



consultation and coordination

CONSULTATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The process of developing the general management plan for Denali began in May 1983. The initial effort consisted of discussions between the planning team and the park to determine the range of issues at Denali National Park and Preserve and the best approach to be taken for this planning effort. The conclusion of these discussions was that the major problems facing Denali were the increasing level of visitors attracted to the park, the ramifications of increased use on the preservation of the park's resources, and how recreational activities might best be accommodated as demand accelerated in the future. As a result the planning effort principally focused on examining the south side of Denali for opportunities to support development and for its recreational potential.

During the 1983 summer season, field trips were scheduled to explore various sites on the south side. In conjunction with the field studies, informal meetings were scheduled with knowledgeable and interested parties to present the approach being taken on the plan and to gain an understanding of any concerns that might be evident. These meetings included representatives of state agencies, the native organizations, and conservation groups.

The proposal for the south side of Denali relies heavily upon the Alaska state park system for the implementation of an activity center in Denali State Park. Several meetings were held with the Alaska Division of Parks, both in the field and in Anchorage. The purpose of these meetings was to explain the approach, gauge any interest the state might have in the proposal, and provide periodic updates on the progress of the project. The contacts with the Alaska Division of Parks eventually resulted in the memorandum of understanding presented in appendix F.

In accordance with the revised programmatic memorandum of agreement between the National Park Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Council of State Historic Preservation Officers, the National Park Service has sought the advice of the Advisory Council and the state historic preservation officer during the formulation of this plan.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was contacted for information regarding endangered or threatened plant or animal species within or adjacent to Denali National Park and Preserve (see appendix M).

As the project evolved, a planning newsletter was published and distributed to all individuals and agencies on the mailing list for Denali National Park and Preserve. The newsletter was released in February 1984, and generally indicated the scope of the plan, issues to be discussed, and a projected timeframe for completion of the project.

COMMENTS

A Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment, Land Protection Plan, and Wilderness Suitability Review was made available for public review on April 5, 1985. Public meetings were held in Fairbanks, Healy, Talkeetna, and Anchorage. Approximately 200 people attended the meetings. About 320 written comments are available for inspection at the Alaska Regional Office in Anchorage. The majority of the comments addressed the proposed plan and specific issues and concerns people had with both the proposal and the alternative. The majority of reviewers indicated support for the concept of the south-side development alternative with specific comments on further planning and environmental assessment.

The draft plan was revised and reissued for review in December 1985. The 60-day public review period extended from December 9 to February 9. No public meetings were held. About 95 letters were received. Refer to the "Summary" at the beginning of this document for information about the major changes made to the plan following each public review period.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE MARCH 1985 DRAFT PLAN

Visitor Use and Access

There should be no hotel development in the park.

The limit on vehicles along the road corridor (1984 level plus 15%) needs clarification.

The National Park Service should construct a northern access route to Kantishna.

The park and preserve backcountry should be made more accessible.

Access to the backcountry should be restricted through a permit system.

RS 2477 information should be added to the plan.

There should be no helicopter access to Ruth Glacier. It would be too noisy and intrusive.

South-side development should be further detailed as to what kinds of development and who is responsible for what activities. Further planning and environmental assessment are necessary.

The National Park Service should provide housing for shuttle bus contract drivers.

Development costs should be clarified.

Resource Management

The bear/human conflict-management plan should be elaborated upon.

The National Park Service is not providing adequate resource protection on mining activities at Kantishna.

The National Park Service is too restrictive on mining at Kantishna.

Land Protection Plan

The National Park Service should not purchase the Sheldon property (area 25). The existing use is historical and compatible.

The Kantishna mining claims should be purchased in fee rather than purchasing only the surface estates. There are too many restrictions on miners.

The Dunkle Mine exchange should not be made. The wolf townships should be acquired by the National Park Service.

Wilderness

The Ruth Glacier should be found suitable for wilderness.

Kantishna should be found unsuitable for wilderness.

Suitability criteria should be presented in the plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE DECEMBER 1985 REVISED DRAFT PLAN

Visitor Use and Access

There should be no hotel in the park.

An access chart similar to the one found in the other NPS plans should be added to the Denali plan.

The campgrounds along the park road corridor should not be removed.

The National Park Service should construct a northern access route or the Stampede road.

The National Park Service should clarify their opposition to the Stampede road.

NPS implementation of ANILCA's "adequate and feasible" access is too restrictive.

A more detailed description of the proposed state and federal responsibilities on the south side of Denali should be added to the plan.

The National Park Service should contact native corporations regarding development projects.

Resource Management

NPS mineral resource management under 36 CFR 9A (requiring plans of operations) is "excessive, restrictive, and bureaucratic."

Impacts on natural resources could be caused by the south-side development project.

Land Protection Plan

Purchasing surface rights in Kantishna is excessive; it seems to indicate that the National Park Service wants to eliminate mining.

The National Park Service should have an outreach program to find out what projects landowners and community residents are contemplating that could affect the park or preserve.

Wilderness

All suitable lands should be designated as wilderness.

There is too much wilderness in Alaska and in Denali National Park and Preserve. No more wilderness should be designated.

PUBLIC COMMENTS GENERAL TO ALL OF THE 1985 REVISED DRAFT PLANS

General

The National Park Service should continue to protect and maintain the undeveloped character of the national park system units in Alaska.

The National Park Service is using policies that are too restrictive--the National Park Service is anti-people.

The public is not capable of developing data to respond to the plans.

Radio repeaters do not belong in parks.

Private land, subsistence, and mining are cultural resources and should be recognized as such.

Plans provide little improvement of recreational opportunities.

Employment opportunities for local residents were not discussed.

There should be subsistence management plans for each national park system unit.

Definitions of traditional, temporary use, and public safety should be included.

Implementation of the plans will be too expensive.

Requests for temporary facilities should be addressed on a case-by-case basis, not in a blanket prohibition (preserves only).

What would constitute a "significant expansion" of temporary facilities needs to be determined (preserves only).

Natural Resources

The management intent for fish and wildlife with respect to the National Park Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game should be clarified.

All national park system units should have class I air quality.

Dogs should be the only pack animals allowed.

The Park Service should make a greater effort to identify all resources, including minerals.

The difference between "natural and healthy" and "healthy" wildlife populations should be discussed, and management implications should be identified.

The National Park Service should consider following U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policy on the regulation of navigable rivers.

The plans need to state that the Park Service has ultimate authority for managing fish and wildlife.

The process for involving fish and game advisory councils and committees needs to be described.

Land Protection Plan

The plans need to state that complete federal ownership of land is needed for proper management.

All private lands need to be acquired.

Boundary adjustments could be used to eliminate private lands within park system units.

Inholders are threatened by unnecessary regulations.

The high priority for the acquisition of nonfederal lands is opposed.

The Park Service should consider land exchanges within national park system units to minimize effects on native allottees.

Native allotments should not be acquired.

Inholders would like to provide commercial services for other park users.

NEPA and 810 documents need to be prepared for land protection plans.

Private lands should be used as developed areas.

The mining EISs should be completed before making compatibility determinations.

Additions to national park system units should not simply be the same designation as adjacent units.

The land protection plans violate ANILCA provisions for access to inholdings.

Access

The National Park Service should limit the number of off-road vehicles.

RS 2477 maps should be deleted from the plans.

The use of helicopters should be restricted to administrative uses only.

The National Park Service does not have adjudicative or management authority for RS 2477 rights-of-way.

Snowmachines and motorboats should be further restricted.

ORV determinations relating to subsistence use lack substantiation.

RS 2477 rights-of-way should be resolved before wilderness recommendations are made.

If permits are required for ATVs, they should be easy to obtain.

The Wrangell's ORV study results should not be applied to other national park system units.

Public Involvement

Methods for involving local residents in planning and management should be identified.

The system for getting rural input in preparing the plans was inadequate.

Mechanisms for public review of resource management plans need to be provided.

Wilderness

Potential transportation corridors should not be recommended for wilderness designation.

Congress should review all changes in wilderness boundaries.

Wilderness areas need to be managed more liberally to be consistent with ANILCA.