



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439
907 822 5234 Fax 907 822 7216

July 27, 2016

Dear Reviewer,

Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on this Proposed Action for the Backcountry and Wilderness Stewardship Plan (BWSP) for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve (WRST). Your meaningful review is needed to make this a better plan. The purpose of this plan is to guide the management of backcountry and wilderness in WRST within the legal framework of the Wilderness Act of 1964, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980, and National Park Service (NPS) policy and regulations.

This document outlines what the NPS proposes for the management of backcountry and wilderness in WRST into the future. The purpose of this Proposed Action is to generate public comments and feedback, which will be used to make revisions to the Proposed Action and to develop a range of management alternatives. Your comments are important to us, and will shape the next step of the planning process including how this plan addresses the diverse management needs of the park.

The content of this Proposed Action reflects the initial phase of this planning effort and is not a final decision of what the BWSP will do. We urge you to use this document as a platform to suggest alternative ways we can address the management needs of this backcountry and wilderness.

Area addressed by the BWSP

This Proposed Action addresses the stewardship of 9.4 million acres of wilderness, as well as 1.7 million acres of backcountry. The plan area is split into several management zones to target the management needs of different areas. We welcome your comments on the zone boundaries. Zones were delineated based on the following criteria:

- Visitor use patterns and activities
- Access
- Existing infrastructure, including airstrips, cabins, and installations
- Administrative boundaries, including designated, eligible, and ineligible wilderness; park and preserve; and land ownership
- Geography and topography

An online interactive map with the zone boundaries can be found at:

<http://nps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=236bb6a925374eb9b35c6e7bf6167555>. Please submit any comments on the zone boundaries via the methods described below.

Content of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is split into various components, including:

- Airstrip management and maintenance
- Cabin management and maintenance

- Snowmachine management
- Management actions common to the entire plan area
- Planning framework tables for each management zone within the plan area

The planning framework tables address indicators, standards, and management actions for each zone. Management actions do not take place unless standards are exceeded, and then they are phased in, beginning with less restrictive management actions.

Submitting comments

You can submit comments in several ways:

- Online by going to the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/documentsList.cfm?projectID=44299>. Comments should be submitted under the Proposed Action document that is posted on this site.
- E-mailed to: bruce_rogers@nps.gov
- Mailed to:
Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve
ATTN: Bruce Rogers
P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, Alaska 99573

Please submit comments no later than August 30, 2016.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this Proposed Action. We appreciate your assistance and look forward to hearing your thoughts and suggestions. Any questions regarding the Proposed Action or how to submit a public comment, please contact Bruce Rogers (822-7276), Nyssa Landres (822-7240), or Morgan Gantz (822-7213).

Sincerely,



Eric Veach
Acting Superintendent