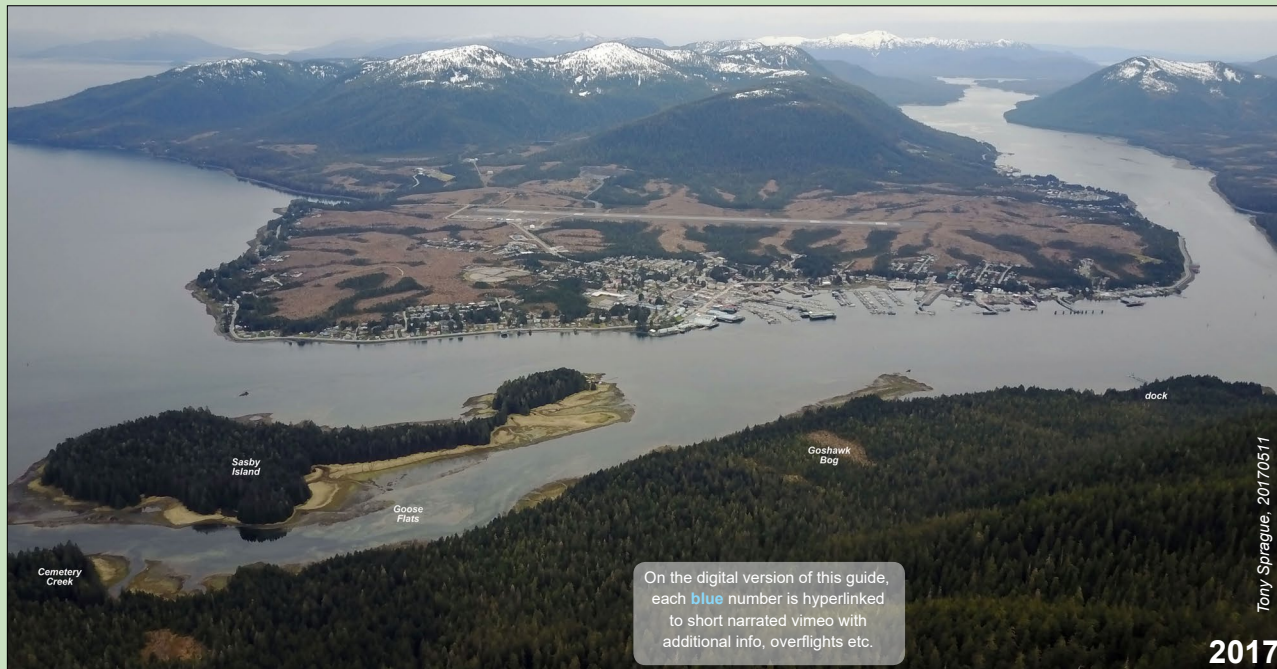


Natural & cultural history of Kupreanof trails

Guide to interpretive stations



On the digital version of this guide, each blue number is hyperlinked to short narrated vimeo with additional info, overflights etc.

2017

Tony Sprague, 20170511



1926

U.S. Navy

Above: A century ago, larger, more visible structures dotted the community of Kupreanof on far shoreline. Steam-powered vessels plied Gánti Yaakw Séedi, *steamboat pass* (Wrangell Narrows). Growing town of Petersburg in foreground. **Left:** SSE from Petersburg Mtn to airport on northern Mitkof. Although scarcely a building can be seen, the City of Kupreanof spreads across the foreground lowlands. Sasby Island, middle left; Kupreanof dock on right. **Right:** Northeast over Goose Flats to the narrow pass between Kupreanof and Sasby Islands.

5 Petersburg Creek Descending stairs to creek level, the trail forks here. Right fork leads NE 8 miles to Petersburg Lake. At most tides you can walk out onto the river flats—one of the great fish and wildlife corridors of Kupreanof Island.
6 Old West Petersburg Highway Although clearcutting for road construction began in the early 1930s, hand-logging of largest spruce goes back to the late 1800s. Roadside conifers are still small; recovery has been slow.

Stations along Kupreanof Loop Trail are numbered clockwise, beginning from the junction (Station 2):
7 Ancient scrub The upper half of the loop trail traverses gently rolling slopes, poorly drained, with small but extremely old hemlock and yellow-cedar. Some are more than half a millenium old. Where logs were sawed to clear the trail, you can examine growth rings, packed tight as pages in a book.
8 Goshawk bog Named for the pinnacle avian predator that haunts the forest fringes, this gently sloping peatland is studded so densely with ‘slump ponds’ that in places it’s hard



Clausen Museum, Petersburg

to thread between them.
9 Junction Hillslope old-growth trail converges with old West Petersburg Highway, framed by slow-growing 2nd growth.
10 Mountain Trail Lower reaches have some of Kupreanof’s largest spruces. Climbs 1.8 miles to Narrows Peak, 2,680 feet.
11 Cemetery Creek Incised through ancient marine silts, exposed by slumping vegetation. Forging the stream, climb the far bank and look for headstones from Petersburg’s original cemetery, mostly moved to Mitkof in the early 1930s.
12 Goose Flats From the old roadbed there are many places to cut down to the beach. This expansive salt marsh is one of the best places in Southeast Alaska to watch grazing deer and black bear, unafraid of humans, partly because Kupreanof prohibits discharge of firearms within city limits.
13 Logging legacies Returning along the old highway, imagine it when hand-cranked automobiles trundled along the beach, and this freshly logged coastal strip was open to the sky. The 1949 Knudson claim described it as “60 feet wide, constructed and maintained by the Bureau of Public Roads.” Many trees were left where they fell; slash tangles still make walking difficult in places.
14 Community Hall Gathering place for residents, and home of the City Council. . .

Left: NE over Yukon Fur Farm at mouth of Petersburg Creek, date unknown. **Right:** Forest framing Old West Petersburg Highway was mostly logged almost a century ago. Look for evidence such as small, same-sized trees, cut stumps, yarding cables, etc.

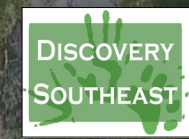


Kupreanof is located on Lindenberg Peninsula on the North Shore of Kupreanof island. In the 1920’s it was initially the industrial area for Petersburg and was known as West Petersburg. In 1975 it was incorporated as an Alaska Second Class City. It is a road-less community by ordinance and basically maintains an individual subsistence lifestyle. Wild creatures are abundant, so for your safety give the larger animals the right of way. Kupreanof is the Gateway into the Petersburg Creek Wilderness. Enjoy your visit and please remember to carry out what you carry in. For more information:

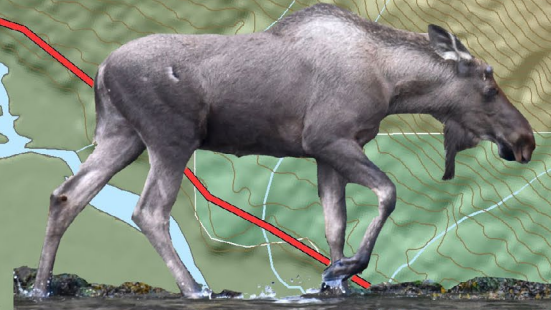
- 907-340-2400
- www.cityofkupreanof.org

This trail guide was created in 2017-18 by *Discovery Southeast* naturalist Richard Carstensen for the City of Kupreanof.

Discovery Southeast is a Juneau-based nonprofit organization promoting direct, hands-on learning from nature through natural science and outdoor education programs for youth, adults, and teachers. • 907-463-1500
 • www.discoverysoutheast.org



Richard Carstensen
 Discovery Southeast



Stations on the trails

From the Kupreanof dock there are two easy loop trails and a choice of lengthier hikes for those in good condition, with more time to spend. On the digital version of this guide, tap blue numbers from your phone or tablet to launch interpretive videos at each station. Cell coverage is generally good here.

- 1 Trailhead kiosk** — Good place to get oriented, stream a short welcome video, or download several interpretive packages from www.cityofkupreanof.org including a digital version of this brochure, or geoPDF maps to assist with navigation.
- 2 Junction** Left fork puts you on the Petersburg Creek Trail. Right fork is the Kupreanof Loop, which returns to the dock via old West Petersburg Highway.
- 3 Wolf Bog** Petersburg Creek trail climbs into a sprawling, 24-acre sphagnum dome bog dotted with stunted shore pines. From the cedar deck in the saddle, residents report close-up encounters with wolf packs on island patrol—mostly in winter when soft snow gives big paws more ‘flotation’ than pointy deer hooves.
- 4 Cedar dieback** Just before descending to the valley of Petersburg Creek, look for slender crowns of long-dead yellow-cedars. For many decades these trees have been succumbing to fine-root freezing, linked ironically to warming climate and shallower snowpack that no longer insulates the ground from severe cold in early spring.

Mileages:	
Kupreanof Loop Trail	1.97
Petersburg Cr Trail to Sta. 5	0.69
“ looping back on beach	1.63
Dock to Cemetery Creek	1.74
Dock to Narrows Peak	3.54
Dock to Petersburg Lake	8.73

