



## Categorical Exclusion Form

**Project:** Categorical Exclusion to increase guided climbing permit allocation on Denali at Denali NPP from 325 to up to 750

**PEPC Project Number:** 74821

**Description of Action (Project Description):**

The Denali Backcountry Management Plan 2006 (BCMP) established a seasonal limit of 1500 climbs on Mt. McKinley (Denali). The BCMP further states that, "In the Old Park, the number of parties or visitors participating in the guided activity would be no more than 25% of the total potential use of the area during any visitor season (summer/winter) where such use is allowed". The 2012 FONSI approving the Climbing Allocation for Mount McKinley in Denali National Park Environmental Assessment, amended the BCMP to allow for a more flexible allocation system. Under Alternative 3, Flexible Allocation, the NPS can distribute unused permits to concessioners and the maximum number of permits available for guided climbs could exceed 750 if independent climbers do not claim them. This categorical exclusion guarantees that up to 750 climbs (or 50% of allocation) are available for distribution to concessioners in Denali's upcoming mountaineering prospectus.

Several reasons justify the categorical exclusion. In 2016, 1093 total climbers attempted to climb Denali demonstrating plenty of remaining allocations for independent climbers relative to total capacity. Further, data on guided vs. private climbs since 2001 demonstrates that more visitors are choosing to climb Denali with a guide (see attached figure). Increasing the guaranteed number of guided climbing permits also provides more business certainty and greatly decreases the administrative burden of allocating permits under a multi-staged process.

**Project Locations:**

**Location**

**County:** Denali Borough **State:** AK

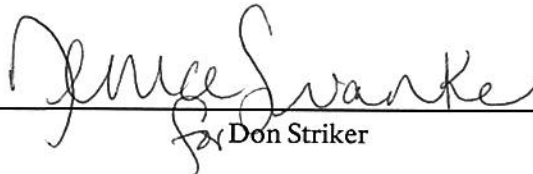
**Mitigation(s):** No mitigations identified.

**CE Citation:** A.1 Changes or amendments to an approved action when such changes would cause no or only minimal environmental impact.

**Decision:** I find that the action fits within the categorical exclusion above. Therefore, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No extraordinary circumstances apply.

**Signature**

**Superintendent:**

  
for Don Striker

**Date:**

23 Aug 2017

**Extraordinary Circumstances:**

If implemented, would the proposal...	Yes/No	Notes
A. Have significant impacts on public health or safety?	No	
B. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?	No	
C. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?	No	
D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	No	
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?	No	
F. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?	No	
G. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by either the bureau or office?	No	
H. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?	No	
I. Violate a federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?	No	
J. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898)?	No	
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 130007)?	No	
L. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?	No	