TONY KNOWLES COASTAL TRAIL

Gently winding along the coast eleven miles from downtown to the chalet at Kincaid Park and Anchorage’s most popular trail. The Tony Knowles Coastal Trail. Leave the bustling city behind, and explore a local treasure that offers a long tale of natural and human history. Skirt the fault line of the ‘64 quake, roll through scented forests, look for wildlife, and take in sweeping vistas where you can spot belugas, whales and North America’s highest peak, all in a single view.

We’ve highlighted the first five miles of the trail for you – from the modern skyline of downtown to the open skies of Point Woronzof. Explore the trail on wheels at Tobie’s Bicycle Rentals 907.250.2871

ELDERBERRY PARK This quaint downtown park is named after the delicious fruiting shrub. Enjoy romantic views of Cook Inlet from the swing set and tour Anchorage’s oldest standing home, the Oscar Anderson House.

HANNAH COVE GARDEN Stop and reflect at this memorial rock garden to Alaskan children lost before their time. Enjoy the wildflowers and trees, including a few pine from Interior Alaska and a sculpted larch. Rest on boulders brought in from the Chugach Range (to the east), while viewing the immense mountains of the Alaska Range (to the north).

WOODEN BRIDGE OVER MARSH Look for tall, furry cattails, and listen for the crying call of the northern wood frog which sounds like the quacking of a duck.

WESTCHESTER LAGOON Burn some calories on the public outdoor workout stations. Spot waterfowl, such as red-necked Grebes with their large flapping necks and Canada geese, which feed on the open lans.

FISH CREEK BRIDGE This short wooden bridge crosses a popular salmon fishing stream. Downriver you’ll find deep channels where the creek has cut into the mud flats. In late summer, salmon migrate up the river to spawn.

BEACH Jump off the trail and comb the beaches of Anchorage. At low tide you can touch the demoralized silts of the mudflats (but don’t walk on them). Unlike sandy beaches of the south, pebbles and gravel left by glaciers cool the shoreline.

LYN ARY PARK Enjoy the baseball fields, tennis courts, and playground. This is also a perfect spot to view Mt. Susitna, Sleeping Lady, named after a Native Alaskan legend, which says the mountain will wake when her lover returns from battle with news of peace.

BENCHES WITH DOWNTOWN VIEW Catch your breath and soak in the city views as you prepare to enter the more forested section of the trail.

EARTHQUAKE PARK View exhibits describing how the 1964 earthquake shifted the Coosawattee mountains. Take a short side trek on the spur trail to distinguish between thick white spruce on one side of the trail and scraggly black spruce on the other.

OLD-GROWTH GROVE Undisturbed by the earthquake or development, the old-growth trees in this location are more intact than in other parts of the trail where the vegetation is more recent. Notice the heavily armored cottonwood trees and birches with enormous burls.

VOLCANIC VANTAGE Breaks in the trees along the trail reveal views of some of Alaska’s being volcanoes, including Mt. Redoubt and Mt. Spurr. The latter blanketed Anchorage in ash during an eruption in 1992.

POINT WORONZOF Look directly north for the best view of majestic Mt. McKinley, and Mt. Foraker (Denali’s Wife). This is the end of our tour, but you’re only halfway to Kincaid Park, so hop on your jogging shoes for six miles of beautiful coastal trail snaking along bluff and beach to more remote patches of Anchorage’s wilderises.