

# Request for Proposal (RFP) "Founders Memorial"

March 17, 2021

City of Valdez Parks & Recreation  
Public Art Committee



# THE CALL FOR ARTISTS

The City of Valdez, Office of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, invites Artists and Artist Teams to submit their qualifications for a City of Valdez Founders Memorial sculpture project at or near the intersection of Hazelet Avenue and Faldago Drive. The project will welcome visitors to the NEW Hazelet-Meals Wilderness Trail on Meals Hill.

We are seeking an artist or artist team to design, fabricate, and install this memorial artwork as a tribute to its founders **George Cheever Hazelet and Andrew Jackson Meals**, an entrance gateway to the newly formed conservation easement identified as Meals Hill. The chosen artist will have a voice at the table to help shape the aesthetics of the entrance with community engagement as a central component of the transformation process. The sculpture should ultimately have some relationship to the history of these two founders. The selected artist or artist group will be asked to consider how their design is specific to the location and celebrates the lives of the founders and the spirit of a true Alaskan partnership. Artists with experience in creating site-specific sculpture and wishing to engage and work with communities as a component of their practice are encouraged to apply.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Valdez Parks & Recreation Public Art Committee (VPRPAC) seeks to commission a permanent public artwork to be installed at the entrance to Meals Hill at Hazelet Avenue, Valdez, Alaska to memorialize and honor the founders of the City of Valdez, **George Cheever Hazelet and Andrew Jackson Meals**.



# ABOUT VALDEZ ALASKA

## Demographics

The City of Valdez, population 4,353, is located in South Central Alaska on the northeast tip of Prince William Sound. On the road system, Valdez is 305 road miles east of Anchorage, and 364 road miles south of Fairbanks. It lies at approximately 61.130830° North Latitude and -146.34833° West Longitude. The city encompasses 222.0 square miles of land and 55.1 square miles of water.

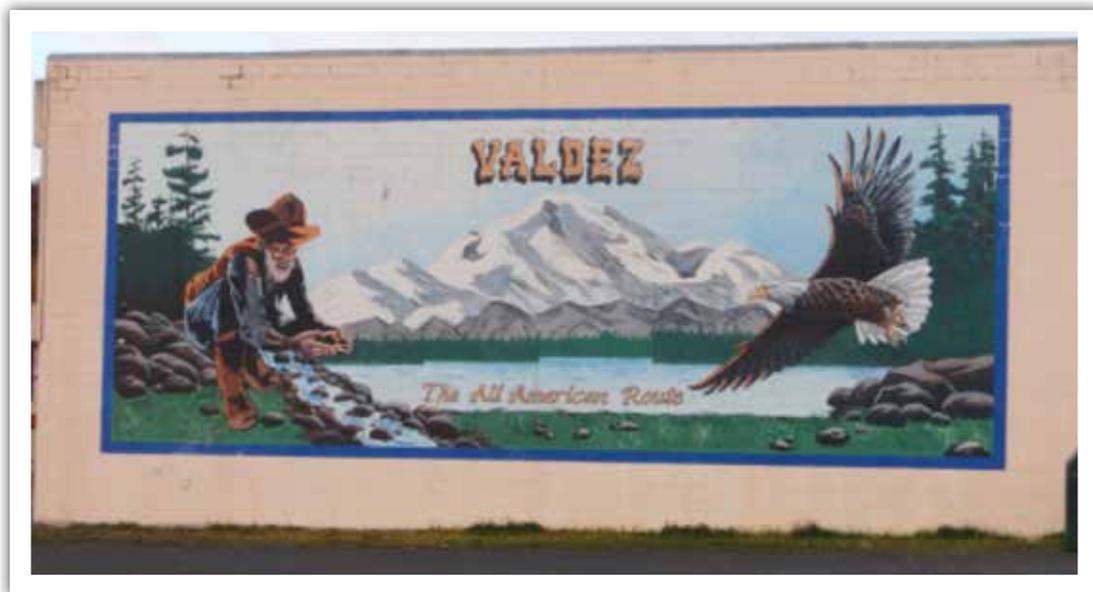
## Climate & Economy

The climate is relatively mild, which is attributed to the marine currents in and weather generated by the Pacific Ocean. Its distinguishing characteristics are the incomparable rugged beauty of its natural mountain-ringed setting and its extremely high average annual snowfall

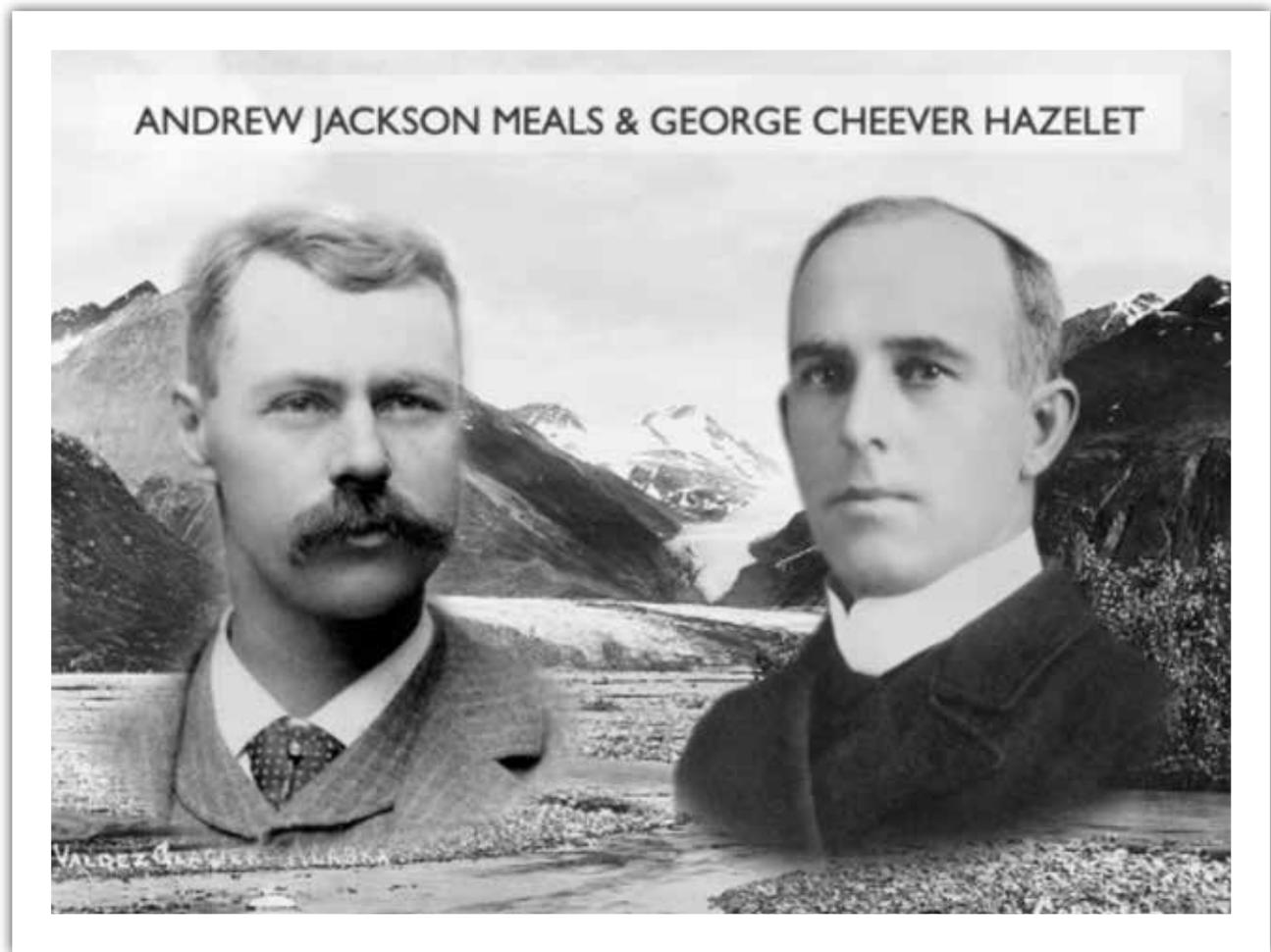
of 360 inches (30 feet) the most of any community at sea level in North America. Valdez's economy is based on oil, tourism, commercial fishing, shipping/transportation and city, and state government. Among small communities Valdez is unique in the vast amenities it offers for a town of its size. Valdez offers a quality of life rivaled by few. It has the comfort of a small town, with many of the advantages of a larger community.

## Early History

The city was founded just before the turn of the 20th century as a gateway to the All-American Route to interior gold and copper fields. Incorporated since 1901, the community's first hundred years have been marked by several significant events the most notable of which are the 1964 Alaska Earthquake, being chosen as the terminus of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and the 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. [Read More Valdez History](#)



# ABOUT THE FOUNDERS ~ THE PARTNERS



George Cheever Hazelet was born on October 11, 1861, at Senecaville, Guernsey County, Ohio. He was educated for the teaching profession, and in the summer of 1897 when news of the Klondyke gold discovery electrified the world, he was principal of the high school in the rural town of O'Neill in north-central Nebraska. He married about ten years previously Harriet Potter, and at this time the couple had two sons, Calvin aged 9, and Craig, aged 7.

Hazelet in his Journal reveals that he and eventually long-time partner Andrew Jackson ("Jack") Meals as men of indomitable energy with consuming ambition to rise in the world above their station at the time. It is also clearly evident from Hazelet's writings that the principal motivation was their desire to provide more abundantly for their families to whom they were devoted. As with tens of thousands of others at the time, the exciting news of rich gold strikes in Alaska proved a compelling force to justify what they knew would be a long and arduous separation from family and friends.

Andrew Jackson Meals was a man 9 years the senior of George Hazelet, born November 18, 1852. He was a Nebraska bull whacker/farmer/rancher/stagecoach driver/wagon train scout/bronco rider—a man with no formal education, although endowed with many admirable characteristics and talents, one most noticeably curious for a man of his background being a natural genius for mathematics. In Nebraska, both men held the office of Treasurer for Holt County. In later years during his residence in Valdez Meals became a successful and highly respected land surveyor and construction engineer.

Together George Cheever Hazelet and Andrew Jackson Jack Meals left Omaha, Nebraska February 17, 1898, by rail on an adventure and journey that most men and women today only dream about. George Hazelet and Jack Meals, neighbors in Atkinson (O'Neill County) Nebraska, traveled to Alaska to try their hands at prospecting.

They traveled three weeks, first by railroad from Nebraska to Seattle and then by steamship (S.S. Excelsior) to Valdez — arriving in Valdez on March 8, 1898. At that time, Valdez, located at the East end of Prince William Sound, was a collection of 200 tents, one frame house, and no wharf. With the other passengers, Meals and Hazelet off-loaded their supplies onto the ice and began the process of making several trips back and forth — moving their camp gradually upward over Valdez Glacier and toward the Interior into a vast unknown—looking for gold. For the next several decades, Meals and Hazelet explored the Copper, Chistochina, and other River Valleys established the Chesna Mining and Improvement Company (backed by investors in Nebraska), worked several mining claims, were present and influential at 1898 meetings to name and plat the City of Valdez, built roads and dams, established the Port Valdez Investment Co., and served in various public offices as Valdez and the surrounding area evolved. In 1900, Hazelet and Meals bought a train carload of horses, sawmill, complete hydraulic mining apparatus, and cattle to aid their efforts. Among their many achievements George Hazelet eventually became the first mayor of Cordova, Alaska. Jack Meals served as Deputy United States Marshall.

In 1901, they homesteaded 700+ acres on the Northside of the Sound—the site of Valdez today. Following the March 27, 1964 (Good Friday) earthquake and subsequent Tsunami that destroyed “Old” Valdez, descendants of these two Valdez pioneers donated 110 acres of their land to relocate Valdez’s “New Town.” A.J. Meals’ son, Owen Meals, and G.C. Hazelet’s sons, Craig and Calvin Hazelet, were key participants in the recovery of Valdez during that time, actively representing the nearly 100 descendants of the two men then owning the land. The Port Valdez Company, Inc. (PVC) was incorporated on May 1, 1964, to facilitate this transfer of land and continues to work today toward the growth and health of the City of Valdez. The two main streets in Valdez are named after these two pioneer families—Hazelet and Meals.

In 1903, Hazelet and Meals moved their families to Valdez. Their children attended school and later started businesses in the area. Others went on to careers outside of Valdez, but always returned to their “home” and legacy—Valdez, Alaska. [Read more here.](#)





**EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL  
TRUSTEE COUNCIL**



**THE PORT VALDEZ COMPANY, INC.**  
VALDEZ, ALASKA

# MEALS HILL: THE PORT VALDEZ COMPANY, CITY OF VALDEZ, GREAT LAND TRUST AND EVOS

In October 2019, The Port Valdez Company, Inc. (PVC) sold 184 acres of land, known as “Meals Hill,” to the City of Valdez to become a conservation easement. The land will remain undeveloped and used as a protected wildlife habitat and public recreation area. The Great Land Trust facilitated the purchase of the property using Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council funds. The Port Valdez Company worked with the Great Land Trust, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program, the State of Alaska, and the City of Valdez to complete the transfer of the land. The City of Valdez will manage the new recreation area. [Press Release](#)

Meals Hill rises 351 feet out of Valdez Bay in the Prince William Sound, providing unparalleled views of the surrounding Chugach Mountains and the shipping terminal for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. It contains an undisturbed coastal rain forest, home to bald eagles and numerous other wildlife.

The new Meals Hill Recreation Area is within walking distance of downtown Valdez, the Valdez Ferry Terminal and cruise ship dock, Civic Center Overlook Trail, and the walkway to the Valdez Small Boat Harbor. Visitors will be able to explore a mile of rocky coastline and wetlands in the low-lying areas. There is also a gravel road that leads to the summit of the property and provides access for hiking, mountain biking, skiing, bird and wildlife viewing, and berry picking.

In 1989, the Exxon Valdez oil tanker spilled 10.8 million US gallons of crude oil in Prince William Sound, Alaska, the second largest spill in US history. The devastation affected 1,300 miles of coastline which led to the creation of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council to oversee the restoration of the injured ecosystem. The Meals Hill property was designated a high priority for conservation efforts and will permanently provide a protected habitat for impacted species, while also supporting tourism and recreation.

“Setting aside this property as a conservation and recreation area is a wonderful epitaph for these two visionary founders of Valdez,” said John Clark, President of The Port Valdez Co., Inc. and a great-grandson of Hazelet. Mr. Clark currently resides in Louisville, KY. “Meals and Hazelet would be proud to know that their legacy lives on in the conservation easement, to be enjoyed by the community of Valdez and those curious enough to visit.”

## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LEGACY:

[Hazelet’s Journal](#)

[Icebound Empire: Industry and Politics on the Last Frontier 1898-1938](#)

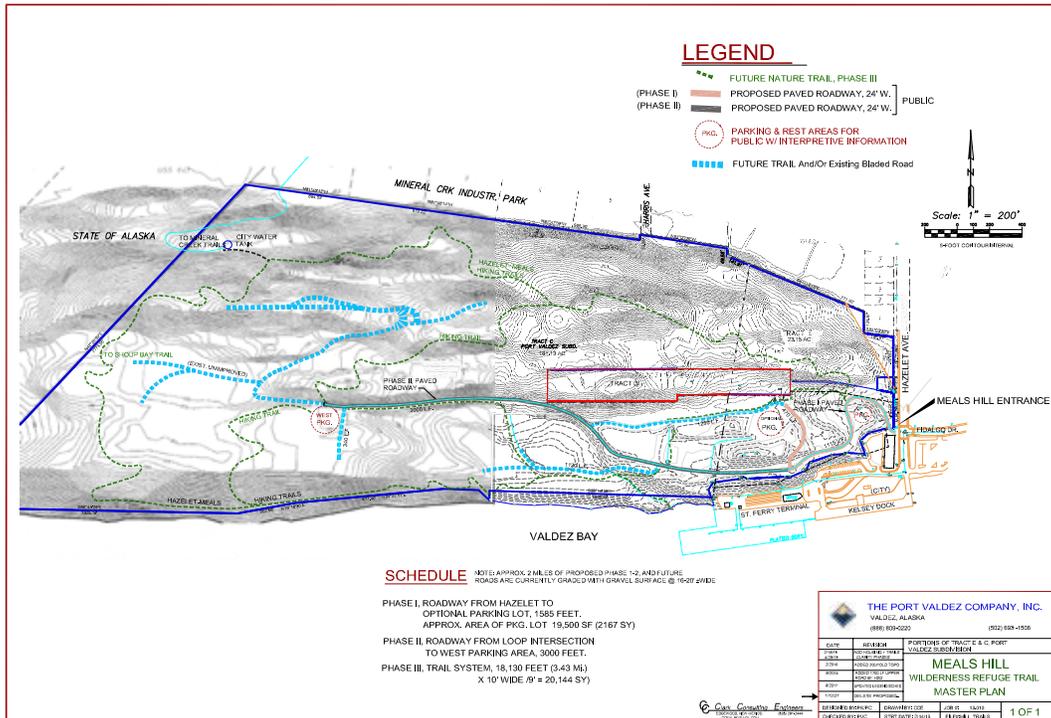
[Meals Hill Video](#)

# LOCATION

## Hazelet Ave and Fidalgo Drive Across from Ruth's Pond



## Kelsey Dock at foot of Meals Hill



## Meals Hill Exhibit A: Hazelet - Meals Wilderness Trail Master Plan

Hazelet & Fidalgo



**Meals Hill Entrance:**  
Hazelet Avenue and Fidalgo Drive





**Pipeline Terminal from Meals Hill**



ECI  
ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS INC.

AERIAL VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST  
Kelsey Dock Interpretive Center  
City Council Design Review: 11.21.2017

**Kelsey Dock Plans**

# **BUDGET: \$200,000 MATCHING GRANT**

The budget includes all artist fees, fabrication, shipping/transportation, and installation fees.

## **The Port Valdez Company commitment to the Community of Valdez as written into the Meals Hill sales agreement to the City of Valdez:**

The Port Valdez Company has set aside in escrow \$100,000 toward a goal of \$200,000 in a matching fund to fund a design competition and production of an appropriate memorial that will recognize the two found founders of the City of Valdez, George Cheever Hazelet and Andrew Jackson Meals. This partnership was instrumental in the founding of Valdez, Alaska, and Cordova, Alaska during the Great Alaska Gold Rush of 1898 and the early 20th Century.

It is the desire of The Port Valdez Company, Inc., not only to recognize this partnership but the spirit of the many Alaska partnerships that ushered the Alaska Territory into statehood and these United States of America. This was a commitment made by The Port Valdez Company to the City of Valdez, Great Land Trust, Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Foundation (EVOS), and the State of Alaska during the sale of their Meals' Hill property to the Community of Valdez and their desire to protect this property under a land conservation easement.

In support of the enhancements contemplated by the City of Valdez on "Meals Hill," The Port Valdez Company, Inc. has agreed to fund and manage a design competition to enhance the Hazelet Avenue entrance to the Meals Hill Project and the named "Hazelet-Meals Wilderness Trails."

A committee of local and statewide leadership, the "Founders Memorial Design Committee" shall be formed and chaired by The Port Valdez Company with guidance by Nick Farline, Director of City of Valdez Parks & Recreation.

## **Eligibility**

Artists 18 years and older residing in the United States or throughout the world. Finalists will have a demonstrated record of public commissions of similar scale and budget to this project. The project must be completed by September 30, 2022.

## **Selection Process and Honorarium:**

Three finalists will be selected to develop site-specific proposals and present them to the committee. Each finalist will receive a \$2,500 honorarium to develop a proposal. Finalists will receive additional information about the entrance area to Meals Hill and existing structural footing upon notification.

The selected artwork must be made of durable, low-maintenance materials able to withstand exposure to the Alaska climate, and safe for public display. The artist is responsible for the delivery, insurance protection to ensure the complete installation of the selected work.

## Submission Requirements:

Combine the following into a single PDF:

- Letter of interest - Describe your approach to the project, two-page maximum
- Current resume in PDF format
- 10 images of prior completed projects similar in scope; images no larger than 5MB in size, JPEG, or PDF. No videos accepted.
- Annotated image list - Include brief project description, dimensions, budget, materials, and location.
- Contact information - email, phone, website, mailing, etc.
- Submit an application to John Clark at [john@portvaldezco.com](mailto:john@portvaldezco.com) with cc: to Nicholas Farline at [nfarline@valdezak.gov](mailto:nfarline@valdezak.gov)
- Please include the following in the email subject line: "Artist Name (Jane Doe) – (VPRPAC) – "Founders Memorial"

## Project Timeline:

Application due: May 17, 2021

Notification of Finalists: June 21, 2021

Finalist Site Visits & Concept Presentations: July and August 2021

Project Awarded: August 2021

Installation: September 2022

## Insurance Requirements:

Finalists will be required to demonstrate the ability to meet insurance requirements. Questions regarding insurance requirements can be directed to [City of Valdez]

## Contact:

General questions can be directed to the Design Committee at John H. Clark, President of The Port Valdez Company at [john@portvaldezco.com](mailto:john@portvaldezco.com) or Nicholas Farline, Director of City of Valdez, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services at [nfarline@valdezak.gov](mailto:nfarline@valdezak.gov)

## Other websites of interest:

[The Port Valdez Company](#)

[City of Valdez](#)

[Valdez Museum & Historical Archives](#)



# EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART IN VALDEZ:



**Pipeline Workforce Memorial - Malcolm Alexander**



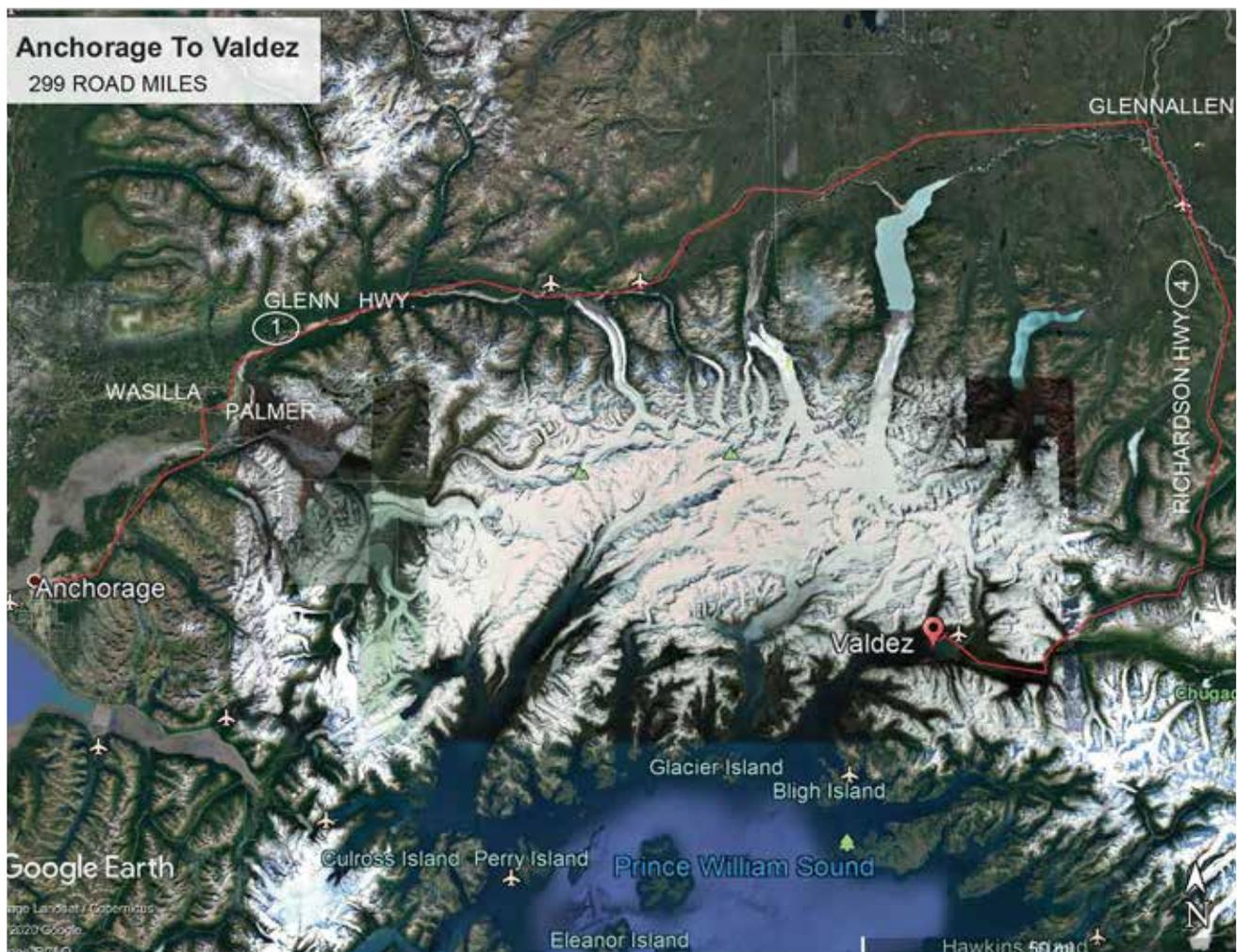
**The bear - Jerry Mehlberg**



**Trail of The Whispering Giants - Peter Troth**

## Anchorage To Valdez

299 ROAD MILES



## Airport Facilities

### Valdez Pioneer Field

The Valdez airport, which was renamed Valdez Pioneer Field on May 1, 2000 in honor of Alaska's pioneer aviators, is served daily by a well-established commuter airline.

**Daily service to Valdez is provided by:** Ravn Aviation (an Alaska Airlines partner); [ravnalaska.com/](http://ravnalaska.com/) (907) 835-2636 or 1-800-866-8394

With a runway 6,500 ft. long, the airport is capable of serving large airplanes. Fuel is only available by prior arrangement with Ravn Aviation (907) 835-2595.