

## **DOCUMENT 1 - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **NANCY LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA PROPOSED MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

There are four documents provided for review at this time. This document, *Introduction and Background*, introduces the reader to the purpose of this portion of the planning process and briefly discusses authorities, describes the recreation area, provides background on what has happened to date, and details the current plan preparation process. The *Issues* document provides an issue statement and background information specific to that issue and closes with a section that summarizes the draft management recommendations. The third and fourth documents provide the management recommendations and alternatives proposed by Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) to address the issues. These are the proposals that you are asked to review and comment on. The third document, *Proposed Management Recommendations*, identifies the issues and provides a brief compatibility statement and standards that will be applied when adjudicating application for these uses. The fourth document, *Lynx Lake Road Butterfly Lake Trail, Summer Access Alternatives* provides four alternatives to current management that address the issues associated with access on Lynx Lake Road and Butterfly Lake Trail in the southern portion of Nancy Lake State Recreation Area (NLSRA).

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide background information on the NLSRA that may be useful to you as you review the Issues, Proposed Management Recommendations, and Lynx Lake Road and Butterfly Lake Trail Summer Access Alternatives documents. The intent of this portion of the planning process is to provide people an opportunity to review and comment on several management proposals prior to the development of the Public Review Draft of the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area Management Plan (Management Plan). While many issues will be addressed in the plan, the issues that follow are perhaps the most significant since they have the potential to be highly contentious and affect hundreds of property owners, and will determine how people access and recreate in a portion of NLSRA. These issues are: permitting of docks and other structures, existing unpermitted structures (in-water), moorage of boats adjacent to private property, property storage and boat moorage at Red Shirt Lake, and Access on Lynx Lake Road and Butterfly Lake Trail during the summer months.

The recommendations included in this document do not constitute a plan. The Division of Parks and Recreation (DPOR) will consider comments on these management recommendations as part of the development of the Management Plan. People will have an opportunity to review and comment on recommendations that are included in the Management Plan after that plan is developed.

#### **Authorities**

The authority for the Legislature to create special purpose sites (such as NLSRA), reserve them from the public domain, and provide for their administration and management is contained in Article VIII, Section 7 of The Constitution of the State of Alaska. The authority for the Alaska

Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), through DPOR, to develop and manage these areas is provided in Title 41 of the Alaska Statutes. Title 11 of Alaska Administrative Code provides both general (statewide) and unit specific regulations for components of the state park system, which includes state recreation sites and areas. DPOR is the agency responsible for managing recreation areas and other units in the park system. DPOR has the authority and responsibility to address issues within the NLSRA and NLSRS.

## **What is a Recreation Area?<sup>1</sup>**

### Definition and Purpose

A state recreation area is a relatively spacious unit and possesses a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities. The dominant management objective of the unit is to provide a maximum level of outdoor recreational opportunities based on the natural values of the unit and its ability to sustain use without significant adverse effects on natural systems.

### Characteristics

A state recreation area possesses recreational and/or natural resources of statewide or regional significance. Geographical distribution of these units and their relationships to population centers are important factors in the designation of an area as a state recreation area. The minimum size of a unit should be 200 acres so that the unit may have diverse natural landscapes capable of supporting a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities. The uniqueness and significance of an area's natural and cultural resources are not key criteria for the establishment of state recreation areas as is the case with state parks.

The majority of the lands within a state recreation area will be classified as natural and recreational development. Cultural zones will be established where appropriate. Only in special cases will any lands be classified as wilderness. Wilderness zones, if established, will be based upon documented public desire for wilderness-oriented recreation within the unit.

### Development and Activities

The management of a state recreation area allows for carefully planned and controlled resource modification to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities as long as the intensity of modification does not diminish the unit's natural and cultural values. Such modifications must be based upon a formal decision to enhance public enjoyment of the state recreation area's natural values or to provide for site-appropriate outdoor recreational activities. Lands within the unit will be developed to provide diverse, high quality outdoor recreational experiences in keeping with regional use patterns and preferences. Other than state recreation sites, state recreation areas are generally the most intensively developed type of unit in the State Park System.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Current Process**

DPOR decided to update the 1983 Plan after an internal analysis of that plan and a discussion of current and future management needs for the area. Soon after that decision was made, DPOR initiated the public planning process which began late in the fall 2008. The early public scoping

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from *Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework*; 1982

process was used to introduce issues identified by DPOR and to gather input on issues that should be addressed in this planning effort. Data needs were identified based on staff and public comments and information was collected.

Following the scoping process, comments were reviewed and a more in depth analysis of issues occurred. In the summer of 2010 a questionnaire was developed to get more specific information on preferences for facilities and trails and to learn more about access methods to private property. In the fall and winter of 2010, focus meetings were held to learn specifics about the types of recreational uses currently occurring and what types of recreation could be facilitated at the recreation area. Types of facilities and levels of development for recreation were also discussed during focus meetings. While these processes to gather information were occurring, planning meetings were held intermittently to discuss policy and management direction based on the available information.

Subsequent discussion and analysis by DPOR resulted in an understanding that five issues have the potential to impact a large number of property owners and the recreating public, involve changes to existing use patterns, and are considered contentious. These issues are: permitting of docks and other structures, existing unpermitted structures (in-water), moorage of boats adjacent to private property, property storage and boat moorage at Red Shirt Lake, and Access on Lynx Lake Road and Butterfly Lake Trail during the summer months. This part of the planning process presents proposed management recommendations to address permitting of docks and other structures, existing unpermitted structures (in-water), moorage of boats adjacent to private property, property storage and boat moorage at Red Shirt Lake. Four alternatives are presented to address access on Lynx Lake Road and Butterfly Lake Trail during the summer months.

### **What do I do now?**

You are being asked to review proposed management recommendations and alternatives and provide input that will be considered when finalizing recommendations to be included in the Management Plan. Any action DPOR takes to address these issues will have an effect on people and recreational use. Property owners may see access methods changed or use increase by people that don't own property in the area. The recreating public may see access methods and opportunities change in an area that has seen little public use outside of the canoe trail and public use cabins. On a large scale, the character of an entire area may change based on management decisions.

You should pay particular attention to how your use or access is affected in these proposals and alternatives. You may think the proposals allow too much use or allow access methods that you don't think are appropriate. Alternatively, you may think proposals don't go far enough to provide access in NLSRA. You may agree with portions of the recommendations or alternatives, but may want to propose changes that would make them more acceptable to you.

DPOR values input from people that may be directly affected by these agency proposals and from those that don't own property or recreate in the area but would like to provide input on management of the public resources within the SRA. All comments will be reviewed and considered prior to the

development of the draft plan. Your comments do count and can influence decision making by DPOR. Some suggestions for commenter's<sup>2</sup>:

- Your comments should be well organized and brief, but long enough to articulate your point.
- Make your comments specific to your issue or issues.
- Explain the rationale for your comment.
- Include or reference pertinent information (i.e. dates, locations, or copies of documents).
- Make realistic requests that are within the jurisdiction and authorities of DPOR.
- Don't distort facts or make intentional misstatements.
- Use appropriate language. The comments are part of the public record and can be viewed by anyone.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from ADNR/RADS "Make Your Comments Count" brochure.