

STATE OF ALASKA

SARAH PALIN, Governor

ANILCA IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

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July 16, 2007

Helen Lons, Chief of Planning and Compliance
Katmai National Park and Preserve
P.O. Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613-0007

Dear Ms. Lons:

The State of Alaska reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Brooks Lake Maintenance Facility at Katmai National Park and Preserve. With the exception of a response from the Office of Project Management and Permitting regarding consistency with the Alaska Coastal Management Program, the following comments represent the consolidated views of the State's resource agencies.

We appreciate the Service's need to improve health and safety standards for employee housing and to relocate maintenance and fuel storage facilities away from such close proximity to Brooks Lake. As noted in the EA, a plan review from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) is required for the water and wastewater project components. The ADEC contact for the review is Bill Rieth. In addition, a solid waste authorization may be required if ash from incinerated waste from building demolition or construction is buried on-site. The operation of a remote camp for housing temporary and seasonal staff, either during or after construction is complete, also requires an authorization from ADEC. The following links provide additional information regarding these authorizations. Questions may also be directed to Bob Blankenburg, DEC Solid Waste Program Coordinator.

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/docs/sw/SWG0302000.pdf>
<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/docs/sw/Class-III-app.pdf>

The EA also notes this proposal implements part of the preferred alternative in the 1996 Development Concept Plan for the Brooks River Area. We recognize the following request is outside the scope of this immediate proposal; however, as the Service considers making additional incremental improvements to the area, we strongly recommend giving a higher priority to replacement of the floating bridge on Brooks River with an elevated structure. We have previously expressed concern about health and safety issues associated with the existing structure and consulted with Service staff concerning

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bear/human encounters in the area. The following advisory was included in Fish Habitat Permit FG 99-II-0056, which was issued to the Service for the floating bridge on April 23, 1999.

“As an advisory, ADF&G continues to be concerned that the floating bridge will be used by brown bears. Although the new design eliminates the stabilizing floats that were traditionally used by the bears, the increased width of the deck provides adequate space for them to travel, rest, nap and fish. Bear use of the floating bridge and the adjacent river/lagoon restricts human use of the structure and increases the potential for undesirable bear/human encounters. We strongly recommend that the National park Service (NPS) place a high priority on elevating the bridge above the river so that the NPS’s required bear/human separation distances can be maintained. This action would simultaneously reduce restrictions on human use of the bridge and increase bear viewing opportunities in the area.”

In hopes of minimizing the potential for bear/human encounters at the site, we would appreciate continued opportunities to work with the Service on solutions to this issue.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Susan E. Magee
ANILCA Project Coordinator

cc: Sally Gibert, ANILCA Program Coordinator