



Dnigi is Dnaina for Moose.

Location:

Moose Creek valley, about 13 miles from the end of Buffalo Mine Road. Elevation: 4150 feet. Built: 1995.

Access:

Via Eska Creek - Moose Creek benches:

(GPS coordinates given in NAD 83). Drive to Sutton and turn left onto Jonesville Road. Follow Jonesville Road past the tiny community of Eska, and, with 4-wheel drive, you should have no problem following dirt roads used mainly by bikers and 4-wheelers to gain the top of the ridge which leads to Knob Creek. You may wish to park before reaching the ridge top, because the road gets very rutted in places. Stay on the main thoroughfare. Continue along the ridge top, going east to a pass above Knob Creek. Just beyond here look for a left turn which descends north-northwest (61,45.578,-148,52.414,2081 feet). This is not a marked junction, but well-used. This trail will eventually lead across the brushy lowlands, winding its way west gradually going up, until it leads back to an overlook of Eska Creek. It ends at the very nice waterfall between Granite Peak and Eska Peak. This is approximately 5 miles from the trailhead. Leave the 4-wheeler trail to ascend a path east of the waterfall until you are above the falls. Cut left through boulders to rejoin this pleasant trail into the high country. The trail follows Eska Creek until it peeters out just before splitting north and south. You want to take the north branch up past short waterfalls to a hanging valley above 4400 feet. Follow this wide tundra-covered valley a short ways past a ridge which comes down from the west. At about 4455 feet (61,47.793,-148,55.65), go west up easy slopes to reach small tarns and a wide bench. The objective is a pass at 5108 feet, Elbow Pass (61,48.022,-148,56.749) so-named for the elbow-shaped ridge just north of it. After reaching Elbow Pass, leave behind Eska drainage and descend 200 feet on boulders. Soon ascend to or traverse to another fipassfl to the north, crossing an east-west ridge on the line between Sections 20 and 29 (61,48.088,-148,57.172,4847 feet).

Finally descend west toward Moose Creek, dropping to approximately 3200 feet in Section 19 (61,48.582,-148,59.192). The hut is still 5 miles away. Turn north and maintain elevation, dropping occasionally into short ravines, for about 3 1/2 miles. This bench approach is preferable to following Moose Creek trail, since you avoid fording rivers and the mud caused by horses. In Section 6 you can begin to ascend above the bench to more easy terrain as you head northeast above the deep ravine of the creek draining from the hut. Cross the ravine high (61,51.101,-148,57.553,4009 feet). On clear days, the hut will be visible for about a mile or so before you reach it, otherwise stick to the creek and you can't miss it (61,51.822,-148,57.068).

Via Grizzly Pass:

From the Mint Hut, cross the meadow to the north of the hut, ascend the easy ridge which leads to a lake, pass the lake and ascend scree slopes to the Mint Glacier at 5000 feet. Continue across the glacier, crevasse-free at this point, going the east-northeast to the base of Spearmint Peak. Ascend on slightly steeper ice to reach a bench which is not crevasse-free and work your way to Grizzly Pass (5750). Descend crevasse-free ice from the pass, leaving behind the Little Su drainage for Moose Creek drainage. The ice gives way to moraine and boulders within 500 feet. Stay in the glacial valley until you have lost about 1300 feet from Grizzly Pass to follow the summer route to Dnigi Hut. In winter, you will need to continue dropping, but be aware that avalanches are possible as you approach Moose Creek. The summer route is much more prone to avalanches, so do not attempt it in winter.

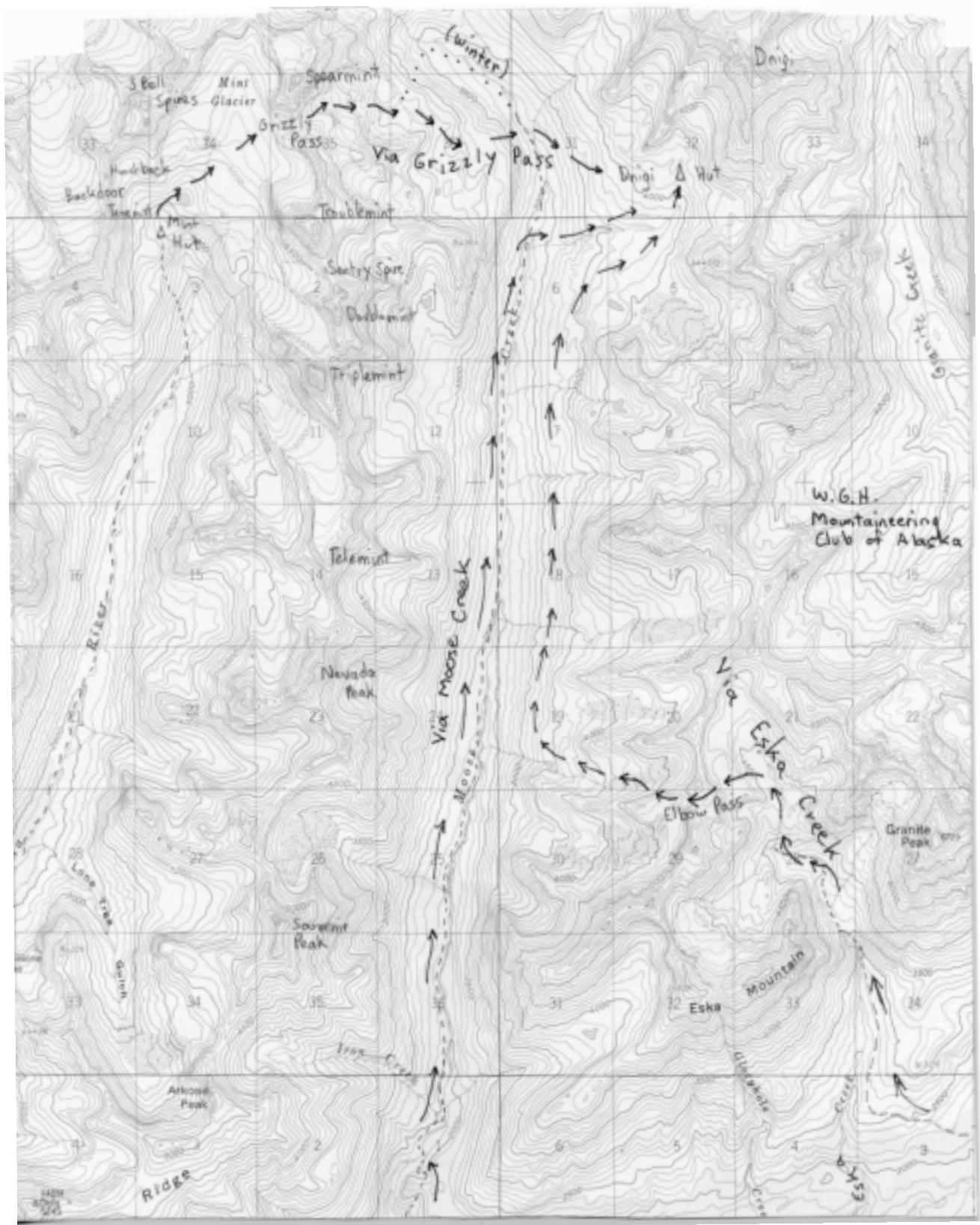
So, in summer, head south-southeast across boulders and tundra to get around the shoulder of a ridge coming down from the west off Troublemint Peak. The bench becomes very easy and pleasant, gradually reaching a hanging valley below Troublemint amid tundra and flowers. Cross a small creek and continue in Section 36 toward Moose Creek and a steep overlook of the valley below. Descend one of several scree gullies to get below the cliffs to the creek, where you will reach the Moose Creek horse trail. Without giving the horse trail a second glance, cross the creek and begin the 1100-foot ascent, heading east. A half-mile boulder field crosses your path before the hut, making the approach somewhat tedious. You may not see the hut until you are rather close, but heading east will either bring it in sight or you will reach the creek which drains from it.

Water: In summer, water is easily found in the creek east of the hut.

Outhouse: About 20 yards from the front door.

Accommodations: Sleeps 6-8, no heat, but it is insulated, 2-burner Coleman cookstove, lantern. No beds, no radio, please bring your own fuel, please carry out all your trash.

LEAVE NO FOOD. BEARS FREQUENT THE AREA.



Policy: Commercial Use of MCA Huts

Approved: MCA Board, August 2002, published in SCREE September 2002.

Background

Prior to the early 1990's there was minimal commercial operator use of the eight MCA backcountry huts. However, over the past several years, competing use between both private and commercial users has increased markedly. Overall use of the MCA huts is expected to rise for several reasons. First, MCA membership has increased from 400 members in 1995 to approximately 600 members.. Secondly, information on how to access the MCA huts has been published in at least one book ("How to Rent A Public Cabin in Southcentral Alaska, A. Romano-Lax, 1999), as well as Outside Magazine (a 2002 issue).

Much of this competition has centered around the five MCA huts whose land is leased to the MCA by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (AKDNR) through their section .810(b-d) Public and Charitable lease program. These five huts are the Scandinavia Hut and Bock's Den on the Matanuska Glacier and the Mint Glacier Hut, the Bomber Hut and the Dnigi Hut in the Talkeetna Mountains. The Scandinavia Hut and the Mint Hut receive the highest concentration of users, both private and public. Attachment A is a letter to the MCA from the AKDNR dated March 18, 2002 which **strictly prohibits** commercial use of these five huts under our .810(b-d) lease agreement. This letter also confirms it is the responsibility of the MCA to insure compliance with the terms of the lease. These huts are open to members of the public upon obtaining membership to the MCA.

The three remaining MCA huts are located in the Chugach State Park (CSP) along the Eklutna Traverse. They are Pichler's Perch, Hans' Hut and Rosie's Roost. Increasing private and commercial use is also impacting these huts. The CSP has a draft policy regarding the three Eklutna Traverse Huts in which they state, "In the absence of a property interest being held by MCA, it is the state's position that the huts are publicly owned and are to be managed as public facilities in Chugach State Park. MCA is encouraged to continue to conduct maintenance work on the huts. However, as publicly-owned structures in the park, the state is responsible and liable for these structures." The CSP does not prohibit commercial use of these three MCA huts, although commercial users must obtain a commercial use permit to operate in the CSP.

In light of growing use of the MCA Huts, the MCA has established the following policy regarding the use of the huts by commercial (for profit) companies:

Policy

1. All hut users are strongly encouraged to join the MCA to support maintenance of these structures.
2. The Hut Committee shall contact all commercial operators (guides, outfitters, etc.) known to be using the huts and inform them of hut rules, this policy, and membership applications. Specific reference will be provided to the March 18, 2002 letter from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources stating that commercial use of MCA huts is prohibited at the 5 huts for which MCA has a lease with the State (Mint/Rainery, Bomber, Dnigi, Scandinavian, and Bock's).
3. The Commercial Use of Huts Policy will be posted at all MCA huts
4. Any conflicts between MCA members and commercially operated groups shall be brought to the attention of the Hut Committee Chairperson, who will relay this to the MCA Board.
5. The Hut Committee Chairperson shall contact the commercial operator regarding all conflicts.
6. Conflicts occurring at Eklutna Traverse Huts which are not resolved between the Hut Committee Chairperson and the commercial operator shall be reported to the Chugach State Park.

Additional Policy for huts under Alaska Department of Natural Resources Jurisdiction:

1. Signs prohibiting commercial use will be posted at each of the five MCA huts located on Alaska Department of Natural Resources (AKDNR) land: Scandinavia Hut, Bock's Den, Mint (Rainery) Hut, Dnigi Hut and Bomber Hut. A copy of the sign is included in Attachment B. A copy of the March 18, 2002 AKDNR letter will also be posted at the five huts.
2. The Hut Committee Chairperson shall contact the commercial operator regarding reported commercial use of the AKDNR huts to remind them of this policy and request that they discontinue use of these huts.
3. The Hut Committee Chairperson shall contact the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to report any documented commercial use of MCA huts under lease with AKDNR-