



March 17, 2021

Greetings from the Alaska State Parks Director:

This letter supports regional facilitators in forming regional working groups for the upcoming planning effort called the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), for 2023 – 2027.

The effort will be jointly coordinated by the DNR – Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) and the NPS – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). I am the overall lead person from DPOR, and Mike Downs is the lead from RTCA. Alaska Trails Initiative, under the umbrella of Alaska Trails, is also actively involved, with Chris Beck as the Initiative's coordinator.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The Alaska 2016 – 2021 SCORP is coming to an end and must be renewed. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act requires states and territories to update the SCORP every five years. In each update, the state will evaluate the demand and supply of public outdoor recreation resources, document emerging trends shaping future public recreation facility needs, identify top public recreation priorities for the state (or by regions), and provide opportunities for ample public participation.

The 2023 – 2027 SCORP will strive to bring together boroughs, cities, tribal councils, native corporations, federal and state land managers, outdoor industry, public health officials and non-profits to develop regional strategies to improve outdoor recreation in Alaska.

Statewide advisory board of 20 diverse agencies will focus on policy, statewide priorities, funding opportunities, roadblocks, and information technology.

Regional Working Groups

Facilitators have been chosen for each region to convene stakeholders in outdoor recreation into SCORP regional working groups. These regional groups will develop their own regionally focused strategies through collaboration, these strategies will become part of the SCORP. There will be five main regions: Arctic, Interior, Southwest, Southcentral (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kenai), and Southeast.

Working with land managers, the regional groups will also identify specific projects that can help advance these strategies. Identified projects will be included in a future capital investment planning GIS database to demonstrate funding needs, be prepared for future funding opportunities, and to start to build a knowledge base on outdoor recreation in Alaska.

We want to create a tool that is useful to guide investments in outdoor recreation infrastructure and set priorities to assist in economic and workforce development the outdoor recreation sector, stewardship and conservation of public lands, and improve the health and wellness of Alaskans. We hope that you decide to become part of this effort and join your regional working group.

Please contact me at your convenience if you have questions or need further information.

Respectfully,

Ricky Gease

Ricky Gease
Director, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation