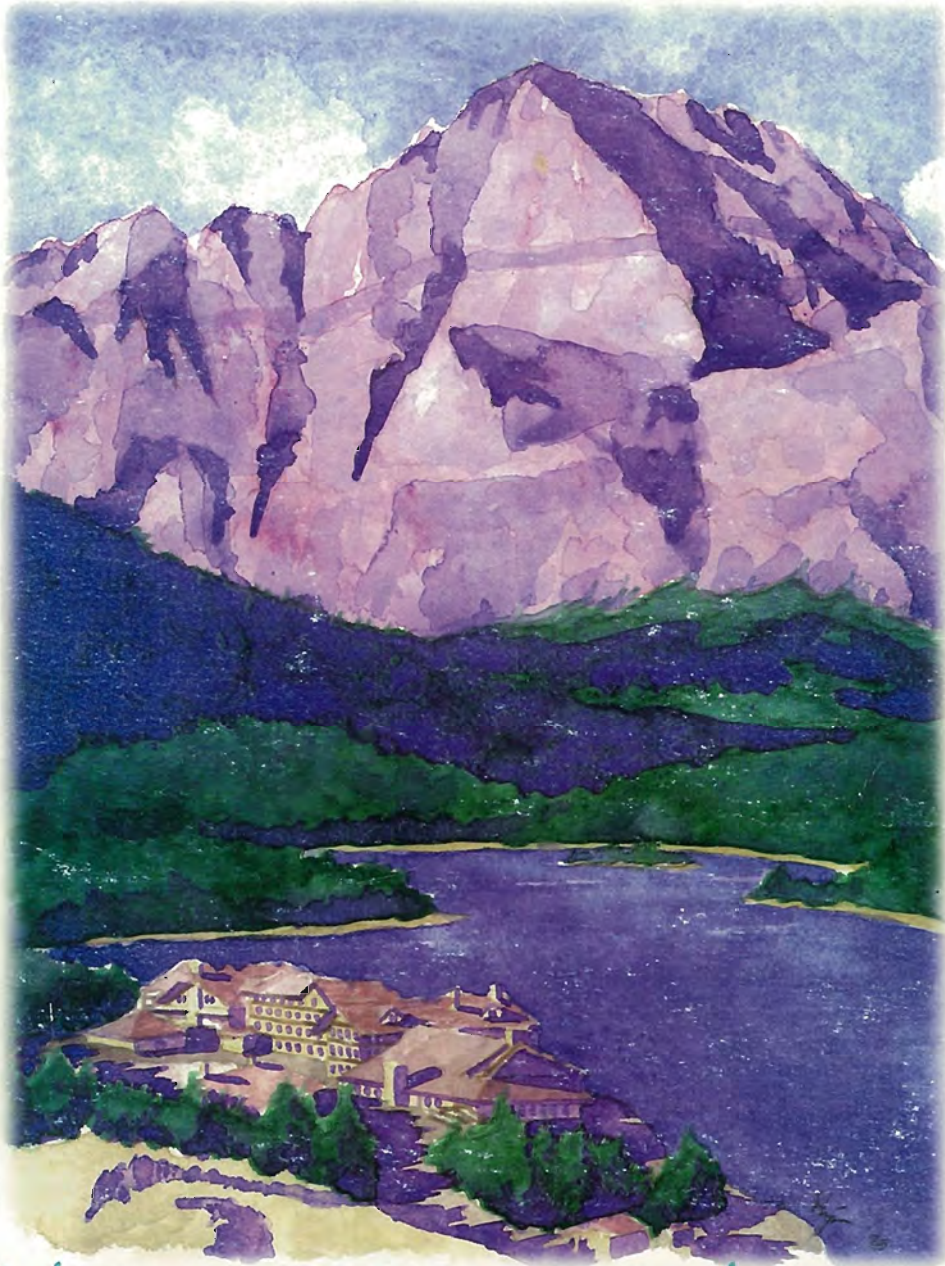


**FINAL
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
VOLUME 1**



Glacier National Park

**WATERTON-GLACIER INTERNATIONAL PEACE PARK
THE WORLD'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL PEACE PARK
A WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

Final
General Management Plan and
Environmental Impact Statement
Volume I

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

A Portion of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park
Flathead and Glacier Counties, Montana

ABSTRACT

This *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* is intended to guide the management of Glacier National Park for the next 20 or more years. Because Glacier is such a special place — a national park, the world's first international peace park, a world heritage site, and a biosphere reserve — it is important to plan carefully for its future. After a long planning process that included a great deal of public involvement, an overall guiding management philosophy has been developed: Glacier National Park would be managed in such a way that it would retain its classic western national park character. Visitor use and resource protection decisions would perpetuate this tradition. Large portions of the park would be managed for their wild character and for the integrity of Glacier's unique natural and cultural heritage, while traditional visitor services and facilities would remain. Visitors would be able to enjoy the park from many vantage points. Visitor use would be managed to preserve resources, but a broad range of opportunities would be provided for people to experience, understand, study, and enjoy the park.

With this overall philosophy in mind, a management strategy has been developed that would guide current and future management decisions. Geographic areas and management zones, which are described in detail in this document, provide the foundation for this strategy. Six geographic areas, each with its own management philosophy, are described. The description includes management zones for each area in which various levels of development and types of activities would be permitted. The plan focuses on eight critical issues and alternatives for addressing those issues. Preferred alternatives and a rationale for their selection are included. An array of information about the park resources that could be affected by the various alternatives is included, as is an analysis of the possible impacts (both positive and negative) of the alternatives.

If you have questions regarding this document, you may contact the following:

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or visit the website: <http://www.nps.gov/glac>

Watercolors by Philip Thys. Illustrations by Ruth Eitel. Graphic design and layout by Glenda Heronema and Joan Huff.

Dear Friends,

What you have before you is the culmination of a four-year effort, in which we worked with you to determine how best to manage Glacier National Park for the future. It has been neither an easy process nor a quick one, and for good reason. Many of you wish to see little change. Many of you believe we must change to reduce impacts to natural resources. Many believe we must meet the demands of greater numbers of visitors. Many of you have actively championed various issues, be they wilderness, visitor access, research, or retaining the heritage of the past that is also the image of Glacier. And all of you feel very strongly about Glacier! I thank you all for taking the time to understand the issues and Glacier's values and for giving us your thoughts.

Glacier — a unit of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park — is special to us all. It is the first national park in the world to be legislatively paired with another as an "international peace park." Its cultural significance predates its national park status. To the Blackfeet Nation, Going-to-the-Sun is not just the name of a spectacular road over the "backbone" of their world.

Nowhere else in the contiguous states is found a complete complement of predators and prey that are interdependent on our ability to manage across national frontiers. Glacier's bears, wolves, and raptors are not "Glacier's" at all, but are part of a "Crown of the Continent" ecosystem that is at the core for survival of endangered species in neighboring states. If we cannot preserve these species here in the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park with the help of Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana, then what does that mean for them in Idaho, Washington, and Wyoming?

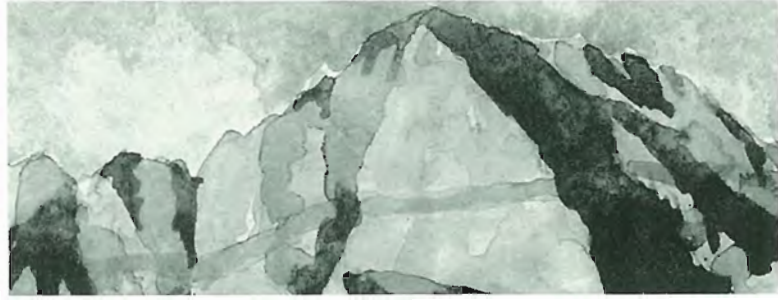
Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park is an incredibly complex natural system of which humans are a part, even if only visiting for awhile. The challenge of preserving park resources while using them for the benefit of people is as complex as the systems themselves. The National Park Service rises to meet this management challenge every day in every way, whether funding research to better understand why bull trout in upper Kintla Lake spawn upstream, rebuilding a washed-out trail bridge, or continuing a visitor use that has become "traditional." And, every employee — from the seasonal employee serving a first year, to the concessioner providing visitor services, to NPS employees who have served their entire careers here — is truly dedicated to doing what is best to preserve Glacier for present and future visitors.

It pleases us to know that so many of you realize that trying to keep the essence of Glacier little changed — while our world around us changes constantly — is a daunting challenge. Yet these challenges are the essence of our duty as national park managers to preserve Glacier for the benefit and use of future generations. Thus, we must actively manage this world treasure, especially where visitors and park resources meet, to meet this responsibility. This **General Management Plan** will guide our efforts.

In ten short years Glacier will begin to celebrate its centennial. We are fortunate that almost a hundred years of national park management has enabled public use of this great park to enrich the lives of so many while little changing the park. The implementation of this **General Management Plan** can help ensure a continuation of use by visitors who become dedicated, through their experience, to Glacier's preservation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.

Summary



Glacier National Park, which is part of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, and a unit of the national park system, sits at the apex of the three oceans that bound the North American continent (a triple divide) in northwestern Montana and encompasses 1,013,572 acres of breathtaking mountain scenery. Its jagged peaks and crystalline lakes are remnants of extensive glaciation in the last ice age, and nearly 40 glaciers still remain in the park. Glacier's high country is accessible to visitors who drive the spectacular Going-to-the-Sun Road from early summer through the fall. The road winds 52 miles up and over the divide through Logan Pass. Each year the park attracts almost 2 million visitors to northwestern Montana, which (it is said) generates over \$1 million each day to the local economy during the summer.

Glacier includes expanses of wild land that are accessible only by foot or horseback. The park functions as a relatively undisturbed core of a large ecosystem that supports a tremendous variety of plants and animals. Glacier is one of the few places in the world where all the original native predators and most of their prey survive in the wild. The federally listed endangered gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) and threatened grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) live in the park.

Glacier has become an increasingly popular destination for visitors with a wide range of abilities and expectations. Visitors are able to enjoy the park in their own vehicles and drive the famous Going-to-the-Sun Road or other scenic roads. They can choose such recreational activities as horseback riding, canoeing, fishing, or commercial boat tours and can stay in historic hotels or campgrounds. Visitors hike on the 735 miles of trails into the backcountry where primitive sites are available for overnight camping.

Conditions have changed significantly in Glacier over the years, and new challenges face the park. Glacier's most recent *Master Plan* was approved in 1977. For the first time in over two decades, the public has had an opportunity to review and comment on a new *Draft General Management Plan* that included a comprehensive management strategy for Glacier National Park. The Plan also addressed eight critical issues facing the park. There has been a great deal of public interest in the preparation of this plan, and public comments have been influential in the development of this final plan. Ongoing cooperation with park neighbors has been emphasized. During the planning process, people who wrote, called, or attended public meetings to comment on the management of Glacier National Park said that park managers should do the following:

- Continue current access and visitor uses.
- Manage the park to protect resources while allowing visitor use.
- Continue to manage the park's backcountry as wilderness.
- Preserve wildlife habitat.
- Coordinate management with owners of adjacent property to protect resources and emphasize the retention of facilities in the park.

The following issues are addressed by the alternatives in this plan:

- visitor use of the Going-to-the-Sun Road
- preservation of the Going-to-the-Sun Road
- preservation of the historic hotels and visitor services
- scenic air tours
- personal watercraft
- winter use
- Divide Creek flood hazard
- west side discovery center and museum

Public comments on the *Draft General Management Plan* generally were very supportive of the management framework and preferred alternatives for each of the eight critical issues. Fourteen public open houses and 12 public hearings were held in September and October 1998 throughout Montana and in Denver, Seattle, St. Paul, Spokane and Canada. Comments were accepted until November 30, 1998. A total of 2,709 comments were received in the form of letters from individuals, testimony, form letters, and petitions. There was overwhelming public support for banning scenic air tours and personal watercraft from Glacier National Park. However, concerns and questions were raised about the preferred alternatives for both preservation of and visitor use on the Going-to-the Sun Road. Changes to the preferred alternatives for these two issues have been made.

The public also raised concerns about the relationship of management zoning to the proposed wilderness lands in Glacier. There was also concern about winter use and about constructing a west side discovery center and museum inside the park. Minor changes have been made in the plan to better explain the National Park Service's reasons and rationales. Some commenters also expressed a concern that the plan merely provides for additional development in the park and does not focus on preserving the resources. In response to this, some changes have been made in this final plan to address these concerns.

This *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* is intended to guide management of Glacier National Park for the next 20 or more years. It will serve managers in resolving new issues, as well as those addressed in this plan.

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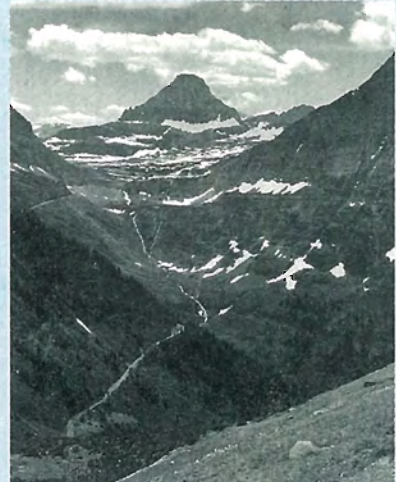
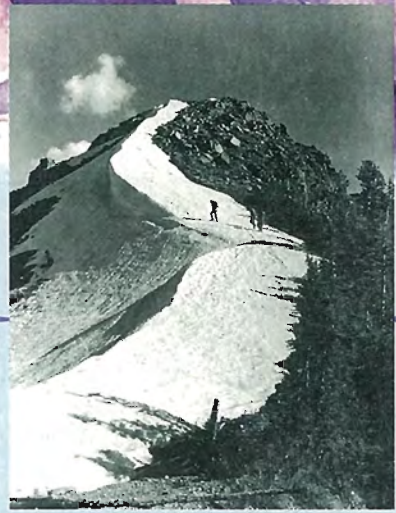
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Why do we need a plan?

Purpose of and Need for the Plan



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Introduction



Glacier National Park is a legacy to the American people and to the world. It allows rare glimpses of the natural world and holds superb examples of western cultural history.

This park means different things to different people. For some, its importance is based in its nearly intact complement of native plants and animals. For others, it is a reminder of the human story, beginning before written record and continuing through this country's westward expansion. People have stood for thousands of years beneath these peaks; many nations include them in their cultural legacy. American Indians still revere the mountains that are the spiritual backbone of their world.

Glacier National Park exemplified the value of wilderness long before wilderness became rare. As visitors hike its rugged trails and sleep in its grand lodges and backcountry chalets, they gain more than memories — they take away a dramatic appreciation of the wild, a reverence for its beauty, and a sense of peace in time. Glacier, along with Waterton Lakes National Park, is part of the world's heritage and an example for those who strive to preserve and enjoy the world's special places. Visitors from many nations can learn how special this place is, and in so doing, they may be able to take some small measure of peace away with them. People from places torn by strife can be inspired by this place where two countries, sharing the world's longest undefended boundary, chose to celebrate peace and goodwill.

Glacier National Park is at the apex of three oceans (a triple divide) in northwestern Montana and encompasses 1,013,572.42 acres of breathtaking mountain scenery (see the Vicinity map). Its sculptured peaks and crystalline lakes are remnants of the extensive glaciation of the last ice age, and nearly 40 active glaciers remain in the park. Glacier's high country is accessible in the summer to visitors who drive the spectacular Going-to-the-Sun Road. The road winds 52 miles up and over the Continental Divide across Logan Pass. The unsurpassed scenery of Glacier National Park attracts almost 2 million visitors each year to northwestern Montana and, it is said, generates over \$1 million a day to the local economy during the summer.

Glacier National Park is an investment in the heritage of America. Our primary mission is the preservation of world class natural and cultural resources, allowing us to ensure that current and future generations have the opportunity to experience, enjoy, and understand the legacy of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

*Glacier National Park
Government Performance and
Results Act Mission Statement*



THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

“... purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. . .” (16 USC 1; 1916)

“... these areas, though distinct in character, are united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage; that, individually and collectively, these areas derive increased national dignity and recognition of their superb environmental quality through their inclusion jointly with each other in one national park system preserved and managed for the benefit and inspiration of all the people of the United States. . .” (16 USC 1a-1; 1970)

“The authorization of activities shall be construed and the protection, management, and administration of these areas shall be conducted in light of the high value and integrity of the National Park System and shall not be exercised in derogation of the values and purposes for which these various areas have been established, except as may have been or shall be directly and specifically provided by Congress.” (16 USC 1a-1; 1978)

Glacier includes large expanses of wild land accessible only by foot or horseback and functions as a relatively undisturbed core of a large ecosystem. It supports an extraordinary variety of plants and animals. Arctic, Great Basin, Great Plains, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific Northwest vegetation are all found in the park. On the east side, grasslands dominate lower mountain slopes, and valleys throughout the rest of the park are forested with pine, fir, larch, and cedar. An exquisite array of wildflowers greets summer visitors to the high country, where alpine vegetation eventually gives way to rock and icefields on peaks rising to nearly 10,500 feet.

Visitors are likely to see a variety of wildlife, including deer, elk, moose, and a variety of birds. Lucky viewers may sight grizzly or black bears, gray wolves, and mountain lions, for Glacier is one of the few places in the world where all native predators from the time of the park’s establishment and most of their historic prey survive in the wild. Some of these species are federally listed as endangered (gray wolf and peregrine falcon) or threatened (grizzly bear, bald eagle, and bull trout).

Glacier has become an increasingly popular destination for people with a wide range of abilities and expectations. The Blackfeet and Salish-Kootenai tribes first used Glacier for hunting and gathering and for religious and spiritual ceremonies. The tribes still consider Glacier to be a spiritual place. It first attracted visitors in the 19th century, and in the early 20th century several grand hotels and high country chalets and other facilities were built. Many of these are now historic structures and still function as accommodations, along with many campgrounds that were constructed later. Visitors to Glacier may enjoy the park in their own vehicles and drive the famous Going-to-the-Sun Road or other scenic roads. They may choose among such activities as snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, canoeing, fishing, or commercial boat or vehicle tours. Visitors may hike on 735 miles of trails throughout the park, where primitive campsites are available.

WHY A GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN MUST BE PREPARED

Conditions have Changed Significantly

Although the rise in visitation has slowed recently, the trend since the 1977 *Master Plan* was written has been toward increased visitation, which could affect the quality of visitor experiences and the ability to preserve park resources. Scientific research and operational experience in the park have increased what is known about the natural and cultural resources and visitor use. More and more, Glacier is seen as part of a broader and more complicated ecosystem. Land uses adjacent to the park boundary have changed in the last two decades, and a cooperative spirit is necessary for managing shared resources. A number of critical issues currently face the park that have not yet been addressed in a comprehensive, strategic manner.

An Updated Plan is Required

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-625) requires that all units in the national park system have a current general management plan. Glacier's *Master Plan*, which was approved in 1977, is not in accordance with current NPS policy and has not been updated. This *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* provides the public with an opportunity to review and comment on a comprehensive management strategy for Glacier National Park.

After the *General Management Plan* becomes final, it will serve as a management "umbrella." Plans already prepared for specific areas will be reviewed to determine if they are consistent with the *General Management Plan*. If they are not, they will be revised.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT BEFORE THE RELEASE OF THE DRAFT PLAN AND EIS

Glacier National Park began seeking outside input (scoping) in March 1995 with both a letter to the public and a notice in the *Federal Register*, announcing that a new general management plan would be prepared. Initially, two newsletters went out to the public about the general management plan and nine open houses were held regionally. There were consultation meetings in accordance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Consultation meetings were held with the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, the Salish-Kootenai Tribal Council, and the Salish and Kootenai culture committees. Waterton Lakes National Park and the Flathead and Lewis and Clark National Forests (among others) also were consulted. Over 2,300 comments were received. Although a range of comments was included, the general tone of most of those first observations favored limited growth in the park and even removing facilities to enhance wilderness values. Some encouraged park management to move development out of the park and to

WHAT A GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN IS

The general management plan is the first phase of tiered planning and decision making in the park. Before specific management actions are taken, a site-specific examination and analysis of that action would be completed as required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The general management plan provides the basis for future actions that would identify visitor carrying capacities of the park, which is required by law. The management area / management zone strategy outlines qualitatively the objectives for visitor use and resource conditions throughout the park. A future implementation strategy will outline resource and social indicators and quantitative standards for various management areas and zones to determine acceptable levels of use.

WHAT A GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN IS NOT

A general management plan is not a static document or cast in stone. Shifting politics, technologies, new scientific findings, human values, and economics may demand amendments or even new priorities.

A general management plan is not a guarantee of funding. The publication does not ensure that funding will be approved for park projects that result from management philosophies outlined in the plan. Actions identified will be implemented as funding and other park requirements allow.

The general management plan is not intended to be a highly detailed road map, complete unto itself, for each major issue or management zone. When a complex concern such as rehabilitating the Going-to-the-Sun Road is addressed in the future, regardless of the alternative eventually selected, sections of the road would be examined in detail and site-specific recommendations and plans would be made.

Manage the Park to Protect Resources, While Allowing Visitor Use

Most who commented about natural and cultural resources asserted that the park's paramount priority should be to protect these invaluable assets and lessen the impact of visitation whenever possible. They went on to say that human use consistent with preserving these resources must continue, that people are now part of Glacier's ecosystem, and that habitat can be protected without keeping people out.

Continue to Manage the Park's Backcountry as a Wild Area

The majority of people commenting about wilderness asked that the park continue to manage the backcountry for these values and provide continuity with adjacent wild lands, including essential wildlife corridors.

Preserve Wildlife Habitat and Coordinate

Management with Adjacent Landowners

Most respondents said they believe that wildlife is central to a true Glacier National Park experience and that habitat should be preserved. Those who commented about wildlife also stressed the need to minimize interactions between animals and people. Most of the commenters said they believed that Glacier National Park has a pivotal role in the region and that park staff should coordinate management with surrounding lands.

Emphasize the Retention of Facilities in the Park

Commenters said that removing facilities from inside the park and replacing them outside the park would result in a loss of a valued traditional visitor experience. The public generally did not favor moving facilities outside the park.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AFTER RELEASE OF THE DRAFT PLAN AND EIS

The *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* was released to the public in August 1998 for a 90-day review period that ended November 30, 1998. Public open houses were held in September 1998 in Montana at Kalispell, West Glacier, Missoula, Great Falls, Billings, Browning, and Helena. In addition, there were open houses in Alberta, Canada, at Waterton Townsite and Lethbridge. Combined open houses and hearings were held in Seattle and Spokane, Washington; St. Paul, Minnesota, and Denver, Colorado. There were public hearings in October in Great Falls, Kalispell, West Glacier, Helena, Bozeman, and Missoula, Montana and in Lethbridge, Alberta. Approximately 525 people attended the open houses and hearings. Approximately 117 persons testified at the hearings.

By the end of the comment period, Glacier National Park had received 2,709 written comments, including transcripts of the testimony from the hearings, comments made at the open houses, five petitions, and four different form letters. Each comment was numbered, and information from the letters was recorded.

This system helped NPS personnel analyze the comments and compose the responses. Every letter, transcribed testimony, and petition was read by many members of the park staff. We have responded to comments from over 700 of your letters in Volume 2 of this final document.

Most people who commented have been very supportive of the plan and the park's preferred alternatives. Most of the letters and comments received spoke well of the work that had been done after *Newsletter 3*. Many of you thanked us for listening to your concerns and changing the direction of the planning effort.

Specifically, most commenters supported the park's preferred alternatives to construct additional pullouts and to provide an improved transportation system on the Going-to-the-Sun Road. Most supported reconstructing the road in 4-6 years, despite the concerns raised before the release of the plan, and most supported preserving the historic hotels and visitor services. Commenters said Congress should be asked to fund the purchase and rehabilitation of the hotels, and that other funding alternatives should be explored, as well. The majority of commenters also overwhelmingly supported the park's preferred alternative to ban scenic air tours and personal watercraft from Glacier National Park. And most supported relocating the facilities from the St. Mary area.

On the other hand, most commenters were not in favor of constructing a new west side discovery center and museum inside the park and instead urged us to reconsider and place it outside the park. Most also urged the park to reconsider the winter use issue and to select the no-action alternative instead.

Specifically, the public expressed concern about four main subjects.

- Before the *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* was released, U.S. Rep. Rick Hill held a field hearing to discuss the reconstruction of the Going-to-the-Sun Road, both the issue and alternatives. There was extensive discussion between Congressman Hill and Superintendent Dave Mihalic, Carol Jacoby of the Federal Highway Administration, and members of the public regarding the economic analysis that Bioeconomics had conducted for the National Park Service (under contract). Earlier in the spring, the area Chambers of Commerce had worked with the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research of the University of Montana School of Forestry to conduct a separate economic analysis. That analysis, which was issued in June 1998, came to a similar conclusion to that earlier reached by Bioeconomics. Simply, the conclusion was that the longer the work would take, the worse would be the economic pain.

The analyses conducted by Bioeconomics and the University of Montana have continued to be doubted by many people, and a great deal of concern has been expressed about how this reconstruction might lead to closure of businesses and a decreased number of tourists coming to Montana. Because Congressman Hill redirected existing funding, Glacier National Park has agreed to conduct further study on this issue. The preferred alternative has

changed and is described below, as well as in more detail in the “Preservation of the Going-to-the-Sun Road” section of this document.

- Another concern that many people mentioned was a belief that the preferred alternatives simply meant a general move by the National Park Service (NPS) toward additional construction and development inside the park. Many commenters concluded this because of the park’s preferred alternatives for visitor use on the Going-to-the-Sun Road, preservation of hotels and visitor services, winter use, and the proposed zoning system, which formalized visitor service zones. Although this is not the park’s intent, a few changes have been made to the preferred alternatives for these critical issues.
- Many groups and individuals expressed fear of and disagreement with the new zoning system and how it relates to the proposed wilderness lands in the park. Changes have been made to the text to address these concerns.
- Most of the commenters on winter use urged the park to change its preference to alternative C, the no-action alternative. Many members of the public perceived the park’s preferred alternative to be simply inviting more winter use of the park. Although the preferred alternative has not changed; the discussion of this in the section “Winter Use: Alternative A” has been clarified to more clearly state that these are the actions that Glacier National Park would take if and when winter use increased. The preferred alternative also states that additional winter use would only be accommodated within the existing facilities and infrastructure. No new development would occur to accommodate increasing use. We continue to believe that it is more important for us to prepare for potential increases and plan how the park will respond, rather than wait and hope that use will not increase. Although we have no guarantee that winter use will increase, there is evidence to suggest that it is very likely.

The National Park Service received 1,513 postcards that resulted from a survey conducted by Glacier Park, Inc., which had sent the cards to visitors who had stayed at the company’s facilities in the park during July and August for the last two seasons. The postcards asked a series of questions about whether visitors wanted additional services provided at these facilities and if they supported taxpayer funding of the purchase and rehabilitation of the hotels or whether they supported exploring other alternatives for funding the rehabilitation. As the park began receiving the postcards, we discovered that many of these visitors had not seen the draft document and so were new to the process and this issue. Nevertheless, the comments were split about half and half supporting either taxpayer funding or other funding alternatives, including private investment, although slightly more were in favor of finding other funding alternatives. Most commenters on these cards also supported making basic improvements to the infrastructure

such as improving the heating system, soundproofing, access for visitors with disabilities, and insulation, as well as adding elevators and “windows that work” and eliminating bat infestations. A much smaller number supported creating family suites and larger bathrooms. Very few supported hostel accommodations, TV/VCR in the rooms, or swimming pools. Only a handful of comments were received that wanted health club facilities and computer access.

Members of the park staff read all the letters and the transcribed hearing testimony. All comments have been considered carefully in developing this *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. The National Park Service greatly appreciates all the time and hard work that each of you has spent to help us develop a plan that will take Glacier into the year 2010 and beyond. We are encouraged by the debates and concern expressed by all of you during this monumental effort, and we hope that as we proceed with implementation all of you will continue to be involved and express your support as well as help us to address your concerns. In response to your comments and further consideration by the National Park Service of the critical issues facing the park, major changes have been made to the preferred alternatives for the following two critical issues.

Preservation of the Going-to-the-Sun Road.

The preferred alternative has been rewritten to reflect that the Going-to-the-Sun Road is deteriorating and in need of major repair and reconstruction, and that available funding is not enough to address the problem before the road would fail. However, further engineering and economic analysis would be done to identify the best way to accomplish this. An Advisory Commission would also be established to advise the Park Service on the best way to reconstruct the road.

Visitor Use on the Going-to-the Sun Road

The preferred alternative has been rewritten to address the need to prepare a comprehensive use plan for the Going-to-the-Sun Road. The plan would look at a variety of methods to deal with increasing use, ranging from replacing and or constructing additional pullouts and visitor opportunities, to exploring incentives for visitors to ride public transportation, to managing the number of visitors allowed on the road at any one time. Many people criticized the National Park Service for not considering placing visitor use limits on the road. However, the preferred alternative also continues to ensure that the road would remain open to private vehicles and that visitors would continue to have the option of choosing the way they might travel on the road.

RESPONSES TO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS

We have responded to substantive comments offered by the public during the 90-day comment period on the *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. Substantive comments, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act, are those that question either the range of alternatives or the accuracy

of the information in the document. Comments are also considered substantive if they offer new alternatives and issues that were not addressed in the draft plan or if they correct misinformation.

Volume 2 of this *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* contains letters from federal agencies, elected officials, state agencies, local governments, and special interest groups. Time and expense prevent the printing of the approximately 700 substantive letters and testimony that were received. Therefore, volume 2 of this document contains a summary of substantive comments received from individuals with responses to the comments.

All the letters are available for public inspection at park headquarters.

Please note that although some of the letters and comments reproduced in this document are critical of the plan and do not indicate support for it, these letters do not represent the majority of the letters and comments we received. We want to thank all of you who responded with overall support for the plan and our preferred alternatives.

REVISION OF OTHER PLANS

After the *General Management Plan* becomes final, it will serve as a management "umbrella." Plans already prepared for specific areas will be reviewed to determine if they are consistent with the *General Management Plan*. If they are not, they will have to be revised.