



Glacier Bay National Park

Backcountry Management Plan

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public feedback to guide its update of a 1989 Glacier Bay National Park Wilderness Visitor Use Management Plan. Planning is in the early stages (*see “Planning framework and process,” next page*) and the NPS is currently seeking public feedback to help articulate goals, objectives, and strategies for managing park backcountry areas over the next ten to 20 years.

Where is the backcountry?

The plan will refine future agency management strategies for ~2.6 million-acres of designated Wilderness lands and waters in Glacier Bay National Park (*see map and legend below*). Areas excluded from “backcountry” include inholdings and non-wilderness waters and lands addressed in other management plans (such as the park frontcountry area and the preserve). Alek River rafting activities also will not be addressed, as this requires an international treaty. At the same time, the plan will address relationships between wilderness and non-wilderness areas of the park.

What will the plan consider?

The plan will serve as a collaborative vision for providing visitor opportunities and managing visitor use in the backcountry, including commercial visitor excursions in designated Wilderness. The planning process will examine current and potential visitor opportunities, and develop long-term strategies for protecting resources and connecting visitors to key park experiences and values.

How can I participate?

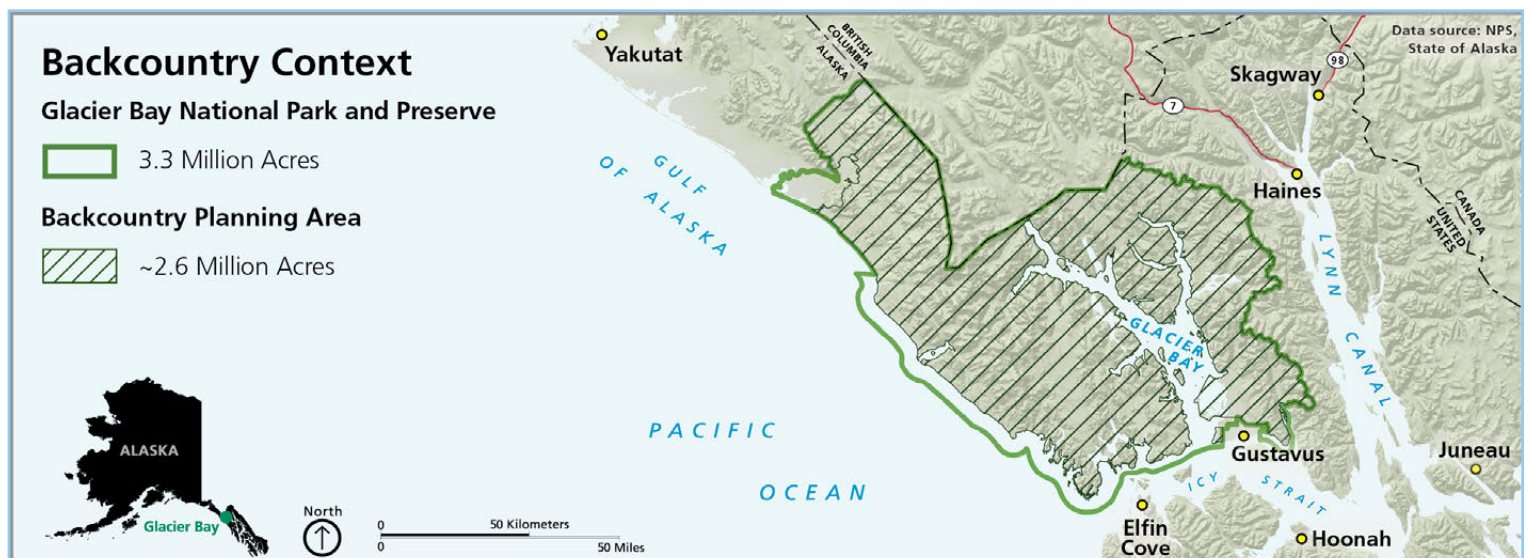
Between February 21 and May 5 you are invited to participate in the planning process (*see details, next page*) as the first of several opportunities. During this period it is most helpful if you respond to five questions (*see right*).

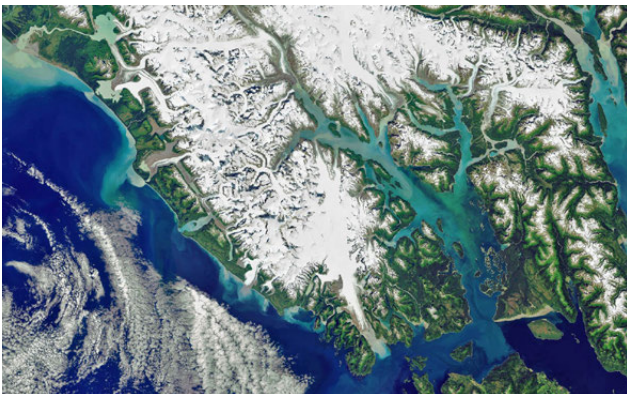


NPS Preliminary Planning Vision, August 2019

The backcountry of Glacier Bay National Park provides opportunities for people to immerse themselves in an intact, dynamic wilderness, now and forever. There are multiple ways to experience the backcountry ranging from the deck of a cruise ship to a multi-day kayaking or backpacking trip.

- 1) What is your vision for the Glacier Bay backcountry over the next ten to 20 years?
- 2) What backcountry experiences do you find most important? How are these unique from the rest of the park/and/or other parts of Southeast Alaska?
- 3) In backcountry areas that attract more intensive visitor use (now or anticipated), can you suggest strategies for managing crowding or dispersing use where the benefits outweigh the restrictions?
- 4) What do you think about the NPS constructing new trails in a small portion of the backcountry (originating from road-accessible trailheads in the Gustavus area)?
- 5) What else specific to the management of the Glacier Bay backcountry do you want the planning team to consider?





(above, Satellite of Glacier Bay, Icy Strait and the Gulf of Alaska) **Designated wilderness in this area encompasses the traditional homeland of the Huna Tlingit who retain living cultural ties with this dynamic landscape.**

How to comment

Between February 21 and May 5 there are a variety of ways you can comment:

- Submit electronically:

go.nps.gov/GBwild (short link URL)

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/>

- Mail:

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
P.O. Box 140, Gustavus, AK 99826

- Email:

GLBA_public_comments@nps.gov

For additional information please contact Sara Doyle, Outdoor Recreation Planner at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve by phone at (907) 697-2675, or by emailing GLBA_public_comments@nps.gov.



Learn more online:
parkplanning.nps.gov

Planning framework and process

The NPS manages Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve as a special place using a portfolio of management plans (*see www.nps.gov/glba/learn/management/portfolio-of-management-plans.htm*).

Management plans serve as internal agency tools that:

- Articulate strategies for public enjoyment while ensuring that park resources are protected unimpaired for future generations.
- Identify desired visitor experiences consistent with the unit's legislated purposes and its unique qualities and values.
- Guide agency decision-making, activities, and investment with transparency and accountability to the American public.

The main steps in the current planning process are described below with an anticipated timeframe:

Preliminary planning (August 2019 - January 2020)

A planning team considered background, developed a planning vision, and defined a public and formal consultation process.

Public input (February 21 - May 5, 2020)

The NPS is soliciting broad input on planning questions to inform backcountry management strategies.

Management alternatives (June 2020)

Considering the input received, the NPS develops a range of backcountry management strategies with sideboards specific to park values and resource stewardship.

Draft plan (Summer through Fall 2020)

The NPS prepares a plan and, depending on the proposed strategies and actions, may begin appropriate environmental compliance processes as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other laws.

Public Review and Consultation (TBD)

A plan is shared for public and stakeholder review and engagement, including any appropriate review and consultation required under NEPA and other laws.

Final Plan and Decision (TBD)

Review comments are considered before a plan is finalized or implemented.



At ~2.6 million acres, the Glacier Bay backcountry is one of the largest designated Wilderness areas in the U.S. National Wilderness Preservation System. The majority of park visitors experience a glimpse of wilderness from the outside looking in (above, left), while others find unique experiences to travel deep into and be fully immersed in wilderness (above, middle and right).