



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore  
9922 Front St. (Hwy M-72)  
Empire, Michigan 49630-9797

IN REPLY REFER TO:

June 11, 2007

D18(SLBE)

Dear Friends:

I would like to thank everyone who provided comments on the General Management Plan/Wilderness Study Preliminary Alternatives and/or participated in the public meetings held in Benzie, Leelanau and Grand Traverse Counties on May 1, 2, and 3. Your continued interest and input is vital in developing a meaningful new plan for the future management of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

The next step is already in progress, as the planning team analyzes the public comment on the Preliminary Alternatives and characterizes the relative benefits, impacts, and costs of the components of each alternative. This effort will enable the planning team to begin developing a Preferred Alternative. Over the course of the next several months, planners will undertake the laborious process of writing the draft General Management Plan/Wilderness Study/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/WS/EIS). The draft plan, which is expected to be more than 300 pages long, will take about nine months to produce. Its primary components will consist of a statement of purpose and need for the plan, a detailed description of the alternatives (including the Preferred Alternative), a description of the topic areas impacted by the plan (such as vegetation, historic structures, socioeconomics, etc.), and finally, a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of each alternative on these topics.

There will be no more GMP newsletters issued. However, because it will take so long to prepare this draft document, we will be posting information as it becomes available on the GMP portion of our website at [www.nps.gov/slbe](http://www.nps.gov/slbe). We anticipate posting the summary of public comments for Newsletter #4 soon. We also plan to produce a series of short bulletins keeping people informed of our progress as we work on the various sections of the document. We encourage you to check the site often and welcome comments throughout this process. One way to publicly discuss the GMP/WS and associated information presented on the website is to register and post comments on the GMP Web Forum. In spring 2008, we will present the Draft GMP/WS/EIS for public review and comment. At that time, there will be an official comment period, including public meetings and hearings in late May or early June 2008.

I would like to thank you again for making our recent GMP public comment period a success. We received many constructive comments and they will be crucial to the development of the Preferred Alternative. Although people care about this special place for many different reasons, and the comments reflect that, I believe we can develop a Preferred Alternative that the vast majority of people will be able to support. I am confident that together we can develop a General Management Plan that maintains a variety of recreational opportunities - from drive-to beaches to solitary hikes - while continuing to preserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore entrusted to our care for this and future generations.

You can access the latest GMP/WS/EIS information and provide input at the park's website located at [www.nps.gov/slbe](http://www.nps.gov/slbe) or for more information call (231) 326-5134.

Sincerely,

  
Dusty Shultz  
Superintendent