



Public Newsletter

Access to Inholdings

Environmental Assessment



Wrangell-Saint Elias National Park & Preserve

Message from the Superintendent

The National Park Service (NPS) invites your participation as we consider issuing long-term rights-of-way (ROW) for established and sustainable access to land holdings inside Wrangell-Saint Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST). The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 1110(b) gives the State or private owner, valid occupiers, and successors in interest, such rights as may be necessary to assure adequate and feasible access to their lands. These rights are subject to regulations to protect the natural and other values of the park. The NPS is preparing a programmatic environmental assessment (EA) as required under the National Environmental Policy Act to evaluate the environmental effects of issuing rights of way to landowners for established sustainable routes and facilities.

We recognize reasonable access is crucial to the use and enjoyment of nonfederal lands in National Park Service (NPS) units in Alaska; the NPS is committed to working with landowners to meet their access needs. Documenting private access across parklands provides certainty to the landowner and to the NPS. Certainty of access allows landowners to make long-term plans and ensures access occurs in ways to minimize effects on park resources.

This EA will not address all existing access routes and facilities in the park; it will only cover established access alignments and facilities that are sustainable within the existing footprint. Access not covered by this document are those that require extensive development or rerouting, are unsustainable in their current location or condition, ford fish bearing streams, or are required for mining and oil and gas operations. These access routes and means will require separate evaluations in environmental documents.

Many landowners utilize well-established drive-ways, roads, tracks, landing strips, waterlines or other facilities to access or service their properties. Few of these access routes or facilities have valid ROWs, permits, or other authorization to traverse public park lands. The NPS intends to fulfill its ANILCA obligations of providing adequate and feasible access. Defining the routes and methods of access, including facility maintenance, will be done in a manner which protects park resources and values.

The EA is scheduled for release for public comment in August 2007. We anticipate finalizing our environmental review, and making a decision regarding ROWs for established and sustainable access by the end of September. Qualifying access facilities would be authorized subsequent to your ANILCA 1110(b) ROW application. We realize that this process may entail individual conversations regarding the applicability of this specific process to your individual situation. We ask for your patience and encourage your participation on this programmatic EA.

If you have any questions about our plans to address access to non-federal lands within WRST, please do not hesitate to contact me or Danny Rosenkrans, Land Manager, at (907) 822- 7240.

Meg Jensen,
Superintendent

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