

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Denali National Park & Preserve

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: DENA

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Denali National Park & Preserve is an internationally significant park. It is a United Nations Biosphere Reserve under the Man and the Biosphere program, significant for its potential for sub-arctic ecosystem research. Created in 1917 as Mt. McKinley National Park, it was expanded to 6 million acres and renamed in 1980 by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Denali National Park & Preserve contains the highest mountain in North America and the largest continuously protected ecosystem in the world. Successful protection of park resources, including wildlife, extensive wilderness, and the vast Alaska Range have made Denali the centerpiece of the booming Alaska tourism industry and a focal point of conservation and research interests. NPS efforts focus on providing for appropriate visitor use that protects the park's pristine natural integrity and the unique aesthetic experience of Alaskan wilderness. Significant issues include increasing quality access to the park, working with regional tourism concerns, managing commercial and subsistence uses, identifying, quantifying and understanding resource impacts from climate change, identifying and protecting newly discovered paleontological resources, and restoring abandoned mining lands.

By 2016: Park visitors are welcomed and served by a diverse group of energetic, enthusiastic, highly skilled professionals including NPS employees, park partners and volunteers. Park decisions and stewardship are guided by a strong strategic research, inventory and monitoring program, ensuring that park resources are protected unimpaired for future generations. Park wildlife thrives in an intact, unaltered ecosystem. Denali's education program is a model for the NPS in bridging science and education connecting people of all ages and cultures with the park, the Service, and its mission through innovative park and distance-learning programs using exciting media and technology. Fully staffed park facilities and operations demonstrate sustainable design, environmental leadership, and Best Management Practices, serving as educational examples for the visiting public. New South Denali visitor facilities partnership enhances recreational capacity, and promotes responsible private sector investment in park protection, visitor services, and economic development. Local communities and partners value Denali NP as a neighbor, cooperating with the NPS to use and protect the Park's natural and cultural resources unimpaired.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Paul R. Anderson

Site: DENA

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

DENA will put greater value on the benefits of the NPS aviation program by advocating for improved pilot recruitment and enhanced training and mentorship. Consistent with the Safety Leadership Council, DENA will participate in the creation, development and delivery of a regional aviation training strategy. An action of the strategy will be to make permanent the Regional Aviation Trainer position. With this effort, aviation program preparedness and safety will become and remain a critical operation focus for the entire region and strive for the lowest rate of accidents within DOI.

Investments in DENA's Communication Center will provide greater public safety communication services for 16 Alaska Region NPS units. Currently, these parks lack common communications center support.

- provide 24 hour per day, seven day a week dispatch services year-round to serve all law enforcement and emergency service providers in NPS units in Alaska.

- Purchase and install tele-communications equipment using Radio over Internet Protocol (RoIP) technology to enable employees in remote location to effectively communicate with the center.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

Key historic structures and landscapes are stabilized/restored in order to preserve their historic integrity for today's and tomorrow's visitors to interpret and enjoy.

- Busia Cabin is stabilized, FCI improved, providing additional interpretive opportunities of the Historic Kantishna Mining District
- Doty House is rehabilitated, FCI improved, preserving its historic character
- Hotel Power House is rehabilitated for adaptive re-use, FCI improved
- Pearson Food Cache is rehabilitated, FCI Improved

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

Restore mined lands in the Kantishna Mining District. Restore lands damaged by ORV activity.

Monitor the distribution and spread of exotic plant species. Learn what factors that have allowed exotic plants such as white sweet clover and orange hawkweed to enter and spread in the park. Manage the exotics species when possible.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

Park utility systems are upgraded and improved to bring them into compliance with existing EPA and DEC mandates.

- Entrance area sewage lagoons are brought into compliance with ADEC mandates
- All permanent portable chemical toilets, along with Teklanika and Polychrome Rest Area toilets are replaced with vault style SST's to reduce the negative impacts of the chemicals on the sewage lagoon

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.

Data gathered from Park Road Study is used to determine Park Road carrying capacity and to guide changes in the visitor transportation system while protecting park resources.

Restoration of lands disturbed by mining and ORV use returns natural water flows and reclaims wetlands.

- Cantwell Subsistence ORV trails are established and hardened, ORV trails in fragile areas are closed and reclaimed
- Kantishna wetlands and rivers disturbed by mining are restored

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

Complete archeological, native place names and cultural landscape inventories.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Provide subsistence and sport harvest opportunities in Alaska parks while conserving populations of fish and wildlife.

- Alaska National Parks will protect and enhance living cultures by providing for subsistence and sport harvest opportunities while conserving populations of fish and wildlife. Denali will work with other parks region-wide to develop research and data analysis on subsistence harvested species which will allow science-based management to a natural and healthy standard.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

STEWARDSHIP

Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Historic Headquarters and the Historic Kantishna Mining Districts are restored, preserved, protected and interpreted for present and future generations to understand and enjoy.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

STEWARDSHIP

Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Develop a scientifically sound understanding of our changing climate and its effects on Alaskan ecosystems. Alaska's climate is projected to warm at a high rate relative to the rest of the United States; to effectively manage our parks we need to understand the change that will occur to the dependent arctic and sub-arctic ecosystems landscapes and ecosystems.
- A region wide assessment and analysis of climate change will inform refined projections of climate change effects and allow for informed, science-based park management.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Fully utilize the educational possibilities of the Murie Science and Learning Center. Children who visit Denali become ambassadors as a result of their experiences with programs provided by the park and its partners.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Denali will reduce environmental impacts of its park operations on air and water quality through the following actions:

- Lease hybrid vehicles when appropriate
- Work with concessionaire and with the bus industry to produce and use hybrid buses.
- Eliminate fuel oil distribution systems for facilities and replace with propane or natural gas.
- Increase building envelope insulation to reduce BTU demand for heating.
- Increase efficiency/effectiveness of dust palliative use on the park road.
- Increase the number of bicycle and pedestrian trips used by employees for short work trips. (Alternative transportation)
- Increase number of employees carpooling to and from work, as well as to and from HQ to Toklat and Wonder Lake.
- Perform timely preventative maintenance on our vehicles and facilities, including our heating systems.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

ENVIRONMENT

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

- Incorporate sustainable design, construction and practices into the MSLC tours of the Denali Visitor Center
- Improve, and increase the number of Visitor Center exhibits on sustainable design and operations

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

- Purchase a minimum of 10% of our total power needs as "green energy" through the SNAP program.
- Incorporate both solar and hydroelectric power as the principle power sources at the new Eielson Visitor Center.
- Convert all power systems used in remote campgrounds to solar energy.
- Increase use of re-refined oils in all engines.
- Increase use of bio-based oils in all chainsaws.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

- Seek platinum LEED rating for Eielson Visitor Center.
- Interpret LEED program at both EVC and DVC.
- Design and construct all new park facilities to meet at least the Silver LEED standards (Southside Visitor Facilities, Savage Rest Stop, Toklat Rest Stop).

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

ENVIRONMENT

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Denali National Park and Preserve further reduces its impact on the environment through the following efforts:

- Reducing our carbon footprint
- Implementing Best Practices for facility, road and fleet operations
- Train all employees in green purchasing policy/requirements
- Increasing education programs emphasizing our successes and actions the public can take to become more "green"

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

ENVIRONMENT

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

- Develop, implement and interpret a community transportation system for visitors, employees and residents between Healy and Cantwell.

- In partnership with the Joint Venture, expand the recycling program in public use areas and interpret the environmental impact of our efforts.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

RECREATION

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

Trail systems within the Entrance Area are expanded and improved to provide safe, accessible access for all visitors so that they may find inspiration and solitude within Denali's vast wilderness.

- Triple Lakes Trail is rehabilitated providing expanded hiking opportunities within the Front Country
- Accessible bridges are constructed across Hines and Riley Creeks providing increased access to inspiring places

Work with park neighbors and partners to identify future projects, such as communication system extensions or gas pipeline installation, which could present opportunities to reduce resource impacts and/or leverage funding to improve recreational opportunities in the area.

- A multi-use trail is constructed to connect McKinley Village with the Denali Bike Trail.

Develop and implement a trails plan for the Kantishna District as prescribed in the Back Country Management Plan.

- Formalize/harden social trails as appropriate in order to reduce wetlands impacts and improve visitor safety.
- Reclaim Skyline Drive, reducing the width to accommodate hiking and subsistence ORV use.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

RECREATION

Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

Create a Volunteer Community Service program to recruit visiting groups such as the BSA, GSA, Schools, Elder Hostels etc. to accomplish high priority tasks for the park.

Create a position to coordinate VIP recruitment efforts and assist staff in directing the work of VIP crews throughout the park.

Additional volunteer support infrastructure is developed in order to grow Denali's volunteer program.

- Construct the VIP trailer loop identified in the HQ Master Plan planning documents.

- Improve communication infrastructure at Savage and Teklanika campgrounds to provide support for VIP's

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

RECREATION

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Using Murie Science and Learning Center partners as well as transportation partners to create a sequence of opportunities for school kids to experience Denali, starting with distance learning and culminating in overnights in an in-park residential facility. It will also include establishing internship opportunities for students to work in parks.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Denali will increase the number of visitors exposed to NPS themes and messages by working with tourism industry and education partners to develop a diverse menu of experiences, increase training to partner interpreters to widen the circle of those sharing the NPS message, and facilitate increased opportunities for all park visitors to interact with NPS interpretive staff.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The vision of the Murie Science and Learning Center (MSLC) is fully realized; connecting people of all ages and cultures with eight partner parks, the Service and its mission through a combination of science, education, and partnerships. The MSLC collaborates with the Fairbanks Interagency Center, through the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitor Center, to reach a diverse audience.

The MSLC eight partner parks work closely together and with partners in developing curricula and creating opportunities to teach teachers to multiply the effects of outreach efforts, so that an order of magnitude more students world-wide benefit from high-quality programs, along with place-based and online learning.

Cutting edge technologies and interactive media are employed throughout the MSLC and its eight partner parks to attract, connect with and engage people throughout the world. Through their learning experience, MSLC program participants become life-long learners and ambassadors for parks and the National Park Service.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Denali will work with other parks and partners to launch a web portal to Alaska's National Parks to allow teachers to access education resources, including park curricula, inventory and reservations system for traveling trunks, teacher training materials, as well as an electronic meeting forum for educators to communicate with park educators and with each other about curricula, share lesson plans, etc. To engage students, Denali will also create platform for students to post their own images, blogs, and home movies (via NPS screening process) about their national park experiences. Increase the use and reach of distance education technology to connect students in classrooms around the world directly to rangers in the field to facilitate exploration of our collective nation heritage.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

Denali National Park and Preserve will implement a Teacher-to-Ranger-to-Teacher program, and develop and market credit courses to teachers to expand the reach of park-created curricula. These efforts will include working with other parks to create an Alaska history curricula that will specifically address the tremendous influence of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in shaping the National Park System as a whole, as well as the political and social fabric of Alaska.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

PROFESSIONALISM

Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

Increase representation of diverse candidates throughout park staffing by participating fully with Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) ANSEP (<http://ansep.uaa.alaska.edu/>), University of Alaska. Offer internships in resource management, interpretation and education, and information technology to attract Alaska Natives into the NPS.

Continue outreach relationships with Tuskegee, St. Mary's, and Southern Universities. Initiate outreach efforts with the University of Alaska in an effort to reach Alaska Natives.

Develop relations with the Alaska Votech school in Seward with an eye towards developing an intern program for Maintenance.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Attain the highest employee satisfaction rate of all federal agencies, as measured by Office of Personnel Management surveys.

Upgrade park housing and IT infrastructure, construct new housing, office space and exercise facilities to adequately support employee needs and support the Centennial Initiative.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

PROFESSIONALISM

Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

Establish a structured professional development curriculum to provide park managers with the skills to apply best business practices and superior leadership.

Beginning in 2008, implement 2006 NPS Servicewide Evaluation Strategy for Interpretation and Education to create a culture of evaluation - or continuous learning - in Denali National Park & Preserve. Provide adequate resources to provide formal evaluation at all stages of program and project development and implementation, especially as we expand into areas of new technology. Though some evaluation may be conducted by contractors - using "core" NPS standards - on major projects, much of the programmatic evaluation can and should be done by park-based NPS employees, using low-cost methodologies and protocol.

Develop a succession plan that provides continuity in the park's strategic employee development program after the senior HR positions retire; including training in leadership and best business practices.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

PROFESSIONALISM

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

Fill the vacant Safety Officer position and enter into the OSHA Strategic Partnership Program in order to improve safety awareness among employees and to more readily identify and correct safety hazards and practices in the work place.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

PROFESSIONALISM

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Continue to strengthen partnerships between the State, Boroughs and other stake holders to move the joint management concept of the Denali State and National Parks forward.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DENA

PROFESSIONALISM

Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.

Grow the Artist in Residence program by making it a year-round opportunity. Share the products of the program with park partners to heighten the awareness and interest in the program.

Work with philanthropic partners, developed through the Artist in Residence program to develop an art gallery in the Entrance Area so that visitors can enjoy the proceeds of the program, furthering their understanding and enjoyment of the park and its resources.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS