



Area Master Plan



*Dear friends of Bering Land Bridge
National Preserve,*

*Serpentine Hot Springs/ Iyat is one of
Alaska's special places. The hot springs and
surrounding area have long been used by
the Inupiat people for religious, medicinal,
subsistence and recreational purposes.
Visitors from across the state and country
come to experience the springs, wildlife,
and granite tors. Since Bering Land Bridge
was established in 1980, the National
Park Service (NPS) has worked to protect
the area and provide opportunities for
residents and visitors to enjoy this special
place.*

*This fall a NPS planning team is beginning
work on a master plan for the Serpentine
Hot Springs area. This plan will guide
management decisions and potential
future development on lands in and
around Serpentine Hot Springs.*

*I appreciate your interest in Bering Land
Bridge National Preserve and look forward
to working together to chart the future of
this spectacular place.*

Jeanette Pomrenke

*Superintendent
Bering Land Bridge National Preserve*

A Plan Guiding Management of Serpentine Hot Springs

The National Park Service is beginning a master planning process for the Serpentine Hot Springs/ Iyat area of Bering Land Bridge National Preserve. The Master Plan will provide long-range guidance for managing Serpentine Hot Springs future development, natural and cultural resources and positive experiences for visitors.

Serpentine Hot Springs is located about thirty miles from the end of the Nome-Kougarok road. It is the most visited area of the preserve. It is a remote destination that is prized for its recreational, scenic, cultural, and spiritual qualities. Facilities at Serpentine are minimal and consist of an enclosed bath house; a bunkhouse with wood/oil heat; a connecting board walk; and a short dirt 1,100 foot airstrip. Current means of access to the area include fixed wing aircraft, snowmobile, dog sled, and foot. As visitation increases through media exposure and word of mouth, natural and cultural resources at of the area may be impacted. The NPS

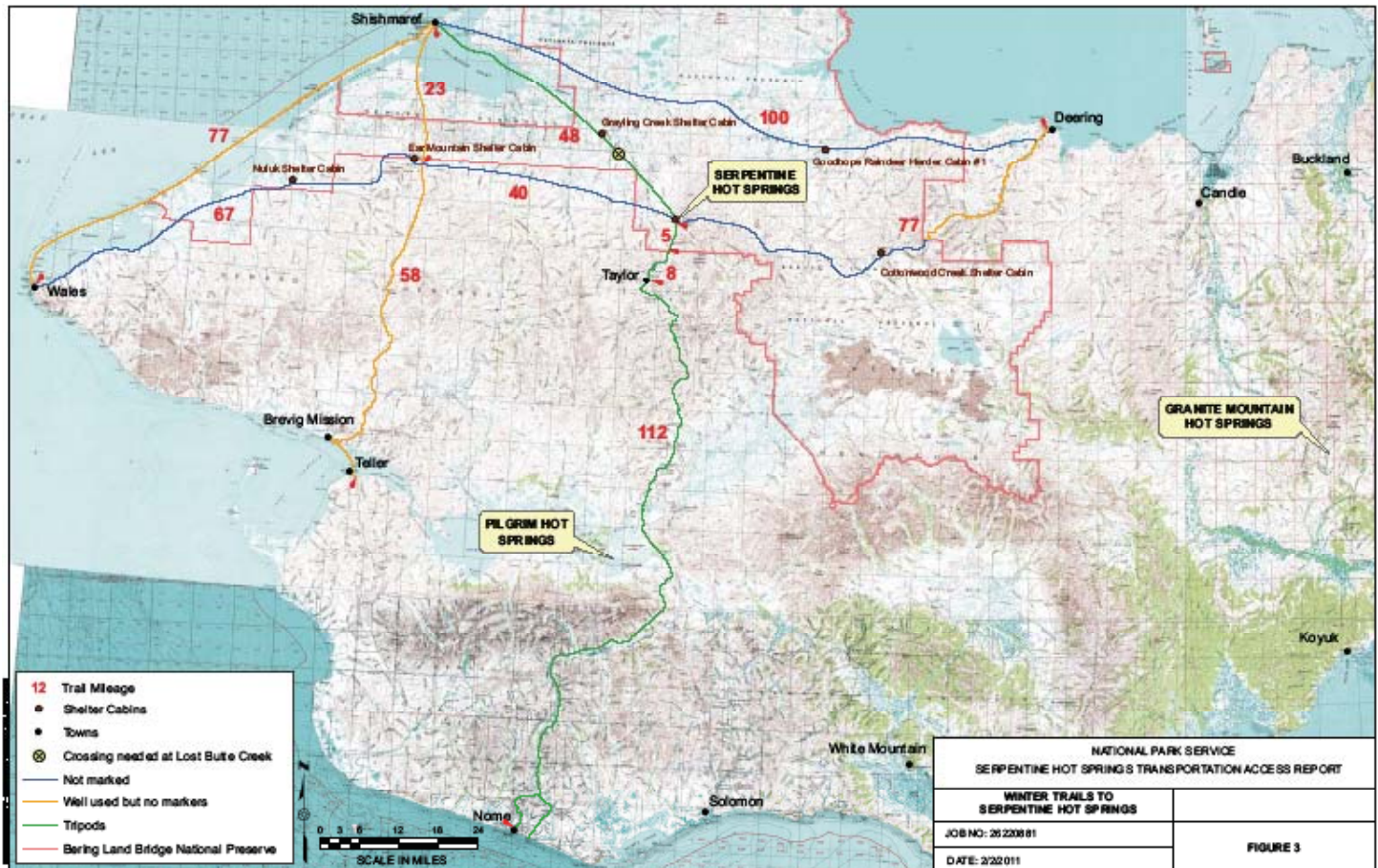
wants to create and implement an area management plan to proactively manage the situation.

the master plan will update the long-range vision for facilities...provide direction and framework for managing Serpentine Hot Springs.

A transportation access study was completed for Serpentine Hot Springs during the winter of 2011. The report compiled information about potential improvements to access ranging from minimal upgrades to facilities to large scale improvements.

The Master Plan will build upon the results of the transportation study utilizing information gained on potential access improvements, impacts to resources, visitation projections and input from residents of the Seward Peninsula and the general public.

Transportation/Access Study



The NPS commissioned URS Group, Inc. in September 2010 to assist the Bering Land Bridge National Preserve in conducting pre-planning dialogue meetings in seven affected communities. The purpose of the study was to compile information about alternative transportation access improvements, costs, and potential effects on visitor experiences, and to gain input from the public.

The report examined a range of potential improvements to access for the Serpentine Hot Springs area. The report looked at improving access options in the summer and winter, by air and by surface transportation. Possible improvements to access that were studied included:

- Limited improvements to the existing airstrip
- Helicopter access
- Increased winter trails
- Expand the existing airstrip
- Build a new, longer airstrip
- Build a geogrid earthen trail from the end of the Nome-Taylor Highway
- A single lane road
- A double lane road

The report provided an overview of possible impacts to resources and visitor experience by the access improvements, and it included preliminary cost estimates for each option.



Public Scoping Summary



Public scoping was a critical part of the transportation/access study. Public scoping meetings took place across the Seward Peninsula. Bering Land Bridge National Preserve and URS staff met with people in Kotzebue, Deering, Buckland, Nome, Shishmaref, Wales, and Brevig Mission.

Many stakeholders have emphasized the importance of protecting the current

rustic facilities and traditional healing values of Serpentine Hot Springs. Other stakeholders have urged improvements in access so that more people can enjoy the exceptional values of the site.

The community dialogues reported in this document were initiated by the NPS in order to learn about community perspectives, potential access improvements, costs and impacts, before undertaking

any formal efforts to amend the BELA General Management Plan (GMP) with a Serpentine Hot Springs Site Management Plan.

The entire report is available online at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=36603>





National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve
PO Box 220
Nome, AK 99762

First Class Mail
Postage and Fees
PAID
City, State
Permit number

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The purpose of Bering Land Bridge National Preserve is to protect and provide opportunity to study and interpret the landscape which contains an invaluable record of floral, faunal, and human migration between Asia and North America and which supports an ongoing traditional subsistence culture.

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve
PO Box 220
Nome, AK 99762
<http://www.nps.gov/bela/index.htm>

Phone
(907) 443-2522

E-mail
Zachary_Babb@nps.gov

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Master Plan Timeline

This Master Plan will update the 1986 General Management Plan to fulfill the mandate to provide for outdoor and environmental education and public access for recreational purposes (ANILCA 201(2)). The master planning process for Serpentine Hot Springs is expected to take almost two years to complete. There will be an environmental assessment (EA) completed in conjunction with the master plan to ensure that the National Park Service is in full compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

Overview of Transportation Plan Draft Newsletter	Summer 2011
Define Purpose, Need, Impact Topics	Summer 2011
Alternatives Workshop	Fall 2011
Draft Alternatives Newsletter and Public Meetings	Winter 2011-2012
Public Review of the Master Plan/ EA	Summer 2012
Final Decision	Fall 2012