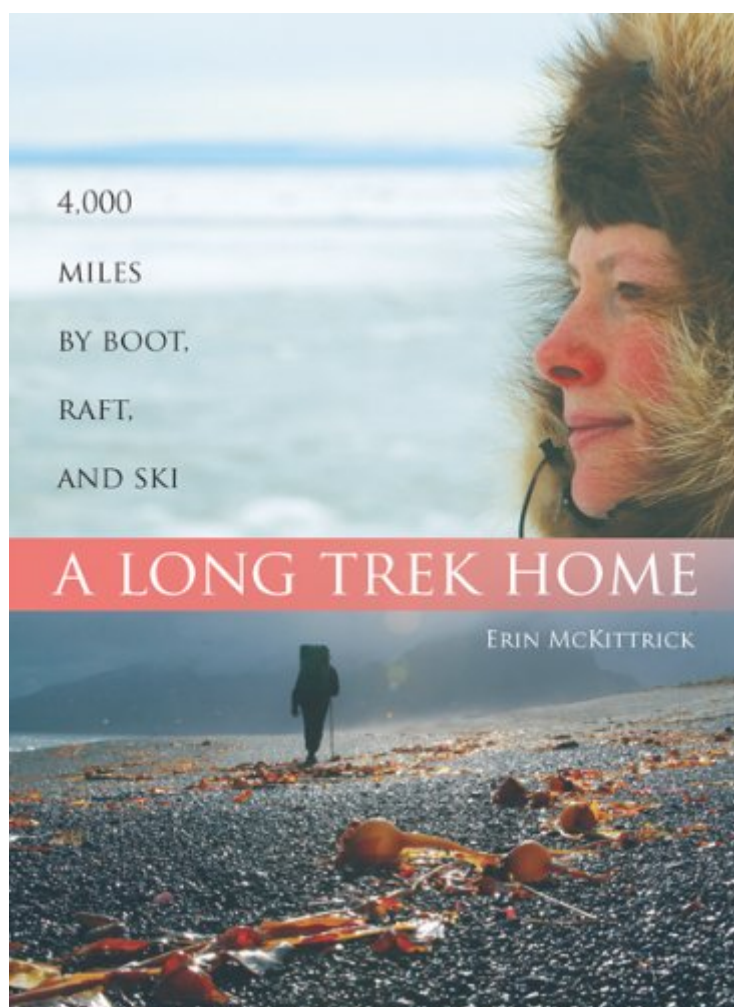


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# Long Trek Home



## Synopsis

\* Compelling adventure with an environmental focus\* An informative natural and cultural history of one of our last wild coastlines\* Author is a pioneer in "packrafting," an emerging trend in backcountry travel

In June 2007, Erin McKittrick and her husband, Hig, embarked on a 4,000-mile expedition from Seattle to the Aleutian Islands, traveling solely by human power. This is the story of their unprecedented trek along the northwestern edge of the Pacific Ocean—a year-long journey through some of the most rugged terrain in the world— and their encounters with rain, wind, blizzards, bears, and their own emotional and spiritual demons. Erin and Hig set out from Seattle with a desire to raise awareness of natural resource and conservation issues along their route: clear-cut logging of rainforests; declining wild salmon populations; extraction of mineral resources; and effects of global climate change. By taking each mile step by step, they were able to intimately explore the coastal regions of Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska, see the wilderness in its larger context, and provide a unique on-the-ground perspective. An entertaining and, at times, thrilling adventure, theirs is a journey of discovery and of insights about the tiny communities that dot this wild coast, as well as the individuals there whom they meet and inspire. Watch Erin and Hig on their Long Trek Home,

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is destined to be an Alaskan wilderness classic in the literary sense of the phrase. Not only was Hig and Erin's packraft and walk journey immense, epic, and original but her story is told so much better in this book than in their on-line blog. It's no wonder that "A Long Trek Home" is already in its second printing. While I am not really a big reader of first person adventure narratives (so can't speak with much authority), I would put the book in the same class as "Arctic Wild" by Lois Crisler, the 1950s story of a couple who spent a year in the Brooks Range filming caribou and raising wolves. Perhaps, and depending on how important Hig and Erin's non-profit activism turns out to be, "Long Trek" might some day land in the same class as "Two in the Far North", the autobiography of Margaret Murie. "A Long Trek Home" is a chronological collection of vignettes of Hig and Erin's 4500 mile trip that stretched over a year -- and into a pregnancy -- from Seattle to the Aleutians. Erin expends most of her text as emotional and detailed landscape and weather description at all scales, from boot-tip and arms length to as far as the eye can see. More interestingly, she does a wonderful portrayal of Hig, who is one of the most fascinating people I have ever met. She captures him well, but as a reader of the book, and as a fan of Hig, I long for more of him in her narrative. In fact, I'd like more human life and description of the interesting characters they meet and interact with along the way. Finally, she describes -- rather unevenly -- a host of environmental issues that are at the heart of "Ground Truth Trekking".

The book "Long Trek Home" tells the story of a married couple and wilderness hikers Erin Mckittrick and her husband Bretwood (Hig) Higman, and their 4000-mile journey from Seattle to the Aleutians, on foot and ski, and by packraft. Their journey took more than a year. **\*\*Spoiler Alert\*\*** During the journey, they witnessed the full cycle of the seasons, from steaming hot summer in Seattle, to Fall in Juneau, to the depth of winter on the Lost Coast and in the Copper Basin, to spring on the Alaska Peninsula and their final destination Unimak, the first volcanic island of the Aleutians. On the way, they endured extreme weather of rain, snow, sleet, and bitter cold. They were constantly hungry, rationing the food they carried on their backs to reach the next village and re-supply point. During a harrowing crossing of the ice-packed Icy Bay, Erin and Hig decided to start a family, as an affirmation to life. Erin got pregnant during the latter part of their journey and their son, whom she and her husband named Katmai after a volcano on the Alaska Peninsula, was a hiker before he was born. **\*\*End of Possible Spoilers\*\*** Erin and Hig owed their success not only to the fact that they were

experienced wilderness hikers, who logged more than 3000 miles in the Alaska wilderness through the years prior to their momentous journey, but also to the fact that they are true soul mates who share similar interests and inspirations. With the companionship and encouragement from each other, they accomplished an extraordinary feat that neither of them could achieve alone. Erin and Hig are devoted environmentalists. Both are highly educated â “ Erin has a master degree in molecular biology and Hig a PhD in geology.

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