



VALDEZ - CORDOVA CENSUS AREA

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TOWNS

Alaganik

No information available. Located on USGS Cordova B-1 map.

Batzulnetas (historical)

History: from unpublished manuscript by Walter James Hoffman (ca. 1895), Batzulnetas was an Thtena Indian village near the upper Copper River where the trail to Tanana River began. from that of a chieftain of the Ahtena, who lived on the Copper River near the mouth of the Slana River. USA, wrote, on June 2, 1885, that Batzulneta "was six feet four inches high, and clad in a blouse of scarlet flannel * * * pair of native trousers * * * a black woolen hat with strips of red flannel, completed his costume. a tangled roll three feet long." Description: site of Indian village, on N bank of Tanada Creek 0.9 mi. SE of its junction with Copper River; Copper River Basin.

Boswell Bay

History: Local name obtained in 1952 by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Description: near Boswell Bay, 16 mi. SW of Cordova, Chugach Mts

Cape Yakataga

History: Local name reported in 1904 by G. C. Martin, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The Indian name "Yakataga" is said to mean "canoe road" because of two reefs forming a canoe passage to the village. A post office was established here in 1935. Description: population 48, at Cape Yakataga, on N coast of Gulf of Alaska, 25 mi. WNW of Icy Cape, Chugach Mts.

Chenega (historical)

History: Name of an Indian village reported by Ivan Petrff in the 1880 census (1884, p. 28). A post office was established here in 1946 (Ricks, 1965, p. 10) but was discontinued when the village was destroyed by the 1964 Alaska earthquake and abandoned. Description: On Kenai Peninsula, on S tip of Chenega I., at head of Chenega Cove, 42 mi. SE of Whittier, Chugach Mts.

Chenega Bay

History: Native American name. Description: Located in Chugach National Forest on N shore of Sawmill Bay, on the SE coast of Evans Island, Prince William Sound.

Chisana

History: Local name derived from the nearby river, reported by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in 1913 (in Brooks and others, 1914, pl. 14). Description: in Nutzotin Mts., on N, bank of Chathenda Creek 1.7 mi. E of its junction with Chisana River and 4.5 mi. E of Euchre Mtn. Alaska Range

Chisana (historical)

History: Former Indian settlement and mining camp established in 1913 (Swanton, 1952, p. 537). The village population was 148 in 1920; 13 in 1930; and 28 in 1939. The Chisana post office operated from 1913 to 1938. Description: on E bank of Cross Creek near the Chisana River 30 mi. SE of Nabesna, Wrangell Mts

Chistochina

History: This place was the name of a U.S. Army Signal Corps telegraph station, established in 1903. During the construction of Glenn Highway, it became the name of a roadhouse. Description: population 28 on Glenn Highway, 42 mi. NE of Glennallen, Copper River Basin

Chitina

History: Railroad and mining supply town established about 1908 on the northern terminus of the Copper River and Northwestern RR. located at or near an Indian village or camp. population was 171 in 1920; 116 in 1930; 176 in 1939; and 92 in 1950. Description: on W bank of Copper River, 3 mi. N of Taral and 66 mi. ENE of Valdez; Chugach Mts

Copper Center

History: A trading post was located here about 1896. The village began as a mining camp when about 300 prospectors wintered here in 1898-99. With the establishment of a telegraph station by the U.S. Army Signal Corps about 1901, the village, being on the Fairbanks-Valdez trail, became the principal settlement and supply center in the Nelchina-Susitna Region. Its population was 91 in 1910; 71 in 1920; 80 in 1930; 138 in 1939; 90 in 1950, and 151 in 1960. Description: On the Klutina River, 1 mi W of its junction with the Copper River and 66 mi NE of Valdez, Copper River Basin.

Copperville

No information available. Located on USGS Gulkana A-3 map.

Cordova

History: Named by Michael J. Heney, builder of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad, about 1906. A post office was established here in October 1906 (Ricks, 1965, p. 14). The town had its origin as the railroad terminus and ocean shipping port for the copper ore shipped from the Kennicott mine up the Copper River. "On April 8, 1911, Cordova celebrated 'Copper Day,' when the first trainload of copper ore, approximately 1,200 tons of it, arrived from the mines and was poured into the holds of the steamship Northwestern, bound for the smelter at Tacoma (Washington)" (Roguszka, 1964, p. 9). The name of the town was derived from the original name "Puerto Cordova," given to what is now known as Orca Bay, by Senor Don Calvador Fidalgo who visited the region in 1790. Description: population 1,128 on SE shore of Orca Inlet, opposite Hawkins I., Chugach Mts.

Touristy Description: Nestled between Hawkins Island and Lake Eyak and overshadowed by Mt. Eccles, Cordova is a hardworking fishing community on the east coast of Prince William Sound. Travelers who make the extra effort to reach the community of 2,121 residents — accessible only by boat or small plane — are well rewarded with a visit to a quaint coastal town in a dramatic natural setting with an intriguing history, great seafood and a wide range of outdoor adventures lying at its doorstep.

The 50-mile Copper River Hwy is for the most part a gravel road that serves as the gateway to the Copper River Delta, a wildlife-rich wilderness with numerous opportunities for hiking, fishing and birding. Millions of birds and waterfowl stop and rest along the delta during the spring and fall, including seven million western sandpipers and the entire population of West Coast dunlins. Birding activity peaks the first weekend of May when the Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival is staged and birders from around the world arrive to enjoy the largest migration in the U.S.

Equally impressive are the twin wonders at the end of the highway: breathtaking Childs Glacier and the Million Dollar Bridge. Childs is one of the most active glaciers in Alaska, advancing some 500 feet a year, dumping icebergs into the Copper River with thunderous calving just 1,200 feet away from an observation deck. Just beyond the glacier is the Million Dollar Bridge, a four-span trestle completed in 1910 and put out of commission by the 1964 earthquake. The bridge has since been rehabilitated and you can now drive or walk to the view from the middle where just downstream is Childs Glacier and upstream lies Miles Glacier, the source of those icebergs floating beneath you.

To appreciate Cordova's long and colorful history, a visit to the Cordova Historical Museum is almost mandatory. The Ilanka Cultural Center Museum preserves and exhibits a collection of prehistoric, historic and contemporary tribal artifacts from the Prince William Sound and Copper River Delta. A complete Orca whale skeleton, one of five on display in the world, hangs in Ilanka's lobby. The area was first settled by nomadic Eyak Indians, providing a trade center for the various tribes occupying the wide-flung region. Commercial fisherman built the first cannery here as early as 1889, but modern-day Cordova was born when the sleepy seaside village was chosen as the terminus for a railway line from the Kennecott copper mines near McCarthy. One of the most impressive engineering feats of the time, the \$23 million Copper River & Northwest Railway was completed in 1911. Within five years, Cordova was a boomtown, with more than \$32 million worth of copper ore passing through its docks on the way to the smelters in Tacoma.

After the mines closed in 1938, Cordova turned to fishing, its main economic base today and the reason its Small Boat Harbor, one of the five largest in the state, is the heart and soul of the town. Throughout the summer wharfs hum with activity with salmon seiners and gillnetters frantically trying to meet their quota before the runs are closed. Extending up the slopes from the docks is Cordova's commercial district, an area of restaurants, shops and attractions that is easy to explore on foot. One of the streets, Railroad Avenue, departs town as the Copper River Highway and the route to spectacular scenery and great adventures that lie out the road.

Crystal Falls

History: Local name reported in 1905 by G. C. Martin (1906, pl. 12), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Description: along right bank of Mountain Slough, 4 mi. S of Cordova, Malaspina Coastal Plain

Ellamar

History: The Ellamar Mining Co. was formed in 1898, a year after the first claims were located. A post office was established at this copper mining camp in 1900; it was discontinued in 1929 (Ricks, 1965, p. 19). Description: population 46, on E shore of Virgin Bay, 40 mi. NW of Cordova, Chugach Mts

Eyak (historical)

History: Former Eskimo village reported in 1869 as "Hyacks" by Major General W. E. Halleck, USA. It was listed by Ivan Petroff in the 1880 Census as "Thiak." The population was 94 in 1890; 222 in 1900. In 1899 Lieutenant Commander J. F. Moser, U.S. Navy (USN), reported it as a cannery called "Odiak" with a population of 273 (Hodge, 1907, p. 448). Description: along Copper River Highway, 5.5 mi. SE of Cordova, Malaspina Coastal Plain

Gakona

Pop. 33

History: A trading post and post office were established in 1905. The name was derived from the Gakona River. Description: on Glenn Highway, at junction of Copper and Gakona Rivers, 15 mi. NE of Glennallen, Copper River Basin.

Gakona Junction

No information available. Located on USGS Gulkana B-3 map.

Glennallen

History: Named for Captain Edwin F. Glenn and Lieutenant Henry T. Allen, United States Army, both leaders in the early explorations of the Copper River region in the 1880's. Description: On the Glen Highway, 2 mi. W of junction of Glenn and Richardson Highways, 7 mi NW of the confluence of the Tazlina River and the Copper River, 110 mi N of Cordova

Golden

History: Local name established here as a post office in 1904 and discontinued in 1916 (Ricks, 1965, p. 23). The village is now abandoned. Description: on E side of Port Wells, 28 mi. NE of Whittier, Chugach Mts.

Gulkana

History: This village was established about 1903 as a telegraph station and named "Kulkana" by the U.S. Army Signal Corps after the nearby river. The Gulkana post office operated between 1909 and 1954 (Ricks, 1965, p. 24). Description: population 59, on Richardson Highway at Gulkana River crossing, 1.6 mi. SW of junction of Glenn and Richardson Highways, Copper River Basin.

Katalla

No information available. Located on USGS Cordova A-2 map.

Kayak (historical)

History: name of a former settlement and steamer landing, was established here in 1900; discontinued in 1906 (Ricks, 1965, p. 32). Description: site of a former village on SE coast of Wingham I., 61 mi. SE of Cordova; Malaspina Coastal Plain

Kenicott

History: The Kennecott Mines Company, which established a camp and offices here in 1906, took its name from Kenicott Glacier. The glacier was named for Major Robert Kenicott. In 1908, the post office of Kenecott was established and continued to operate until 1938. (Ricks, 1965, p. 33). The town, which grew to a population of 494 by 1920, took its name from the mining company, but it has been spelled variously through the years. Description: On the N bank of National Creek, E edge of Kenicott Glacier, 4 mi N of McCarthy, Wrangell Mts

Kenny Lake

No information available. Located on USGS Valdez C-3 map.

Kiniklik (historical)

History: Eskimo name reported in 1900 by F. C. Schrader, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), as "Kinicklick." Description: 0.5 mi. N of Kiniklik I. and 37 mi. NE of Whittier; Chugach Mts

Latouche

History: A mining village and landing on Latouche Island. A post office was established here in 1905, but was discontinued in 1955 (Ricks, 1965, p. 39). Recent maps indicate a settlement of about 20 buildings at the site. Description: on NW coast of Latouche I., 18 mi. SE of Chenega, Chugach Mts

Liebigstag (historical)

History: A former Ahtena Indian village reported in 1885 as "Liebigstag's by Lieutenant Allen (1887, p. 120), USA. Description: "on the left bank of Copper River. USGS map Valdez D-5.

Lower Tonsina

History: This probably was little more than a roadhouse; first reported by F. H. Moffit, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in 1914. Description: 1 mi. NW of junction of Tonsina River with Copper River, 64 mi. NE of Valdez, Copper River Basin.

Matanuska (historical)

History: Former Indian village reported in 1898 by Captain E. F. Glenn, USA. See Miduiski. Description: on E shore of Old Man Lake, 21 mi. W of junction of Tolsona Creek and Tazlina River, Copper River Basin.

May Creek

History: Local name obtained by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and published on maps since 1954. Description: on Dan Creek Road at May Creek crossing, 9 mi. SE of McCarthy, St. Elias Mts.

McCarthy

History: Mining camp named for the stream established about 1908 with a population of 127 in 1920; 115 in 1930; and 49 in 1939. The McCarthy post office operated from 1912 to 1943. See Kennicott. Description: at mouth of McCarthy Creek, near Kennicott Glacier, 12 mi. NE of the junction of the Nizina and Chitina Rivers, Wrangell Mts.

Meakerville

History: Name of a settlement reported in 1955 by Rand McNally.

Description: population 48, on Odiak Slough, 0.5 mi. S of Cordova, Chugach Mts.

Mendeltna

No information available. Located on USGS Gulkana A-5 map

Mendeltna Lodge

No information available. Located on USGS Gulkana A-6 map

Mentasta Lake

History: this appears to be an early Indian settlement site which has been located in more than one place around Mentasta Lake. P. G. Lowe in 1898 reported near the lake an Indian's house which he called John's House or John's Village, after the Indian occupant. The U.S. Army Signal Corps established a telegraph station in the pass in 1902. area has been the best known route of native migration across the Alaska Range since the first native settlements here. Mentasta Lake post office was established in 1947 and discontinued in 1951 (Rices, 1965, p. 42). "Montasta Lake native village" with a population of 15. Description: population 40, on shore of Mentasta Lake, on W side of Mentasta Pass, 38 mi. SW of Tok; Alaska Range.

Nabesna

History: This village began as a camp of the Nabesna Mining Co., from which its name was derived. Its first post office was established in 1909 (Ricks, 1965, p. 44). Description: population 41, W of Nabesna River, at base of White Mtn., 84 mi. NE of Glennallen, Wrangell Mts

Nelchina

No information available. Located on USGS Valdez D-8 map

Nuchek (historical)

History: site of an abandoned Eskimo village (Hodge, 1910, p. 90). The Russians built a stockade post here about 1793 called "Fort Konstantine" probably named for Grand Duke Constantine, the younger brother of Czar Alexander II. 1880 was 74, in 1890, 145. Description: on Hinchinbrook I., on N shore of Port Etches, 35 mi. SW of Cordova; Chugach Mts

Old Valdez

Description: On the E end of Port Valdez, 3.1 mi SE of the City of Valdez.

Orca

History: Named for a fishing vessel of the Pacific Steam Whaling Co. which opened a cannery here at the end of the 19th century. A post office was established here in July 1804, but discontinued in 1909 (Ricks, 1965,p49).(AK-T1) Description: Located on the southeast shore of Orca Inlet, 2.5 miles northeast of Cordova, Chugach Mountains.

Paxson

No information available. Located on USGS Mount Hayes A-4 map

Port Ashton

History: Fishing village reported in 1943 by US@C&GS. A post office was established here in 1952 (Ricks, 1965, p. 53). Description: on E coast of Evans I., NW shore of Sawmill Bay, 17 mi. S of Chenega, Chugach Mts.

Port San Juan

No information available. Located on USGS Seward A-3 map

Ptarmigan

History: This place originated as a roadhouse or station on the Valdez winter trail. Description: along Richardson Highway, at junction of Ptarmigan Creek and Tsina River, 1 mi. E of Ptarmigan Drop and 22 mi. NE of Valdez, Chugach Mts.

Redwood (historical)

History: Name of a mining community reported in 1905 by G. C. Martin, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The village is now abandoned. Description: on right bank of Mitcher Creek, 3.5 mi. E of Katalla, Chugach Mts.

Slana

History: Indian village name derived from name of river on which it is located; published in 1936 by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Description: population 12, S of Glenn Highway, on N bank of Slana River near its junction with Copper River, 53 mi. SW of Tok,

Alaska Range

Strelina

History: This small community and mining camp were named in association with the stream, and the name was reported by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in 1910. The Strelina Post Office was in operation from 1912 to 1925. Description: Located on Strelina Creek, 1.7 mi north of its junction with the Kuskulana River, 77 mi northeast of Valdez, in the Wrangell Mountains.

Tatitlek

History: Indian village reported by Ivan Petroff in the 1880 Census as "Tatikhle," population 73; 90 in 1890. The present spelling was published by Grant and Higgins (1910, pl. 2), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). T. E. Gerdine, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) wrote, "formerly it stood at the head of Gladhaugh Bay, but some years ago it was moved to its present site near Copper Mountain." A post office was established here in 1946 (Ricks, 1965, p. 64). Description: population 96, on NE shore of Tatitlek Narrows, 1 mi. NE of Bligh I. and 40 mi. NW of Cordova, Chugach Mts.

Tazlina

History: Local name of a roadhouse reported by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) (in Brooks and others, 1914, pl. 11) as being on the Copper River at the mouth of the Tazlina River. The name has been transferred to this lodge on the Glenn Highway. Description: on Glenn Highway, 30 mi. W of Glenallen, Copper River Basin.

Tolsona

No information available. Located on USGS Gulkana A-5 map

Tonsina

History: A telegraph station was established here in 1902 by the U.S. Army Signal Corps. was discontinued in 1916. discontinued in 1933. Description: on Richardson Highway, 0.5 mi. S of Tonsina River and 52 mi. NE of Valdez, Chugach Mts.

Valdez

History: Town established in 1898 as a debarkation point, with an excellent ice-harbor, for men seeking a route to the Klondik gold region. It was originally called "Copper City" but name was changed when the Valdez post office was established in 1899. Valdez soon became the supply center of its own gold mining region. The town is located on the distributary delta of Valdez Glacier, and was severely damaged during the 1964 Good Friday earthquake (plans are being made to move the town to more stable ground three miles northwest.) The population was 315 in 1900; 810 in 1910; 466 in 1920; 442 in 1930; 529 in 1939; and 554 in 1950. Description: On E end of Port Valdez, 45 mi. NW of Cordova and 115 mi. E of Anchorage Chugach Mts.

Touristy Description: Deep in the heart of Prince William Sound and encased by some of the world's tallest coastal mountains that top 7,000 feet is Valdez, a city of 4,498 residents in a remarkably picturesque setting. Though known best as North America's northernmost ice-free port and as the southern terminus for the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, Valdez is also a destination for travelers. It lies less than 25 miles east of the Columbia Glacier, one of Alaska's most popular tour boat cruises, all around are glaciers galore, stunning mountain scenery, an abundance of marine wildlife and opportunities for outdoor adventure, from catching giant halibut and salmon to kayaking among icebergs and seals.

Valdez is located on a wedge of flat land on the north shore of Port Valdez, a deep-water fjord, and is a 305-mile road trip east of Anchorage and 364-mile drive south of Fairbanks. Valdez's location in Prince William Sound makes it an outdoor paradise. Within a few blocks of the downtown area Mineral Creek Trail heads to mining ruins in the mountains and Shoup Bay Trail skirts Port Valdez to views of glaciers. Kayaks can be rented in town and drop-off services can be arranged for overnight paddles in calm inlets and fjords nearby. Anglers arrange charter fishing trips in the Small Boat Harbor while others book tour boat cruises to see Columbia Glacier, the second-largest tide-water glacier in North America with a face as high as a football field as well as Meares Glacier. Thanks to those steep Coastal Mountains, daredevil enthusiasts can go whitewater rafting on the Lowe River through the impressive Keystone Canyon in the summer and heli-skiing and ice climbing in the winter.

The heart of Valdez, like so many other coastal towns in Alaska, is its small boat harbor clustered along its waterfront. From there, the town stretches about a dozen walkable blocks back toward the mountains and Mineral Creek Canyon while nearby Egan Drive, Valdez's equivalent to Main Street, turns into the Richardson Highway and heads north for Thompson Pass. Scattered through the downtown area is a wide range of restaurants, accommodations, museums and Prince William Sound Community College while. Visible across the inlet from town is the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline Terminal with its massive storage tanks each holding nine million barrels of oil.

Valdez's darkest moment was the Good Friday Earthquake in 1964 when the ensuing tsunami destroyed the town. Valdez was rebuilt on more stable bedrock 4 miles to the west and flourished during the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Terminal in the 1970s.

Whitshed

History: Local name published in 1951 by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) on a map indicating a probable cannery with two or three buildings. Name derived from nearby Point Whitshed. Description: In the Chugach Mountains, on peninsula 8 mi SW of Cordova.

Whittier

History: Port and RR terminus established during World War II. The name derived from nearby Whittier Glacier was reported in 1943 by

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The population in 1950 was 629. A post office was established here in 1946 and was discontinued in 1961 (Ricks, 1965, p. 71). Description: population 809, on NE end of Kenai Peninsula, at head of Passage Canal, 28 mi. SE of Sunrise and 50 mi. SE of Anchorage, Chugach Mts.

Touristy Description: Tucked in a pocket of mountains hard against Prince William Sound, Whittier is famously compact. Connected to the rest of Alaska by road, rail and the Alaska Marine Highway, Whittier attracts a large numbers of visitors during the summer looking for the unspoiled wilderness of water, ice and granite that lies beyond its shores. Fantastic hiking opportunities exist and due to the influx of travelers, a fair number of interesting shops are scattered about. Kayaking and scuba diving are superb, and the docks are packed with cruise ships and water-taxis waiting to take visitors into the wildlife-rich waters of the Sound.

Thanks to its location deep in Prince William Sound, tour-boat cruises running out of Whittier are among the best in Alaska. A variety of boats, large and small, depart from the small-boat harbor into the rugged and steep fjords that line the sound, many of them featuring glaciers deep inside most sail so close to a kittiwake rookery you can see the eggs in the nests of the black-legged birds.

Whittier's history is as alluring as its tourism possibilities. Shortly after the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Islands during World War II, the U.S. Army began looking for a spot to build a secret military installation. The proposed base needed to be an ice-free port and as inaccessible as possible. Whittier fit the bill perfectly, thanks to 3500-foot peaks that surround it and keep it hidden in cloud cover for much of the year. The Army built the base that included blasting a supply tunnel out of solid granite, one of Alaska's great engineering marvels, and constructing what at the time was the largest building in Alaska to house more than 1000 people.

The Army maintained Whittier until 1960, leaving behind, among other things, the 14-story-tall Begich Towers, where today most of Whittier's 190 residents live. While it is still compact, Whittier is not nearly as inaccessible as it used to be. In 2000, the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel was overhauled to accommodate auto traffic as well as the Alaska Railroad. You can now drive the 11 miles from the Seward Highway, the most traveled highway in Alaska, to what was once an impenetrable fortress.

In early June, the town hosts the "Walk In Whittier," a geo-caching event and treasure hunt in the harbor. The July Fourth celebration includes fireworks, a parade, kids games and entertainment and a free barbeque for all. The Whittier Halibut Derby runs May through September and the Silver Salmon Derby is July through September.

Willow Creek

No information available. Located on USGS Valdez D-4 map

Wortmanns

History: Former roadhouse and mining camp reported 1908 by Moffit and Maddren (190 (1909, pl. 1) U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Description: on Richardson Highway 1.5 mi. NE of mouth of Bear Creek and 15 mi. E of Valdez, Chugach Mts.



[Valdez-Cordova Census Area AKGenWeb](#)
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