific Glacier.

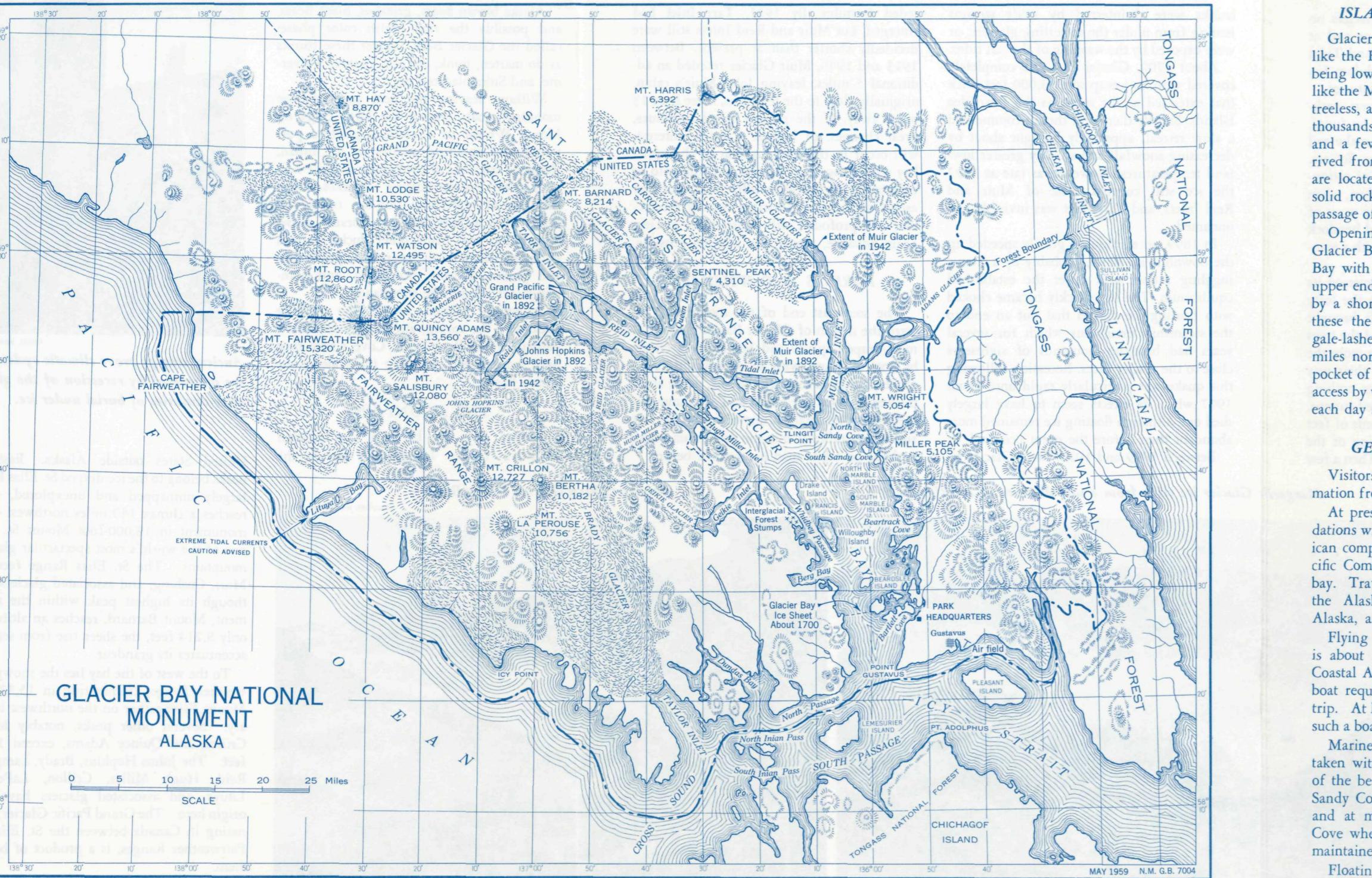
BRADFORD WASHBURN PHOTO.

Alaska, drenched by a continuous succession of westward-moving storms born in the Aleutian region, such glaciers are fed so constantly that many of them flow all the way to the ocean. There, they end in towering cliffs. Great chunks continually crack off as the cliffs become undermined by the water.

When blocks of the ice cliffs, some of which are over 250 feet high, crash into the sea they cause immense waves and sometimes fill the tidal inlets with thousands of drifting bergs and smaller ice fragments. The principal active glaciers are the Muir, Johns Hopkins, Lamplugh, Reid, and Margerie in Glacier Bay and the Lituya and Crillon Glaciers in Lituya Bay.

GLACIER RECESSION AND CLIMATE CHANGES

Even the most rapidly replenished glacial rivers flow extremely slow compared with water. A daily travel rate of an inch or two is common, a foot or two is comparatively fast, and 20 or 30 feet a day, as in the case of Muir Glacier, is rare. If the lowland air is sufficiently warm and accumulation of snow is sufficiently slow, the glacier melts away at



ISLANDS AND OTHER BAYS

Glacier Bay is studded with islands, some, like the Beardslee archipelago in the south, being low and densely wooded, while others, like the Marble Islands, are steep and largely treeless, and are used as nesting rookeries by thousands of sea birds. The Beardslee Islands and a few others are composed of sand derived from the valleys opposite which they are located. However, the majority are of solid rock, much worn and scarred by the passage of former glaciers.

Opening into Cross Sound, southwest of Glacier Bay, lies beautiful, winding Dundas Bay with heavily wooded shores.

From its upper end, nearby Taylor Bay can be reached by a short overland hike.

Westward from these the monument extends to the open, gale-lashed North Pacific Ocean. Here, 26 air miles northwest of Icy Point, lies the deep pocket of scenic Lituya Bay, made difficult of access by violent tidal currents that four times each day sweep through its narrow entrance.

upper end of the bay. When falling from the faces of glaciers, it may create waves 30 feet high. Therefore, small boats should not approach closer than half a mile to active glaciers. Icebergs also should not be approached closely because, if disturbed by swells from a small boat in passing, they may roll over.

Shoals and kelp beds are present; daily tides average between 18 and 20 feet; and surveys beyond a line running north from Francis Island to Tlingit Point (western entrance point of Muir Inlet) are incomplete.

For these reasons and because of the frequency of Alaska coastal storms, navigation of the bay by small boats is not considered safe without local knowledge.

The approach to Dundas Bay should not be attempted by small boats in unfavorable weather because of the frequent occurrence of rough water in Cross Sound. Lituya Bay and the waters of the open coast north of Icy Point should be avoided by small craft at all times.

ADMINISTRATION

Glacier Bay National Monument is administered by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, and is under the immediate supervision of the Superintendent, Sitka and Glacier Bay National Monuments, Box 1781, Juneau, Alaska.

MISSION 66

Mission 66 is a program designed to be completed by 1966 which will assure the maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources of the National Park System in such ways and by such means as will make them available for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fred A. Seaton, Secretary

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Conrad L. Wirth, Director



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