

# Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, AK



## A remote Alaskan treasure brought back to life

Kennecott has had many incarnations—massive copper mining operation, ghost town and now National Historic Landmark. With many of the original buildings stabilized or restored by the National Park Service (NPS) and open for public exploration, APA was brought in to meet a challenge: design an interpretive experience that does justice to the site's stories without impacting its historic character.

Our firm involved the passionate and knowledgeable local community at every stage of design, from concept to final touches. The design approach centered on two principles: *use a light touch and help visitors distinguish between old and new*. As visitors wander the 1-mile long site, they explore the historic buildings to discover vignette structures dense with stories, photographs and artifacts, leaving the rest of the building to be populated by their imaginations. Since few visitors access the mines in the surrounding mountains, a tactile model brings the mines to them. All exhibits are free-standing so as not to interfere with the historic fabric of the buildings. Exhibits opened June 2018.

