



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Alaska Region  
240 West 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 114  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7617(AKRO-EPC)

**AUG 15 2013**

Dear Interested Citizen, Agency, Tribe, or Organization:

Enclosed for your review is an environmental assessment (EA) in which the National Park Service (NPS) is proposing new and more detailed protocols to manage hazardous vegetative fuels to protect structures and human lives from wildfires within the boundaries of National Park System units in Alaska. Areas covered in the proposed plan include: Katmai National Park and Preserve, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, and Western Arctic National Parklands (WEAR). WEAR parks include Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Noatak National Preserve, and Kobuk Valley National Park. This analysis does not include areas in Southeast Alaska, Kenai Fjords National Park, and Denali National Park and Preserve, the latter which already has an approved fire hazardous fuels management plan.

Each NPS area addressed in this EA has an approved fire management plan and associated vegetative fuels management plan designed to protect the built environment (including historic structures) and the lives of visitors, employees, and firefighters in the event of wildfires. These plans, completed 8 to 12 years ago, did not address the scope of mitigation actions regarding hazardous vegetative fuels build-up as part of a proactive fuels reduction program. This EA is needed to evaluate the scope and effects of detailed protocols for the removal of vegetation that could carry a wildfire toward infrastructure and humans, and to address a maintenance plan for retaining competent fire breaks around facilities and sites. The EA analyzes the proposed action and alternatives and their impacts on the environment.

The EA was completed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9).

The comment period for the EA will extend 30 days, beginning August 21, 2013, and ending September 20, 2013. The EA is available online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/HFMPEA>. Comments may be submitted using the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment program at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/AlaskaHFMP>.

Please send written comments to:

Attn: Bud Rice  
National Park Service  
240 West 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

If you have any questions about the EA or need additional copies, please call Bud Rice at (907) 644-3530 or Dan Warthin at (907) 644-3409. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joel Hard', with a small flourish at the end.

Joel Hard for  
Sue E. Masica  
Regional Director, Alaska Region

Enclosure

cc:

Greg Dudgeon, Superintendent of Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve/  
Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve  
Rick Obernesser, Superintendent, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve  
Frank Hays, Superintendent, Western Arctic National Parklands  
Jeanette Pomrenke, Superintendent, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve  
Margaret Goodro, Superintendent, Lake Clark National Park & Preserve  
Diane Chung, Superintendent of Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve and Katmai  
National Preserve