



Family Bike Ride Recommendations

Take the family out on some of our great nearby biking paths. To make your planning easier, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

Be sure to bring these necessities along on your ride:

- Helmet
- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Map and route directions
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Tire mini-pump or CO2
- Spare tube or patch kit
- Tire levers



For a complete cycling checklist, visit [Expert Advice](#) on REI.com.

Here Are Five of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Bike Rides

Bird Creek to Girdwood Trail

Terrain: **Paved path**

Distance: **6.5 miles one-way (13 miles out-and-back); mostly flat with a few minor hills**

Why This Ride: The popular “Bird-to-Gird” trail offers views of mountains, glaciers, ocean and even beluga whales.

Ride Description: This bike path is quite possibly one of the most scenic rides in the country, promising spectacular views of mountains, glaciers, the ocean and often eagles and beluga whales. If the whole route —13 miles one way from the town of Indian to Girdwood—is too long for your crew to tackle in a day, consider a one-way ride on the 6.5-mile stretch from Bird Creek to Girdwood (or make it a 13-mile out-and-back). The path follows the Turnagain Arm next to the nationally designated Scenic Seward Highway. Most of the “Bird-to-Gird” trail (as locals call it) was built on the old highway after the roadway itself was moved closer to the ocean. Interpretive signs beside the trail tell of geologic features and wild-life along the way. Pick up the bike trail at the Bird Point rest stop just after the Bird Flats. Proceed under the tunnel to get to the bike path on the old highway and head on into Girdwood.

Driving Directions: Park at the Bird Point rest stop just after the Bird Flats. From Anchorage, take the Seward Highway about 25 miles southeast. The rest stop is at mile 96.1. There is a day-use fee of \$5 to park here. Parking at the Bird Ridge rest stop at mile 101 is free, but crossing the highway here is very dangerous.

Tips: Take time at the Bird Point rest stop to enjoy the interpretive installation that describes the eco-system around Turnagain Arm as well as the interesting beaver dam nearby. Turnagain Arm can be very windy: To be prepared, bring energy snacks, pack a windbreaker and wear synthetic clothing that wicks sweat to avoid chills. One warning: Never walk out onto the mudflats, which can trap you like quicksand.

Eklutna Lakeside Trail

Terrain: **Unpaved trail**

Distance: **Up to 14 miles roundtrip, but you can turn around at any point; 300 feet of elevation gain.**

Why This Ride: Enjoy views of the towering Chugach Mountains as you travel along this wide dirt road that follows the Eklutna Lake shoreline.

Ride Description: Though the Lakeside trail goes beyond the end of Eklutna Lake (after about the 7-mile mark), the focus of this recommended ride is on the portion that follows the shore. Start from the trailhead parking lot, cross the Twin Peaks Creek bridge and take a right onto the Lakeside Trail. This spectacularly scenic—and easy—ride on an old dirt road offers views of steep canyon walls, waterfalls, Eklutna Glacier and lots of wildlife. Look for Dall sheep, mountain goats, pikas and more as you go. There’s a little bit of elevation gain on this ride, but you may be so wrapped up in checking out all the amazing scenery that you don’t even notice it.

Driving Directions: Drive north from Anchorage on the Glenn Highway to Mile 26 and take the Eklutna Lake exit. Take New Eklutna Lake Roadpark, following signs 10 miles to Eklutna Lake. There is pay parking (\$5 for the day, \$40 for a yearly permit, available at REI) at the campground at the end of the road.

Tips: Sunday through Wednesday, ATVs are allowed on the trail, so you may want to plan accordingly. In the fall, look for currants, cranberries, and raspberries alongside the trail—yum! There are restrooms at the trailhead.

Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail

Terrain: **Paved trail**

Distance: **8 miles roundtrip; no major elevation gain, just a few moderate hills**

Why This Ride: This wide urban trail connects two bodies of water—Westchester Lagoon and Goose Lake—and offers plenty of great scenery along the way.

Ride Description: Start off at the Westchester Lagoon trailhead and ride east along Chester Creek. Marked mileposts will indicate your progress as you ride toward Goose Lake. You'll cross the heavily wooded creek multiple times (look for moose!) and even go through a few short tunnels along the way. And despite the fact that you're on a paved path riding close to downtown, the abundance of shade-providing trees that line the trail really make it seem more like a ride through a forest. Bring your swimsuit if you want to cool off at the turnaround point at Goose Lake.

Driving Directions: Driving from downtown go south on L Street and turn right onto W 15th Avenue. Follow W 15th Avenue to Westchester Lagoon. There are two free parking lots on the south side of W 15th Avenue where it ends at Margaret Eagan Sullivan Park, as well as some parking available on the street. Keep in mind that nice weekends can be busy.

Tips: Westchester Lagoon is a great place to watch some of the resident waterfowl, including Canada geese and red-necked grebes. There are restrooms at the end of W 15th Avenue.

Tony Knowles Coastal Trail

Terrain: **Paved**

Distance: **22 miles roundtrip, but you can access it at numerous points and turn around whenever you'd like; mostly flat until a lengthy climb to the chalet at Kincaid Park**

Why This Ride: One of the few urban trails—from downtown Anchorage to Kincaid Park—where you may spot beluga whales and moose in the same trip.

Ride Description: This amazing paved trail is perfect for families and riders of all ages. Hop on the path at W. 2nd Avenue, near the train depot and follow it as it hugs the shoreline of Cook Inlet on its way to Kincaid Park. Along the way you'll pass several interesting sights, including the Oscar Anderson House Museum (and a small park here with swings for the little ones). At Earthquake Park there are nice views of downtown Anchorage and Knik Arm. The park also includes interpretive displays of the devastating 1964 Good Friday earthquake. On clear days, the view southwest includes Redoubt and Iliamna volcanoes. Fire Island is the landmass you see a couple miles offshore to the south. From Point Woronzof—a good place to spot beluga whales in Cook Inlet—to the Kincaid Chalet (if you decide to go this far) the trail is heavily wooded and moose often hang out along—or on—the trail. If they're on the trail, give them some space, especially if there is a calf with its mother.

Driving Directions: A good place to start your ride is on W. 2nd Avenue, in downtown Anchorage, just past Christiensen Drive. All access points to the trail have free parking.

Tips: At Point Woronzof, on clear days the view north includes Mount McKinley and occasionally beluga whales in Cook Inlet. There are restrooms at Westchester Lagoon and Kincaid Park.



REI's PEAK program uses a fun presentation filled with hands-on activities and games to teach kids ages 6 through 12 about taking care of the outdoors.

Ask an REI team member about scheduling a free PEAK presentation for your classroom or youth group, or visit www.rei.com/PEAK for more information.



First Saturday in June The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day, sponsored by REI, is a nationwide celebration of trails. Celebrate with your family by taking a hike, or volunteering for a trail clean-up project. Ask an REI team member about how to get involved, or visit www.rei.com for more information.