

Cannabis and

# ALASKA



Facts & Figures • Top Retailers • Industry Pioneers





# CANNABIS IN ALASKA

**M**arijuana Venture's ongoing series on every legal market in the United States explores the ever-changing rules and regulations, market trends, demographics, business leaders and more for each state that has legalized recreational marijuana. This month takes us to the Last Frontier and quite possibly the most unique state where cannabis is legal: Alaska.

Alaska has long taken an out-of-sight, out-of-mind legal stance on cannabis, dating back to the *Ravin v. State* court decision in 1975 that determined the right to privacy enshrined in the state constitution protects adults' ability to possess a small amount of marijuana in their home for personal use. Even prior to that landmark court ruling, Alaska has decriminalized and recriminalized cannabis multiple times in the past 45 years. The state officially legalized medical marijuana through a ballot measure in 1998, but residents rejected bills to fully legalize cannabis in 2000 and 2004, before finally succeeding with Measure 2 in 2014, making it the fourth state to allow recreational sales.

Today, Alaska's burgeoning cannabis industry reaches nearly every corner of the state's massive and awe-inspiring 663,000-square-mile expanse.

Next month, Marijuana Venture will look at Northern California (April), followed by Southern California (May), Nevada (June), Massachusetts (July) and other states in future months. For information about upcoming issues or to learn about advertising and sponsorship opportunities, email [Editor@MarijuanaVenture.com](mailto:Editor@MarijuanaVenture.com).

## SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks to all the sponsors who helped make this issue possible: AK Slow Burn, AM Delight, Bad Gramm3r, JDW Counsel, Moose Garden, Nature's ReLeaf, Rosie Creek Farm, Scorpion Grass and The Stoney Moose.

## ABOUT MARIJUANA VENTURE



Marijuana Venture is a leading business magazine focused on the legal cannabis industry in North America. Marijuana Venture is published monthly and distributed to subscribers and through bookstores and newsstands in the United States. For more information or to subscribe, visit [MarijuanaVenture.com](http://MarijuanaVenture.com) or call 425-656-3621.

## Legal Overview

BY JANA D. WELTZIN

**A**laska legalized adult-use marijuana in 2014 and successfully launched licensing in 2016. Alaska's marijuana market is rapidly evolving and developing into a stable, flourishing industry. Due to the state's small population base, with fewer than 1 million residents, there have been concerns regarding the ability of the market to absorb all the marijuana produced in the currently uncapped licensing system. However, Alaska's wholesale price of bud has remained resilient: depending on THC/CBD content, the average wholesale price for flower ranges from \$2,000 per pound to \$4,300 per pound, with many boutique cultivators able to wholesale toward the higher end of the price spectrum. This has spurred much-needed localized economic activities and has provided many Alaskans with self-supporting income for themselves and their small crew of employees. Larger cultivators are selling in the mid-range of the price spectrum and venturing out into retail and manufacturing.

Currently, there are approximately 231 operating cultivators, 138 retailers, 45 manufacturers (including both concentrate-only licenses and product manufacturing licenses) and four testing facilities. The market is currently very healthy, but if the licensing does not get capped and limited in early 2021, the regulated market may become oversaturated.

Onsite consumption was approved by the Marijuana Control Board in March 2019, and several retailers are opening onsite consumption venues. In Anchorage, only onsite consumption of edibles is allowed, whereas in Fairbanks, inhalation and edibles are permitted. Consequently, Anchorage has yet to see the development of an onsite consumption cafe. However, in places like Fairbanks, companies like Good Titrations are developing swanky inhalation lounges, equipped with a full-scale restaurant for its clientele.

**THE INDUSTRY HAS  
GENERATED MORE  
THAN 7,300 PLANT-  
TOUCHING JOBS SINCE  
ITS INCEPTION**

The Alaska marijuana industry has been a shining star in the state's recent economic downturn due to declining oil prices. The industry has generated more than 7,300 plant-touching jobs since its inception, in addition to ancillary jobs like contractors, architects, accountants, etc. The Alaska marijuana industry is steadily growing, thriving and becoming a real source of revenue for the state and for the communities. Responsible local leadership, industry leadership and community support will determine the longevity and health of the market in the long term.

*Jana D. Weltzin is the owner of JDW Counsel, a boutique law firm based in Anchorage, Alaska, that represents over 100 licensed marijuana companies in Alaska and Arizona. She has been immersed with marijuana licensing, compliance, land use permitting, and corporate law since early 2013, and is widely recognized as an expert in the field.*

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# ALASKA: BUZZ-WORTHY

• • • BY GARRETT RUDOLPH



## SURVIVING 2020.....

With a population of just over 700,000, Alaska’s cannabis businesses rely heavily on the annual influx of more than 2 million visitors to the state. Yet, in a year without tourists that decimated many other sectors of the economy, Alaska’s cannabis industry managed to survive and set itself up for success in the years to come.

Surprisingly, cannabis sales didn’t decline. In fact, the demand from in-state residents has been high enough to create a slight shortage on the market.

“This means our Alaska residents were trying to cope with 2020, and perhaps they’re turning to cannabis where they hadn’t before,” says Lacy Wilcox, president of the Alaska Marijuana Industry Association (AMIA). “And maybe people are turning to the legal market instead of the black market.”

At the onset of the COVID pandemic, the first fight was for cannabis businesses to be considered essential and allowed to stay open — “We were pretty sure we wouldn’t be,” says Wilcox — because Alaska’s political leaders lean more conservative than other states that have legalized cannabis.

Passing that test, the next obstacle was for businesses to comply with COVID mitigation protocols.

But most businesses rolled with the trials and tribulations and managed to stay afloat.

“All things considered, 2020 hasn’t been terrible for the industry,” Wilcox says. “And we’re really, really grateful that we got to be here for Alaskans to help them cope with this crazy year.”

## POWER HUNGRY.....

Growing indoors is a costly venture in Alaska, which has the fourth-highest industrial electricity rates in the nation, behind Rhode Island, California and Hawaii.

The state’s average rate for commercial operators is 15.75 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh), which is 134% higher than the national rate of 6.72 cents/kWh, but still considerably lower than Hawaii’s rate of 23.38 cents/kWh. Normally, Alaska is second only to Hawaii in terms of industrial electric costs, but Rhode Island’s rate of 16.05 cents/kWh and California’s rate of 16.02 cents/kWh narrowly beat out Alaska during 2020. Nevada has the lowest industrial rate at 2.88/kWh, while indoor growers in Washington and Oregon also have favorable lighting costs at 5.62 and 5.87 cents/kWh, respectively.

**“ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, 2020 HASN’T BEEN TERRIBLE FOR THE INDUSTRY. AND WE’RE REALLY, REALLY GRATEFUL THAT WE GOT TO BE HERE FOR ALASKANS TO HELP THEM COPE WITH THIS CRAZY YEAR.”**

## .....GROWING NUMBERS

Despite the pandemic, Alaska’s cannabis industry continues to grow with each passing month as more and more businesses continue to open.

With one month still to be counted, the state Department of Revenue reported \$24,968,021 worth of taxable marijuana transferred or sold by cultivators in 2020 — an increase of \$3.3 million over 2019.

“This last year — with the pandemic and all the stimulus money going around — was a real high-point for a lot of companies,” says Eric Riemer, CEO of The Stoney Moose. “The price of flower was up, and there was a real scarcity in the state.”

Tax revenue generated by the industry has increased in every quarter except one, since the state began tracking sales in October 2016.

Although the state is in its fifth year of legal cannabis sales, the industry is still in its infancy compared to Colorado, Oregon and Washington, the only three states to begin adult-use sales before Alaska. Alaska legalized medical marijuana in 1998 and has long been cannabis-friendly with its rules and enforcement, but prior to the passage of Measure 2 in 2014, the state didn’t have a true commercial industry like other Western states.

Wilcox says the state has done an excellent job of bringing unregulated growers into the legal fold, and consumers have been rewarded with top-quality cannabis from craft growers who have been mastering their techniques for years.

“Way to go Alaska!” she says. “You guys are putting your skills to good use.”



## ZOOMING INTO THE FUTURE

In some ways, the pandemic has actually brought the state’s industry closer together — despite the massive distance between businesses and the social distancing requirements.

When the pandemic closed many government offices to the public, the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office and the Marijuana Control Board moved some of their public meetings to Zoom, using an online conference format to allow people to listen to regulators and industry officials, as well as provide testimony on the issues at hand. The public Zoom meetings successfully brought in many businesspeople that otherwise wouldn’t have been able to attend, due to the time constraints of traveling to Anchorage or Juneau for a public meeting.





# ALASKA: BUZZ-WORTHY



## GOALS FOR 2021.....

Looking at the rest of 2021, the AMIA is continuing to lobby for reform at both the state and national level, though speaking to federal legislators about cannabis has been exceedingly tough because of the pandemic.

The state's weight-based wholesale tax is one of the primary targets for reform. Increasing opportunities for banking is another.

"We're going to continue to lobby our governor to see if he can give some assurances, kind of like the governor of Colorado did, to offer a little bit of defense or safe harbor to bankers and have a conversation about credit unions like Colorado," Wilcox says. "And we're going to just keep pushing on our people here to get us some access to banks, because it's a long way to travel and it's even harder when you're traveling with that much cash. It can be super uncomfortable."

However, that cash from the cannabis industry — especially during a time when other Alaskan industries have been put on ice — helps keep policy makers accountable to marijuana businesses. As the industry has developed, legislators have begun to recognize it as a "real, living, breathing industry."

"We're becoming a force," Wilcox says. "We can walk into the Capitol now and they're looking at us like a tax-paying industry and not just a bunch of stoners."



## THE BIGGER PICTURE.....

At the federal level, the SAFE Banking Act is of particular interest to cannabis businesses in Alaska, but while the goal of federal decriminalization is appealing from the perspective of social justice, it also raises plenty of concerns about the viability and future of Alaska's home-grown industry, which has allowed many mom-and-pop businesses to thrive.

"I can see a big question mark on the horizon as far as federal decriminalization goes," Riemer says. "Moving cannabis from the Schedule I list will open a world of access for cannabis businesses and allow us a lot of growth by easing our tax burden and opening up the banking system for us to get loans. However, I do worry about the influence and influx of outside money and product flowing from the Lower 48 to Alaska."

If interstate commerce were to be allowed, it would have the potential to ruin Alaska's cultivation economy — and many state residents and businesspeople don't like the idea of the market being flooded with cannabis grown out of state.

"And I don't want to see hard-working Alaskan small-business owners who poured their blood, sweat and treasure into their business get swallowed up or pushed aside by out-of-state big money producers/corporations," Riemer adds.

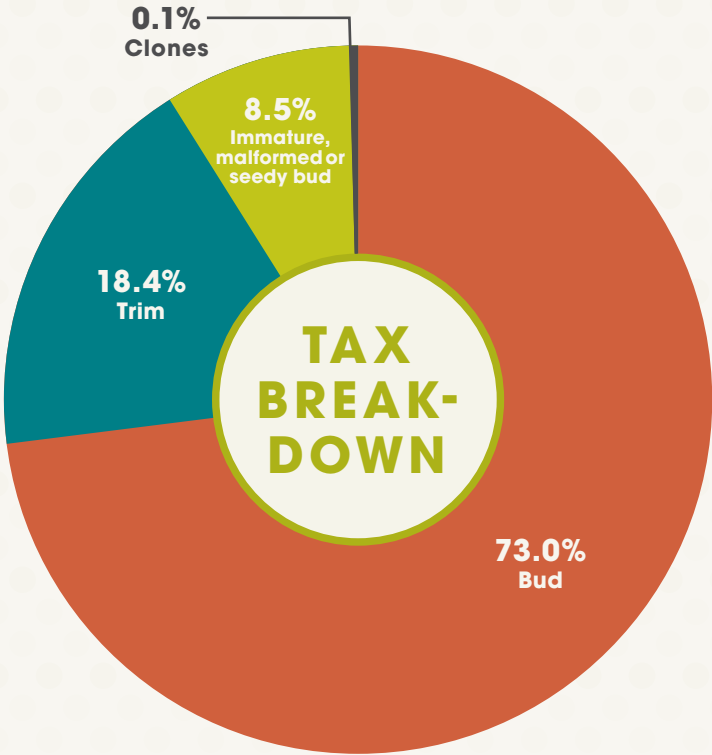




# ALASKA: MARKET TRENDS

Total marijuana tax revenue since 2016

• \$68,645,072 •



LICENSED BUSINESSES  
418

PLANT-TOUCHING JOBS  
7,300+

TOTAL GRAMS OF FLOWER  
50.1 MILLION

TRICK OR TREAT

PAID BY WEIGHT

RECORD GROWTH

In 2017, 2018 and 2019, October was the top reported month for marijuana tax revenue, with each year hitting a new record at that time. In 2020, October was the second-highest revenue month, at \$2,581,021. Meanwhile, February is at the other end of the spectrum, reporting the lowest tax revenue of the year in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Alaska’s tax structure is unlike any other cannabis-legal state in the country, with a weight-based tax on cultivation, rather than a tax at retail or taxes throughout the supply chain, meaning taxes collected by the state do not equate directly with cannabis sold at retail. Cultivators pay \$50 per ounce of flower, \$25 per ounce of immature, seedy or malformed flower, \$15 per ounce of trim and \$1 per clone.

Despite the lack of tourists in 2020, Alaska’s cannabis industry actually enjoyed a record-setting year, with nearly \$25 million worth of taxable marijuana reported by the state of Alaska, including \$2.6 million in July alone, the highest tax revenue month ever. Pre-pandemic, the record was \$2.1 million in October 2019.



## JDW Counsel

Founded in 2015, JDW Counsel represents more of Alaska’s marijuana businesses than any other firm. Over the past five years, JDW Counsel has worked with more than 200 licensed marijuana businesses, helping licensees build their businesses, navigate regulatory hurdles and obtain successful, compliantly operating licenses.

JDW Counsel’s Principal Attorney, Jana Weltzin, has been working in the marijuana industry since 2012. In that time, she has received a variety of awards for her expertise and influence in her field, including Marijuana Venture’s 40 Under 40 (2017), Acquisition International Leading Adviser Awards (2019, 2020), the ACQ5 Law Awards (2019), and the Women in Law Awards (2018). Attorney Weltzin is a founding member of the Alaska Marijuana Industry Association (AMIA), which advocates for a vibrant and reasonably regulated cannabis industry. Ms. Weltzin currently serves on AMIA’s Board of Directors.

JDW Counsel prides itself on its advocacy and involvement in local government. This has proven to be the key to successfully integrating marijuana businesses with the broader market. JDW Counsel has worked closely with the Alaska Marijuana Control Board, state assemblies and local governments to enact regulations that protect the marijuana industry, businesses, employees, and consumers.

JDW Counsel represents clients nationwide in a variety of areas of law, including marijuana business licensing and compliance, liquor licensing and compliance, land use, industrial hemp pilots, contract and labor disputes, Native American law and much more.

Attorney Weltzin is licensed to practice law in Alaska and Arizona and offers consultation services nationwide. For more information, please visit the website at [JDWCounsel.com](http://JDWCounsel.com).

For inquiries, please call 907-231-3750 or email [legal@jdwcounsel.com](mailto:legal@jdwcounsel.com).



# Timeline of Events

1975

Alaska becomes the first state to decriminalize cannabis, making possession a \$100 fine. In addition, the state supreme court ruled in *Ravin v. State* that the state constitution's right to privacy includes the use and possession of marijuana in the home.

1998

Voters in Alaska approve Measure 8 to allow medical marijuana use, with 58.7% of voters approving the measure that allows patients with a doctor's note to possess up to an ounce or grow six plants.

2003

In *Noy v. State*, the Alaska Court of Appeals would overturn a possession conviction, reaffirming the 1975 ruling in *Ravin v. State*.

2006

Going directly against two previous court rulings, the Republican-led Alaskan Legislature recriminalizes possession, making one ounce a misdemeanor punishable by up to 90 days in jail and one to four ounces a misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail.

2016

Alaska's first legal cannabis dispensary, Herbal Outfitters, opens on October 29 in Valdez.

1990

Alaskan voters approve Measure 2, re-criminalizing cannabis possession and use, even in the home, and imposing a penalty of up to 90 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine for possession.

2000

Measure 5, an attempt to legalize the recreational use of cannabis, only gains 40.9% approval and fails to pass.

2004

A second attempt at legalization fails when only 44.3% of voters cast their ballots in favor of Measure 2.

2014

With 53.2% of the vote, Measure 2 passes and Alaska finally legalizes the recreational use of cannabis. The measure allows for state-regulated dispensary sales and sets in motion the modern industry that is thriving today.

2019

Alaska becomes the first state to allow the licensing of on-site consumption lounges.

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PROFITS WITH A **HIGHER PURPOSE**



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**GRASS**  
CANNABIS CO.

Founded in 2017, Scorpion Grass is a vertically integrated, state-of-the-art cultivation, manufacturing, and retail cannabis facility. We are diligent in our quality practices from seed to sale with every step of production in mind. We extend our positive family values and experience with every customer.

Visit us on your next trip to Wasilla, Alaska.



We are a family business aiming to provide excellent customer service, and top quality products at an affordable price. Community involvement and outreach will always be our ultimate goal. We strive for each and every customer to leave our shop with a smile.

We take pride in providing the community with our craft grown cannabis where quality is valued over quantity. Everything we harvest at Scorpion Grass is hand trimmed from the stem so we don't damage the trichomes, leaving our customers with premium cannabis to smoke and enjoy.

Scorpion Grass has two identical, 1450 sq. ft. and 72 lights in each bloom room. Each room is on a 35-day harvest cycle. We have over 40 unique strains at any given time. We have over 1,000 plants in each bloom room using 3-liter coco pots. Our beautiful, healthy plants are fed by a sophisticated Desatron Nutrient Injection System, powering our custom, automated drip irrigation. Our passionate team is very diligent with quality control and staying attentive with each and every plant.

Here at Scorpion Grass Manufacturing we are able to fraction terpenes and cannabinoids separately, while maximizing potency. We are able to selectively target individual compounds present in whole plant material. We've harnessed advanced scientific post processing methods and are able to produce a full spectrum oil that has been de-waxed using zero solvents. This process gives the extract a fuller representation of the cannabis plant so the customer can experience the true essence.

Come one, Come all! Whether you're a local Alaskan arriving by car, dog sled, 4 wheeler, snow-machine, dirtbike, or just visiting our beautiful state on vacation, you can always count on finding quality cannabis and personable customer service at Scorpion Grass.

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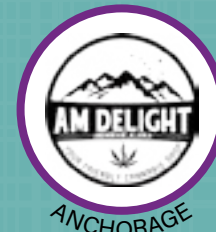


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## AM DELIGHT

*"Your Friendly Cannabis Shop"*

**A registered nurse and a cannabis business owner during a pandemic**

During her first summer in Alaska, Angela Vinh truly fell in love with The Last Frontier and knew this was the place she would plant her roots. As a travel ICU-RN (Intensive Care Unit Registered Nurse) she worked assignments in other states, but she always kept coming back to Alaska.

When Alaska passed Measure 2 in 2014, legalizing recreational marijuana, Angela made the decision to take a full-time position at a hospital in Anchorage and started creating a business plan for a marijuana retail license. The next few months would consist of attending meeting after meeting with the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office and the Municipality of Anchorage until they finalized regulations. She then contacted countless commercial property owners and realtors without much luck before finally finding a property owner who was kind enough to rent a building for her shop. However, after a year of planning and construction, exactly two days before the final inspection to receive her license, the unexpected happened — the store was broken into by an armed suspect who thrashed the shop, damaging the cameras, construction and new equipment. It was a devastating event that put Angela in a tight financial spot at the worst time, but she pushed herself — working extra shifts at the hospital during the days and spending the nights cleaning debris and repairing damages. In March of 2017, Angela's dedication and perseverance paid off and

she received a State of Alaska marijuana retail license for AM DELIGHT in the Spenard area of Anchorage.

Over the next three years, Angela attuned her goals, balancing the necessary priorities and multitasking between her cannabis business and keeping her nursing certifications up to date to maintain her full-time position at the hospital. On her days off she can be found at the retail store making sure the back office and inventory are always correct, as accountability is mandatory. If she isn't there, she can be found at her cultivation facility with her husband, Marius, tending to the plants. Moose Garden is a hydroponic cultivation that is famous for its strain called The Purple, an indica that will have you chilling in no time.

As many know, Alaska has amazing summers that are perfect for tourism, fishing, fun and all the great outdoor adventures the state has to offer. But in March of 2020, COVID-19 began to spread quickly in Alaska. As a business owner and an RN, Angela's first reaction was to keep the employees and customers safe. Safety and health are always priorities, so she implemented a plan to do just that. Face masks and social distancing were mandated for customers and staff, and continuous cleaning and other sanitation measures were required by staff. At first, many customers complied with the mask mandate, but many customers did not like wearing them. There were many others who understood the reasoning behind it, but after multiple conversations about how COVID-19 spread and the masks were for their safety and the safety of others,

the general customer base began to comply to the store's mandates without being disgruntled.

In the months that followed, the Mayor issued a hunker-down order that closed many businesses including gyms, bars and restaurants. But to Angela's shock, the marijuana industry was deemed an essential business that could remain open and operational during this pandemic. Nervous and stressed about what was happening to the community, she continued working with patients while maintaining her two marijuana businesses. For her relentless commitment to her profession as an ICU-RN, Angela received the Daisy Award at the hospital in 2020. She continued working not for the pay but because of her pure, unselfish care for humanity and desire to help people fight to overcome COVID-19, pulling long shifts at the hospital with direct contact to this highly contagious virus.

Sometimes it can get overwhelming having to continuously swap between and balance roles as Angela sees, but she understands the roles she plays and must play in the cannabis industry and health care industry — accountability from each spectrum is fundamental. As she sees the effects of COVID-19 at the hospital, she always tells everyone to stay safe while we all go through this pandemic together. Be nice and patient, keep encouraging others, check on people, and have love and compassion for one another. Keep safe, wear a mask, sanitize your hands, and always protect yourself, your family, your neighbors and everyone around you.

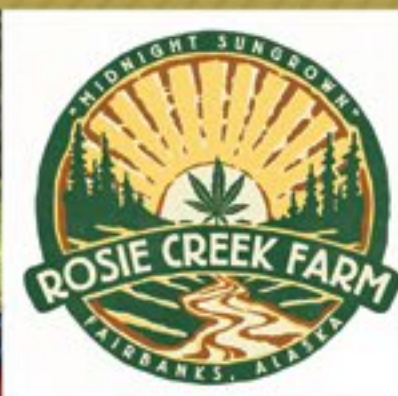






"THE GOAL IS TO GROW CANNABIS IN A MANNER THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH RESPONSIBLE LAND STEWARDSHIP."

— MIKE EMERS,  
OWNER AND HEAD GROWER



## Rosie Creek Farm

People kept telling Mike Emers that he couldn't grow cannabis outdoors in Alaska. But as a trained botanist and someone who has farmed the region for more than 25 years, he disagreed.

"We wanted to do something that hadn't been done before," says Emers, the owner and head grower of Rosie Creek Farm.

He proved doubters wrong by cross-breeding and refining the popular, high-potency strains that dominate the market like OG Kush, Blue Dream and Girl Scout Cookies with the resilient, auto-flowering branch of the cannabis family, Cannabis ruderalis. The high-quality strains Emers crafted take full advantage of the 24 hours of daylight Fairbanks is known for in the summer and are rich in CBD and CBG, while touting respectable THC levels between 15 to 25%.

"We are producing a high-quality product with a close to ze-

ro-carbon footprint," Emers says. "I might have had a little bit of arrogance as an Organic farmer, thinking that this is the only way to do grow, but in the long term, for the benefit of the earth and for consumers, I think we have something worth looking at."

The business makes a lot of sense. Rosie Creek's outdoor growing practices also keep overhead costs low, allowing the company to sell pounds at a fraction of the price of indoor growers who are saddled with high electricity bills.

The brand also resonates with conscious consumers who want to vote with their dollars to support a cannabis producer with a nearly zero-carbon footprint and a sustainably produced product.

"The goal is to grow cannabis in a manner that is compatible with responsible land stewardship," Emers says.

Rosie Creek Farm is producing something that consumers may not find anywhere else. Sure, there are plenty of farms using organic practices, but very, very few farms have dared to deviate from the high-potency strains that are guaranteed to sell at retail to create something unique — and even fewer farms that do so successfully. But to do it with auto-flowering cannabis, outdoors in the far North, under a midnight sun, with a near zero-carbon footprint — that's something consumers can only find at Rosie Creek Farm. As the company enters its sixth season, the strains at Rosie Creek Farm get better with each harvest.

"We are always learning," Emers says. "The bud structure is tighter. The potency and terpenes are going up."

Because the company cannot buy seed in bulk, Emers does his own breeding. He started growing cannabis with a vast collection of seeds to grow popular strains. But from the onset he knew strains dependent on the 12-hour light cycle

wouldn't be feasible, so he experimented with and cross-bred commercially available auto-flowering strains. With a few years of practice and keeping a close eye on what plants could reliably produce flower in the harsh environment, Emers built a stock of genetics that thrive in the Alaskan soils he has been farming for more than 25 years.

"As you start looking for those traits and those traits become more uniform, the next generation becomes more uniform," Emers says. "It's intentional breeding, just like plant breeding anywhere."

Unique strains like Rosie Creek's "Cabin Fever" and "Ice Fog Kush" came to fruition because of the company's breeding process and can now be found in cannabis stores across the Last Frontier.

This year Emers says the farm will be producing roughly two acres of its unique outdoor flower for stores statewide.





## AK Slow Burn

Alaska, The Last Frontier, is open for responsible cannabis recreational use. As one of the primary cannabis retail businesses in Anchorage, Alaska, AK Slow Burn was among the original handful of businesses to work through the state and local regulations to establish its first store on August 16, 2017. The company is now working on opening its third store in 2021.

As an original business in the new cannabis industry in Alaska, it was very apparent the company and its customers had a lot to learn. In any AK Slow Burn retail store, your happiness is our first goal. We place the customer first and foremost — sales are always second place.

AK Slow Burn sources Alaskan Cannabis from ALL around the state and has the most comprehensive quality-controlled, finished cannabis in Alaska. We offer the most personal care for our cannabis, which is hand selected, hand rolled and is given extra curing time to enhance the deep notes of terpenes. And we adhere to exact measurements on all finished, packaged cannabis. AK Slow Burn offers the most cared for weed in the state from

only the TOP Alaskan Cultivators.

Our focus quickly developed into an educational, informative, friendly and welcoming retail experience creating the first "normal" retail buying experience in Alaska, where folks can come in, browse the store's cannabis offerings, ask questions of Budtenders to become better informed and make great selections for their individual needs and tastes. We make our customers feel comfortable and welcome and help ALL customers to be better informed, aware of all the options available to them in the rapidly changing world of cannabis consumption and, most of all, happy!

In the Alaska Press Picks Challenge, AK Slow Burn was voted one of the top retail stores in Alaska for "Best Customer Service" — across all retail categories, not just cannabis.

AK Slow Burn's Budtenders understand the ensemble effect of terpenes and other variables that affect how THC interacts with your body, your brain, your mood and your overall experience. If all of this sounds intimidating, do not

worry! We are here to provide you guidance with strains to make you feel just how you want and with the various methods of getting your cannabis on board, whether it be flower, pre-rolls, edibles, tinctures, beverages, topicals, oils, vapes, concentrates, CBD and more. We will guide you through the haze and make sure that you walk out of AK Slow Burn with exactly what you need at a price that meets your budget. We take pride in the quest to find the highest quality Alaskan cannabis for the best price and then passing the best prices on to the customers.

Every day of the week, AK Slow Burn has "Daily Specials" featuring unique Alaskan Cannabis and CBD strains that cover indoor and outdoor activities for the whole family (21+) — including your favorite four-legged family members. If you find yourself in Anchorage, come visit AK Slow Burn and get a true Alaskan welcome from our warm and friendly staff, while you get good information and a great deal. If you are visiting Alaska from the Lower 48 come into AK Slow Burn (2042 E. 3rd Ave or 1551 E. Tudor in Anchorage) and get up to a 20% discount when you show this article.





"WE DO TRY TO KEEP A WIDE SELECTION OF FLOWER AND CONCENTRATES ON HAND AND IF SOMETHING NEW SHOWS UP ON THE MARKET, WE GO AND GET IT."



## Nature's ReLeaf

Nestled in the historic downtown district of Fairbanks, the Nature's ReLeaf cannabis store is rooted in the city's culture and was established by one of its oldest families. Owner Barbara Paschall opened the quaint, 400-square-foot location in 2018 and with the help of her granddaughter and chief operations officer, Karissa Paschall, the business is growing its loyal customer base by offering a wide selection of products and taking an earnest, personal approach to retail.

"We try to get to know the customer and for a huge percentage of them we are on a first-name basis," Barbara says.

"We have always been customer-oriented since the beginning," Karissa adds. "It's in the way that we structured our business."

Karissa says the company decided early on to stay out of cultivation so it can focus on retail and quickly respond to consumer demand. She estimates that the store has roughly 400 different products available at any given time.

"There are a lot of vertically integrated businesses in

Fairbanks where you go into their store and you can only find the strains that they grow," Karissa says. "Our menu changes almost daily and at any given time we usually have 20-30 cultivators on shelves and a lot of concentrates as well."

"We do try to keep a wide selection of flower and concentrates on hand and if something new shows up on the market, we go and get it," Barbara adds.

In addition to packing the store with the best selection available, the Paschalls also opted to take an deli-style approach to flower sales "because we want our customers to have a closer interaction with the product that their buying," Karissa says.

"I think the deli style operation is super attractive to some customers," she adds, "and in many places it is still so rare to find a deli cannabis shop."

And the model is working: customers are building deep-

er relationships with the products by seeing them first-hand, and as they inspect the available flower, they pose more and more questions.

"Customers want to know how the flower is grown as well as the test results. We have a big binder, and we provide the test results to all our customers who ask for them," Barbara says. "They are looking for a personal experience, one-on-one, where they could tell you their stories."

Another facet of the company's consumer-focused design is the physical location itself, which happens to be in one of Fairbanks' original homes. The Paschalls spent two years revamping the 1942 home to maximize the sales floor and install locally made fixtures, such as the display cases, custom woodwork signage and the two wood-burned pieces used as island displays. Even the apothecary jars are sourced from a local artist. The entire atmosphere is in service of welcoming new and returning customers and dispelling the stigmas sur-

rounding the industry.

"We wanted our shop to be bright, fresh and welcoming," Karissa says. "We want customers who have never been in a weed shop and that maybe have their stereotypes or opinions of people who smoke weed, to have those stereotypes and opinions fall to the wayside. We were really able to convert those people and show that there's a place for them."

But Nature's ReLeaf isn't just a reflection of Fairbanks's virtues, the company plays an active role in the community. The woman-owned business regularly donates to the Fairbanks Food Bank, the Arctic Resource for Suicide Prevention, The Door Emergency Youth Shelter and the Literacy Council of Alaska.

"There's a lot of need in our community here," Karissa says. "Our state is in a deficit so it's important to support nonprofits."

"It's in our name, 'Nature's ReLeaf,'" Barbara says. "We're here to help people."





## The Stoney Moose

In just four years, the Stoney Moose has grown from a single-employee cannabis retailer operating out of a 96-square-foot room into a vertically integrated, multi-tiered business with more than two dozen employees.

The rapid expansion has allowed the Ketchikan-based company to not only produce its own top-quality flower, but also introduce its award-winning line of edibles, including unique offerings such as THC-infused pesto and CBD-infused, wild-caught, Alaskan smoked salmon.

"Basically, the Stoney Moose went from zero to hero in an incredibly short time period. Now my focus is split both outward and inward, between consolidating and refining what we have and also strategic planning on our next expansions," Stoney Moose CEO Eric Riemer says.

The Stoney Moose's retail shop is located in historic downtown Ketchikan — a picturesque destination for tourists and a much-needed hang-out spot for locals.

The company is in the process of planning its next major expansion: a rooftop consumption lounge that overlooks the nearby businesses, salmon stream and boat harbor. But the innovative new space is proving more difficult to achieve than it is to conceptualize.

"There are going to be multiple levels of clever work-arounds to the obstacles in place right now," Riemer says. "There are roughly a million hurdles to clear and committees, boards and councils to navigate, but the idea is to create a beautiful, rooftop cannabis lounge where people can smoke our own Stoney Moose Farms organic, living soil-grown flower and enjoy infused meals that we create fresh at Stoney Moose Kitchens every day, as well as CBD-infused coffee, kombucha and other elixirs made in-house."

Riemer says he envisions the space as a lounge/café during the day and an alcohol-free gathering space in the evenings, with movie nights, educational seminars

and maybe even yoga classes.

The company is also in the process of launching a national line of CBD products to be carried by health food stores and specialty shops.

"Our CBD-infused smoked salmon is an amazing product, and our CBD coffee line will be coming online this year as well," Riemer says.

While the company's retail space remains the centerpiece of the growing enterprise, the build-out of Stoney Moose Farms in early 2020 truly allowed the company to take its operations and its products to the next level. Being vertically integrated allows the Stoney Moose to avoid paying the highest wholesale prices for cannabis in the entire country (reaching more than \$6,000 per pound in some parts of the state). Located on an island, the old, rustic-looking barn and greenhouse are a slice of Alaskana. And despite its remote location, it's one of the top-producing cannabis farms in the state, allowing

the company to continue growing its revenue even as the local tourist economy was decimated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Riemer says he believes the Stoney Moose — and Alaska's cannabis industry as a whole — is in an excellent position to capitalize as soon as the tourist market rebounds.

"For now, though, there is a lot of potential for growth still out there," he says, "and I don't think we've reached market saturation by a long shot. I'm excited to see what the next two years bring us!"

**The Stoney Moose**  
127 Stedman Street  
Ketchikan, Alaska  
[TheStoneyMoose.com](http://TheStoneyMoose.com)





## GEOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES



When it comes to the challenges of transporting cannabis products across the state, to testing labs, processors and retailers, Alaska is in a league of its own.

Not only is Alaska massive beyond comprehension — nearly 1,500 miles from its northwestern tip to the southeastern straits and islands that make up the Alaskan Panhandle — but many communities are landlocked, only accessible by boat or by plane.

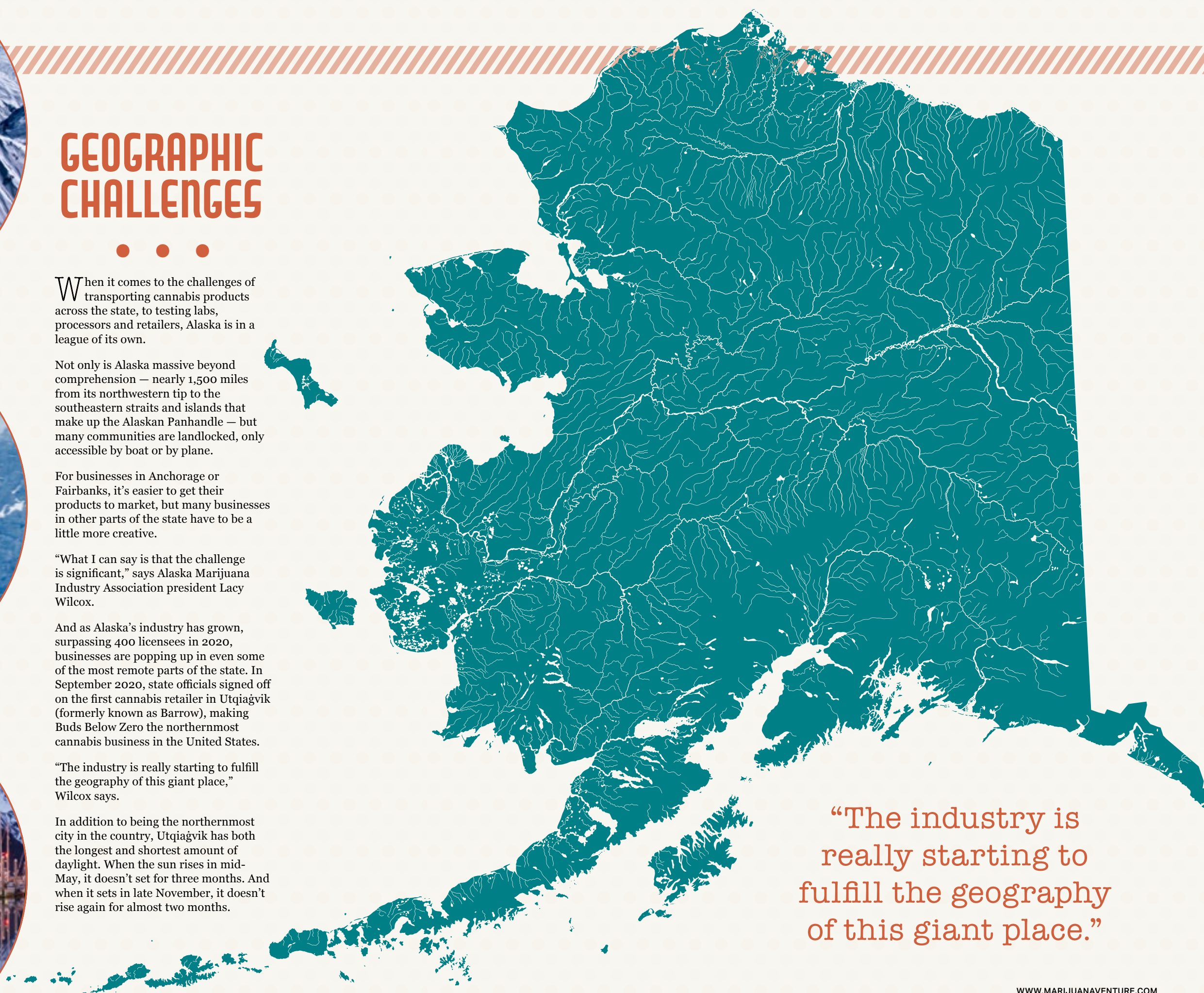
For businesses in Anchorage or Fairbanks, it's easier to get their products to market, but many businesses in other parts of the state have to be a little more creative.

“What I can say is that the challenge is significant,” says Alaska Marijuana Industry Association president Lacy Wilcox.

And as Alaska's industry has grown, surpassing 400 licensees in 2020, businesses are popping up in even some of the most remote parts of the state. In September 2020, state officials signed off on the first cannabis retailer in Utqiagvik (formerly known as Barrow), making Buds Below Zero the northernmost cannabis business in the United States.

“The industry is really starting to fulfill the geography of this giant place,” Wilcox says.

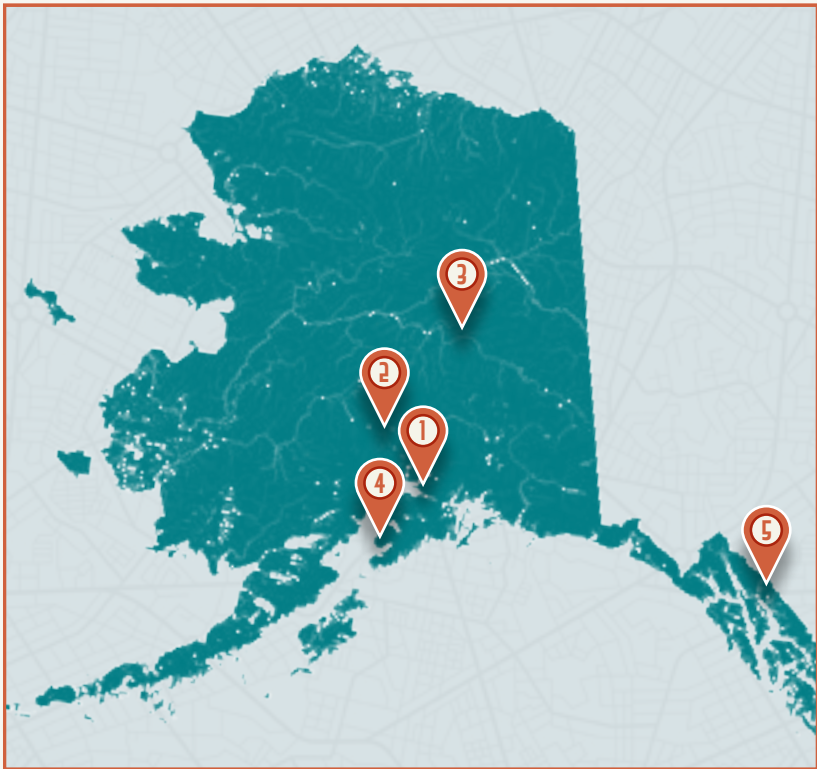
In addition to being the northernmost city in the country, Utqiagvik has both the longest and shortest amount of daylight. When the sun rises in mid-May, it doesn't set for three months. And when it sets in late November, it doesn't rise again for almost two months.



“The industry is really starting to fulfill the geography of this giant place.”



# ALASKA: AT A GLANCE



## 5 MOST POPULATED BOROUGHS

- 1. Anchorage**  
Population: 291,845 | Largest City: Anchorage  
Licensed cannabis businesses: 91
- 2. Matanuska-Susitna**  
Population: 106,438 | Largest City: Wasilla  
Licensed cannabis businesses: 112
- 3. Fairbanks North Star**  
Population: 95,898 | Largest City: Fairbanks  
Licensed cannabis businesses: 72
- 4. Kenai Peninsula**  
Population: 58,367 | Largest City: Soldotna  
Licensed cannabis businesses: 69
- 5. Juneau**  
Population: 31,986 | Largest City: Juneau  
Licensed cannabis businesses: 19

*\*Cannabis sales per capita are based on average monthly sales for FY2020.*

### Population

**732K**  
**RANK: 49**  
Comparable to North Dakota and Washington, D.C.

### Median Household Income

**\$74,346**  
**RANK: 8**  
Comparable to New Hampshire and Washington

### Geographic Area

**665,384 SQUARE MILES**  
**RANK: 1**  
More than twice the size of Texas

## DID YOU KNOW?

Of the 20 highest peaks in the U.S., 17 are located in Alaska, including Denali, the tallest mountain in the country at over **20,000 FEET.**

The largest salmon ever caught was from Alaska's Kenai River, weighing in at more than **97 POUNDS.**

Eligible Alaskans receive an annual dividend from the Alaska Permanent Fund, a legislatively controlled fund based mostly on oil revenue. Full-time residents receive an average of **\$1,600/YEAR** (the all-time high was \$3,269 in 2008).

On average, the Northern Lights can be seen **243 DAYS** a year in Fairbanks.

At its closest point, Alaska is separated from Russia by about **50 MILES** of ocean.

## Bad Gramm3r

Bad Gramm3r is truly a family owned and operated business! Founded by Peter and Teri Zell, along with their son Casey, they had one principle in mind: You're never too broke to smoke.

This principle is applied into every aspect of the company's two stores, Bad Gramm3r in Wasilla and Higher by Bad Gramm3r in Palmer. There is always something for everyone. Even if you only have \$5, there is a doobie for you. The same can be said for every other product in our stores. We have \$3 pipes, and we have \$3,000 pipes. No matter what you're after, we have it available for you.

The family aspect of the business is apparent from the moment you walk in the door; regulars are greeted by

name, and even if it's your first time, you are welcomed like a long-lost family member by staff that are truly passionate about every product we carry. Our drive-thru always has treats on hand for your furry companions as well! Our customers' dogs are always excited as can be when they pull up to the window because they've come to expect a warm welcome and a yummy treat!

Being a family-owned small business also means we can adapt and make changes at a moment's notice to better accommodate any situation that should arise. Our drive-thru at Higher is one of the only ones in the state and allows us to provide contactless customer service without taking away the face-to-face hospitality shoppers have grown to expect.





## ALASKA: Great Land

The giant state of Alaska has more than 6,640 miles of coastline — more than the rest of the United States combined. Including its islands, Alaska has nearly 34,000 miles of shoreline.



## 20,310 Feet

At 20,310 feet, Denali is the tallest mountain in the United States, standing more than 2,000 feet above the next highest peak, Mount Saint Elias, about 400 miles to the southwest.



## 10 Peaks

Alaska has the 10 highest peaks in the United States, ranging from the legendary Denali at No. 1 to Mount Hunter at No. 10 (14,573 feet). Only Alaska, California, Colorado and Washington have peaks higher than 14,000 feet.



## 656,425 sq. mi

Alaska is home to an incredible 2,670 islands, as well as 3 million lakes, 3,000 rivers, 100,000 glaciers, 100 volcanoes and 39 mountain ranges dispersed across its 656,425 total square miles (570,374 of which is land).



## 938 miles

The Iditarod sled dog race covers 938 miles from Anchorage to Nome. It is the largest sporting event in Alaska and the most well-known dogsled race in the world.



## 2.3 million

Tourism is one of the most important industries in Alaska, with about 2.3 million visitors expected each year. In 2018, more than \$1.4 billion in payroll was created by the tourism industry (1 in 10 jobs in Alaska), and visitors spent approximately \$2.2 billion at local businesses like restaurants, hotels, outdoors activities and even cannabis retailers.



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# A JOINT EFFORT.



SEVENPOINT  
— INTERIORS —

"SevenPoint Interiors continues to be one of our strongest vendor partners supporting the roll-out of our SUNNYSIDE\* dispensaries across the country. The team at SevenPoint Interiors embeds themselves with our own internal team to accomplish the seamless delivery of our new store program. They've become an integral part of building our brand by providing quality millwork, fixtures and visual displays. With their partnership, we continue to launch beautiful brand-right store environments on-time and on-budget."

— Cris Rivera SVP, Consumer Experience and Retail Marketing | Cresco Labs

## THE SEVEN POINTS

- PREFAB SOLUTIONS
- CONCEPT & INTERIOR DESIGN
- ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING
- SOURCING, PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY CHAIN SOLUTIONS
- CONSTRUCTION & PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES
- INTERIOR PRODUCT DISPLAYS & FIXTURES
- VISUAL DISPLAY & PRODUCT MERCHANDISING