

Wilderness.net's Izembek Wilderness Fact Sheet



Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Izembek Wilderness in 1980 and it now has a total of 307,982 acres. All of the wilderness is in Alaska and is managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Description

On the tip of the Alaska Peninsula, Izembek Wilderness sees a quarter-million migratory birds land every fall, including the entire world's population of black brants and thousands of Canada and emperor geese, ducks, and shorebirds. Izembek Lagoon, which is enclosed by the Wilderness, contains one of the largest eelgrass beds in the world, providing food and shelter for migratory birds. Tundra swans live here year-round. Gray, Minke, and killer whales migrate along the coast by the thousands. Sea otters are the most common inhabitants of the lagoon. Hundreds of thousands of salmon begin and end their life cycles on the refuge. The brown bear habitat is unparalleled, and caribou wander through in herds. Crowberry, blueberry, and salmonberry are only three plant species of over 300 that are found in the Wilderness. Strong winds and acidic soils common to this region have resulted in plants that are hearty and low-growing. Smoking volcanoes and glaciated mountains tower over lakes and meandering rivers that drain into lagoons opening on the Bering Sea. The castle-like Aghileen Pinnacles form a portion of the boundary between Izembek Wilderness and the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge. Izembek Wilderness makes up the entirety of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge with the exception of the land along a gravel road system and several private inholdings.

Elevations in the Wilderness vary from sea-level in many of the wetlands to over 5,800 feet atop the apex of Mount Frosty, a Holocene volcano. Hunting and fishing draw many visitors; however, no maintained trails exist and the terrain can be rugged. Average temperatures range from 47 F to 56 F in summer and 24 F to 33 F in winter. Izembek Wilderness receives 41.9 inches of annual precipitation.

Leave No Trace

How to follow the seven standard Leave No Trace principles differs in different parts of the country (desert vs. Rocky Mountains). Click on any of the principles listed below to learn more about how they apply in the Izembek Wilderness.

1. [Plan Ahead and Prepare](#)
2. [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces](#)
3. [Dispose of Waste Properly](#)
4. [Leave What You Find](#)
5. [Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)

6. [Respect Wildlife](#)
7. [Be Considerate of Other Visitors](#)

For more information on Leave No Trace, [Visit the Leave No Trace, Inc. website.](#)

Area Management

The Izembek Wilderness is part of the 110 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals. In wilderness, you can enjoy challenging recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and extraordinary opportunities for solitude. You play an important role in helping to *"secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness"* as called for by the Congress of the United States through the Wilderness Act of 1964. Please follow the requirements outlined below and use Leave No Trace techniques when visiting the Izembek Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.

Unless otherwise specified, no motorized equipment or mechanical transport, with the exception of wheelchairs, is allowed. This is generally true for all federal lands managed as designated wilderness.

Links to Other Websites

[Alaska Region, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge](#)

Links on Wilderness.net

[National, Regional and Local Wilderness Organizations \(NGOs\)](#)

A listing of societies, organizations, coalitions and other wilderness-related advocacy and stewardship groups.

[Career and Volunteer Opportunities](#)

A listing of sites providing information about wilderness- and environmentally-related career and volunteer opportunities.

Applicable Wilderness Law(s)

Law	Date	Acreage Change (in acres)
Public Law 96-487	December 2, 1980	300,000
Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act - Public Law 96-487 (12/2/1980) Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act		

 [download 96-487](#)