



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

P.O. Box 140

Gustavus, Alaska 99826-0140

Tel: 907-697-2230 · Fax: 907-697-2654



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### Memorandum

To: Central Files

Through: Sue Masica, Alaska Regional Director *Sam 11/30/11*

From: Susan L. Boudreau, Superintendent *SLB*

Subject: Annual Determination of Cruise Ship Quota – 2012

In accordance with 36 CFR § 13.1160 (b), the 2012 cruise ship seasonal vessel quota will be as follows:

June, July and August: 153 use days

May and September: 92 use days

The year-round daily quota for cruise ships remains at two per day in accordance with the 2003 Vessel Quota Operating Restrictions Environmental Impact Statement (VQOR EIS) Record of Decision (ROD) and existing regulations.

The VQOR EIS ROD states that the determination to increase seasonal quotas for cruise ships will rely on criteria that define the environmental and social conditions to be met before any additional seasonal use-days are approved.

In 2005, an independent Science Advisory Board (SAB) that was appointed by Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve recommended various studies to assess potential impacts from vessels, including cruise ships, on physical and biological resources, visitor experience, and the Huna Tlingit relationship to the park.

In December, 2009, the National Park Service (NPS) convened a meeting that brought together the SAB, principal investigators, and NPS scientists and managers to review the results of the first suite of studies. Their assessment indicates that the original impacts analyses from the VQOR EIS remain accurate. However, the NPS will continue to pursue



independently recommended research and monitoring in order to assess the effects of vessel traffic on the environment, as well as their effects on cultural relationships and visitor experience in Glacier Bay. Studies are ongoing to address several important information gaps identified by the SAB, including the impacts of cruise ships on air quality, soundscape, wildlife disturbance, and the Huna Tlingit relationship to the park.

Therefore, this determination continues, unchanged, the final decision for the 2007 through 2011 season quotas. In August, public comment was solicited via press release, the park's website, and the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website. Two comments were received. One organization asked that the quotas remain at the 2011 level to protect marine wildlife using Glacier Bay. A second comment from an organization that promotes diversified business opportunities in Alaska stated that they feel the proposal for 153 cruise ships in June, July and August is adequate, but they would like to see an increase of ships so that opportunities for passenger numbers could grow and that it would not have an adverse impact on the environment.