Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, AK

An Alaskan Treasure

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

An impassioned and knowledgeable local community collaborated on a design approach that centered on two principles—use a light touch and distinguish between old and new. Since few visitors access the mines in the surrounding mountains, a tactile model brings the mines to them. As visitors wander the 1-mile long site, they explore historic buildings to discover vignettes with stories, photographs and artifacts, leaving the rest of the buildings to be populated by their imaginations.