
Copper Oar Rafting, LLC
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Alaska River Rafting: Nizina Fly, Raft & Hike

Surrounded by ice-capped peaks and rocky crags, you'll be in the heart of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park when the bush plane drops you off at the toe of the Nizina Glacier. In front of you is Nizina Lake, filled with sparkling blue and white icebergs (some bigger than a house!). This is wilderness, and since less than a dozen people float this stretch of river in any given year, you'll be able to fully relax and savor the remoteness. After a day of exploring the lake side, and rowing around the lake checking out the icebergs, you'll head downriver for four more jam-packed days of hiking and rafting before yet another bush plane picks you up for the flightsee back to McCarthy.

Breathtaking scenery abounds on this trip. The enormous scale of the Wrangell, St. Elias, and Chugach mountains will challenge the comprehension of the senses. Exploration options are endless. The relaxed hiker can wander at will on moderate terrain to marvel at the beauty of the landscape. Adventurous souls can roam far and wide and push themselves to tackle the challenges that only backcountry hiking in Alaska can provide.



A classic Alaska expedition, this trip is accentuated by sparkling side rivers, rare and fascinating geology, good wildlife viewing opportunities, delicious fresh cooked meals, and idyllic riverside camp sites.

Those seeking a medium length Alaska whitewater rafting trip into a place less traveled should consider this trip!

Trip Highlights:

- TWO Bush Plane Flightsee's
- Mile High Cliffs
- Nizina Lake Icebergs
- Chitistone River Valley Hiking
- Nizina Canyon Rapids

NIZINA FLY, RAFT & HIKE: DETAILED ITINERARY

The following is a sample itinerary for this trip. Due to individual abilities and goals, as well as the demanding environment of Alaska, all of our trips are customized as they unfold. The guide will constantly make decisions based on weather, logistics and group dynamics to maximize each day's experience. There can be quite a bit of variation, but we always strive to make every trip your best ever.



The Nizina Fly, Raft & Hike trip combines the some of the greatest features Wrangell-St. Elias has to offer into five days of adventure tailored to your tastes. Though the white water rapids can be challenging, they are not fierce. Similarly, the landscape offers beautiful hikes of every degree of difficulty, and you and your guides can shape them around your abilities and preferences.

This is one of the most remote and rarely visited sections of the park: few people will ever see the sights that you and your guides

will have access to. In order to make your trip run as smoothly as possible, we can help arrange your transportation to and from McCarthy and will provide all specialty river gear.

DAY 1 – Before your journey begins, you'll need to have the best equipment possible! You'll meet your guides at the Motherlode Powerhouse in McCarthy, where they'll outfit you with rain gear, rubber boots, and waterproof drybags for your personal belongings. We will be happy to store your luggage and any additional items you decide not to bring with you at the Powerhouse for the duration of your journey. Then it's off to the airport! The talented pilots of Wrangell Mountain Air will fly you and your guides up the Nizina Valley in a bush plane. It may be smaller than the airplanes you're accustomed to, but it's worth it for the tremendous views! You'll fly over glaciers, river, and tundra, and pass the Mile-High Cliffs before landing at the edge of the Nizina Glacier. Your first night's camp will be prepared for you when you arrive, as well as a delicious lunch! In the afternoon, you and your guides will take the rafts out for a test run around the icebergs of the lake at the





terminus of the glacier, taking breaks to explore the terrain a bit further on foot.

DAY 2 – In order to prepare for your first day on the Nizina River proper, you and your guides will carefully pack the rafts and go over safety techniques and precautions for the forty mile trip. Then you'll board the rafts and paddle across the lake to where the current picks up and river begins. Floating by the cliffs you saw from the plane, you'll get up close and personal with some of the gorgeous waterfalls that pouring off the cliffs on the east side of the river. A lunch stop here will give you the chance to explore the cliff walls, filled with intricate patterns formed over millions of years. Later in the afternoon, you and your guides will set up camp for the next two nights in the shadows of the cliffs. As you sit by the fire after dinner, you'll make plans for the next day's hike!

DAY 3 – After packing in a hearty breakfast, you'll say goodbye to the rafts for a day and take off on foot

eastward up the Chitistone Valley. After cutting through the woods for a half hour, the valley opens up, revealing routes along the Chitistone river up towering valley walls and by hidden waterfalls. You can hike as far as you like up the valley - it's full of beautiful lunch spots! And you'll have quite a spread for your well-earned dinner whenever you return to your cliffside camp for the evening.

DAY 4 – It's back onto the rafts for Day Four, floating down the Nizina as it widens into dozens of crisscrossing channels across its floodplain. Navigating the channels will be a fun challenge for your team, as gravel bars, fallen trees and other thick debris take aim at the rafts. The river will take you just south of Mt. Sourdough, and present (weather permitting) a beautiful view of Mt. Blackburn to the north. Towards the end of the day, the river will narrow back into a canyon and you'll set up camp for the last night along the river.

DAY 5 – Your last day on the river will feature some incredible new views and rapids. The canyon opens up into a wider base as the Kennicott River flows into the Nizina. The greater flow will speed and surge as limestone walls rise up around you, creating another canyon larger and narrower than the last. The



water swells and spins as it's forced around the canyon turns, and you'll see the full strength of your guides in action rowing you through to the other side.

As the canyon opens up into the Chitina Valley, you'll reach the end of the Nizina River. It joins here with the Chitina, which eventually flows into the Copper and out into the Gulf of Alaska. Sadly, this journey ends along with the Nizina, but you'll have one last beautiful bush flight out over the valley on your way back to McCarthy.

If you have the opportunity to spend a little extra time in McCarthy, either before or after your trip, we highly encourage it. The McCarthy/Kennecott region provides incredible opportunities to round out your Alaska adventure with glacier hikes, ice climbing and historical tours of turn-of-the-century mining facilities. We would be happy to provide more information on any of these activities, as well as local accommodations to extend your stay.



What's Included?

When you go on the Nizina Fly, Raft & Hike Journey with us, you'll get our most experienced and talented guides along with all rafting gear (dry-bags, rain gear, life jackets, rubber boots and tents) and delicious meals - since we're travelling by raft, we can bring fantastic fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and cheeses to cook up top-of-the-line backcountry meals.