National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Glacier Bay News Release

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NPS Proposes Climate Monitoring Program for Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

BARTLETT COVE, AK –The National Park Service has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider potential effects of placing eight automated climate monitoring stations and adding instrumentation to two existing radio repeater towers in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Two alternatives are presented and the environmental consequences are analyzed.

Why monitor climate in Glacier Bay?

The National Park Service Inventory & Monitoring program operates long-term ecological monitoring programs for parks including Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. "Weather and Climate" is one of the park's 12 priority Vital Signs. Additional climate monitoring is being proposed to help managers understand future changes in key park resources and ecological processes that may result from climate change such as glacial ice mass wasting, shifts in marine salinity and nutrients, changing composition of plant communities, and the spread of invasive species.

What would monitoring stations do?

Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) would record air and soil temperature, precipitation, relative humidity, wind speed and direction, solar radiation, and snow depth data. Stations would be powered by solar panel or methanol fuel cell. In addition to storing data, each station would also transmit hourly weather conditions and sensor condition by satellite. Hourly weather condition information would be available over the internet to help improve National Weather Service forecasts and to aid park visitor trip planning and safety.

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Where would stations be located?

A grid of stations was designed to capture conditions along the west-east, north-south, and high-low elevation gradients in the park. Sites in Dry Bay, Deception Hills, Lituya Bay, Queen Inlet, Glacier Bay's Lower West Arm, upper Muir Inlet, and Brady Icefield are being considered for installation of new weather stations. Park resources that may be affected by such installations include wilderness value and character, wildlife, vegetation, natural soundscapes, visitor experience, and culturally-sensitive areas.

Where can I learn more about the NPS Climate and Weather monitoring program?

Follow the link below to read more about NPS climate monitoring projects in Southeast Alaska parks. https://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/sean/WC_main.aspx

What's next?

The NPS is asking for your review and comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA) including the range of alternatives, resources affected, and the potential impacts to these resources. The EA is now available at the following link. You may also submit comments using this link: http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=12&projectID=44972&documentID=53961

You may also submit comments by email at glba_public_comments@nps.gov
or by postal mail at:
Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve,
P.O. Box 140
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If you have questions about the proposed climate station program please contact Allison Banks by phone at 907-697-2611, or by email at Allison_Banks@nps.gov

Please submit all comments by close of business on June 12, 2015.

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About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 406 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Visit us at www.nps.gov, on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalparkservice, Twitter www.twitter.com/natlparkservice, and YouTube www.youtube.com/nationalparkservice.