

# Refuge Visitor Center Turns 1

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Photo by Kevin G. Smith Photography

Jay Barrett/KMXT

It was a year ago last week that the new Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center opened its doors to the public. On Friday, the staff is celebrating its first anniversary with cake and everyone's invited. The anniversary reception will start at 11 a.m. on Friday.

Tina Shaw is the manager of the visitor center. She said its first year of operation was a rousing success.

-- (Wildlife 1 20 sec "It is a jumping place ... the community of Kodiak.")

In June alone, 3,000 visitors came through the doors of the center, which is nearly eight times the number the old center near the Buskin River welcomed in the same month last year.

The center's location, a block from the Alutiiq Museum and the Russian Orthodox Church, and across the street from the Baranov Museum and ferry terminal, lends to its popularity.

-- (Wildlife 2 16 sec "It's excellent placement ... that need to be protected.")

Shaw says  
it's also more convenient for students to come in on class trips.

-- (Wildlife 3 13 sec "School groups come ... check out this bear!")

The total cost of the center was 8-point-2 million dollars. It features interactive animal displays, including a suspended whale skeleton, and a bear den where visitors can use a stethoscope to listen to the sound of a hibernating bears' heart.

Shaw says  
there's enough intricacy in the displays for visitors to always find something new, OR, she says, folks can just bring their lunch and relax there.

-- (Wildlife 4 15 sec "It's  
just a vibrant place ... quiet reflection, too.")