



Shared Beringian Heritage Program STRATEGIC PLAN





Water tank art on St. George / Ram Papish

INTRODUCTION

The Shared Beringian Heritage Program (SBHP) strategic plan was developed during the spring and summer of 2022. It is intended to guide program efforts over the next five years.

Past and potential agreement recipients, program partners, and current and former Alaska park superintendents and regional staff provided early input through online meetings and a written questionnaire. Input was gathered from representatives of the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Brown University, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Eurasian Conservation Fund, Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS), Council for US-Russia Relations, Wildlife Conservation Society, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game-Gulf and Bering Marine Mammal Program.

Shared Beringia Heritage Program staff hosted a workshop at the NPS Alaska Regional Office and online to develop the strategic plan elements. Workshop participants included representatives of the SBHP, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Western Arctic National Parklands, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, NPS Alaska Regional Office, NPS International Affairs Office, Kawerak, Inc., and a University of Alaska Ph.D. candidate. A number of the participants are of Indigenous heritage.

Front Cover photo captions, clockwise from the top left: 1. Skin boat race, Chukotka / Konstantin Savva, 2. Sea ice forming in Bering Strait / E. Anichtchenko, NPS, 3. Dog musher Timofei preparing meat for the dogs / Mille Porsild, 4. Majestic caribou / NPS





Cooking traditional meal on campfire / Mille Porsild

MISSION STATEMENT

To connect people and promote collaboration for thriving cultures and ecosystems and to celebrate the Beringian region.

CORE VALUES

Community. Our Beringia community transcends the boundaries drawn between us. We recognize and value the individual identities of the communities that make up the Beringia region and dedicate attention to the connections among us. These connections are born from family ties as well as shared cultures and natural environments.

Determination. We overcome challenges, communicate what those challenges are, and do what is right and important, even when there are strong opposing forces. We persevere in the face of adversity.

Creativity. We are creative and adapt to different situations to accomplish impactful work.

Inclusiveness. We engage with and incorporate new and diverse perspectives, ideas, and voices into our work. We practice empathy: with open hearts and open minds, we hear and accept others, and we think, speak, and act respectfully.

VISION STATEMENT

Through strong community connections across Beringia, we are an international and transcultural model of friendship and collaboration.



Audience of the 2011 Beringia Days / Rudy D'Alessandro

GOALS AND ACTIONS

Keystone Goal: Projects and programs reflect meaningful engagement with Beringian partners and Indigenous communities.

GOAL 1

Develop a strategic workplan to guide community engagement.

KEY ACTIONS

- Participate in in-person, live events already occurring that have shared goals with the program.
- Create a structured youth program that connects local young people to science, culture, and related opportunities within Beringia. Elements of the program could include the following actions:
 - » Develop cooperative agreements with local youth program providers that incorporate Indigenous knowledge, science, and cultural activities focused on Beringia.
 - » Create or partner to support internships that provide professional and developmental opportunities.
- Develop a community exchange program that includes participants of all ages, as well as international and Indigenous communities.



Participants of the Shared Beringian Heritage Program strategic meeting / NPS

GOAL 2

Reinvent the proposal process to ensure strong connections with local communities and Indigenous cultures and highly impactful and lasting results.

KEY ACTIONS

- Ensure that proposals and supporting documents are easy to submit. For example, create an optional template project or easy-to-use form and consider accepting proposals in the mail.
- Establish an advisory committee comprising community members and agency staff.
- Develop a list of preferred translators and interpreters for cooperative agreement holders.
- Provide application support, as requested, to potential cooperators, conduct workshops on the application process, and seek ideas from various communities and Indigenous groups on possible funding themes before a formal request for proposals.
- Assess the two types of financial assistance currently available and make needed changes.
- Design quality control processes, such as restricting the number of open projects from the same applicant to one; introducing cost efficiency and applicant's standing as proposal rating elements.
- Seek granting authority for the Program through a Legislative Proposal.



Bering Land Bridge National Preserve / NPS

GOAL 3

Increase awareness of the program among communities and stakeholders throughout Beringia and within the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior.

KEY ACTIONS

- Present at existing events that help increase community or agency connection with the program.
- Support other organizations in reestablishing the Bering Strait Messenger Network.
- Travel to the local communities where projects are taking place to collect information and media for communications. Communications could include, for example, an annual webinar and digital video shorts.
- Re-envision Beringia Days, create a collaborative forum that brings together communities, funded projects and scientists, and international partners and cooperators. Cocreate the new vision with local communities and Indigenous organizations.





Sockeye drying on fish rack in Teller, Alaska / E. Anichtchenko, NPS

STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

SHARED BERINGIAN HERITAGE PROGRAM

Jenya Anichtchenko, Russian Language Specialist/Outreach Coordinator

Nikki Braem, Cultural Anthropologist, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve

Jeanette Koelsch, Superintendent, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve

Jacob Martin, Program Specialist

OTHER NPS

Rudy D'Alessandro, International Cooperation Specialist, Office of International Affairs

Tahzay Jones, Regional Coastal Ecologist, Alaska Regional Office

Justin Junge, Archeologist, Western Arctic National Parklands and Bering Land Bridge National Preserve

Jim Lawler, Program Manager, Arctic Inventory and Monitoring Network

Maija Lukin, Alaska Native Tribal Relations Program Manager, Alaska Regional Office

Rachel Mason, Senior Cultural Anthropologist, Alaska Regional Office

Jeff Rasic, Resource Program Manager, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve

Jennifer Pederson Weinberger, Cultural Resources Program Manager, Alaska Regional Office

PARTNERS

Vera Metcalf, Director, Eskimo-Walrus Commission

Eduard Zdor, University of Alaska Fairbanks

MEETING FACILITATION

Sarah Bodo, Project Manager, NPS Denver Service Center

Maureen Finnerty, Project Manager, NPS Denver Service Center

John Valainis, Cultural Resource Specialist, NPS Denver Service Center

Back cover photo captions, clockwise from the top left: 1. The 2014 Nadezhda (Hope) Race / Mille Porsild, 2. Jumping fish / NPS, 3. Beringia landscape / NPS, 4. Yaranga, traditional dwelling of Chukchi reindeer herders / Konstantin Savva



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