

Welcome to



# Nancy Lake

State Recreation Area

## Park History

Nancy Lake SRA, located in the broad Susitna River Valley, owes its topography to ancient glaciers that once covered the land. When the glaciers retreated some 9,000 years ago, they left behind a rolling landscape of glacial deposits and hundreds of lakes and ponds. Humans arrived once the glaciers melted, and two Dena'ina Athabascan village sites—found buried just outside the recreation area—suggest that this land was used for fishing, hunting, and trapping.

With the construction of the Alaska Railroad in 1917, homesteaders settled the nearby towns of Wasilla, Houston, and Willow. The Nancy Lake area—too rugged and swampy for easy development—remained wild, natural, and largely untouched. Today, these features make Nancy Lake SRA one of our most distinctive state parks.



Frazer Lake

## For More Information

Nancy Lake Ranger Station  
Mile 1.3 Nancy Lake Parkway

Mailing Address:  
7278 East Bogard Road  
Wasilla, AK 99654  
(907) 495-6273

[www.alaskastateparks.org](http://www.alaskastateparks.org)



Background photo courtesy of Victor Stanculescu  
Inset photo courtesy of Doug Gasek



Alaska State Parks

## Area Highlights

### Canoe Trails

Nancy Lake SRA's canoe trails are a great place to get your paddles wet. Beginning at the Tanaina Lake Canoe Trailhead, the popular Lynx Lake Canoe Trail travels through an eight-mile chain of lakes and is an ideal weekend getaway. Portage locations are well marked with signs, and wet sections of the trail are covered with boardwalk. Other routes can be explored along the trail by continuing south from Lynx Lake to Butterfly and Skeetna lakes.

If you don't own a canoe, you can rent one from a local concessionaire and pick it up at the canoe trailhead. There's no excuse for missing one of Alaska State Park's best trail systems, and there's absolutely NO excuse for not wearing your lifejacket along the way.

### Public-Use Cabins

With 13 rustic cabins on the shores of Nancy, Lynx, James, Bald, and Red Shirt lakes, Nancy Lake SRA's public-use cabins are a great way to camp in style. Several cabins are accessible by foot from the Nancy Lake Parkway, while others are only accessible via canoe during the summer. In winter, remote cabins can be accessed with snowshoes, skis, or snowmachines.

All cabins are equipped with basic amenities such as a heating stove, wooden bunks, and a latrine. Lake water or snowmelt should be purified before drinking. Visit [www.alaskastateparks.org](http://www.alaskastateparks.org) for reservations, locations, and availability of cabins.

### Winter Recreation

Under a blanket of snow, the rolling topography of Nancy Lake SRA is ideal for cross-country skiing, snowmachining, and dog mushing. With nearly 40 miles of maintained trails and lots of opportunities for backcountry snowshoeing, ice fishing, snowmachining and skiing, Nancy Lake SRA is a superb winter playground.



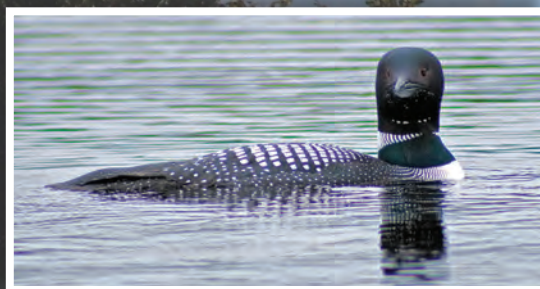
Little Noluck Lake portage  
Photo courtesy of LRHolzapfel

## Welcome

Nancy Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) is one of the few rolling, lake-studded landscapes in Alaska's state park system. Crystal clear lakes wreathed by pristine forests provide an idyllic setting for canoeing, fishing, hiking, skiing, and camping.

## Wildlife

Nancy Lake SRA's landscape of lakes, wetlands, and forest creates an ideal habitat for an assortment of wildlife including beavers, loons, eagles, arctic terns, moose, black bears, and the occasional brown bear. Proper storage of food and garbage will minimize the chances of dangerous human-wildlife interaction. Make noise while hiking and please give all wildlife, especially nesting loons, a wide berth.



Loon on Nancy Lake  
Photo courtesy of LRHolzapfel



Public-use cabin #1 at Red Shirt Lake





This is bear habitat...



James Lake public-use cabin  
Photo courtesy of LRHolzapfel



Big Noluck Lake  
Photo courtesy of LRHolzapfel



South Rolly Lake campground

## Trails

### Red Shirt Lake Trail 1

**Access:** Red Shirt Lake Trailhead (end of Nancy Lake Parkway)

**Travel Means:** Foot

**Distance:** 3 miles one way to Red Shirt Lake

This easy trail follows the tops of glacial hills and moraines to rustic lakeside campsites with a latrine. There is no well at this site, so backcountry campers will need to pack or purify their own water.

### Lynx Lake Loop Canoe Trail 2

**Access:** Tanaina Lake Canoe Trailhead (mile 4.5 Nancy Lake Parkway)

**Travel Means:** Canoe with portages

**Distance:** 8-mile loop

The wild, wet landscape of Nancy Lake SRA is best seen by boat. Lynx Lake Loop Canoe Trail travels over 14 placid lakes, with well-marked portage sites and boardwalks covering the wettest sections of trail. The loop can be paddled in a day, but numerous campsites and public-use cabins along the way make it an ideal weekend trip for those who want to take their time.

### Little Susitna Connector Canoe Trail 3

**Access:** Skeetna Lake Portage

**Travel Means:** Canoe with portages

**Distance:** 4.3 miles from Little Susitna River to Lynx Lake

You can also access the Nancy Lake canoe trails via the Little Susitna River. From the canoe launch at mile 57 of the Parks Highway in Houston, it takes four to five hours to reach the Skeetna Lake Portage. The river is fairly easy traveling, but some canoeing experience is a plus. Watch for the sign marking the portage and use caution when meeting powerboats.



Northern pike are easy to catch and they put up a decent fight. They are considered an invasive species in this area, so catch and eat all you want and consider it a favor to the trout populations.  
Photo courtesy of Travis Shinabarger

## Camping

Alaska State Parks offers two main campgrounds in this area that can be accessed from the road system. Nancy Lake State Recreation Site, on the northeast shore of Nancy Lake, has 30 campsites and can be reached from mile 66.5 of the Parks Highway. South Rolly Lake Campground, located at the end of the Nancy Lake Parkway, has 91 campsites and is adjacent to the Red Shirt Lake Trailhead. All sites are equipped with fire rings and picnic tables, with access to water and latrines. Several remote backcountry campsites can be found throughout the area along popular trails. Check the map for camping locations.

## Fishing Report

Many lakes and ponds in the Lynx Lake Loop have populations of northern pike. Fish measuring up to 14 inches are common here, with the occasional 20- to 24-inch lunker prowling the water. Explore off the beaten paths to find great fishing.

Trout can be found north of the Nancy Lake Parkway in North Rolly, West Rolly, and Rhein lakes.

There are several private cabins within and adjacent to Nancy Lake SRA. Please respect all private property and trespass signs.



### Map Legend

- Restroom
- Maintenance Station
- Parking
- Camping
- RV Camping
- Picnic Shelter
- Boat Launch
- Canoe Launch
- Water Station
- Hiking
- Information & Registration
- Public-Use Cabin
- Host Cabin
- Private Property
- Roads
- Park Boundary
- Summer Trails
- Winter Trails
- Ski Trails
- Canoe Trail
- Seismic Line
- Trails—Winter Only

