

Cordova Community Profile:

Setting

Cordova, in the Valdez-Cordova census district, is located 117 air miles east of Anchorage, Alaska. The year round population is approximately 2,300 residents, and nearly doubles in summer as seasonal workers flood the community for commercial fishing and related support business. Cordova is located on the coast of South-Central Alaska. Cordova is flanked on three sides by the breathtakingly wild and beautiful backdrops of the Chugach and Wrangell-Saint Elias Mountain Ranges to the north, the Prince William Sound to the west, and the Copper River Delta to the east. To the south lies the Gulf of Alaska, the source of high quality, fresh Alaskan Seafood, the present cornerstone of Cordova's Economy.

Cordova defines the northernmost extent of the Coastal Rainforest and the northern limit of many plant and animal species. Average rainfall is 148 inches, and temperatures range from a record low of -20F to a record high of 86F. Average high Winter Temperature is in the 30's, average summer high temperature is in the 60's.

Recreation

Cordova is unparalleled, even in Alaska, for out-your-front-door access to adventure. Proximity to ice-free and protected salt waters of Prince William Sound offer year round opportunities for sailing, sightseeing, exploring, fishing, and hunting. Prince William Sound is noted for world class fishing for salmon, halibut, cod, rock fish, trout, and shark, as well as shellfish harvesting. Residents are allowed both sport fish and subsistence fishing rights. Activities for the extreme adventurers include skiing some of the world's most vertical snow slopes, glacier surfing, and diving in the cold waters.

The Copper River Highway, a 50-mile long highway, offers access to the pristine Copper River Delta, one of the largest wetlands complexes in the world. The delta offers fresh water fishing, hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, kayaking and canoeing on US Forest Service Trails systems. A popular winter activity is ice skating at Sheridan Glacier, which allows skating to the face of the glacier and ice caves. Other winter activities include extreme skiing in the Chugach Mountains or on Cordova's own single chair lift behind town. The extensive network of sloughs, ponds, rivers, and lakes offer water access to world class birding, waterfowling, small game hunting, trapping, and big game hunting for brown bear, black bear, mountain goats and moose.

Travelling farther east on the Copper River Highway offers access to the upper delta islands and glaciers. Four-wheeling and dirt biking the sand dunes are popular activities, as are sight-seeing trips "out the road". The Mile 36 Bridge over the Copper

River was damaged during a recent flood event; however, there are charter services that provide access across the river to the Million Dollar Bridge and the fabulous Miles and Childs Glaciers. The US Forest Service campground at the Miles Glacier offers spectacular viewing of the Glacier as it calves into the Copper River.

The Cordova State Airport offers lease lots for airplane and helicopter hangers. Nearby is the Cordova Trap and Gun Club with two trap houses, a skeet range, and three pistol and rifle ranges. The Ranges are open to the public. There is a spring trap and skeet league, and occasional turkey shoot, trap, and skeet events through the winter months.

Closer to the community of Cordova is Eyak Lake. The City of Cordova offers Skater's cabin for rent or use for canoe parties in the summer and ice skating in the winter. Ice fishing, show machining and four-wheeling are occasional winter activities on Eyak Lake. Several US Forest Service and City trails offer access to the Eyak Mountain and Heney Mountain behind Cordova for hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, and photography. Eyak Mountain also offers skiing at the Sheridan Ski Club. Boasting a rope tow and the original single chair lift from Sun Valley, the downhill course offers challenging skiing and snowboarding during winter months. For the more adventurous, Heli-skiing is available from February to April, where Cordova is frequented by world class and Olympic athletes who train in the steep Chugach Mountains. Cordova is highly featured in the Warren Miller films of the 1990s and 2000s.

Indoor activities include a community swimming pool and recreation center/gym. City league volley ball and basketball, swimming, weight lifting, aerobics, yoga, dance, and a variety of fitness activities are available year-round. Various businesses offer video gaming and rentals, ping pong, pool, darts and other indoor sports and tournaments. On Tuesday evenings, the US Forest Service and Prince William Sound Science Center provide a community education program often featuring national and international speakers and lecturers. The program is interspersed with local presentations of interest.

Dining and entertainment options are limited in winter, expanding to a wide variety of culinary and entertainment options during the bustling summer months, ranging from café to gourmet. Cordovans are noted for their hospitality and culinary skills and are frequent hosts to a variety of potlucks and feeds.

Cordova boasts a thriving arts and crafts community including world class sculptors, potters, painters, carvers and photographers working in a variety of mediums. Art classes are offered frequently and artists meet regularly at the two local art institutions, complemented by the local galleries of the artists themselves and outlets at local businesses. The Native Village of Eyak operates the Ilanka Cultural Center, a thriving native arts community and gallery, and Harbor Art is a non-profit (no commission) Art Gallery for the creation, display and sale of local art. There are several craft and quilting retailers offering excellent inventory, selection, classes, and events for the quilter's guild.

Knitting, crocheting, and quilting are popular indoor activities, particularly in winter. The quilter's guild is particularly active, and attracts nationally renowned quilt designers to teach classes annually.

A variety of festivals, many of national and international distinction, include

- The Iceworm Festival – February
- The Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival – May
- The Copper River Nouveau – June
- Fish Follies Juried Art Show – June
- Old Time Downtown 4th of July Celebration
- The 4H Music Camps – July
- The Copper River Wild! Salmon Days – July
- Prince William Sound Science Center Kids Camps – June – August
- The Fungus Festival – September
- Fish Prom – September
- Friends of the National Rifle Association Fund Raiser - September
- The Ducks Unlimited Fall Banquet – November
- Sobriety Celebration – November
- Christmas Kickoff , Tree Lighting, and Christmas Bazaar - December

Community

Cordova has a top-rated school system. Mount Eccles Elementary was renovated in 2010 including a brand new gymnasium and playground area. The school was recently awarded “Blue Ribbon School” status. The teacher to student ratio is attractive, and the school system is widely and strongly supported by the community. Cordova High School is noted for outstanding scholarship, athletics, and arts. The science club and problem solvers clubs frequently rank in national competitions. Cordova basketball, volleyball, cross country running, and wrestling programs have all secured state championships in the late 2000's. Cordova students frequently win state honors in band, symphony, choir, and dance. Graduation rates are high, and many students earn full scholarships at top universities nationwide. Cordova teachers have recently won state and national awards for innovative and successful teaching methods, as evidenced by the well-rounded students they develop.

Local law enforcement includes both a City of Cordova police force, and an office of the Alaska State Troopers. The Cordova Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Medical Service, primarily consisting of highly trained volunteers, are recognized statewide as one of the best. They work closely with police to respond to a variety of emergencies including back country rescue, winter rescue, medical emergencies, and fire.

The United States Coast Guard has both an air station and Cutter Vessel providing enforcement, rescue, and marine navigation services to the Gulf of Alaska.

Cordova has a community hospital that provides regular clinical services, as well as emergency services and a long-term care facility. The Ilanka Health Center also provides clinical services. Severe medical emergencies are referred to nearby Anchorage, available for medi-vac services.

There are several churches and affiliations in the community including Catholic, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Baptist, Episcopal, Nazarene, Salvation Army and Non-denominational. The Churches work closely together on a variety of community outreach and service projects.

Service organizations in the community include boys and girls scouting of various age groups, a Moose Lodge, a 4H program, a Pioneers of Alaska Lodge, the Cordova Chamber of Commerce, a Ducks Unlimited Chapter, and an Audubon Society chapter.

Cordova utility services are a mixture of private and non-profit. Sanitary, Water, and Refuse services are provided by the City of Cordova. Electrical Service is provided by Cordova Electric Cooperative. Communications and cable services are provided by GCI Inc, by Cordova Telephone Cooperative, by Cordova Wireless Service, by Copper Valley Wireless Service, and by DISH Network. Cordova Telephone Cooperative owns and operates a submarine fiber optic cable to Valdez that ties Cordova to the national fiber grid, affording exceptional bandwidth and reliability. All utilities are underground providing a visually appealing environment, and service continuity that consistently exceeds national standards and averages.

Transportation

Alaska Airlines has a terminal at the Mudhole Smith Cordova State Airport and provides year round daily north and south bound jet service to Anchorage and Seattle. Ravn Air, an Alaskan commuter, supplements this service, and Cordova Air provides local air charter service. The Fast Vehicle Ferry (FVF) Chenega is home ported in Cordova, and provides daily service to Whittier and/or Valdez in the summer, and 4 day a week service in winter, supplemented by the Marine Vehicle Ferry Aurora in winter.

Additional Information about Cordova is Available from the Cordova Chamber of Commerce

Cordova Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 99

Cordova, AK 99574-0099

(907) 424-7260

www.cordovachamber.com

And Historical Information is available from the Cordova Historical Society

Cordova Museum & Historical Society

www.cordovamuseum.org

\\PCS-CORDOVA\users\BarbB\Winword\Cordova Community Profile 2015.docx