



Saturday, January 3, 2026

## Commercial Recreational Land Use Permit Application

As required by Sitka General Code 14.10 No person may conduct commercial recreational activities on city and borough of Sitka lands subject to this title except as authorized by a permit issued by the municipal staff as designated by the administrator.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

**Business Name** Tidecrest Adventures, LLC

**Primary Contact** Olga Thomas

**Address** [REDACTED]  
Sitka, Alaska, 99835

**Phone Number** [REDACTED]

**Email** [REDACTED]

### DETAILS OF TOUR OR GUIDED ACTIVITY

**Season Start Date** Friday, May 1, 2026

**Season End Date** Wednesday, September 30, 2026

**Commercial Allocations:** For each area, the commercial carrying capacity is indicated in the far left column next to the area name, denoted as (maximum client group size/maximum groups per week). For each area at which you would like to request commercial recreational use, check the "Area of use" box. Additionally, provide your maximum proposed group size (clients only, not including guides) for each area; may not exceed commercial carrying capacity maximum group size. For groups per week, provide your estimated number of groups per week based on a season average that will use each area. Enter an estimated total client number using each area in the far right column.

	Area of use	Group Size	Groups per week	Total Clients
Cross Trail North (12/26)				
Cross Trail South (8/23)				
Gavan Hill Access (7/19)	✓	6	1	20
Indian River (7/23)	✓	6	1	10
Thimbleberry/Heart Lake (14/24)	✓	6	1	20

	Area of use	Group Size	Groups per week	Total Clients
Herring Cove/Beaver Lake (7/18)	✓	6	1	50
Herring Cove Beach (6/24)				
Blue Lake Road (12/26)				
Blue Lake (6/20)				
Green Lake Road (8/26)				
Green Lake (6/20)				
Swan Lake (6/16)				
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach") (6/18)				
Sitka Sound Islands (6/18)				
Baranof Warm Springs (6/18)				
Goddard Hot Springs (6/14)				
Other (please list area below)				

**OTHER - Areas of proposed use not listed above. Please list each area, group size, maximum groups per week and total client estimates.**

N/A

**Details of tour or guided activity: Fully describe tour or activity in each area, including guided activity, outfitting resources provided, typical areas of use, etc.**

The operation provides private, small-group guided hiking tours on established trails within the City and Borough of Sitka. Tours run from May through September, ranging in duration from 2 to 6 hours. All tours are private, with no merging of unrelated parties, and accommodate up to six participants per group. Each tour is led by a single guide.

The trails utilized include Gavan Hill Access, Indian River Trail, Thimbleberry/Heart Lake Trail, and Herring Cove/Beaver Lake Trail. These trails traverse forested areas, rocky ridges, and lakeside terrain. The operator conducts hikes exclusively on established trails to minimize environmental impact and to ensure visitor safety. Trail selection is based on seasonal conditions and trail accessibility.

Transportation to and from trailheads is provided by the operator using a dedicated vehicle. Prior to each tour, participants are briefed on trail conditions, expected hiking duration, and Leave No Trace principles. During the hike, the guide provides orientation on the trail, interprets natural features as appropriate, and maintains a pace suitable for the group. Upon completion, a brief debrief is conducted.

The operator provides equipment and resources as necessary for participant comfort and safety, including hiking poles, drinking water, snacks, sunscreen, insect repellent, and rain ponchos. Participants are informed in advance regarding clothing and footwear requirements. All tours adhere to Leave No Trace principles, with no off-trail travel or vegetation/wildlife disturbance.

More route-specific information below:

Thimbleberry Lake/Heart Lake Trail:

- Length: 3.7 miles for a loop (0.3 miles from the parking to the Heart Lake Trailhead, 1.6 miles to the Thimbleberry Lake Trailhead, and 1.8 miles to do a loop back along Sawmill Creek Rd)

- Access: From the Heart Lake Trailhead; parking across from Gary Paxton Industrial Park.
- Estimated Duration: 2 hours for the full loop
- Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. There is a relatively steep hillside at the beginning of the trail, the rest is minimal elevation gain/loss.
- Terrain: Hemlock-spruce forest, switchbacks, bridges, two lakes with a small dock, a small stream crossing and a steep rocky section of the trail.
- Notes: Bears may be present.

#### Herring Cove/Beaver Lake:

- Length: 3.6 miles loop from Herring Cove around Beaver Lake and back
- Access: Herring Cove Trailhead; parking at the trailhead parking lot.
- Estimated Duration: 2-3 hours
- Difficulty: Moderate. Steep grade at the beginning/end of the trail (approximately ¼ mile). The middle section around the lake is mostly level with some stepping stones and log steps; some boardwalk.
- Terrain: The trail goes along muskegs, marshes, and stunted forests, old growth trees, a series of waterfalls and two lakes. Several bridges.
- Notes: Bears may be present in the first section of the trail. Boardwalk may be slippery when wet.

#### Indian River:

- Length: 9 miles round trip
- Access: Indian River Trailhead parking lot and back
- Estimated Duration: 5-6 hours for a round trip
- Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. Climbs gradually. Approximate 1000 ft elevation gain. Some muddy spots. The last few hundred feet are less of a defined trail, but clear.
- Terrain: The trail goes through a rainforest and follows a salmon stream.
- Notes: High bear activity is expected during spawning season. This trail will only be used in May and June.

#### Gavan Hill:

- Length: 5.2 miles round trip (Baranof Street trailhead to Harbor Mountain shelter and back)
- Access: Baranof Street trailhead parking lot and back
- Estimated Duration: 6 hours
- Difficulty: Moderate to Difficult. Steep climbs with some areas where footing is difficult. There are extensive stairs, steps, roots, rocks, and log steps
- Terrain: The trail is well marked. Multiple staircases, switchbacks, and log steps with a steep climb
- Notes: Boardwalk sections can be very slippery when wet

**Please include the following information and attachments with your application.**

Safety & Operating plan

#### File Upload



Safety and Operating Plan - Tidecres... .docx

## APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

#### Commercial Use Regulations:

- Applications and permits issued under [SGC 14.10](#) COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL USE OF MUNICIPAL LANDS AND FACILITIES
- Guidance provided by the [2026 Commercial Recreational Land Use Plan](#)
- Permits shall expire on December 31st of each calendar year.
- Permits are valid only for the dates, times, activities, and areas specified.
- Permits are not automatically renewable. Issuance of a permit shall not entitle any priority or preferential consideration for subsequent, new, or additional permits for the same area or for related

uses.

- Permit Fees will be invoiced after January 4, 2026 application closure.

Upon acceptance of a permit, all permittees shall execute an instrument under the terms of which the permittee shall agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City and Borough of Sitka from any and all claims for injury or damage to persons or property suffered in connection with the permittee's activities unless such injury or damage is caused by the gross negligence of the City and Borough of Sitka.

I certify that the business/operator(s) are registered with the CBS Sales Tax Office, unless specifically exempt from collecting and remitting sales taxes for sales outside of City and Borough of Sitka jurisdiction, and have no outstanding judgements to the City and Borough of Sitka.

**Terms and Conditions**

Accepted

**Date**

Saturday, January 3, 2026

**Signature**



## **Safety and Operating Plan**

### **Guide Qualifications:**

Tours are led by a certified Wilderness First Responder and CPR-certified guide who is also a Leave No Trace Instructor. All tours are staffed with a single guide per group, either an operator or an assistant guide, with the operator serving as the primary guide for the 2026 season. Guides maintain current certifications and follow professional guiding standards.

### **Safety Equipment:**

Guides carry a comprehensive safety kit on all tours, including a full first-aid kit, waste-management supplies, bear spray, a Garmin InReach Mini two-way satellite communicator with SOS capability and location tracking. Additional safety and comfort items include hiking poles (upon participant request), rain ponchos, sunscreen, insect repellent. All equipment is inspected regularly and replaced as necessary. Communication devices are checked for battery life prior to each tour.

### **Communication Protocol:**

Prior to each tour, the guide provides a detailed itinerary to designated contact, including trail, group size, expected start and return times, and emergency procedures. The guide checks in upon arrival at the trailhead and upon tour completion. If a group is overdue by one hour, the contact attempts communication via phone or satellite device. If no contact is established within two hours, local emergency services (Sitka Police/EMS) are notified with route and participant information.

### **Emergency Response:**

The guides are trained to respond to minor and major incidents. Minor injuries, such as sprains or cuts, are treated on-site using standard first-aid procedures. In the events of a serious injury or illness, the guide initiates evacuation to the nearest trailhead or contacts emergency services for assistance. The guide continually assesses the severity of incidents and takes action necessary to ensure participants' safety.

### **Weather and Environmental Conditions:**

Tours may be modified or cancelled under unsafe conditions, including high winds, heavy rain/landslide risk, lightning, muddy trails, or low visibility. Weather forecasts and local trail conditions are monitored prior to and during tours. Turnaround points are established to ensure safe completion of hikes before sunset of deteriorating trail conditions.

### **Wildlife Protocols:**

All operational trails are considered bear habitat. Participants are briefed on wildlife safety, instructed to maintain safe distance, and advised to make noise in dense vegetation. Participants are directed to avoid high-risk areas, such as salmon streams during runs. The guide carries bear spray and reinforces safe group behavior throughout the hike.

#### **Participant Screening and Orientation:**

Prior to tours, participants are asked about relevant medical conditions, allergies, mobility limitations, and prior hiking experience. The operator provides clothing, footwear, and gear recommendations, along with hydration reminders and pacing expectations. Tours are adjusted as needed to maintain safety and participant comfort.

#### **Transportation Safety:**

Participants are transported in a dedicated vehicle equipped with seat belts for all passengers. The vehicle is maintained according to manufacturer standards, and all driving occurs on maintained public roads.

#### **Equipment Management:**

All safety and hiking equipment is inspected prior to tours and replaced when necessary. First-aid supplies, bear spray, and communication devices are checked for expiration, functionality, and battery life daily.

#### **Environmental Stewardship:**

All tours adhere to Leave No Trace principles. Guides ensure all waste is packed out, participants remain on established trails, and vegetation and wildlife are not disturbed. Participants are briefed on environmental stewardship prior to each tour.

#### **Incident Reporting:**

All incidents, injuries, or wildlife encounters are documented internally. Significant incidents are reported to the appropriate regulatory agency in accordance with permit requirements.