# general management plan
# land protection plan
# wilderness suitability review

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## SUMMARY

This combined document consists of the general management plan, the land protection plan, and the wilderness suitability review for Denali National Park and Preserve. The purpose of the general management plan is to protect the ecosystems of Denali while accommodating recreation, subsistence, and other valid uses. The plan proposes a cooperative federal/state venture to develop visitor facilities on the south side of Denali. This development is seen as a way of creating new opportunities for recreation and of accommodating anticipated increases in the number of park visitors. One of the major concerns is that visitor use is affecting wildlife behavior and diminishing the unique wildlife-viewing opportunities along the park road. To resolve this problem, the plan proposes to monitor wildlife populations and to reduce the amount of traffic on the road to avoid unnacceptable changes in wildlife behavior.

When Congress expanded Denali National Park and Preserve, it recognized that subsistence uses were appropriate activities that should be allowed to continue in the new park and preserve additions, and sport hunting is allowed in the preserve. These uses raise a number of management issues, primarily questions of access. These issues are addressed in the general management plan to the extent that they can be resolved at this time.

The land protection plan identifies the compatible and incompatible uses of nonfederal lands in the park and preserve and recommends the actions needed to protect significant resource values. Mining is recognized as a valid use that will continue under current regulations. The plan proposes the acquisition of the surface estates to the mining properties in Kantishna to preclude any further commercial or residential development in that area. A land exchange with the state is proposed to place the "wolf townships" in public ownership to protect prime habitat for caribou and wolves.

The wilderness suitability review finds that approximately 95 percent of the new additions to the park and preserve are suitable for wilderness designation.

## CHANGES FROM THE DRAFT PLAN TO THE REVISED DRAFT PLAN

### General Management Plan

The following major changes were made to the "Visitor Use and General Development" section of the plan.

The proposal to provide four mountain huts on the south side of Denali was deleted.

The proposal for helicopter access to Ruth Glacier was deleted.

The proposal to limit private vehicle and bus traffic on the park road to 1984 levels plus 15 percent was elaborated upon to describe a three-stage implementation program.

A development concept plan was proposed to reexamine the need for a new hotel to replace the existing temporary facility near the park entrance. It was noted that the DCP and an environmental assessment would be available for review by the public.

The following major changes were made to the "Resource Management" section:

The discussions of resource management plans and of fish and wildlife management were rewritten. The policy on fish stocking was clarified with regard to waters surrounded by private lands.

Discussions of water rights and of submerged lands, shorelands, and tidelands were added.

It was clarified that class I air quality applies only to the designated wilderness area. The 1980 additions to the park and preserve are class II airsheds.

### Land Protection Plan

The plan was revised to show that no interest is needed in area 25, since the current historical use pattern is compatible with park resources.

### Wilderness Suitability Review

The wilderness suitability criteria were added to the plan.

The Ruth Gorge/Sheldon Amphitheater area was found to be suitable for wilderness designation.

The Kantishna mining district was found to be unsuitable for wilderness designation.

## CHANGES FROM THE REVISED DRAFT PLAN TO THE FINAL PLAN

### Introduction

A new section was added to describe public involvement in plan implementation.

General Management Plan

The following changes were made to the "Visitor Use and General Development" section of the plan.

The proposal to remove some interior campgrounds was deleted. Under the final plan, all the existing campgrounds will be retained. Eventually, however, visitors will no longer be able to drive their private vehicles to their campsites. By the end of stage two of the traffic management program, all the campgrounds beyond Savage River will be accessible by shuttle bus only. The Wonder Lake campground will be relocated in the same vicinity and expanded from 20 to 30 sites. Four handicap-accessible sites will be added to the Savage River campground.

The scope of the development concept plan for the hotel area was further defined. The DCP will include the options of removing the hotel from the park, rehabilitating the hotel, building a new hotel on the existing site, and building a hotel on a new site. An environmental assessment will be prepared for public review.

Development costs for the road corridor were updated.

New language regarding state, federal, and private responsibilities was added to the discussion of the proposed development for the south side of Denali. It was noted that an environmental impact statement for the south-side development concept plan will be prepared for public review.

New language was added to the "Natural Resources" section to clarify the proposals for the management of fish and wildlife.

The following changes were made to the "Access" section:

The potential adverse resource impacts of a northern access route were described in greater detail, and the NPS management intent for this area was clarified.

A discussion of maintenance of aircraft landing strips was added.

A detailed access chart was included for further clarification of this issue.

A commitment was made to continually inventory access routes and uses and to involve the public in future actions regarding access.

A new section on "Temporary Facilities and Cabins" was added. The discussion of temporary facilities was revised to clarify and provide additional justification for the NPS management intent regarding temporary facilities in the preserve. A discussion of cabins was added to clarify the management intent regarding unclaimed cabins on federal land.

A new section on "Subsistence" was added. It includes a general discussion of title VIII of ANILCA, a commitment to prepare a subsistence management plan, and a revised discussion of subsistence access. A definition of "traditional" was added to help clarify the NPS management intent regarding traditionally employed means of surface transportation for subsistence purposes.

## Land Protection Plan

Land status information and the Land Status map were updated.

A new section on "Implementation Procedures" was added to clarify the preferred options for the acquisition of lands or interests in lands, the NPS policy on the use of condemnation, and how it will be determined whether acquired lands should be designated as park or preserve.

A new section on "Compliance Considerations" was added to clarify NEPA and ANILCA section 810 compliance requirements for the land protection plan.

For areas 34-39, the minimum interest was changed from "none" to "less than fee (easement)." Refer to appendix L for descriptions of these properties and the justifications for the recommended actions.

## Wilderness Suitability Review

Language was added clarifying the suitability of potential RS 2477 rights-of-way for wilderness designation.

## Consultation and Coordination

A summary of comments on the draft plan and the revised draft plan was added to this section.