



AAC Publications

Katmai National Park Traverse

Alaska, Aleutian Range

Luc Mehl and Josh Mumm completed a 200-mile, 15-day ski traverse through Katmai National Park, at the northeast end of the Alaska Peninsula, at the end of winter. On March 20, the two flew from Anchorage to Kamishak Bay in the northeast corner of the park. Their trip ended in the village of King Salmon on the west side.

Along the way, they climbed several volcanoes, including Mt. Douglas (ca 7,050'), where they used litmus paper to test the crater lake—it showed a pH of 1, the equivalent of sulfuric acid. They then climbed Fourpeaked Mountain (6,903'), which erupted in 2006, and skied down to the coast at Swikshak Bay. Turning inland, they continued southwest, weaving among numerous volcanoes. After dropping to the Katmai River, they followed a traditional native trade route over Katmai Pass, dropped into the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, sat out a blizzard in a USGS hut, and continued out flatter terrain toward King Salmon. Crossing Naknek Lake, they were able to use their “skickets”—snow pickets equipped with Nordic bindings to double as ice skates. Thanks to a strong tailwind and generally good conditions, they finished the traverse on April 4—a week earlier than planned. A first-person report with many photos can be found [here](#).

– Dougald MacDonald, with information from Luc Mehl

Katmai National Park Traverse from Luc Mehl on [Vimeo](#).

Images

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