

STATE OF ALASKA

ANILCA IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM Office of Project Management and Permitting

SARAH PALIN, Governor

550 W. 7TH AVENUE, SUITE 705
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
PH: (907) 269-7477 / FAX: (907) 334-2509
sally.gibert@alaska.gov

February 15, 2008

Marcia Blaszak
Regional Director
National Park Service
240 West 5th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Ms. Blaszak:

The State of Alaska reviewed the draft 2008 Superintendent's Proposed Compendiums for all park units in Alaska, as posted on the National Park Service web site. This letter represents the consolidated views of the State's resource agencies.

We appreciate the Service's continued commitment to annual public review of park compendiums and the opportunities for dialogue throughout the year as issues develop. As a result, we have no substantive issues with the specific changes proposed in this year's compendiums. Some of our few remaining long-standing issues (e.g., various pet restrictions, camping on the Katmai Coast) are being addressed in other forums, such as possible future regulations.

The following comments, specific to the proposed 2008 Compendiums, primarily offer suggestions for clarification purposes.

ALL PARKS

We appreciate the new explanations that provide the reasons for new restrictions and, when applicable, why less restrictive measures would not be effective. These are valuable additions to the Service's on-going efforts to make these documents more transparent and accountable. In some cases (as specified below) we recommend incorporating aspects of this background material into the individual compendiums as italicized justification. We also recommend the Service maintain a long-term internal record of such new provisions and their rationale so that 5 or 10 years from now managers will be able to look back and see the original reason for each entry as it was developed.

1.6(f) Compilation of activities requiring a permit, first bullet: For clarification, we suggest the following change to the park-wide entry: "Towing a person using a parasail, hang glider, or other airborne device behind a boat."

2.10(d) Food Storage: designated areas and methods: First, we specifically support the proposed change to remove the Sierra Interagency Black Bear Group from the list of groups that can approve adequate storage containers. Second, we request an addition to the following bullet that appears in all Compendiums:

- Items or methods approved by the Superintendent.

We request the addition of “methods” to provide the Superintendent with discretion to work with commercial guides, research groups, or others on other new technologies that may prove to be well-suited to Alaska conditions, such as portable solar powered electric fences. We understand that such discretion should be exercised with care (perhaps with additional conditions), and applied on a case-by-case basis, especially regarding emerging technologies.

See also comment for 2.10(d) Food storage in the Wrangell-St. Elias Compendium for a suggestion that may be applicable to other park units.

DENALI

13.45(c) Designated areas where personal property may be... stored, Reasons for the new bike storage provision: First, we request incorporating simplified versions of this rationale into the permanent compendium as italicized justification. We also recommend clarifying (in the justification) whether bike storage occurs along the park road in conjunction with biking the road, backcountry camping, or both. It would also be helpful to list where bike racks may be found once bicyclists leave the frontcountry developed area.

13.160 Designated cabins for subsistence uses without a permit: We presume the DENA 167 Fish Lake cabin is proposed for deletion because it is uninhabitable.

13.460 Cantwell ORV closure: We recommend including an acknowledgement (as an italicized justification) that this Compendium entry is temporary, pending promulgation of permanent regulation, which is currently being drafted.

13.972(a) Frontcountry Developed Area camping conditions: The second sentence starts with the word “These....” To clarify the applicability of this provision, we suggest the following alternative: “Non-essential vehicles or trailers...”

GLACIER BAY

2.14(a)(2) Sanitation and Refuse: This new provision includes a reasonable exception for “private” boaters. We assume this exception is not intended to apply to commercial boats and suggest this be further clarified. Otherwise a reader might assume the intent is to make a distinction between public (administrative) and private, which could lead to an incorrect interpretation.

13.1152(a) Private vessel permits and conditions, first bullet: This section indicates advance-notice permits *must be* confirmed within 48 hours and that permits not confirmed by 10am on the day of scheduled arrival will be cancelled. [emphasis added] Are there any consequences to not complying with the 48 hour requirement? If not, it may be more accurate to indicate confirmation within 48 hours is “*encouraged*” or “*recommended*.”

Reasons: While we have no problem with the proposed reallocations, the #1 reason provided is confusing. The final EIS originally targeted 10 short-notice permits, but also provided discretion for the Superintendent to adjust these allocations annually in the Compendium (page 2-45). The 2007 Compendium called for 14 short-notice permits and 10 advance-notice permits, apparently inadvertently reversing the numbers. The 2008 Compendium is returning to the allocation targeted in the EIS, while attempting to clarify that the EIS numbers are not fixed and remain adjustable.

13.1178 Closed waters, islands and other areas, Reasons less restrictive measures will not be effective, No. 1: This justification indicates certain types of human disturbance “...may *not* adversely affect breeding success...” (emphasis added), which appears to be contrary to the “reasons for the restrictions.”

KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH

2.35(a)(3)(i)(A) Alcoholic beverages and controlled substances: We appreciate the Park’s efforts to work with the City of Skagway on the issue of public intoxication. The proposed solution seems to be appropriate.

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS

2.10(d) Food storage: We note that the Wrangell-St. Elias Compendium is the only one that includes four additional bullets of listed and approved bear resistant containers. Are these containers already covered by the first bullet? If so, they would be duplicative and we suggest they be removed from the list. If these additional container types are not already automatically approved, we recommend they be considered for addition to the other park compendiums that address bear resistant containers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. If you have any questions, please call me at 907-269-7477.

Sincerely,



Sally Gibert
ANILCA Program Coordinator