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Done Wrong

SPECIAL REPORT

What's
Killing
the Great
Cyclists of
Europe?



HOT FITNESS TRENDS // True Tales of the Expedition King

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park

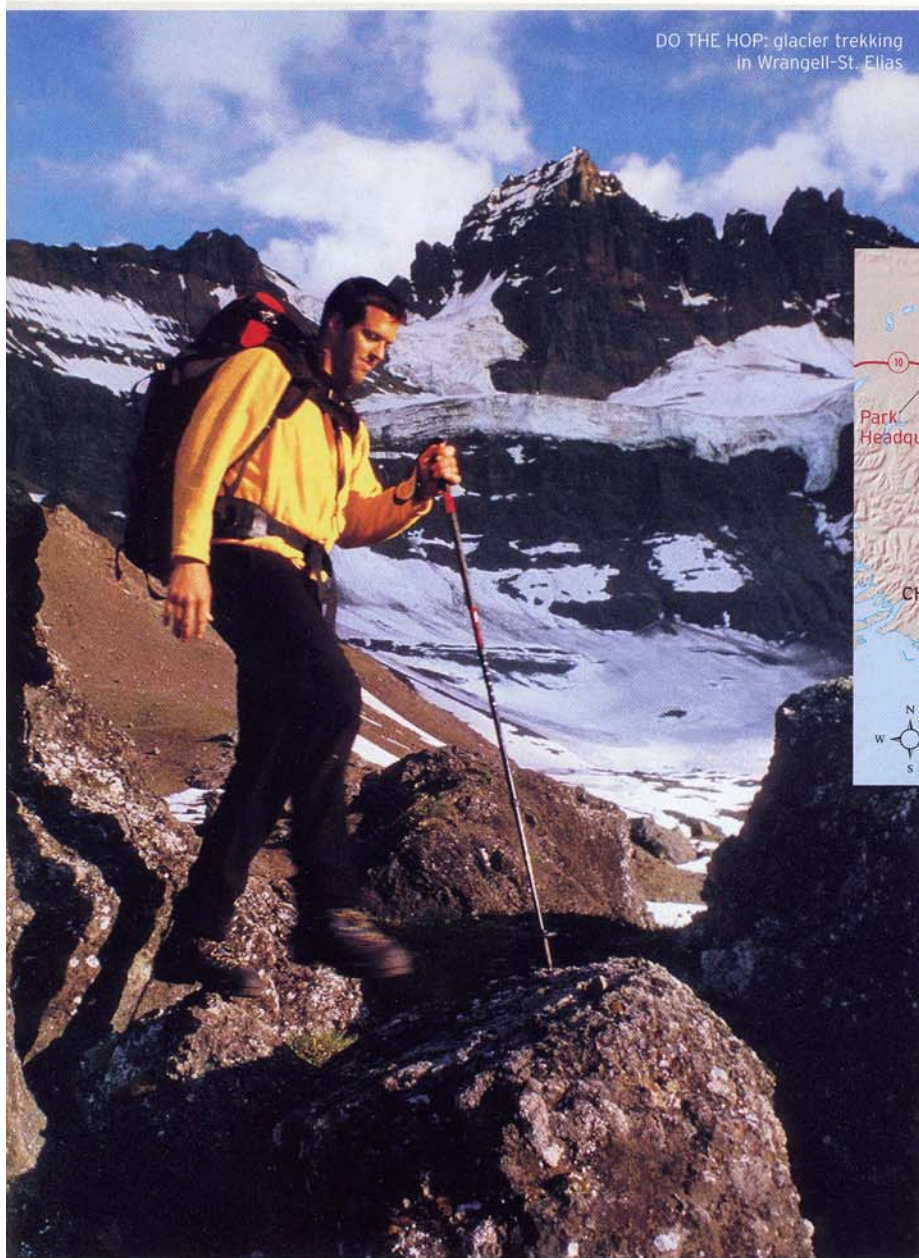
Trek Alaska's Monster Backcountry

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PLANNING AN ALASKA WILDERNESS trip can be daunting—especially if you're heading into the vast glacier- and grizzly-filled Wrangell-St. Elias. But this park is surprisingly user-friendly, compared with some parts of big, bad Alaska. It's home to St. Elias Alpine Guides, one of the most experienced outfitters in the state, and it's relatively accessible via a 60-mile gravel road—no bush plane required. At road's end you'll find the town of McCarthy—and, four miles beyond that, Kennicott, your stepping-off point for a four-day expedition to Wrangell's Donoho Peak.

To get started, you'll hoist your pack and hike toward Donoho and the Root Glacier. St. Elias Alpine Guides' trips are small (no more than six people), and they're tailored to fit your group's skill level, with instruction available on everything from ice climbing to alpine mountaineering. Because Wrangell is one of the most glaciated parks in the U.S., the Donoho trek is the perfect setting for learning the rudiments of glacier exploration. Before breaking camp at the base of the Root, your guide will

DO THE HOP: glacier trekking
in Wrangell-St. Elias



Kick Back in McCARTHY

Until 1997 you could reach the remote Alaskan village of McCarthy only by using a hand tram to cross the Kennicott River. Then some meddler came along and put in a footbridge; now any old yahoo can walk straight into town. Get your fresh Copper River red salmon at the McCarthy Lodge (907-554-4402, www.mccarthy lodge.com), which conveniently also houses the area's only bar, the New Golden Saloon. The same outfit runs Ma Johnson's Hotel, a restored boardinghouse with rooms for \$159 a night.

ONE FINE DAY: Take a tour of the abandoned Kennecott Mine mill buildings; then float the Class I-III Kennicott and Nizina rivers in the shadow of the Wrangell and Chugach ranges. Contact Copper Oar Outfitters (800-523-4453, www.copperoar.com).

— J. D.

give you pointers on crampon use and safe route-finding. Then you'll start the traverse, planting your feet on an undulating sea of ice. Once you arrive at the west side of the glacier, you'll set up camp and mull your many options. You could make the nontechnical scramble up 6,698-foot Donoho for views of



16,390-foot Mount Blackburn and 18,008-foot Mount St. Elias, the second-tallest peak in the U.S. You could rope up and go ice climbing on the Kennicott or Root glaciers, or hike across the tundra to an alpine lake. Or you could just do it all.

GETTING THERE: St. Elias Alpine Guides' four-day Donoho Peak Trek is \$699 per person, assuming a group of six. A variety of other options are also available, including custom expeditions and first ascents (888-933-5427, www.steliasguides.com).

WHEN TO GO: July through September.