



# Winter and Shoulder Season Plan Overview

## Vision

The winter and shoulder season plan guides Denali National Park in engaging and inspiring a diverse visitor population while protecting park resources and values to the highest degree. As a result of this planning effort, the park is able to increase the quality of the visitor experience, continue its resource stewardship legacy, strengthen its relationships with stakeholders and local communities, and prepare for an uncertain future during the winter and shoulder seasons.

## Need for the Plan

- Marked increases in winter and shoulder season visitation to Alaska in general and to parts of Denali National Park specifically
- End of the five-year winter road plowing evaluation period authorized by the 2013 Winter Road Plowing Environmental Assessment and FONSI
- A relative lack of guidance in existing planning documents related to park management during the winter and shoulder seasons

## Goals

1. Prepare for changing visitor use and climatic patterns in the winter and shoulder seasons
2. Protect park resources and values while sustainably improving the quality of the winter and shoulder season visitor experience
3. Appropriately accommodate a diversity of visitor populations, including Alaskans, international visitors, independent travelers, and package tours
4. Build positive relationships with local communities and stakeholders
5. Foster safety in both the work environment and visitor experience

## Objectives

*Prepare for changing visitor use and climatic patterns*

- Consider a variety of possible future scenarios and incorporate an adaptive management framework
- Base proposals on the best available science and information, including information about the larger Alaskan tourism industry

*Protect park resources and sustainably improve the quality of the visitor experience*

- Protect the biotic, abiotic, cultural, wilderness, and other resources and values of the park by emphasizing visitor uses that are compatible with resource vitality and integrity
- Provide a variety of recreational and educational opportunities
- Ensure adequate and appropriate access to the park
- Provide durable facilities that allow for visitor safety, orientation, and reasonable comfort
- Encourage commercial enterprises to provide appropriate visitor services

*Meet the needs of diverse visitor populations*

- Foster a variety of appropriate ways in which the park can be experienced during the winter and shoulder seasons
- Communicate effectively with a wide variety of audiences
- Encourage the expectation that available visitor experiences and opportunities will be consistent with park values

*Build positive relationships with local communities and stakeholders*

- Collaborate with businesses to provide visitor services
- Anticipate how changes in the park during the winter and shoulder seasons will affect local communities

*Foster safety in the work environment and visitor experience*

- Communicate with visitors regarding conditions in the park so that they may adequately prepare themselves
- Provide safe settings while maintaining opportunities for self-reliant recreation by modifying park procedures, facilities, or messaging, rather than the wilderness character or environment of the park

