

# **LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN**

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## **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve**

**June, 2010**



**Prepared by**

**Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**Bering Land Bridge National Preserve**

**Harpers Ferry Center  
Interpretive Planning**



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# INTRODUCTION

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve (BELA), which covers 2.7 million acres, was established by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) on December 2, 1980.

Approximately 12,000 – 15,000 calendar years ago, during the Last Ice Age, the water level of the oceans were lower, exposing land that today is under the Bering and Chukchi Seas. During the glacial epoch this was part of a migration route for people, animals, and plants. Most archeologists agree that the Bering Land Bridge, also called Beringia, was a major migration route where humans passed from



Asia to populate the Americas. The Preserve's western boundary lies 42 miles from the Bering Strait and the fishing boundary between the United States and Russia. Beringia still exists today in the people of Northwest Alaska and the Russian Far East. Though they are separated by water the people of these two areas have common heritage and depend on the same environment.



Current visitor activities may include a visit to the Visitor Center in Nome where one can learn about Beringia and receive some general information about the Preserve and listen to guest speakers (archaeologists, biologists, scientists, park staff, etc.). Within the Preserve and on the Nome road system one can go birdwatching for raptors, waterfowl, and some rare Asiatic species. For a special experience, one can take a flight to Serpentine Hot Springs and hike among huge granite tors which encircle the springs. Camping,

hiking, backpacking, exploration, nature observation, photography, hunting, gathering and coastal boating are among other possible activities. Winter offers opportunities for snowmobiling, dog sledding, and some cross-country skiing. The Preserve and surrounding areas including Native villages offer opportunities to learn about traditional subsistence lifestyles and historic reindeer herding.

# THE PLANNING PROCESS

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This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) recommends actions that should occur over the next seven to ten years. It identifies Preserve themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide variety of both personal and non-personal interpretive services and outreach activities that will best communicate the Preserve's purpose, significance and themes. In concert with the Preserve's Annual Implementation Plan and Interpretive Database, it completes the Preserve's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, as established in DO-6. In addition, this planning process has been customized to meet the individual Preserve's needs, conditions, and special circumstances. The ultimate product is an effective and efficient interpretive program that achieves management goals, provides appropriate visitor opportunities, and facilitates desired visitor experiences.

The Preserve and Harpers Ferry Center, (HFC) generally agreed that the project would start in the summer of 2009 with a Scoping Trip, Foundations Workshop and Recommendations Workshop conducted in July/August by the HFC Interpretive Planner and several technical specialists provided by Harpers Ferry. The HFC Planner would also collect information to finalize a Project Agreement and address any unique circumstances or concerns with management. Nichole Andler would facilitate the logistics and invitations for these workshops and scoping trip.

Barring legislative changes or major new revelations, the foundational elements expressed in this LRIP—purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals—will remain constant over the life of the plan. Specific recommendations about media and programs may need to be updated as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further design documents must be produced to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

## PARK PURPOSE

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Preserve Purpose describes why an area was set aside and what specific purpose exists for this area. Purpose is derived from legislation, legislative history, public participation, and public rule making. Purpose statements may reflect traditional purposes of preservation and enjoyment, the linkages between the management unit and its cultural and natural resources, connections with groups and areas external to the Preserve, and language of the enabling legislation. Additional purposes may have emerged since this area was originally set aside.

**The purpose of Bering Land Bridge National Preserve is to protect and provide the opportunity to study and interpret the landscape which contains an invaluable record of floral, faunal, and human migration between Asia and North America and which supports an ongoing traditional subsistence culture.**

# PARK LEGISLATION

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The Preserve legislative statement clarifies and reveals key components of the original enabling legislation and subsequent pertinent legislation that enabled this area as a National Preserve. Primary sections of this legislation follow:

## Public Law 96-487

**To provide for the designation and conservation of certain public lands in the State of Alaska, including the designation of units of the National Preserve, National [H.R. 39] Wildlife Refuge, National Forest, National Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Wilderness Preservation Systems, and for other purposes.**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the “Alaska National Interest Lands Interest Lands Conservation Act”.**

\* \* \* \* \*

## **TITLE I—PURPOSES, DEFINITIONS, AND MAPS**

### **PURPOSES**

**SEC. 101. (a) In order to Preserve for the benefit, use, education, and inspiration of present and future generations certain lands and waters in the State of Alaska that contain nationally significant natural, scenic, historic, archeological, geological, scientific, wilderness, cultural, recreational, and wildlife values, the units described in the following titles are hereby established.**

**(b) It is the intent of Congress in this Act to Preserve unrivaled scenic and geological values associated with natural landscapes; to provide for the maintenance of sound populations of, and habitat for, wildlife species of inestimable value to the citizens of Alaska and the Nation, including those species dependent on vast relatively undeveloped areas; to Preserve in their natural state extensive unaltered arctic tundra, boreal forest, and coastal rainforest ecosystems; to protect the resources related to subsistence needs; to protect and Preserve historic and**

# PARK LEGISLATION

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(Continued)

archeological sites, rivers, and lands, and to Preserve wilderness resource values and related recreational opportunities including but not limited to hiking, canoeing, fishing, and sport hunting, within large arctic and subarctic wildlands and on free-flowing rivers; and to maintain opportunities for scientific research and undisturbed ecosystems.

(c) It is further the intent and purpose of this Act consistent with management of fish and wildlife in accordance with recognized scientific principles and the purposes for which each conservation system unit is established, designated, or expanded by or pursuant to this Act, to provide the opportunity for rural residents engaged in a subsistence way of life to continue to do so.

## TITLE II—NATIONAL PRESERVE SYSTEM

### ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW AREAS

**SEC. 201.** The following areas are hereby established as units of the National Preserve System and shall be administered by the Secretary under the laws governing the administration of such lands and under the provisions of this Act:

(2) Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, containing approximately two million four hundred and fifty-seven thousand acres of public land, as generally depicted on map numbered BELA-90,005, and dated October 1978. The Preserve shall be managed for the following purposes, among others: To protect and interpret examples of arctic plant communities, volcanic lava flows, ash explosions, coastal formations, and other geologic processes; to protect habitat for internationally significant populations of migratory birds; to provide for archeological and paleontological study, in cooperation with Native Alaskans, of the process of plant and animal migration, including man, between North America and the Asian Continent; to protect habitat for, and populations of, fish and wildlife including, but not limited to, marine mammals, brown/grizzly bears, moose, and wolves; subject to such reasonable regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, to continue reindeer grazing use, including necessary facilities and equipment, within the areas which on January 1, 1976, were subject to reindeer grazing permits, in accordance with sound range management practices; to protect the viability of subsistence resources; and in a manner consistent with the foregoing, to provide for outdoor recreation and environmental education activities including public access for recreational purposes to the Serpentine Hot Springs area. The Secretary shall permit the continuation of customary patterns and modes of travel during periods of adequate snow cover within a

# PARK LEGISLATION

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(Continued)

one-hundred-foot right-of-way along either side of an existing route from Deering to the Taylor Highway, subject to such reasonable regulations as the Secretary may promulgate to assure that such travel is consistent with the foregoing purposes.

## **Bering Land Bridge National Monument**

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

The Bering Land Bridge, now overlain by the Chukchi Sea, the Bering Sea and Bering Strait, was the migration route by which many plants, animals, and humans arrived on the North American continent. The monument hereby created has within it an invaluable record of this migration.

There are found here rich archeological sites giving evidence of human migration during the periods the Bridge was water free. Also found are paleontological sites providing abundant evidence of the migration of plants and animals onto the continent in the ages before the human migrations. The arctic conditions here are favorable to the preservation of this paleontological record from minute pollen grains and insects to the large mammals such as the mammoth.

The monument is also the summering area for a number of Old World bird species, which feed and nest in the area. It is one of the few places in North America where ornithologists are able to study these species.

The diversity of the soils, topography, permafrost action and climate within the monument leads to an excellent representation of varied, yet interrelated tundra plant communities. Their proximity and diversity make the area a prime outdoor laboratory.

The area is also rich in volcanics. Here is the opportunity to study unique Arctic lava flows which erupted through deep permafrost. The tubes and cracks of these flows are now filled with the sheen of permanent ice. In the Devil Mountain area are the uniquely paired maar explosion craters which were formed by violent explosions

# PARK LEGISLATION

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(Continued)

resulting from the steam pressure released when the hot volcanic ejecta contacted the water and ice that covered this wetland area. These craters are now crystal clear lakes bounded by a shoreline of volcanic ash, cinders and scoria.

The land withdrawn and reserved by this Proclamation for the protection of the geological, archeological, paleontological, biological and other phenomena enumerated above supports now, as it has in the past, the unique subsistence culture of the local residents. The continued existence of this culture, which depends on subsistence hunting, and its availability for study, enhance the historic and scientific values of the natural objects protected herein because of the ongoing interaction of the subsistence culture with those objects. Accordingly, the opportunity for local residents to engage in subsistence hunting is a value to be protected and will continue under the administration of the monument.

Section 2 of the Act of June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. 431), authorizes the President, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments, and to reserve as part thereof parcels of land, the limits of which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected.

Now, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by Section 2 of the Act of June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. 431), do proclaim that there are hereby set apart and reserved as the Bering Land Bridge National Monument all lands, including submerged lands, and waters owned or controlled by the United States within the boundaries of the area depicted as the Bering Land Bridge National Monument on the map numbered BELA-90,006 attached to and forming a part of this Proclamation. The area reserved consists of approximately 2,590,000 acres, and is the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected. Lands, including submerged lands, and waters within these boundaries not owned by the United States shall be reserved as a part of the monument upon acquisition of title thereto by the United States.

# PARK LEGISLATION

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(Continued)

All lands, including submerged lands, and all waters within the boundaries of this monument are hereby appropriated and withdrawn from entry, location, selection, sale or other disposition under the public land laws, other than exchange. There is also reserved all water necessary to the proper care and management of those objects protected by this monument and for the proper administration of the monument in accordance with applicable laws.

The establishment of this monument is subject to valid existing rights, including, but not limited to, valid selections under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), and under or confirmed in the Alaska Statehood Act (48 U.S.C. Note preceding Section 21 ).

Nothing in this Proclamation shall be deemed to revoke any existing withdrawal, reservation or appropriation, including any withdrawal under Section 17(d) (1) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1616(d) (1) ); however, the national monument shall be the dominant reservation. Nothing in this Proclamation is intended to modify or revoke the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding dated September 1, 1972, entered into between the State of Alaska and the United States as part of the negotiated settlement of Alaska v. Morton, Civil No. A-48-72 (D. Alaska, Complaint filed April 10, 1972).

The Secretary of the Interior shall promulgate such regulations as are appropriate, including regulation of the opportunity to engage in a subsistence lifestyle by local residents. The Secretary may close the national monument, or any portion thereof, to subsistence uses of a particular fish, wildlife or plant population if necessary for reasons of public safety, administration, or to ensure the natural stability or continued viability of such population.

Warning is hereby given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, destroy or remove any feature of this monument and not to locate or settle upon any of the lands thereof.

# PARK LEGISLATION

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**IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and third.**

**JIMMY CARTER**  
President of the United States

**Specifically, section 201 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) states that the Preserve shall be managed for the following purposes, among others:**

- **To protect and interpret examples of arctic plant communities, volcanic lava flows, ash explosions, coastal formations, and other geologic processes;**
- **To protect habitat for internationally significant populations of migratory birds;**
- **To provide for archeological and paleontological study, in cooperation with Native Alaskans, of the process of plant and animal migration, including man, between North America and the Asian Continent;**
- **To protect habitat for, and populations of, fish and wildlife including, but not limited to, marine mammals, brown/grizzly bears, moose, and wolves;**
- **To continue reindeer grazing use, including necessary facilities and equipment;**
- **To protect the viability of subsistence resources;**
- **To provide outdoor recreation and environmental education activities including public access for recreational purposes to the Serpentine Hot Springs area.**

**Public Law 96-487, Sec. 201 (2):**

**The national Preserve shall permit the continuation of customary patterns and modes of travel during periods of adequate snow cover within a one-hundred-foot right-of-way along either side of an existing route from Deering to the Taylor Highway, subject to such reasonable regulations as the Secretary of Interior may promulgate to assure that such travel is consistent with the purpose of the Preserve and section 201 of ANILCA.**

**To continue reindeer grazing use, including necessary facilities and equipment, within the areas which on January 1, 1976, were subject to reindeer grazing permits, in accordance with sound range management practices.**

# PARK SIGNIFICANCE

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Significance Statements describe the distinctiveness of the combined resources of this NPS unit. These

Significance statements describe the importance or distinctiveness of the resources of an area.

statements should reflect the uniqueness of the Preserve's natural, cultural, scientific, recreational, and inspirational resources. The statements embody the power of the place through a factual representation of what makes it special. Usually stated as facts placed in relevant context, these statements summarize the essence of the importance of this Preserve's resources to our natural and cultural heritage. Significance Statements may evolve over time as a result of discoveries and updates to our knowledge about this place.

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve's resources are of great significance for the following reasons:

- **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve protects and provides opportunities for the study of paleontological, archeological, and biological resources that reveal a record of migration across the land bridge between Asia and North America.**
- **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve protects and interprets, in collaboration with Alaska Natives, thousands of years of use and occupation by the Inupiaq people and their continuing subsistence way of life.**
- **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve protects natural resources and native habitats that provide the opportunity for local rural Alaska residents to engage in customary and traditional subsistence uses.**
- **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve protects the integrity of the Serpentine Hot Springs, its natural setting, and its cultural and spiritual significance.**
- **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve protects and provides opportunities to study and interpret a variety of high latitude volcanic features unique to North America.**
- **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve protects reindeer herding habitat to ensure the continued opportunity for reindeer herding by Alaska Natives.**

# PARK PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

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Primary interpretive themes are those ideas and concepts about Bering Land Bridge National Preserve that are vital to helping visitors gain an understanding of the Preserve's significance and

Primary themes should be few enough in number to provide focus for the interpretive program, but numerous enough to represent the full range of Preserve significance.

resources. The themes, which are based on the Preserve's mission, purpose, and resource significance, provide the foundation for all interpretive media and programs in the Preserve. The themes do not include everything that may be interpreted, but they do address those ideas that are critical to understanding and appreciating the Preserve's importance. All interpretive efforts—through both personal and non-personal services—should relate to one or more of the themes and each theme should be addressed by some part of the overall interpretive program. Effective interpretation is achieved when visitors are able to associate resources with values and consequently derive something meaningful from their experience.

The following Primary Interpretive Themes will provide the basis for interpretation at the Preserve:

- **BERINGIA.** Bering Land Bridge National Preserve lies at the heart of continental crossroads that profoundly influenced the distribution of life in the Western Hemisphere, including migration to South America, Greenland, as well as Europe, and Asia.
- **PEOPLE ON THE LAND.** Alaska Native people remain an integral part of the environment of Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, as their ancestors have for thousands of years. Subsistence is an integral part of the ecosystem and is essential to the physical, economic, traditional, cultural, and social existence of rural Alaska Native residents.
- **SERPENTINE HOT SPRINGS.** The tors, along with the waters of Serpentine Hot Springs, have provided inspiration and healing to the people who have come to this place for thousands of years.
- **INTERNATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES.** Bering Land Bridge National Preserve contains internationally significant volcanic and geologic resources that illustrate the dynamic environment of the region.
- **WILD, VAST REMOTE AREAS.** Bering Land Bridge is of a wilderness character, containing ecosystems as they have evolved naturally with only isolated manifestations of Euro-American influences.

# PARK PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

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- **SURVIVAL STRATEGIES.** Survival strategies and adaptations of plant and wildlife in the arctic/sub-arctic are as wondrous as the environment is extreme — often defying our expectations about the ability of life to thrive in such conditions.
- **REINDEER HERDING.** Reindeer and the reindeer herding way of life developed into a distinctive element of the historic fabric of Bering Land Bridge National Preserve following its introduction into Alaska in the late 1800's by missionary teachers.

# DESIRED AUDIENCE EXPERIENCES

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Desired Audience Experiences describe what physical, intellectual, and emotional experiences should be available for visitors and local residents to Bering Land Bridge National Preserve. These experiences should be available to people of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive impairments. The experiences listed below are priority ranked based on input during the Foundational Workshop.

**“Desired experiences” is what people do, sense, feel, think, and learn. It is affected by experiences prior to the visit and affects behavior after the visit. The ultimate goal of interpretation is for visitors to experience strong emotional and intellectual connections with the meanings represented in Preserve resources and as a result become better stewards of these places which characterize our national heritage.**

## **Information and Orientation**

- **Audiences want to access information about BELA in a variety of ways**
- **Audiences would like to have some exhibits which are changed and updated as new information becomes available**
- **Audiences would like to have more extensive Visitor Center information and new exhibits available**
- **Audiences will receive information about the Preserve at other points of entry to the area, including airports and other tourist contact points**

## **Support Facilities and Programs**

- **Preserve audiences want to have a safe experience**
- **Preserve audiences want to know there is clean water and good local food to sample**
- **Preserve audiences would like to be able to purchase mementos to take home with them and to allow them to share the experience with others**
- **Visitors and local residents want to know there are clean restrooms available**
- **Visitors and local residents want a Ranger Station / Contact Station in one or more villages, including Wales, Shishmaref and/or Deering**

# DESIRED EXPERIENCES

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(Continued)

## Personal Experiences

- Audiences want to encounter and understand the Alaska Native connections to this land and its special places
- Audiences want to know why the Preserve is important
- Audiences want to know about Beringia
- Preserve Audiences want local people to live their traditional native lifestyles in the Preserve, including hunting and fishing
- Preserve Audiences want to experience the Bering Land Bridge landscape and have access to the Preserve
- Audiences want to know about the “People on the Land” and subsistence culture
- Audiences want to learn about the innovative ways that people have developed to survive in the Arctic. This should include simple and complex things from storing food to winter travel and building shelter.
- Audiences want to encounter and learn about wildlife, including Muskox, Birds and Caribou
- Audiences want to learn about Ice Age mammals
- Visitors want to understand and use proper etiquette when meeting Alaska Native people
- Audiences want to look across the Bering Strait
- Audiences want to have fun
- Preserve audiences want to discover unique features of and have personal experiences in the Preserve, not just Serpentine area
- Preserve Audiences want to know how Park Service activities may affect them and help the local community

# DESIRED EXPERIENCES

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(Continued)

## Interpretive Activities

- Audiences want cool museum exhibits
- Audiences want to access information about BELA in a variety of ways
- Audiences want a high quality, interactive “virtual” experience
- Visitors and local residents want to understand how Climate Change is connected to and affect the Preserve’s landscape and resources
- Audiences want to contact and interact with a Park Ranger
- Audiences want to “hear” stories from local people, not a performance by an outsider who learned, but did not experience it.
- Visitors, local residents and educators want an established Interactive Educational Curriculum available online and in the classroom, that can be utilized for Distance Learning as well. One facet of this educational curriculum should explore the “ologies” that Dave Hopkins brought together
- Audiences would like to see a “passport program” for local students that would help them explore the Preserve’s resources in depth
- Audiences want the stories told accurately in a way that honors local peoples
- Audiences want a varied and effective Virtual Visitor Experience to include the Preserve website, podcasts, social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc..) and short videos that can be played on a wide variety of electronic devices

## Recreational Activities and Experiences

- Preserve Audiences would like to have summer access to the Preserve available by a greater variety of motorized and safe means
- Audiences would like to have a wide variety of things to do that relate to the Preserve’s Interpretive Themes

# PARK USER AND AUDIENCE PROFILES

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About 1,000 to 1,200 visitors and local residents come to the Preserve visitor center annually. Accurate visitation numbers within the Preserve are not known. There tends to be three primary audience groups area visitors, local residents and school groups. Adult visitor groups are mostly Caucasian with a few Alaska Native participants. School groups are Caucasian, Alaska Native and Asian American. Travelers into the Preserve include local Seward Peninsula residents from Nome and the surrounding villages, such as Shishmaref, Wales and Deering and travelers from other places in Alaska, the rest of the US and international visitors. Guest speakers on reindeer herding, wildlife and Alaska Native history (archaeology) as well as the cultural workshops, tend to attract a more varied audience to the visitor center.

The primary audience groups are:

- **Visitors, from outside of Nome, visiting primarily during the summer months. They come to experience Nome and its history, its remote location and road system. Birders come in May and June and gold prospectors come in July and August. Alaska residents come all summer because they have “always” wanted to come here. Only a handful of summer visitors come to Nome with the Preserve on their agenda and that is usually to get the Preserve stamp or find out how to get to Serpentine Hot Springs. Most visitors come to see us after they get to Nome and another local business or the museum or Nome Visitor Center recommend visitors come visit us. A few visitors find us after they see our programs advertised on posters, on the radio or in the newspaper.**
- **Visitors in Nome for the Iditarod. Even though their primary purpose for being in Nome is the Iditarod, these visitors also seek out the programs provided by the Park Service. They mostly come from out of the State of Alaska but also include Alaskans and international visitors. Most visit the Visitor Center, but have no intention to explore the actual Preserve.**
- **Nome Residents are the primary participants in children programs, ranger guided hikes, bird programs, and winter workshops. This can include families, locals, and long-term seasonal folks. Affiliated peoples are also included in this category.**
- **Village residents. At this time, the primary participants are school children and programs are provided in the local schools.**
- **Students and those wanting some form of education about Beringia and the arctic ecosystem**

# **EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES**

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The following is a summary description of visitor experiences and conditions, as they existed at the onset of this long-range interpretive planning process.

## **PRE-VISIT, ARRIVAL AND WAYFINDING INFORMATION**

Information regarding Bering Land Bridge National Preserve is available by mail, phone, and on the Preserve's website. No analysis has been done regarding website effectiveness. Information is also available in guidebooks like those from the Fodor's and Lonely Planet. The airport at Nome lacks substantial wayfinding guidance.

The Preserve receives daily requests for information via letters, phone calls and emails. Most requests are for basic information (brochures, pamphlets, junior ranger programs, etc.) and information on how to access Nome, the Preserve and sometimes other villages on the Seward Peninsula.

There are no directional signs or wayside exhibits at this time. Signs along the three major roads adjacent to Nome have no information on the Preserve. The Preserve plans to update their sign program, utilizing design components from the NPS Graphic Standards.

Visitors traveling to the Preserve have to make a concerted effort to get to Nome and then make special arrangements to access the Preserve via small aircraft, boat or hiking.

## **MEDIA OUTREACH**

The Preserve informs the public of upcoming events and special programs through public service announcements and press releases sent to area newspapers and radio stations. A Preserve newsletter is distributed intermittently to all post office boxes in Nome and nearby villages.

## **WEBSITE**

The Preserve website is a great place for information on trip planning and information on ice age wildlife and should be improved upon. The Preserve has one podcast, a Facebook fan page, Twitter feed and Flickr pages. A greater social media presence is planned for the Preserve.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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## INTERPRETIVE AND VISITOR CONTACT FACILITIES AND AREAS

### Visitor Center

The Bering Land Bridge Visitor Center and Beringia Room are the primary visitor contact areas and are located outside the Preserve in downtown Nome, AK. There is a small Alaska Geographic Association bookstore in the visitor center (VC). The visitor center has a touch table with many interpretive items most, without any accompanying interpretation or labeling. There is an exhibit case with items on loan from the Carrie McClain Museum with Chukotkan Native Art and Russian pottery and a samovar. A bulletin board has rotating exhibits that are made in-house. Topics are selected based on what visitors are in the area to see or one of the Preserve's significant resources.

Four maps on the wall are popular with Preserve audiences, especially the circumpolar map and map of the Preserve. A map with the road system would be popular and is often requested by visitors and local people. A primary item in the visitor center that brings people in from the lobby is a giant short-faced bear (GSFB) skull. There are also black, grizzly, and polar bear skulls to compare sizes with the GSFB. A walrus tusk, Dall's sheep horn and mammoth leg bone and tusk fragment are also in the cases. A saber toothed cat skull sits on top of the display case next to the GSFB. Free interpretive items are displayed on exhibit cases and front desk. Many of the display items have been in the Preserve VC for years, some since 1997 when the VC first opened.

The Beringia Room has limited exhibits provided by the NPS Shared Beringian Heritage Program. A nice framed circumpolar map is on display. Media devices including, a large HD Monitor (42"), DVD/VCR combo player, video conferencing equipment, and an Apple TV are in this room. Seating for up to 45 people can be provided in this room for interpretive programs, workshops and guest speakers. This room is currently not used on a daily basis, but is used at least once a week during the summer.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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## INTERPRETIVE MEDIA RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

### Audiovisual Media

Audio Visual Presentations are shown in the Beringia Room on request and as scheduled. A film, titled “Bering Land Bridge 1991” provides audiences with a view into the Preserve. Additionally Journey of Discovery and Siulpta Paitaat are movies produced by the Shared Beringian Heritage Program about stories of the people and history of the Preserve and/or Seward Peninsula. Information has been collected to contact National Geographic to get permission to show their films on the short-faced bear and saber-toothed cat.

### Publications

There are several Preserve publications. The Unigrud brochure needs to be updated and made more interpretive. This document is often the only “view” of the Preserve that visitors to Nome and those requesting information will ever see. The brochure does have the entire road system on the Peninsula, making it useful to the City of Nome visitor center to use as basic visitor information

The Junior Ranger book is new (2007) and very popular. It is used in Junior Ranger Programs and school programs, but is most requested by visitors from out of state who download and print it from the Preserve’s website. Visitors then request the patch and certificate from the Preserve.

A newsletter is produced on an irregular basis and distributed to all post office boxes in Nome and villages adjacent to the Preserve. A more reliable schedule needs to be maintained for its creation and distribution.

The Serpentine Hot Springs brochure was created to the messaging standard but has too much information with no photographs of the place, which is considered by some as one of the most unique and beautiful places in the world. The brochure would be more useful as a trip planning tool and history and geologic information available online.

Other publications available are NPS National Publications and other local community based information. They include, the NOME visitor guide, Caribou trails from Alaska Department of Fish & Game, NPS brochures including Climate Change, old VIP brochure, issues of Alaska Park Science, Bear Safety, Wildland Fire and Subsistence brochures.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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(Continued)

## Wayside Exhibits and Interpretive Signs

There are currently no signs or wayside exhibits on the Nome road system or in the Preserve.

## MEDIA ASSETS

### Artifact and Archive Collection

Artifact collection is available online and accessible from the Preserves website. The Chief of Cultural Resources will also loan materials to the Preserve visitor center for special events and display.

### Preserve Library

The Preserve has a small library with a good collection of books related to Beringia, the Arctic, wildlife and Alaska.

Several films on Ice Age wildlife, especially mammoths, and the arctic are available in the Preserve's library as well.

## PERSONAL SERVICES

### Visitor Center Contacts

People going to the visitor center have the potential to have very high quality informational and interpretive contact. These contacts range from providing basic visitor travel and safety information to discussing Preserve resources or items on exhibit, such as maps and GSFBS.

### Children's Programs

Junior Ranger programs are given for eight weeks during the summer. Several children attend for most or all eight weeks and are from the local community. Some local children and visiting cousins or friends will come for one or two weeks. Junior Ranger Programs are for 6-12 year olds and tend to attract 6-10 year olds.

Tundra Tots are programs given once a week for several weeks during the summer. This is only the second year for Tundra Tots and moving the program from Saturdays to

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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**(Continued)**

Wednesday has made a huge difference in attendance. These programs are geared for 3-5 year olds and their parents.

Both Junior Ranger programs and Tundra Tots provide programs focus on the Preserve's primary purposes and interpretive themes.

## **Interpretive Programs**

Ranger Guided hikes have been conducted for the last three summers and seem to be growing in popularity. However, there are still hikes early in the summer that are unattended. Hikes are conducted on state or BLM land along the road systems as the Preserve is inaccessible for day hikes.



Evening Programs are conducted every other Friday in the Beringia Room during June, July and August. These programs are 30-45 minutes and will sometime feature guest speakers. A variety of multi-media can be used, props, film clips and PowerPoint.

Saturday Family Programs are new summer 2009. They are meant to provide in house activities for the whole family and every other week a local short hike to explore the natural world right outside Nome resident's doors.

A Winter Speaker/Workshop Series have been going on for the last three years, which initially started as a speaker series with very low attendance. With the addition of workshops attendance increased. For 2010 the series will feature mostly workshops. These workshops are conducted by local residents and feature cultural activities like, arts, handy crafts and cooking.

Ranger Talk at Nome Visitor Center is new in 2009. These talks are 20 – 30 minutes long and conducted at the Nome Visitor Center. This is a new partnership that has had some success. Non-local visitors who might not have heard about the programs otherwise are able to make contact and attend programs given by a ranger at the Nome Visitor Center. Topics at these talks focus on Preserve purposes and interpretive themes.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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(Continued)

Wildlife Caravan is scheduled to begin in September on Friday evenings. This will be the first year for these programs.

## **School Programs**

Schools in Nome and the Bering Strait School District are conducted mostly at the schools themselves due to weather and the remote location and difficulty traveling to the Preserve itself. Bering Strait Schools are located in villages around the Seward Peninsula. The Bering Strait Schools are very technologically involved and could be used on projects with the Preserve staff. Programs are conducted in several classrooms during each visit. Programs are curriculum based and custom planned for the classrooms that are being visited. School programs are a major visitor group. A few Nome and Teller classroom come to the Preserve Visitor Center for short or impromptu programs. Education kits are for loan to schools for teachers to use in the classroom or rangers to take and use in the classroom. These are the: Bear kit, Bird kit, Foot Prints into the Past and Future, Gold Rush kit, Mammal kit, Map and Compass kit, Salmon Lifecycle kit, Tree kit, Water kit, and Wetland kit.

## **Special Events/Community Events**

Iditarod Week special programs provide an alternative to other non-educational activities taking place in the community. Twenty-eight programs, lectures, movies and workshops take place during the week. All events are conducted by Preserve staff, guest speakers and community member and park partners.

Special Events for National Park Week and Founders Day are held annually. National Park Week features a lunchtime movie series. Founders Day features an interpretive program about the Preserve and birthday cake.

The Preserve participates in community events such as Summerfest and the Folk Fest. Participation varies depending on the need of the organizations.

## **Current Personal Services Program Assessment**

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve could potentially offer a multitude of interpretive opportunities related to a wide-range of natural and human history including local and regional geology, plant and animal life, archeology and ethnology. Beautiful scenery accentuates the area in and around the Preserve.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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(Continued)

The interpretive staff is working to meet the needs of its audiences through formal and informal interpretation. Though the Preserve has a small staff and low visitation, interpretation is a high priority reflected in the number of interpretive and educational opportunities offered throughout the year.

## PARTNERSHIPS

### Cooperating Association

Alaska Geographic operates the bookstore in the visitor center. The sales area contains a small variety of region-specific publications on topics including history, botany, animals, geology and recreation. It also occasionally contains theme-related items (t-shirts, ball caps, pins, magnets, etc.). Bookstore sales generate over \$2000 annually. Alaska Geographic Association (AGA) donates a percentage of its sales each year to aid the interpretive program and other educational and research needs for the Preserve.

### Outside Partnerships

The interpretive division is actively involved with several regional and local partners, including:

- Kawerak, Inc.
- Nome Recreation Center
- Norton Sound Health Corporation
- C.A.M.P. Office with the Health Faire and other outdoor activities
- Nome Visitor Center
- Nome Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Nome Library Youth Programs
- Nome Eskimo Community
- UAF Northwest Campus

# EXISTING CONDITIONS, ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

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(Continued)

- Nome Community Center – Beringia Grant
- Teacher-Ranger-Teacher

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve maintains a Volunteer-In-Parks (VIP) program and Student Conservation Association (SCA) program to enhance its interpretive mission. Volunteers help conduct interpretive programs and staff the visitor center information desk throughout the year. The Preserve has an annual \$1500 Volunteer-In-Parks program allotment from the Alaska Regional Office. These monies are used each year to cover uniform costs, supplies, housing utilities and VIP recognition awards and gifts.

## ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

### Visitor Related Safety Issues

- Protection of natural and cultural features from user impacts is a concern, since sites can only be minimally monitored. It would be valuable to research ways to best minimize user impacts at these “unhardened” sites, perhaps in cooperation with the Preserve’s tribal and subsistence partners.
- Effectively addressing and communicating critical visitor safety issues such as cold related dangers, hypothermia, wildlife, etc.

### Special Concerns and Management Issues

- Increase consultation and cooperation with Alaska Native organizations
- Enhance interpretive training for permanent, seasonal and volunteer staff
- Resolve staffing shortages and continue to increase staff diversity
- Fully develop Preserve interface with local communities, with special emphasis on relationships with local Alaska Native organizations and tribes, subsistence organizations and other local and regional Alaskan organizations

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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Interpretive planning assesses current conditions and formulates recommendations that provide direction and focus to achieve the desired future interpretive program.

**The ultimate goal of all recommendations is to support management's strategies and to provide visitors opportunities to connect with the meanings inherent in this Preserve's resources.**

The discussion of each program or media proposal identifies its place within the overall strategy, accounts for special considerations and sometimes suggests specific themes and locations that best facilitate a desired interpretive outcome. These suggestions should provide a framework for the Preserve's strategic vision, but should not limit the creativity and scope so essential when planning specific programs and media. These recommendations contain both long-term and short-term strategies which may be very helpful when preparing the Annual Implementation Plan and related funding requests. BELA has chosen to classify priority implementation actions into three tiers: Tier 1- High Priority specifies items that are considered essential, Tier 2 - Medium Priority specifies items that are considered important and Tier 3 - Low Priority specifies items that are considered desirable. The numbers in Brackets [1] following most recommendations indicates which Tier has been determined for that particular recommendation.

A primary challenge for interpreters at Bering Land Bridge National Preserve is helping visitors visualize and understand the character and qualities of this landscape and its inhabitants, now and in the past. Difficulty in accessing the actual Preserve, along with challenging environmental conditions and isolation adds to this challenge.

During the Workshops the team identified some areas that they felt provided the best opportunities for audiences to better experience Preserve resources via successful interactions with Preserve personnel, media and natural and cultural resources. These locations were:

- *A Small structure like a yurt in the area surrounding Serpentine Hotsprings*
- *Preserve Emergency Use Shelter Cabins*
- *Deering*
- *Shishmaref*
- *Wales*
- *Brevig Mission*
- *Local Scanner Channels*
- *Preserve Ranger Contact Station*
- *Kougarok Road between miles 56 and 71 where visitors can actually see the Preserve.*
- *Cyber Space*
- *Nome Road System*

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- *Regional and Local Schools*
- *Skookum Pass*
- *Russia*
- *Iditarod Trail*
- *Reindeer Wayside on the way to Teller*
- *Cruise Ships*
- *Airport Terminals*
- *Nome*

When determining priorities for personal and non-personal services based on available resources, Preserve staff may find that these locations produce the best quality interpretive experiences.

## **Pre-Visit Orientation, Information, and Wayfinding**

General and trip planning information regarding Bering Land Bridge National Preserve would continue to be provided by traditional means such as regular mail, phone, website, and email. All public information should include the Preserve's website address so that audiences may easily access more in-depth information. Critical information regarding access, adjacent road conditions, weather and safety should be included in all communications.

Adequate, clear information should be provided at appropriate remote thresholds of the Preserve so that potential visitors are given the tools and motivations with which to travel to the Preserve. The primary opportunity for Preserve specific information in Nome is at the BELA Visitor Center. No public transportation to the Preserve exists, so visitors typically explore the adjacent Nome road system via rental vehicle. Actual access to the Preserve is primarily available via commercial means including aircraft and watercraft, although visitors can hike into the Preserve via several fairly long access routes (the shortest being over 8 miles).

## **Recommendations:**

- Continually update training for all employees and volunteers on Preserve information, wayfinding, and informal visitor contacts. Preserve staff should understand the value in providing excellent interpretive services and accurate, understandable directions to sites around the Preserve.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Assure that up-to-date orientation information is available at our partners' sites and related tourist contact points including the local airport terminals (Nome, Alaska) regional and community visitor information centers, libraries, and other agency offices were mentioned in the workshops. Review internal and external printed and electronic tourism literature promoting Bering Land Bridge and associated sites to assure that it is accurate, appropriate, and up-to-date.
- Increase the BELA presence at the Nome Airport with an easily accessible brochure rack and exhibit panels which include way finding information [1], location of the Visitor Center and a phone number and big beautiful resource photos. [2]
- Continue to enhance the phone/email/mail response process. Several workshop team members emphasized a better phone answering system that facilitated a live person answering the phone when possible (during regular business hours). The second emphasized point was that all messages must go to someone who will take action on them. [1]
- Design and produce a Visitor Guide that could be widely distributed both physically and electronically, and convey primarily orientation and way finding information. [1]
- Expand the depth of information on the Preserve's internet site. This is an excellent venue to whet the appetite of the potential Preserve visitor, while also providing solid way finding information. An overview on how to safely visit the area and be culturally sensitive to local people is critical. This can also be a source of information for historians and academics that look to the Preserve for solid research and information. The site may also be utilized to download Podcasts and related material that visitors can experience at their leisure or bring with them to the Preserve.[2]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Workshop participants felt that these changes should include re-writing and updating the “Plan Your Visit” section; adding wayfinding information so that folks can find the Visitor Center; increasing the amount and quality of photos available on the site (to include outstanding photos of special places like Serpentine Hot Springs, Alaskan Native cultural activities and important wildlife including musk ox and reindeer); adding a webcam at Serpentine Hot Springs that would contribute to the virtual experience and flight safety; adding a weather link to the site; adding or enhancing the sections on cultural diversity; adding a downloadable and easily printable map of the Preserve and surrounding region; bolstering the section on safety and how to explore this type of challenging, wild environment. [1]
- Develop improved orientation/information literature and displays for regional tourism contact points. These may include rack cards, portable or permanent exhibits, and other methods to dispense literature.
- Safety information should be integrated into all facets of the visitor experience at Bering Land Bridge beginning with pre-trip planning.



## Arrival and Orientation

People are welcomed to the Preserve Visitor Center with NPS signs, a sandwich board on the sidewalk and one that hang near the inside front. Most visitors spend time in the visitor center area first and then go on to explore the Nome road system and possibly explore parts of the Preserve.

### Recommendations:

- Design and produce a new entrance sign for the Visitor Center / Park Headquarters. Workshop participants recommended a sign panel hanging from a reproduction mammoth tusk that was secured to the side of the building. [1]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Develop and produce a 3-dimensional tactile contoured guide map for the Visitor Center, which can be the basis for a common map form that is repeated in wayfinding information and at visitor contact sites.
- Develop and produce small-framed information panels that can be displayed at local businesses and partners establishments. These should contain mainly wayfinding / orientation information and have a map that conforms to the map mentioned above.
- Downloadable information including Mpeg4 video, Mp3 audio and PDF files, offered at the Preserve’s website, a new visitor center media download kiosk and other venues should include wayfinding, orientation and safety messages. Podcasts or equivalent audio/visual (A/V) files could include that information and expand into more in-depth orientation and thematic interpretive information. [1]
- Develop an updated Park Sign Plan that includes regional and local wayfinding signs that direct visitors to the site and internal points of interest. Signs should include appropriate safety messages and introduce new thematic elements in appropriate locations. These signs should conform to the NPS sign standard and enhance agency identity in this region of the country. This consistent, recognizable design may develop greater “brand identity” for the Preserve.
- Participants in the workshops emphasized the need for subtle but functional wayfinding/orientation signs at locations where people could benefit from that type of information. These signs would introduce visitors to the immediate area and give them options to explore other facets of this region. Exhibits like this tend to blur the line between information signs and wayside exhibits, but these are listed here because their information function supersedes their interpretive function. In many NPS areas, **orientation** and **agency identity** are accomplished by trailhead-style upright waysides, often with two or three panels, when placed at parking lots or overlooks and displayed singly at trailheads. Pairings can include an orientation panel and bulletin board or other configurations.
- Workshop participants recommended that the multi-sided exhibits include a distribution method for brochures, a panel with easily changeable media, and two panels dedicated to wayfinding/orientation and interpretation respectively. One should be created and placed at the Visitor Center in Nome. The other placements of these exhibits would be in collaboration with our partners, as the NPS neither owns or controls most of the locations where these would be most beneficial to visitors. [1]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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## Visitor Contact Facilities, Activity Sites, Interior and Exterior Exhibits

During the Long Range Interpretation Planning it became clear that the Park and its partners are strongly in favor of developing a variety of media that will allow visitors and local resident to “access” Bering Land Bridge National Preserve in varied ways that fit their needs. A minority of visitors will make a trip into the Preserve; so providing media that allows



them to remotely experience the resource becomes one of the primary ways of connecting them to the meanings of the Preserve.

The current primary visitor contact point is at the visitor center. Upon entering the visitor center, people are greeted with an information desk and small association sales outlet, adjacent to existing exhibits. A visitor center or contact station and its exhibits should help ground audiences in the Preserve’s primary themes, using engaging text and compelling graphics and objects. The exhibits should build a foundation of knowledge for audiences to retain as they explore the Preserve and associated areas. Workshop participants felt strongly that audiences should be made aware of the distinct remote opportunities in the Preserve and the multitude of alternative local opportunities in the Nome region. The perspectives of Alaska Native Peoples must be conveyed in the exhibits expressing the meanings and sacredness these people and their ancestors attach to Bering Land Bridge.

Indoor exhibits and exterior wayside exhibits provide interpretive information but also can subtly remind visitors that this NPS-preserved place is something of great value to our nation and represents the heart of Beringia, revealing how people came to the Americas. Much effort has been invested at the national level to have a distinctive, easy-to-read, comprehensive system of signs and displays. The system provides off-the-shelf solutions from formal Preserve entrance signs to trailhead exhibits and campsite numbers. Built into the NPS sign program is a visual hierarchy that gives readers clear clues as to the relative importance of the blocks of information seen on the signs.

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Wayside exhibits are especially valuable interpretive experience in the face of reduced staffing and increased visitor and local resident exploration. At Bering Land Bridge, the Preserve staff feels interpretive experiences can be enhanced by utilizing waysides to promote a sense of discovery while providing adequate guidance and learning opportunities for visitors to the Preserve and the Nome region. This can be accomplished with thoughtful design and placement of thematically based exhibits in carefully selected areas.

## Recommendations:

- A study should be undertaken to determine if current space occupied by the BELA offices and visitor contact area could be converted in part or whole into a larger, open, public area for interpretive exhibits, visitor contact, and sales. The LRIP team reviewed the schematic exhibit plan produced for BELA in early 2008. Design criteria for that exhibit plan included the use of the current visitor contact space, a portion of the building lobby, and the multi-use Beringia room for all public functions. The consensus of the team was that the exhibit areas as they were planned in 2008 did not provide sufficient space for the exhibits and visitor circulation, and they unnaturally divided the exhibit storyline. In addition, the lack of a dedicated exhibit space in the Beringia room in the 2008 plan presents operational challenges resulting in a less than optimal presentation of the exhibits for the visitor. However, if the decision is made to utilize the current building rather than pursue the enlarged space proposed below, the park should take action on the 2008 Exhibit Plan, incorporating the modifications mentioned in this plan. The Exhibit Plan should then be developed as a PMIS project to obtain funding for designing and building.

- The LRIP team discussed the possibility of cooperative development of wayside exhibits on lands managed by other DOI agencies (USF&W, BLM), state and local lands, or Alaska Native land locations that fit into the interpretive themes and mission of BELA. Preserve management, in



coordination with Interpretation should begin to engage these regional partners, to

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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obtain cooperation in designing and building wayside exhibits at the following locations and areas (State sites should be considered first):

- Train to Nowhere Site
  - Nome City Waysides
  - Villages on the Seward Peninsula
  - Safety Sound
  - Quartz Creek Landing Strip
  - Skookum Pass
  - Salmon Lake
  - Boundary Wayside at the boundary adjacent to Serpentine Hot Springs
  - Old Reindeer corrals on the Teller road
- 
- Establishing a new, enlarged public area on the first floor of the Sitnasauk Building is based on moving the BELA administrative offices to the second floor of the building or other suitable location. A determination as to whether all or some of the offices can be moved to the second floor should be part of the overall study mentioned below. The current space occupied by BELA, both public and office, is approximately 2,700 sq. ft. A space study in concert with a schematic plan should illuminate how much of the floor area is actually required to accomplish the public use goals of presenting exhibits, meeting visitors, increasing staff space and offering sales items for enriching the interpretive experience to BELA. It could also clarify audience experiences and opportunities for this facility. More specifically, it would relate interpretive themes to particular exhibit designs and content and could also inform and support further design work. The Beringia room should remain as a dedicated multiuse room for public meetings, public programs and AV presentations. [1]
  - Workshop team members recommended that to fully provide for high quality interpretive and educational experiences in the visitor center, one additional permanent park interpreter should be added to the staff. A full time permanent GS-09 Education Specialist.
  - The current full time Interpretive Ranger position description needs to be amended to include an accretion of duties, including full operation of visitor services, program planning, budgeting, grant writing and other Interpretive Specialist duties. [1]

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- Some team members proposed investigating a move to other buildings in the Nome area that could accommodate more visitors and local residents, provide more staff room, support a larger exhibit area and ultimately provide the facilities for an interagency or inter-partner visitor facility. [2]
- Establish a small living structure (like a yurt) at Serpentine Hot Springs in coordination with other divisions that could possibly be staffed by VIPs, complete the compliance process and consultation with local residents. Design and produce a set of compact interpretive exhibits to be used on site that concentrates on revealing the history of the Serpentine area, traditional cultures, and historic mining activity. [2]
- Design and construct “Shared Beringia Heritage Exhibits” in concert with our partners in Russia, to be displayed in both places. [3]
- Design and build a set of portable exhibits for the Preserve shelter cabins
- Establish a Shishmaref Ranger Station and information area, with small exhibits and interpretive opportunities that would concentrate on Beringia and the peopling of the Americas, but also include information/wayfinding in regards to preserve access, safety, education, and promote cultural understanding. The exhibits could be designed with the help of local school children, who would bring their own unique perspective to the process. This facility would also serve as a support facility in coordination with other Preserve divisions. [2] Similar contact stations/support facilities could also be established at Deering, Quartz Creek, and Wales to provide similar services and support functions at those locations. [3]
- The Park should move forward with a PMIS request to fund a new exhibit in the in the Sitnasauk Building in Nome. The existing Schematic plan produced in 2008 would be the starting point for a new design.
- Other locations for interior and exterior exhibits in Nome and around the Seward Peninsula were discussed which BELA should evaluate as potential exhibit and activity sites:

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- The Alaska Airline terminal at the Nome airport may offer an opportunity for reaching visitors when they arrive in the area. Due to limited space at the terminal, an exhibit would probably be limited to a simple panel focusing on orientation but might include some interpretive elements and possibly some small objects in a case. Bering Air and Frontier terminals would also be good locations for panels, Bering Air in particular for Beringia.
  - Partner sites and interpretive facilities, such as the proposed Kawerak Beringian Heritage Museum, or the Beringian International Heritage Park (Russian) when they are established.
  - In the villages: interpretive kiosks might be placed in the villages using pictures of local people and possibly utilizing local art by students or residents.
  - With the possibility of establishing contact stations at Shishmaref, Deering, Wales, or Serpentine Hot Springs, some simple exhibits could be developed that compliment each area.
  - Within the Preserve, place panel exhibits in or on shelter cabins, at Serpentine Hot Springs bath/bunk house. Consult with the local communities to find out what they would find useful and relevant in panel exhibits at these locations.
  - An exterior 3-sided kiosk on the under-eave boardwalk outside the Nome VC to provide casual and after hours orientation, interpretation and timely information for people passing by.
- Access to information about BELA would be increasingly provided through “new media”. A suggested element for inclusion in new exhibits in the Sitnasauk Building (not included in the 2008 plan) could be a media kiosk that allows visitors to “plug into” various audio-visual media—podcasts, web ranger, tours, maps, and “Apps” that can be downloaded to their personal smart phone, iPod or media player.
  - When this LRIP is finished the 2008 exhibit plan should be reassessed to make sure its themes are in line with those of the LRIP.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Design and produce a compact travel exhibit that highlights careers in the NPS. Coordinate better quality give-away items to supplement the new portable exhibit.  
[1]
- Bering Land Bridge’s artifacts and reproductions can serve as powerful interpretive tools and are part of the Preserve’s core cultural resources that enrich visitors and local resident’s experiences. The visitor center could serve as a display area for appropriate objects that facilitate the telling of the Preserve’s story.
- The planning team recommends that an audience evaluation be conducted as part of any new media development. For many of the media elements in the plan it would be valuable to conduct front-end evaluations to determine what visitors already know and what they might like to experience in the Preserve. This should include a formative evaluation to test proposed exhibit concepts before final production and a summative evaluation to fine-tune the exhibits after installation. Evaluation will increase the cost of exhibit development, but would add value during the life of the exhibits by insuring that visitors and local resident needs are being met.

## Distributable Media

Generally the distributable media here is well accepted by audiences and historically accurate. Providing orientation and wayfinding material on a broader region-wide basis would serve to increase Bering Land Bridge’s exposure to greater numbers of more diverse people. Any new publications might be linked with a “branding” program, utilizing the NPS graphic standards and the Preserve’s special logos or other art developed by the Preserve. This will serve to increase recognition of the Preserve’s national significance and its connection to the larger NPS system.

## Recommendations:

- Create and produce a new Serpentine Hot Springs brochure to replace the current Site Bulletin. Investigate designs that fall between the Site Bulletin and a full-out Unigridd design, but take advantage of 4 color printing and spectacular graphics.  
[1]
- Produce a BELA Book similar to the old NPS handbook series.[3]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Consider reproducing and selling versions of older, possible out of print books that relate well to the Preserve and its resources. Consider a book made from the DVD “Siulpta Paitaat” and the book “Ublasauun.” [2]
- Update and revamp the Preserve’s Unigridd brochure, possibly integrating the new map and related material from the above mentioned exhibits. Produce a translated version in Russian (not verbatim). [2]
- Update the Preserve’s Visitor Guide to reflect new material recommended in this plan. [1]
- Continue to distribute a calendar of events encompassing both special events and daily activities. The team recommended expanding the distribution of this schedule to more local and regional businesses and tourism centers. The Preserve website is a good point for distribution as well.

## Audiovisual Technology

Audiovisual distribution of interpretation and information makes parks and their resources more accessible to all visitors through a variety of means. Short AV presentations can supplement static exhibits, set the mood for exploration of a historic area and assist those who are visually impaired with an audio description of a place or event. A park film can provide a stunning introduction to the Preserve’s resources and inhabitants.

Distribution methods may vary from video in an exhibit to cellphone tours to downloadable guides or podcasts. Audio messaging or background, if done well, can add emotional color and authenticity. When visitors hear directly from recognized subject-matter experts or from people who work in the Preserve and know it well, these recordings can be a powerful medium.

The majority of AV messages work best if they are kept short and well-focused. The visitor center kiosk and web based distribution centers could offer multiple methods for delivery of these programs.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

## Recommendations:

- Develop and produce a “media-source kiosk or exhibit” that visitors can utilize to download appropriate A/V content at the Visitor Center and potentially other sites. Provide this content in forms that are distributable for various A/V players to include Podcasts and Mp3 files. [1] The design should include isolation from the NPS intranet.
- Develop and produce a new Preserve film (12-20 minutes) that presents an exciting introduction, incredible landscapes, compelling stories and compliments more in-depth media available elsewhere in the Preserve. [3]
- Develop new cellphone tours for areas along the Nome road system that have appropriate coverage. These tours should provide adequate wayfinding information, in addition to interpretive opportunities [3]
- Additional downloadable media should be developed either internally with a media specialist or via contract, including:
  - Nome Road Tour [2]
  - Flight Tours [3]
  - Serpentine Hot Springs Site Tour
  - Village Introductions for Shishmaref, Wales and Deering. These should be produced in concert with the locals, and contain information about the relationships between these Villages and the Preserve. [1]
  - Preserve Archaeology
  - Preserve Geology
  - Preserve Ecosystems
  - Preserve History
  - Preserve Cultures (Historic and Pre-Historic)

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- An Introduction to Appropriate Etiquette for Visitors when visiting Alaska Native communities
- Consider creating an A/V development plan that addresses where this type of interpretive service may be most effective, which content and formats should be used and looks at alternate sources of funding or staffing to make it happen.
- Develop an iPhone App about the Preserve and Land Bridge. (Virtual Villages Beringia). [1]

## Website and Internet

In the past decade there has been incredible growth in internet usage and an expansion of ways in which people utilize the web. Old ways of distributing information and interpretation have been supplanted by the leverage gained from instantaneous, in-depth dispersal of knowledge over the web. Add the opportunity for interactivity and the web becomes an optimum tool for interpreters. This is particularly crucial in an area like BELA, as many people are “Virtual Visitors” that cannot make a trip to the actual Preserve due to cost or environmental conditions.

### Recommendations:

- Introduce more quality, exciting, unique short animations and live action video clips to the current Preserve website that appeal to not only children, but adults as well. These video clips should be interpretive and each should tell a critical story about the Preserve and our partners. Videos should include: [1]
  - An informational video that provides orientation to and promotes the Preserve’s values.
  - A video on our partner schools, perhaps partially produced by the students.
  - Informational videos about subsistence lifeways, produced in cooperation with our partners. Team members specifically requested that more “People on the Land”



# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- stories be told through this medium, with our Native partners and local Alaskans contributing information and stories on camp and subsistence activities in their own words. [1]
- Expand the current links available on the Preserve website to include our local and regional partners and to the Beringian Heritage Program. [1]
- Expand the Preserve's presence on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc) and develop a plan to assure adequate staffing and appropriate concordance with the NPS IT standards. [1]
- Connect with Google Earth and other internet databases related to geography, science and culture to make sure BELA has an appropriate presence there. [2]
- Create and publish on the Preserve's website multiple travel itineraries that will enhance visitor access to all the Preserve's stories and address the challenges of access in this bush community. These itineraries should include snappy graphic, good wayfinding information and be created in collaboration with our partners. They should emphasize trips that can be taken in/around Nome in addition to travel in the Preserve and provide multiple elements (places to visit, things to see/experience) developed in partnership with private or commercial entities, other agencies and non-profits in area. [1.5]
- Market the BELA website to multiple audiences, locals, villagers, schools, government partners, regional tourism partners and the tourism industry for Alaska.
- Add an extended photo database that is available online. These photos could be procured from locals, kid's photo contests and other sources. Copyright concerns should be assessed and dealt with prior to publication. Possibly link our catalog to Flickr, so that it receives more attention.
- Expand the website's downloading section to include updated material that supplements visitor understanding of the Preserve. This should include a regularly updated information/orientation section, extended photo collection as mentioned above, a multiple Itinerary section as mentioned above, an expanded amount of downloadable programs including podcasts and audio guides, and enhance Birding section [1], and an updated map section with maps that correlate to Preserve exhibits that visitors may find in the Nome area, local villages and in the Preserve. [2]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Expand the website’s Administrative History Section. [3]
- Place recordings from the elders and other culture bearers on the site that were derived from the “Eskimo Heritage Program” in coordination with Kawerak, to further reveal the incredible connection that these Alaskan Native people have with the land. [1]
- Expand the Junior Ranger section on the website, integrating new material specified by this plan and other innovative changes

## Off-Site Activities and Partnerships

Partnerships and greater civic engagement continue to be beneficial to both Park areas and regional communities.

### Recommendations:

- Continue and expand the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program, which has proven very effective.
- Continue to work with Kawerak on the Workshop Series and expand that partnership to include the new Heritage Program.
- Coordinate with more educational institutions, including the University of Alaska at Fairbanks.
- Expand coordination with other government agencies including enhanced coordination with the Bureau of Land Management and Fish and Wildlife Services, coordinating education programs and visitor information programs with the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game.
- Expand coordination with entities around Nome, including the Nome Visitor Center, the Nome Library youth program, the Nome Eskimo Community and other Nome based tribes, regional and village Native Corporations, and the Nome Recreation Center.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

(Continued)

- Other Regional Partners include the Norton Sound Economic Development Corp. (Ocean Education Partner), Seward Sealife Center, Tribes in the Bering Strait Region (i.e. Native Village of Shishmaref) and the Norton Sound Health Corporation C.A.M.P. program.

## Personal Services

Personal interpretive services are those in which the Preserve staff interacts with visitors. Examples of personal services include staffing the visitor center, formal interpretive programs, roving and other informal interpretation, conducted activities, special events, orientation and educational programs. Personal Services give the Preserve staff an opportunity to enhance the visitors experience through personal interaction.



Personal services are often most effective for interpreting complex or conceptual themes and topics and encourage audiences to become active participants in exploring the Preserve's stories. Several formal and informal programs are offered at Bering Land Bridge including formal guided hikes, roving interpretation, and educational programs. Because most visitors and local residents to this site have only partial access to the actual Preserve, personal services are vital to create opportunities for visitors to truly understand and relate to the people, meanings and stories represented here. The interpretive staff at Bering Land Bridge should assess on a yearly basis which particular personal interpretive services would be most effective. This is the core of the Annual Implementation Plan which would guide the interpretive program in supporting management goals and providing optimum opportunities for the visitor. This process includes yearly re-evaluation of desired audience experiences and subsequent assessment of the most effective combinations of interpretive themes, locations, audiences and types of personal services to best fulfill the visitors' and local residents' interpretive and educational needs as they relate to BELA. These factors can change from year to year as the Preserve's visitation demographics, management policies and other needs change.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

## Recommendations:

- Important learning opportunities for Bering Land Bridge visitors are made available through the current schedule of guided interpretive walks and talks led by uniformed interpreters. A wider variety of theme-based programs would provide visitors with a range of prospects for connecting with Bering Land Bridge's stories. These choices could include more ranger-led hikes, cultural demonstrations, and porch talks at the Visitor Center—each adaptable to the needs and interests of the visitor. Since most Preserve visitors are unfamiliar with or have a limited knowledge of the Preserve's resources, it is important to provide this service to enhance the quality of their visit and Preserve experience.
- Guided interpretive activities should also work symbiotically with other non-personal media to increase visitor understanding.
- Provide a guided interpretive canoe trip from Salmon Lake to the Pilgrim River Bridge on a regular basis during the summer.
- Expand and refine roving and other informal interpretation opportunities for people in the visitor center, Nome road system, and the surrounding areas where appropriate.
- Utilizing the Preserve's General Management Plan (GMP) which defines and identifies zones of desired visitor/audience use and experience would support the process of determining where to best utilize personal interpretive services. Areas that are valuable for their solitude and isolation may not be the best choice for personal interactions with an interpretive ranger.
- An Annual Implementation Plan should be created and revised yearly. It is important to assess changes in management strategy, demographic shifts, and any new information that would modify our message to the visitor. One tool that helps to integrate inevitable change into a personal interpretive services program is the use of a matrix; this matrix assesses the best combinations of current interpretive themes or sub-themes, the best locations for services and the most effective services for particular audiences. This would in turn facilitate achieving the Preserve's *Desired Visitor/Audience Experiences*. This exercise is also a good opportunity to assess whether or not resources are being optimally used to achieve these *Desired Visitor/Audience Experiences* and to support identified management initiatives.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Assessing the effectiveness of our interpretive techniques and services is critical to maintaining positive user experiences and providing a rationale for programs. These assessments can include supervisory assessments of effectiveness, more formal outcome based assessments, a correlation of user inputs and formal demographic studies. The rubric based assessment method utilized in the Interpretive Development Plan while not addressing “supervisory concerns” does give great insight into whether a particular service is effective in creating interpretive opportunities for our visitors and local residents. Outcome based evaluative methods would also be effective.
- Establishing a seasonal volunteer presence (2 VIPs) at Serpentine Hot Springs in the above mentioned small live in structure would provide a currently lacking opportunity to provide informational and interpretive services to users that make it that far into the Preserve and also to enhance communication with users who may not have contact with the NPS through regular communication channels. [2]
- The Volunteer-in-Parks program could be enhanced through focused outreach efforts to recruit audiences specifically interested in Bering Land Bridge’s natural and cultural resources and serve as a source of potential volunteer candidates with appropriate backgrounds. An effort to enhance and expand the participation of local resident volunteers would also be beneficial.
- Participation by all interpretive staff in the Interpretive Development Program would be encouraged. This program is core, professional-level NPS interpretive training for all permanent field level interpreters and interpretive supervisors and is critical for individual’s career development and professional enhancement. Seasonal staff will be coached by Local Regional Coaches and participate in the online Eppley courses. This will keep employees abreast of the most effective interpretive methods and provide valuable insight into national policy and trends.
- Team members at the workshop recommended some specific areas that they felt would be optimum places for personal interpretation and/or media. Workshop members specified that these would be appropriate places to put resources after in-Preserve necessities were met. They include:
  - Expanded interpreter presence on cruise ships [2]
  - Interpreters participating in Beringia formal programs
  - Roving at Safety Sound during the bird season [1]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- General Rangers with interpretive duties at the Shishmaref Ranger Station / Contact Center, when it is established [1]
- Higher staffing levels will be required for the Preserve to fully support this plan.
- Many team members noted the value of special events, especially those that integrated cultural demonstrations as another very good tool for engaging visitors.

## Education Program

The current education program at Bering Land Bridge centers on the established Environmental Education Program and outreach program for numerous schools and groups in the region. The interpretive staff presents a variety of curriculum based programs and assemblies for students throughout the Seward Peninsula region. Interpretive rangers provide occasional guided experiences for school groups, university classes, and Elderhostel groups. Educational themes have expanded to include education about our natural resources as well as cultural and historical resources.



## Recommendations

- Bering Land Bridge anticipates bringing on an Education Specialist in FY2011 to enhance and expanding the current education program. [1]
- Bering Land Bridge must keep abreast of changes to state and federal curriculums to keep the program effective and relevant to education partners. The Preserve intends to develop the education program to support the National Curriculum for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. This curriculum should be made available on line and updated on a regular basis.[2]

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- The Preserve should develop Distance Learning programs for the TEL and similar networks, which will engage educators and others well beyond the local area. Providing an effective program requires a significant investment in staff time and money. A formal distance learning plan would better assess the scope of the program, what can realistically be accomplished and what resources could be received from alternative funding sources. [2]
- The Preserve should also develop and present Ocean Education and Climate Change programs for the Northwest Alaska region. [2]
- Development of traveling Educational Kits that can be used to supplement Distance Learning and other programs should be a priority as well. Initially, workshop team members recommended that these be developed around the following topics; Muskoxen, Beringia, Ocean Health, Reindeer and Climate Change. [2]
- An expansion of the Elder Hostel program and programs for Senior in regional communities was recommended by team members as well. [2]
- An enhanced Junior Ranger program with outreach to area schools, local villages and local youth would inspire area residents to further explore Bering Land Bridge with their children. This popular nationwide program is becoming a focal point for many traveling families seeking parks with engaging and effective Junior Ranger programs as vacation destinations.
- Improvement and expansion of the Winter Workshop Series was highly recommended by team members, especially for its potential to engage local and regional visitors. Expanding community events in Nome and the regional villages was addressed in this conversation as well, for the same reasons. [1]
- Finally, utilizing Career Days to enhance diversity recruitment and recruit for internships from the local population was highly recommended by the team.

## Services for Special Populations

It is important to move beyond basic accommodation to active pursuit of equal opportunities in all facets of interpretation for those that are in some way impaired.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

## Recommendations

- The wayfinding and interpretive material should be brought up to date with appropriate accommodations available for impaired visitors. The advent of downloadable audio/visual programming can lead to marked improvement in experience for some impaired visitors. A recommendation from the workshop specifically talked about virtual tours of the Nome road system, Serpentine Hot Springs, and flight tours that would be downloadable not only for visitors on site, but individuals who will only experience the Preserve from their computer.
- A Russian translation of the park brochure, as mentioned above.
- Many team members indicated a strong support of an environment here at the Preserve that fosters and supports the use of traditional Alaska Native language and partners with traditional Alaska Native speakers to translate all types of media into traditional languages. [1]
- Diligence must be observed in following the NPS reasonable accommodation standards when creating new media and structures ranging from critical type sizes to film captioning, so as to accommodate those with disabilities.
- When developing the new waysides, exhibits and audiovisual products, the design should not just accommodate impaired users, but should be designed to fully involve those users in those interpretive opportunities. Guidelines for designing for and accommodating those with special needs are found in the appendix.
- Another topic of concern to team members was the lack of diversity reflected in the visitors to Bering Land Bridge. Part of this may be due to the difficult access to this region and the expense involved. The NPS has many programs and suggestions for creating opportunities for more diversity in our NPS areas and the team recommends that a plan be developed to introduce more varied populations to Bering Land Bridge and its stories.

## Library Collections and Research Needs

The Preserve currently has a small collection of artifacts, stored both on and off-site. The collection is viewable and searchable online from the Preserve's website. In addition, a small research library is maintained at the visitor center offices, accessible to the public on a case by case basis.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

## Recommendations

- Develop a database that would be supported by the information systems in the yet to be developed visitor center kiosk and on the Preserve website. Giving visitors the ability to search for specific information and download it for further study could be very valuable to visitors and promote the involvement of researchers and academic professionals as well.
- Develop a list of needs for the library and plan and develop a new library space.

## Staffing and Training

### Staffing

BELA interpretive division staffing is currently minimal and must be bolstered accordingly to support the recommendations in this plan. Additional training will make these new recruits and the current staff more effective and able to leverage their resources to better affect. A major concern, which must be addressed, is the need for additional housing to attract and retain quality employees and volunteers. Hiring locals in this bush community is advantageous to the park and the local community, but it is important to provide opportunities for those from outside as well. The following is a recommended list of additional positions required to implement the recommendations of this Long Range Interpretive Plan:

- a. Education Specialist (**GS-09**), to be hired in FY2011
- b. Education Technician (Seasonal)
- c. Additional Interpretive Ranger (Seasonal)
- d. Additional Generalist Ranger with Interpretive duties at Shishmaref (Seasonal)
- e. Interpretive Specialist with Audiovisual developmental experience (Term)
- f. Multiple Interns (possibly locals) and Volunteers (2 specific to Serpentine)
- g. Upgrading the current GS-9 Interpretive Ranger to a GS-11 Supervisory Interpretive Specialist

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

## Training

- Continue to use the Interpretive Development Program (IDP) to train interpreters in the essential interpretive skills and techniques. Also involve as many staff members as possible in the new interpretive coaching program.
- Train the interpretive staff to develop and deliver curriculum based programs and interpretive programs via distance learning technologies, portable media (podcasts, mp3...), and other types of interpretive media.
- Monitor training services offered by our partners and stakeholders; participate when applicable.
- Actively seek other appropriate training opportunities including Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Contracting Officer Representative (COR), Conflict Resolution, Supervisor Training and Partner Etiquette with Traditional Peoples.
- Ensure that training reflects the issues and needs addressed in the LRIP including the established interpretive themes.

## Coordination with Internal Partners

Communication and coordination with our internal partners can enhance how we support the visitor and local peoples and maintain an open dialog that benefits all division within the Preserve.

### Recommendations:

- Expand regular communication with Resources Management staff and local villages to enhance those relationships and provide visitors and local residents with the most recent and best knowledge as they explore the Preserve and surrounding region.
- It would be very helpful to establish a database or system that is easily accessible by all parties that would inform everyone when researchers were going to be in the field, along with information on transport (Plane tail #'s, etc..).

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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(Continued)

- Coordinate with other divisions to establish regular communication via weekly updates or something equivalent that could assist with more accurate audience information, enhance safety, and contribute toward addressing compliance questions and bolster teamwork.

## Appendix

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- 1. Knowing Your Audience**
- 2. Current Staff Organization**
- 3. Special Populations Guidance**
- 4. Examples of Wayside Exhibits, Bulletin Boards and Signs**
- 5. Stories and Sub-Themes**
- 6. LRIP Team**

# Knowing Your Audience

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## The Role of Evaluation in Exhibit Planning and Design

Over the past thirty years it has become increasingly evident that exhibitions of all kinds in a variety of venues (including visitor centers) can significantly benefit from the using various evaluation activities during the development of any medium. A recent bibliography lists over 600 studies that have demonstrated the value of getting input from target audience members to help inform decisions about both the content and presentation methods being considered, thus avoiding serious and costly mistakes discovered only after the work has been completed.

Traditionally, there are three stages during which formal visitor studies are conducted.

1. **Front-End Evaluation:** during conceptual planning when themes, story lines, and program ideas are being considered;
2. **Formative Evaluation:** during early fabrication of exhibits when mock-up testing can be carried out;
3. **Summative/Remedial Evaluation:** conducted after final installation, when the total “package” can be evaluated and final adjustments can be made.

Front-end evaluation concentrates on getting input from potential visitors by means of interviews and/or focus groups, to find out what kinds of information they need and would like to know, and how this information could be presented in a meaningful, interesting, and cost-effective way. Misconceptions about the subject matter are also revealed at this stage, often leading to specific content and presentation elements designed to counter them.

Formative evaluation is intended to “catch” design and/or content problems before they become a part of the final exhibition, when they are often difficult and expensive to “fix.” Especially critical to test at the mock-up stage are interactive exhibits, where feedback from users almost always reveals flaws or weaknesses in the program that can be easily corrected.

In a comprehensive evaluation program, the conduct of summative/remedial studies often reveal problems that were not, or could not be, identified during the earlier stages of development. For example, crowd-flow problems are often revealed only when the actual configuration of all the elements of the exhibition are in place. Similarly, orientation and

# Knowing Your Audience

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(Continued)

signage problems become “obvious” at this point, and can often be corrected by relatively minor adjustments to wording and/or placement.

The media evaluation process requires the planning team to identify the intended exhibit target audience in terms of their ages, educational levels, and levels of entering knowledge of the subject matter of the exhibit. The team must also have clearly defined objectives – both cognitive and affective. Cognitive objectives relate to the intended impact of the exhibit on the target audience in terms of knowledge of the subject matter (e.g., facts, concepts, controversies, comparisons). Affective objectives relate to the intended impact of the exhibit on visitors’ beliefs, interests, feelings, and attitudes as related to the exhibit content. These explicit and agreed-to objectives guide not only the way the exhibit is tested at the formative and summative/remedial stages, but the entire exhibit development process, including decisions about content, sequence, media, interpretation, and presentation techniques.

*From the personal writings of evaluator **Dr. Harris H. Shettel**, Rockville, Maryland, and used by his permission. Edited by **Neil Mackay**, Harpers Ferry Center, Media Services and Interpretive Media Institute*

## **Professional organizations**

The following professional organizations are concerned with exhibit evaluation and can provide additional information on the subject:

### **Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation (CARE)**

American Association of Museums (AAM)

1575 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400

Washington, DC 20005

tel.: (202) 289-1818

<http://www.aam-us.org/index.htm>

CARE publishes *Current Trends in Audience Research and Evaluation*, and the *Directory of Evaluators*

### **Visitor Studies Association (VSA)**

8175-A Sheridan Blvd., Suite 362

Arvada, CO 80003-1928

303-467-2200

303-467-0064 fax

<http://www.visitor studies.org/>

VSA publishes *Visitor Studies Today*

# Knowing Your Audience

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(Continued)

## **American Evaluation Association**

American Evaluation Association

16 Sconticut Neck Rd #290

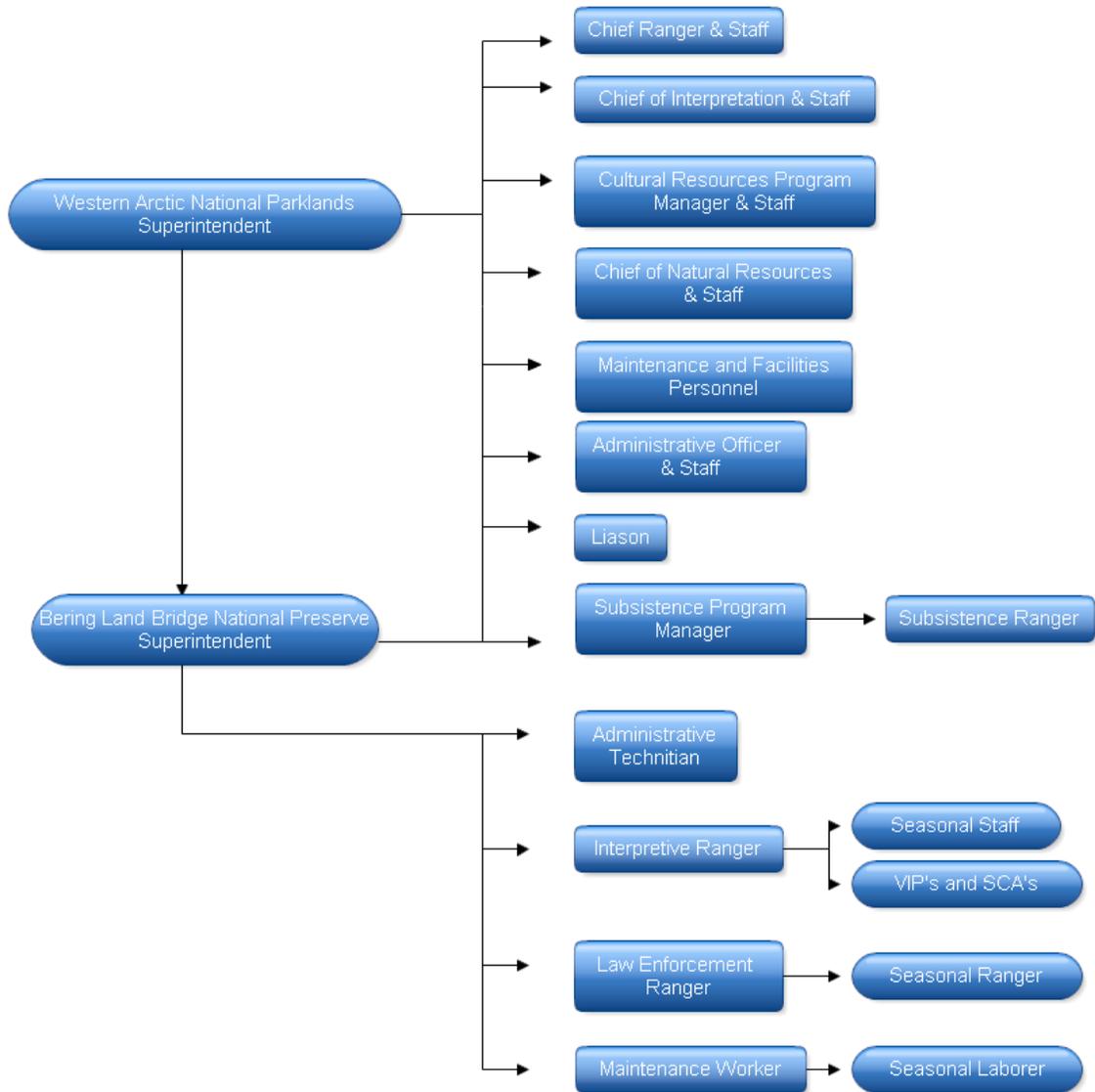
Fairhaven MA 02719

Phone/fax 888-232-2275 (toll free in US and some Canada)

<http://www.eval.org/>

AEA publishes *American Journal of Evaluation* (published three times per year).

# Current Staff Organization



# Special Populations Guidance

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## **Special Populations**

Provisions would be made to reasonably accommodate the needs of special populations who visit Bering Land Bridge National Preserve. Special populations are identified as those with sight, hearing, learning, or mobility impairments; users who do not speak English; and the elderly or young children.

The Sitnisauk building, where the Preserve visitor center is located is accessible to persons of limited mobility.

Public Law 90-480, the Architectural Barriers Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 establish standards for physical access. Any new or re-designed facilities constructed as a matter of course will be designed to be accessible for physically impaired visitors and employees.

All new interpretive media will conform to National Preserve Service, August 2009, Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media. Available at the Harpers Ferry Center website.

# Wayside Exhibit, Bulletin Board and Sign Examples

Low-profile  
22" w x 18" h

Title - 84 point  
NPS Rawlinson  
Medium  
set on one line

Main Text - 30/42 point  
NPS Rawlinson Book

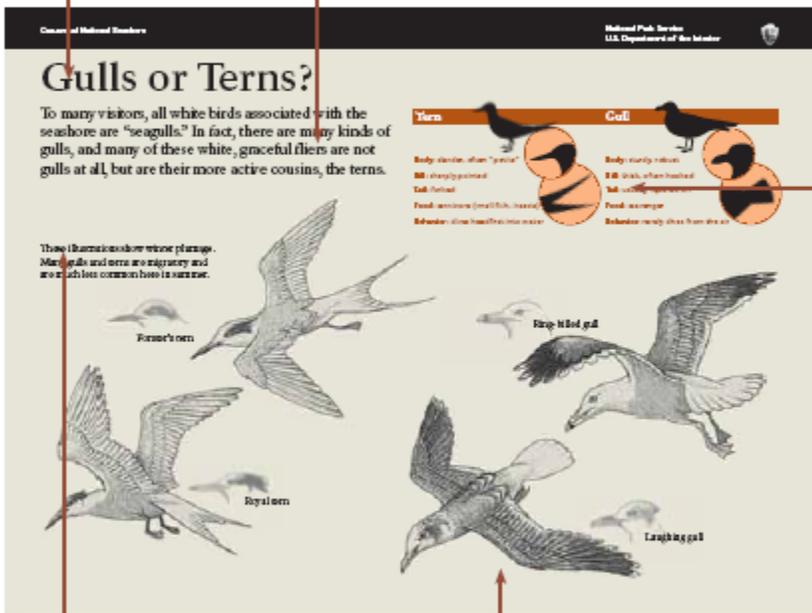


Diagram labels  
18/32 point  
Frutiger Bold and  
Frutiger

Caption - 22/30 point  
NPS Rawlinson Book

Labels - 20 point  
NPS Rawlinson Book  
set on one line

# Wayside Exhibit, Bulletin Board and Sign Examples

(Continued)

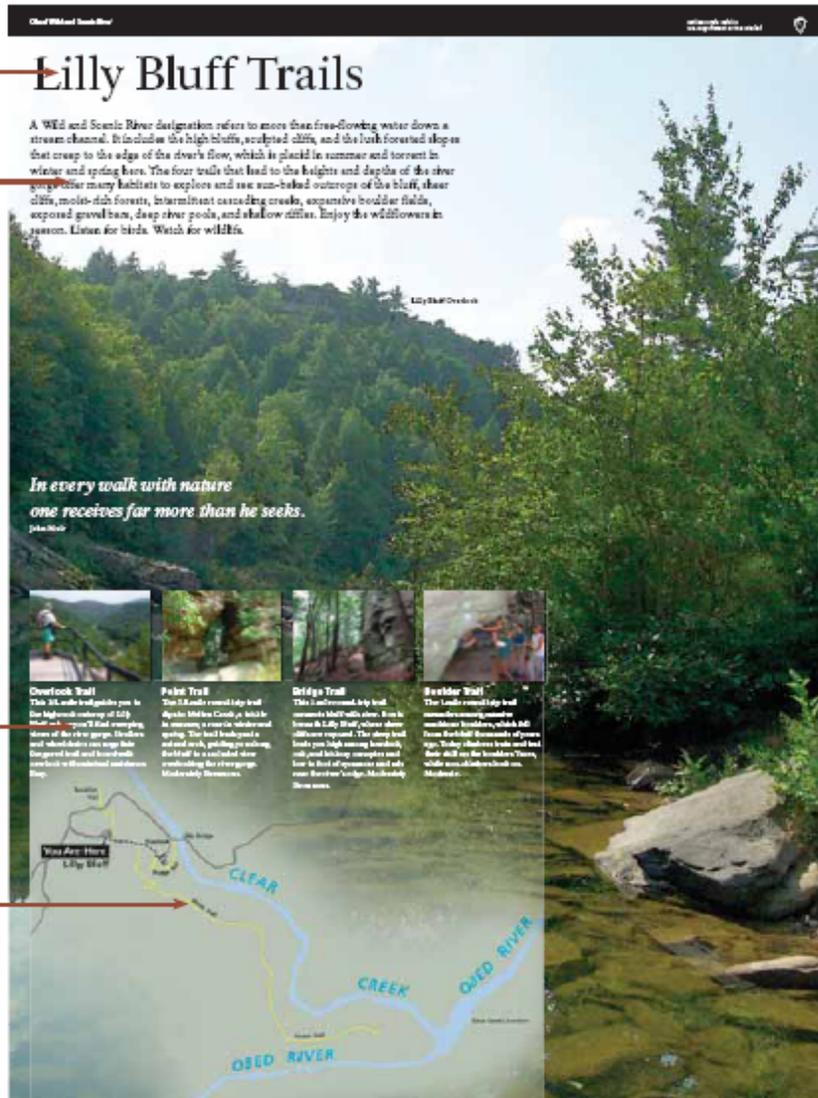
## Upright Trailhead 36" w x 48" h

**Title** - 144 point NPS Rawlinson Medium set on one line

**Main Text** - 36/46 point NPS Rawlinson Book (aligned to baseline grid). Use Medium when reversing white text from a dark background

**Caption** - 24/32 point NPS Rawlinson Medium (use Book for black text on light backgrounds)

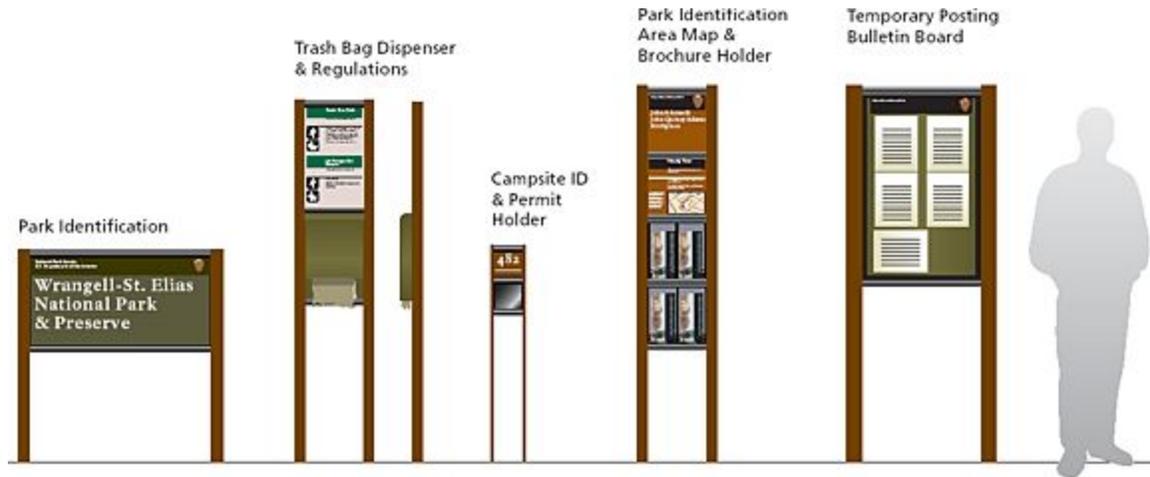
Use Frutiger for map labels following the Wayside Exhibit Map Standards



# Wayside Exhibit, Bulletin Board and Sign Examples

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(Continued)



# Stories and Sub-Themes

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The following Stories and Sub-Themes were discussed in the workshops and it was felt that they would be valuable for interpreters who were crafting programs.

- Historical Bush Pilots
- Mammoth Programs
- Oceans / Ocean Health
- Climate Change
- Sustainable Use
- Tundra Ecology
- Territorial Guard
- Native Dog Musers
- Eskimo Names and Places
- Muskozen Story
- Gold Rush Park History
- Sinrock Mary
- Military in the Preserve (WWII, Cold War, Jimmy Doolittle)
- Missionaries, Schools, and Reindeer
- Russian and English Exploration
- Whalers and Traders

# Planning Team and Consultants

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## **Preserve Staff:**

|                   |                                          |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Jeanette Pomrenke | Superintendent, BELA                     |
| Nichole Andler    | Lead Interpretive Ranger, BELA           |
| Ken Adkisson,     | Subsistence Program Manager, BELA        |
| Fred Tocktoo      | Subsistence Ranger, BELA                 |
| Peter Neitlich    | Natural Resources Program Manager, WEAR  |
| Jim Lawler        | ARCN I&M Network Program Manager         |
| Eileen Devinney   | Cultural resources Program Manager, WEAR |

## **Stakeholders:**

|                   |                                |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Richard Beneville | Nome Discovery Tours           |
| Pearl Mikulski    | Planner, Kawerak, Inc.         |
| Bruce Tungwenuk   | Sitnasauk Native Corporation   |
| Jeremy Master     | City of Nome Recreation Center |

## **Harpers Ferry Center:**

|                 |                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Judy Chetwin    | Interpretive Specialist, IMR         |
| Michael Lacombe | HFC Planner                          |
| Rick Jones      | HFC Planner and Workshop Facilitator |

