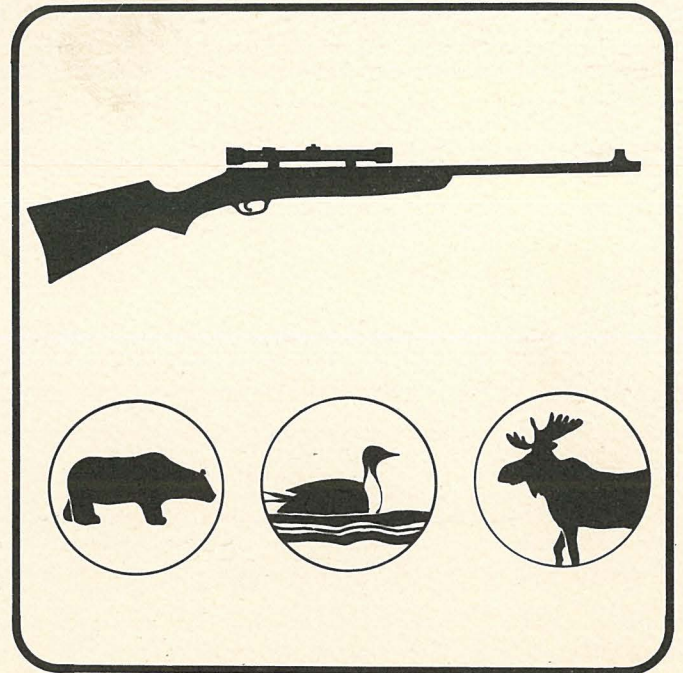
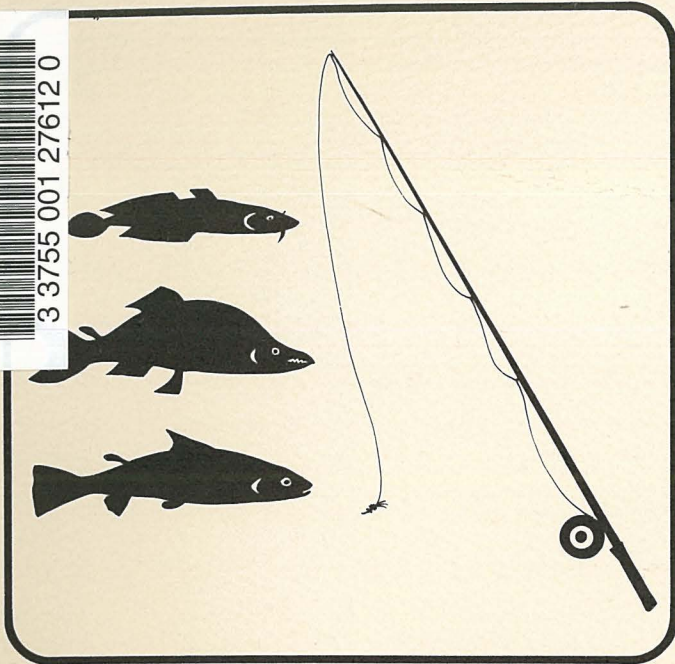


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REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# OUTDOOR RECREATION IN ALASKA:

EXAMINATION OF GOVERNMENTAL ROLES

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1979

JANUARY 1979



Commission Study 36

FEDERAL-STATE LAND USE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR ALASKA

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LAND USE PLANNING COMMISSION  
FOR ALASKA

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Federal-State  
Land Use Planning Commission  
For Alaska

January 1979

Dear Reader:

This report represents background work by staff for the Commission's review of public policy regarding outdoor recreation and public recreation lands. It also includes the Commission's findings and recommendations based on that policy review. The Commission and its staff will continue to work with the Administration and the Legislature in the implementation of these recommendations.

This report also completes the work of the Commission requested by the Chairman of the State Senate Resources Committee in 1977. Earlier work of the Commission in response to this legislative request focused on policy for disposal and retention of State lands and was completed in 1978.


We feel that this subject is particularly important at this time because of the limited supply of accessible public recreation land and the increasing demands for outdoor recreation, as well as for other competing uses of these lands. In recent years, the emphasis on millions of acres for Federal purposes has tended to obscure the fact that accessible public lands are quite limited, and that these lands are often in State or municipal rather than Federal ownership. In terms of the individual seeking to use or acquire public lands, it is location and accessibility that count far more than gross amounts.

Assessment of the State recreational role in the context of Federal land policy is particularly timely. Our analysis points to the importance of State leadership in this area. We hope that these recommendations and findings will be useful to the State Legislature and the Administration as were our 1978 recommendations in the formulation of the Land Policy Act of 1978.

Sincerely,

  
Esther C. Wunnicke  
Federal Co-Chairman

Sincerely,

  
Walter B. Parker  
State Co-Chairman

OUTDOOR RECREATION IN ALASKA:  
AN EXAMINATION OF GOVERNMENTAL ROLES

Recreation Land Policy Recommendations

Adopted by the  
Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission for Alaska  
December 1, 1978

Staff Findings and Report

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report is based in part on knowledge gained through correspondence and interviews with numerous Federal, State, and municipal employees, as well as private individuals. Their generosity in providing information and thoughtful comments about public recreation in Alaska contributed greatly to our study and is much appreciated. Special thanks go to Terry McWilliams, Director of the Alaska Division of Parks, and her staff who provided background information and useful criticism throughout the development of this project.

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## INTRODUCTION

In a general sense, recreation might be defined as a pleasant change of pace from daily patterns of living, a change involving the "re-creation" of well-being. As such, recreation is an essential ingredient of our society. There is a public interest in seeing that recreational opportunities are available to all people.

The kinds of recreation that people seek are widely varied. For many, recreation involves increased contact with nature. To escape to the woods or beach is a natural response to an increasingly urban environment. However, for people living in rural Alaska in the midst of a vast natural area, recreation may be perceived differently. Recreation for an Anchorage resident may be a fall hunting trip to the bush. For a bush resident, recreation may be a fall shopping trip to Anchorage. This study deals with the types of recreation which are dependent upon contact with the natural environment. Yet, it is important to keep in mind the broader definition of recreation as a personal experience seen in the context of individual lifestyle and requirements.

For many people throughout the Nation, as well as for State residents, Alaska's vast expanses of wilderness and outdoor recreation land are the essence of this State, the quality that makes Alaska unique to the Nation. Nowhere else in the Nation are there such expanses of scenic lands undisturbed by human use. To some outdoor recreationists, the opportunity to experience such areas is what Alaska is all about.

However, Alaska's great amount of untouched land has supported a commonly held myth that Alaska has an unlimited amount of accessible wilderness, even near urban areas. Sheer quantity creates the impression of availability, and location tends to be overlooked. In reality, public lands that are easily accessible are rapidly being transferred to private ownership as the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act is implemented and as the State and municipalities dispose of lands. Alaska's sparse road system and the added expense of boat or plane charters to remote areas further limit the availability of recreation lands.

At the same time, the demand for outdoor recreational experiences will continue to grow in Alaska, and it is reasonable to expect that this growth in demand will be more rapid than growth in population. There are several dimensions to projections of increased recreational activity in the Nation and Alaska. First, there is the direct relationship between population and recreation demand. On the basis of information provided by the Institute of Social and Economic Research, Alaska's population is projected to increase from approximately 442,000 in 1980 to 751,000 by the year 2000. Compounding increases directly related to population growth is the fact that the proportion of population engaging in outdoor recreation has been increasing nationally. In part, this can be attributed to long-term rising trends in per capita income and increases in leisure time. It may also be a reflection of changing consumer preferences. Further, on an individual basis the amount of time devoted

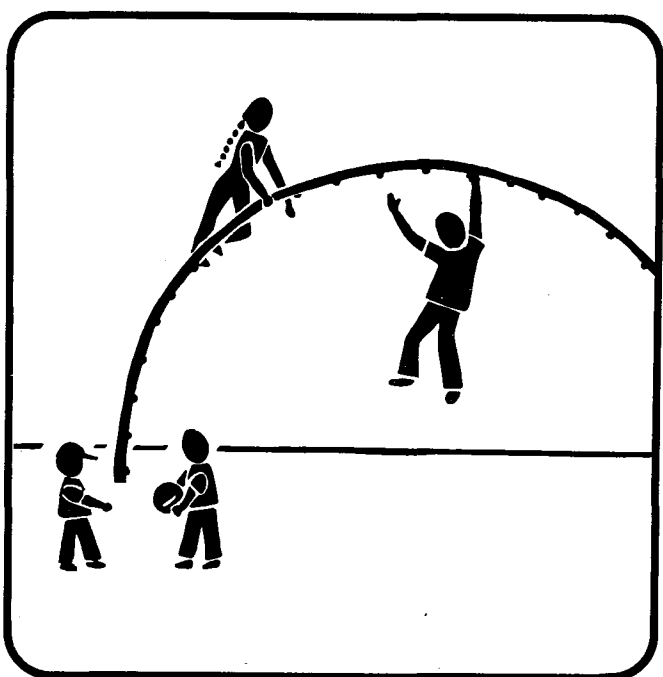
to recreation appears to be increasing. This change may also be related to rising incomes and increasing time.

Finally, the demand for outdoor recreation will be directly related to the cost of the experience. Since the cost of travel, both in terms of time and money is a highly important variable, it is clear that a reduction in travel costs and time will tend to result in increased use of outdoor recreation lands. Better highways, reduced airfares, and generally improved access will increase recreational opportunities, but also add to the demand for recreation.

Assuring that outdoor recreational opportunities will continue to be widely available to people at all income levels will require foresight and careful planning. In the absence of a public program to protect recreation lands for present and future generations, prevailing market forces and demands will gradually lead to the conversion of accessible public lands to private ownership. Already this has happened in many areas. Should this trend continue, we will face a future where there will be few remaining recreation lands in accessible locations. Overcrowding will reduce the quality of recreation on close-in lands, and desirable recreational experiences will be available only to those who can afford long and costly travel.

One of the purposes of planning is to prevent the homogenization of land use and ownership and to preserve enough diversity to accommodate the variety of needs and interest of our society. Through planning, we can retain a balance and mix of public and private lands, and access to public lands can be expanded. Focusing on these objectives, this report identifies methods of coordinative planning through which the State can guide the many public and private entities which influence outdoor recreation opportunities in Alaska.





# **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

## RECREATION LAND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission

In reviewing municipal, State, and Federal recreation land policy in Alaska, the Commission has found that there is a special need to clarify the difference between State and Federal roles regarding public recreation lands. The two governments hold differing policies for recreational land use and own different types of lands. However, in recent years the debate over the Federal (d)(2) lands has tended to emphasize the Federal role in public recreation and to overshadow the equally important though different role of the State.

In broad perspective, Federal lands tend to be more remote and inaccessible than State lands and to have a higher proportion of mountainous and wetlands areas. State lands are generally nearer to communities and traveled ways and have a higher proportion of valleys and benchlands which can accommodate more intensive activity. Because of their relative accessibility, many State lands are particularly important for public recreational uses. For the same reason, State lands are much in demand for private acquisition.

The State and Federal policies which govern recreation land management are also different. Federal policy emphasizes protection of the land and its resources, and Federal managers generally try to keep recreational use light and dispersed. State policy emphasizes the accessibility of recreational lands for human use, and State management generally allows a more intensive level of activity while still maintaining the natural character of the land.

In addition to its role as a landowner, the State has special responsibility for comprehensive planning of outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the State and for coordinating Federal, State, municipal, and private recreation providers to maximize public benefits. This role is comparable to the State's comprehensive planning responsibilities for fish and game management and for transportation systems. Though the Federal government continues to manage the majority of the land acreage in Alaska, the State has the primary responsibility for providing recreational opportunities for its people and its visitors.

For these reasons, the Commission has directed many of its recommendations on public recreation in Alaska to the State government. Commission recommendations on this subject are as follows:

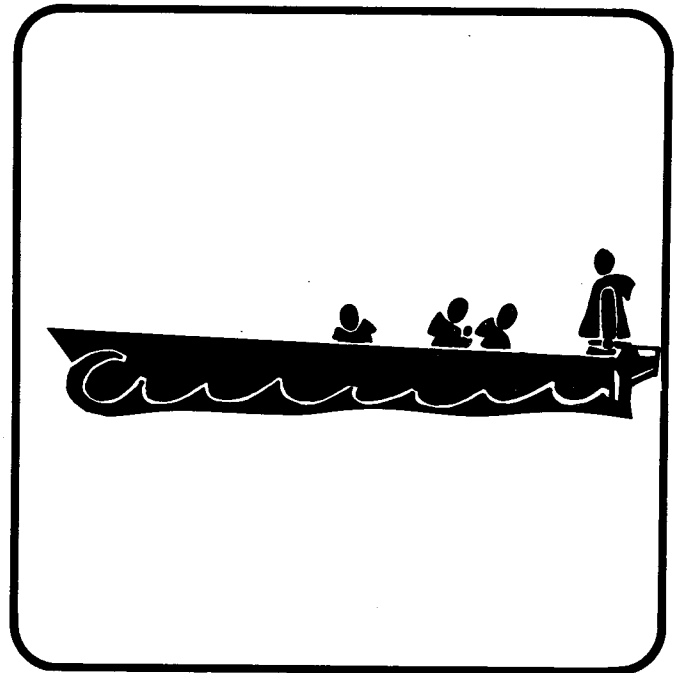
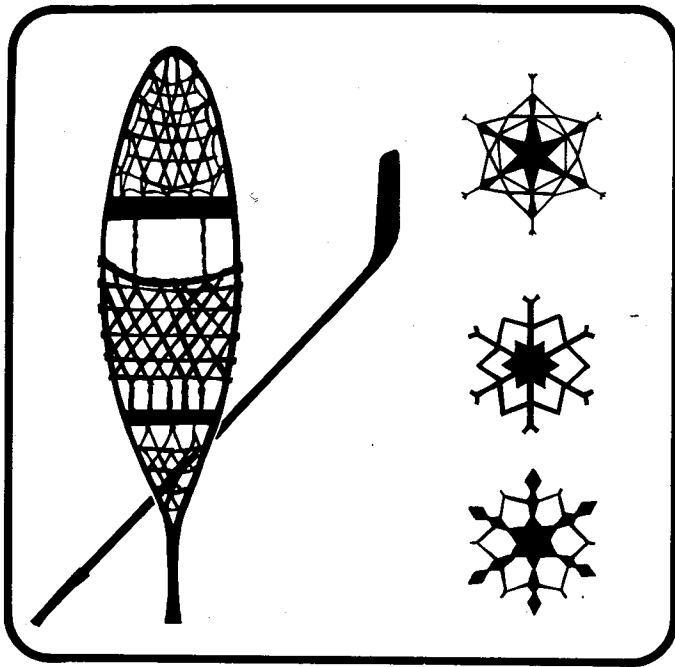
Recommendation to State Government: By statute, the State Legislature should establish policy as follows:

1. Public Value of Recreation: State policy should recognize that a variety of recreational opportunities are important to the health and well-being of all Alaskans, as well as to the State's economy. On this basis, the State should actively encourage recreation as an important use of public lands.
2. Need for Accessible Recreation Lands: State policy should recognize that many Alaskans cannot afford long and costly travel to recreation areas. To insure recreational opportunities for all, State recreation lands should include lands that are convenient and accessible to populated areas. The amount of such land should be determined in relation to future, as well as existing needs for public recreation.
3. Assertion of Recreation Values in State Land Decisions: State policy should recognize that accessible and waterfront lands are valuable for public recreation, as well as for private acquisition. Public recreational values should be actively asserted in the process of deciding about State land selection, classification, management, and disposal.
4. State Park System Categories: State policy should recognize that different components of the State Park System have different purposes and serve varying needs. The Legislature should adopt a statement of intent for various elements of the State Park System, including a designation for water-based recreation areas.
5. Recreation Values in Other State Lands: State policy should recognize that many State lands outside the State Park System combine recreational values with other public resources. Such lands should be considered for dedication to public use under the State's new Public Reserve System which allows management for a variety of compatible uses.
6. Consideration of Nonrecreational Uses: State recreation policy should recognize that decisions about recreation lands affect other types of land use. Recreation planners should be directed to evaluate their decisions in relation to the public interest in other uses of the land and to seek participation by municipalities and other governmental agencies who have an interest in nonrecreational, as well as recreational land uses.
7. Encouraging Local Recreation: State policy should encourage community recreation at a local governmental level. The State should support strong technical and financial assistance to local communities for

establishment of recreation areas and programs. Such assistance should reflect local goals and requirements. Emphasis should be placed on assisting smaller communities with limited resources and communities which are destinations for recreationists from outside the local area.

8. Interagency Liaison: State policy should recognize that there are a number of State agencies besides the Division of Parks that influence public recreational opportunities. The Division of Lands, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and the Department of Fish and Game each have a determinative influence on the supply and availability of public recreational opportunities. The recreation planning capability of State agencies outside the Division of Parks should be strengthened, and systems for interdepartmental liaison on matters having to do with State lands and resources should be developed and formalized.
9. Statewide and Regional Planning and Coordination: State policy should recognize that the State has the primary responsibility for statewide and regional recreational planning and for coordination of the many providers of public recreational opportunities. To strengthen this aspect of the State's recreation role, the Alaska Park and Recreation Council should be established as a statutory entity of State government with funding and responsibility to obtain public participation in recreation planning; to coordinate Federal, State, local, and private recreation providers; and to develop regional recreation plans which can serve as a basis for coordination. The Alaska Land Manager's Cooperative Task Force should also be called on to assist in the coordination of recreation projects and programs at a statewide level.

Recommendation to Federal Agencies: Federal recreation managers and funding agencies should recognize that the State has responsibility for recreation planning and coordination on a statewide basis and should participate actively in the development and implementation of State sponsored recreation plans.



## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Outdoor Recreational Activity

1. Since recreation is essentially a personal experience, the nature of outdoor recreation is as varied as the individual participants. For many, the essence of outdoor recreation is contact with the natural world; for some, this experience is unsatisfactory unless it also includes the opportunity to compete or achieve or is shared with family or friends.
2. For most recreationists, whether land is in State, Federal, or municipal ownership is only an incidental consideration. The primary interest is in the type and quality of experience to be gained. Often the trip to a recreation destination is a valuable component of the recreational experience and, in some cases, the availability of services such as restaurants and lodging are essential to enjoyment of public lands.
3. Recreational activity extends across ownership boundaries and involves property in both the private and public sector. In this respect, planning and land management for public outdoor recreation is comparable to planning and land management for fish and wildlife protection or for the development of transportation facilities.
4. Patterns of recreational activity vary widely from region to region within Alaska. The geography, natural setting, and cultural background of the community tend to shape public recreation preferences, as well as to determine the opportunities that are available.
5. In villages, the primary need for public recreation assistance is for community recreation programs and sites for active recreational use which will contribute to the quality of life within the village, particularly during long seasons of low employment.
6. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act is resulting in the transfer of popular recreation areas, such as Bristol Bay sports fishing lands, from public to private ownership. Land ownership gives the Native corporations a greater opportunity to benefit economically from tourism and recreation. Changes in ownership will also tend to place greater recreation pressures on remaining public lands.
7. Recreational activity concentrates heavily around points of access, particularly along areas accessible by road. In areas away from roads, waterfront, and airstrips, recreational activity is dispersed, but still tends to concentrate at attractive lakes and streams.
8. Some people prefer recreation in natural lands without any public improvements. For them all that is needed are road pull-offs and other forms of access to public lands, such as trail clearance through woods and brushy areas. Additional site development can be detrimental rather than beneficial to their recreational experience.

9. The extent to which lands are available to urban people at all levels of income is heavily influenced by mode of access. Lands that are accessible only by plane or by a long and costly boat trip are effectively limited to those in higher income brackets; whereas lands that are accessible by road are more widely available.
10. Near urban areas, lands with prime recreational values, particularly land with road or water access, also have high value as private real estate. Unless public lands needed for recreation are clearly identified and reserved for this purpose, accessible lands will eventually be closed to public use through disposal to private ownership. Should this occur, people will have to travel farther from the community to reach public open space. Alternatively, costly repurchase of accessible lands will be necessary.
11. In the future, population growth, combined with increases in per capita income and leisure time, will generate an ever increasing demand for recreation resources. Unless the supply of accessible recreation lands is increased or recreational use is redirected, existing recreation sites will be used more intensely.
12. Overuse and crowding can reduce the quality of a recreational experience in a given area. The threshold of use at which the quality of the experience starts to deteriorate depends on the type of experience sought, the carrying capacity of the land, and the amount and nature of recreation facilities and site maintenance.
13. Alaska lands are used for recreation by people from other parts of the Nation and world, as well as by residents. In 1977 between 40 and 50 percent of the people using lands in the Alaska State Park System were from out of state.<sup>1</sup> The State is mandated to provide the same outdoor recreation opportunities for Alaskan visitors, as well as for its residents.
14. Alaska's wealth of outdoor recreational opportunity is a significant asset to the State's economy. It has been estimated that in 1977 people visiting Alaska for recreation spent over \$200,000,000.<sup>2</sup> Visitor expenditures have been growing steadily over time.

#### Governmental Roles

1. The State, Federal, and municipal governments have assumed different and complementary roles in providing recreational opportunities and services on public lands in Alaska.
2. Federal agencies see their primary role as preserving land and resources of outstanding value for the Nation as a whole. Accordingly, their management policies seek to disperse or manage recreational use to protect the resource.

3. Municipalities, on the other hand, see their role as providing recreation sites and programs conveniently located for use by local residents. Municipal recreation sites are often used intensively and require expensive development and management.
4. The State's primary recreation agency, the Division of Parks, defines its role as providing accessible outdoor recreation opportunities to Alaska residents and visitors while protecting the natural resources of the land. State park policy is use oriented, like that of the municipalities, but has some aspects of the Federal orientation towards natural resource protection.
5. Each governmental level provides an essential component in the array of outdoor recreational opportunities sought by the public. State recreation areas which accommodate intensive recreational use by the traveling public are needed if Federal lands are to be maintained in their natural state for low intensity uses.
6. There is a rough alignment between the character of lands owned by different governmental levels and their differing recreation management policies. The vast, remote, and often rugged or marshy character of Federal lands is best suited for light, dispersed use; the State holds more accessible and useable lowlands; whereas municipal recreation lands are generally smaller sites within developed communities. But there are important exceptions to this generality, most notably, early Federal withdrawals adjoining communities and highways, such as the Chugach and Tongass National Forests, the Kenai National Moose Range, and the military withdrawals near Fairbanks and Anchorage. Conversely, the State Park System includes holdings of remote and mountainous land, such as the Wood-Tikchik State Park.
7. In addition to its role as a provider of recreation lands and facilities, the State has special responsibility for comprehensive planning, for coordination of various governmental levels, for assisting local communities in recreation projects, and for identifying and preserving historic areas and structures.
8. Within communities, recreation planning, program operation, and site maintenance are most effectively accomplished by the local government which has a direct and daily knowledge of local needs and conditions.
9. The State's policy has been to encourage local governments to assume responsibility for recreation sites and programs located within the community.
10. Local communities vary considerably in their ability and willingness to provide public recreation services. Often, small isolated communities with heavy unemployment are most in need of local recreation programs; yet, local governmental resources are inadequate to meet this need. In relation to other needs for scarce resources, recreation is often given a low priority by local governments.



11. Some financial assistance has been provided to local governments through the State's revenue sharing program and through Land and Water Conservation funding. Occasional technical assistance has been provided, and the State has assisted in the organization of local Park and Recreation Councils to support the establishment of local recreation areas and programs. Despite these efforts, State assistance for local recreation has reached only a few communities.
12. There are a number of State and Federal agencies with some responsibility for helping local governments provide local recreation, but there is no working system of coordinating these efforts.

#### Recreation Responsibilities and Policies Within State Government

1. In terms of money and effort spent, the major program of the Division of Parks has been the development and maintenance of a system of campgrounds, waysides, and recreation areas located along main highways for use by the traveling public. No other governmental level provides this service. Though providing campgrounds and recreation sites for the traveling public is widely accepted as a State responsibility, existing statutes do not specifically recognize this aspect of the Division of Park's program.
2. In designing campgrounds, the State's policy has been to keep them simple and rustic, and, in this manner, to maintain a distinction from private visitor accommodations and to minimize construction and maintenance costs.
3. Public use of campgrounds and waysides has shifted in recent years from predominately tent campers to people with truck campers and self-contained recreational vehicles. This shift has cut down on the demand for traditional campgrounds and created different needs for siting and campground design.
4. The State has recently been considering extending its system of campgrounds and recreation sites to other main traveled ways, such as waterways and airports. With the transfer of much of the land along major rivers from public to private ownership, there is a need for designated public recreation sites for use by river travelers. Without such a system, people traveling along rivers are liable to trespass on private property or to misuse easements which have been reserved solely for the purpose of providing rest areas necessary for travel rather than for recreation purposes. State waterway recreation areas could be acquired through selection, dedication of existing State lands, or exchange or purchase from Native corporations.
5. The Wood-Tikchik State Park Act, adding 1,428,320 acres to the State Park System in 1978, represents public recognition of the

fact that the State ownership includes large areas with outstanding natural values well suited for retention in public ownership through inclusion in the State Park System. The Legislature stipulated that management of this park provide for subsistence and fisheries protection, as well as for recreational use.

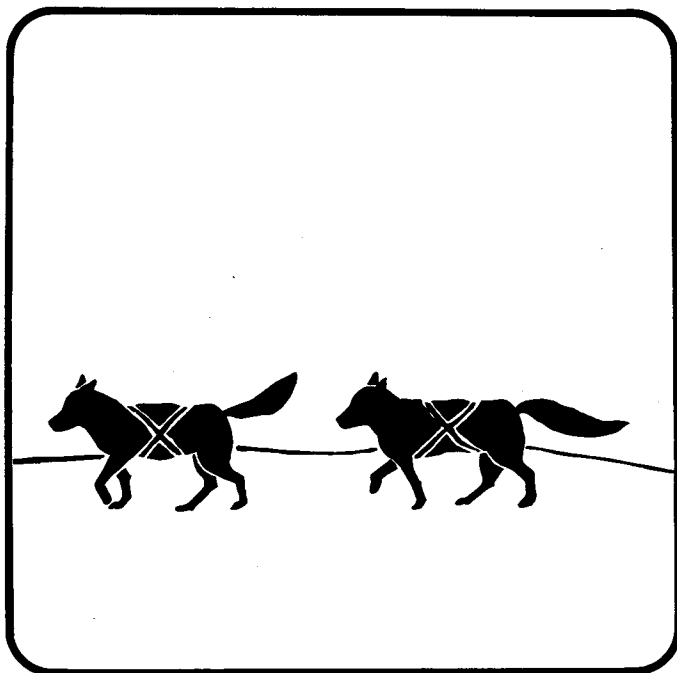
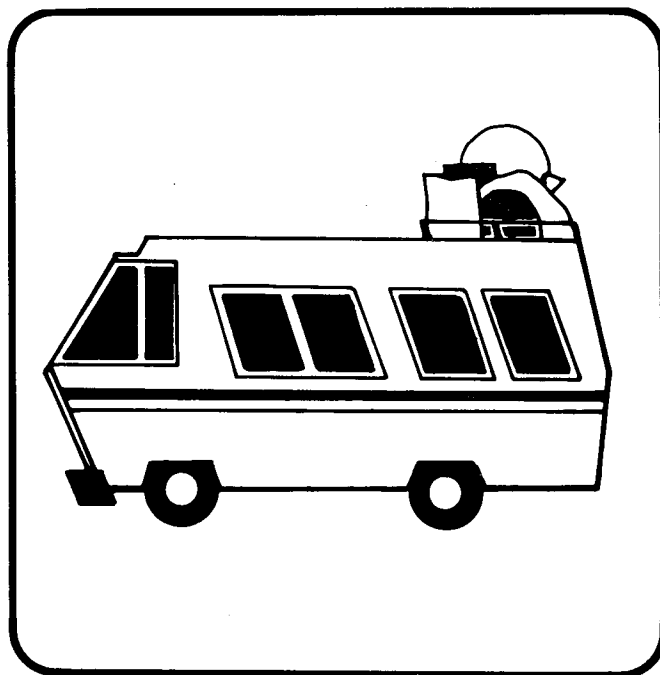
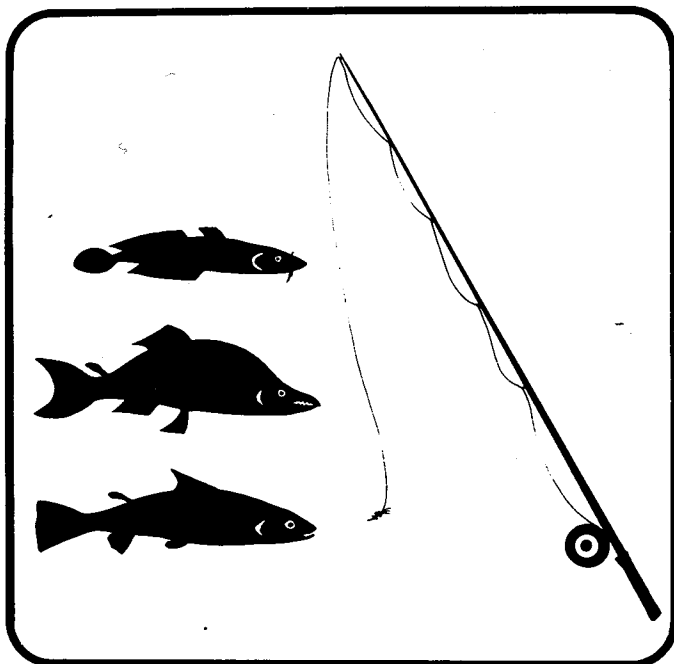
6. With its ownership of natural lands relatively near to communities, the State has an opportunity to provide the public with accessible wildland or wilderness experiences.
7. Though State law assigns primary responsibility for State recreation lands and services to the Alaska Division of Parks, other State agencies have a major influence on recreational opportunities in Alaska. Primary among these are the Division of Lands, which will eventually manage about 100 million acres; the Department of Fish and Game, which influences the pattern of recreational activity through its management of fish and wildlife resources; and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, which provides various modes of access to recreation lands, as well as opportunities for pleasure-oriented travel. The Department of Commerce and Economic Development, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Division of Policy Development and Planning in the Governor's Office also have an important, though less direct, influence on outdoor recreation lands and resources.
8. The Division of Lands' decisions about land disposals are a point where critical choices between public recreation and other land interests must be made. In the past, land disposals in some areas have seriously reduced the State's supply of accessible or waterfront recreation land, and decisions about surface and subsurface use have not always been compatible.
9. Policy statements of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities give little recognition to the recreational component of highway travel. Nor is there much public recognition of the ways in which mode and cost of access limit or extend the availability of public recreation lands to various sectors of the public. In actuality, roads and highways are heavily used for recreation, as well as for transportation. Surveys show that driving for pleasure is a popular form of recreational activity. Road access is essential to many forms of public recreation, and for many people, driving is the only means of travel used.
10. The responsibilities and management tools of the Department of Fish and Game are primarily limited to one facet of the recreational experience of the hunter, fisherman, or wildlife observer; i.e., resource availability. Recreational hunting and fishing are also influenced by State agencies which control land ownership, the availability or kind of public access, the availability of site maintenance services, and in some cases, the availability of public camping and private campgrounds, lodges, and restaurants.

11. State fish and wildlife management has historically emphasized sport fishing and hunting and paid less attention to the recreational value of the resource for viewing and other nonconsumptive purposes. Recently, however, the Department has given greater recognition to nonconsumptive resource values.

#### Coordinating Outdoor Recreation Planning

1. Recreation opportunities in Alaska are influenced by a wide range of public agencies at various governmental levels, as well as by the private sector.
2. Recreation planning by the Alaska Division of Parks is either statewide (the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) or local. At a regional level there is no existing State program for recreation planning and intergovernmental/interagency coordination.
3. The existing A-95 Clearinghouse provides an opportunity for State and Federal agencies to comment on projects involving a component of Federal funding or licensing. As currently structured, the Clearinghouse is not an effective vehicle for interagency communication about pending decisions involving State lands and resources. The State lacks a formal system through which various State departments could exchange information about pending land and resource decisions.
4. In the absence of effective coordination, the pattern of recreation lands and services will be a random composite, and opportunities to better allocate public resources by avoiding duplication and sharing or reorganizing responsibilities will be lost.
5. Recent State legislation recognizes a local governmental prerogative in land use planning. The State Land Policy Act requires that planning for State lands be consistent with local governmental land use planning, except where there is an overriding State interest. The State Coastal Zone Management Act also grants local planning prerogatives.
6. Recreation plans are more likely to be implemented if (a) line agencies responsible for implementation are active participants in plan preparation, (b) recommendations are at a level of detail and specificity comparable to that of agency programs and budgets, and (c) budgeting for recreation projects is keyed to the plan.
7. The existing State Park and Recreation Council has several features which give it a nucleus from which a more effective entity for recreation planning and coordination could be built. Its membership is based on local representation; its leadership by the Lt. Governor gives it a potential for strength within the context of State government; and it has the beginnings of an interagency committee for coordination of recreation plans and programs. However, without

a stronger legal mandate and staff within the Division of Parks which can help accomplish its responsibilities, the State Park and Recreation Council will be unable to provide effective recreation planning and interagency coordination.



## **RECREATION PATTERNS AND TRENDS**

## Kinds of Outdoor Recreation\*

Outdoor recreation in Alaska is as varied as the nature and preferences of different people. The experience defined as outdoor recreation can range from a glimpse of sparkling ocean while driving through an urban setting to days spent wandering in a wilderness. For some, outdoor recreation is a sociable occasion at a crowded fishing site, for others the key ingredient is in solitude. For some, it is the activity of jogging, playing soccer, hunting, snowmobiling, or skiing; for others, it is a chance to sleep on the grass in the sun.

None of these variations is the exclusive specialty of any one group of people. During the course of a year even the most single-minded sportsman finds outdoor recreation in a variety of places and ways. Typically, an experience which may be labeled in one way, be it a fishing trip, a picnic, or a rockhound hike, combines a range of uses of the public lands and traveled ways. A significant part of most recreational excursions is the trip itself. A recent survey showed that driving for pleasure was the most frequent summer recreational activity among State Park System users.<sup>1</sup> In Alaska, most highways have scenic vistas of a quality that is matched in only a few parts of the Nation. Traveling by boat or viewing scenery and wildlife from a train may also be an important part of the pleasure of a recreational excursion.

Once people reach their destination, their total recreational experience comes from a combination of factors. The activity they engage in, be it picnicking, catching fish, collecting rock specimens, or visiting an historic site, is only a part of the experience. The setting and contact with nature is a major factor in the quality of outdoor recreation for most people. Catching fish from a busy highway culvert is not the same as fishing in a country stream. The surrounding lands are often as important to the quality of the recreational experience as the specific site itself. Similarly, the nature of the traveled way, be it a highway, railbelt, river, or air, influences the quality of the total outdoor recreational experience.

During the course of a year, people commonly use a variety of public lands for recreation. Recreational activity extends across ownership boundaries and involves both the public and private sector. In this respect, planning and land management for public outdoor recreation is comparable to planning and land management of fish and wildlife or for the development of transportation facilities. Many recreational experiences involve only an hour or two of spare time and are limited to recreation lands and facilities within the community. On a two-day weekend, people seldom want to spend more than half a day each way traveling. But most people also have at least one or two times a year when they can take a longer trip and venture into an area farther from home.

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\*Appendix I includes reports from the Commission's survey of recreation activity in three sample areas.

Recreational patterns and preferences vary significantly in different regions of the State. For example, in southeastern Alaska, recreationists commonly disperse from the main communities by boat or plane to favorite coves for fishing or access to remote hunting opportunities. The Kenai Peninsula, on the other hand, is deluged on summer weekends by Anchorage residents who concentrate into often over-crowded campgrounds and waysides during the salmon season. The lack of facilities to meet peak demand on the Kenai has translated into public desire for more or larger public recreation facilities. By contrast, residents of Fairbanks and other outlying interior Alaska communities are less interested in new recreational developments because they are still able to disperse onto public lands for a variety of activities. As a whole, they are more interested in preservation of access so that they may continue to independently pursue their own recreational opportunities unconstrained by "managed" recreation areas.

Nonresidents, which comprised 40-50 percent of the visitors to the developed areas of the State Park System in 1977, have different patterns of recreational activity. The members of this group typically travel to one or more major communities while they are in Alaska, and they have a far wider travel range. Expenditures by those visiting the State for recreation make a significant contribution to the economy. It is estimated that, in 1977, people visiting Alaska for recreation spent over \$200 million. Visitor expenditures have been growing steadily over time.

#### Lands Used

How is this complex structure of outdoor recreational activities distributed across the lands of Alaska, and, of equal importance, how do the pulse and location of activities change with the seasons? To help answer these questions, the Commission studied three regions of recreational activity centering on the Kenai Peninsula, Fairbanks, and Juneau. A wide-ranging series of interviews were conducted in these regions by contacting air taxi operators, sporting goods store operators, local recreation managers, and others whose lives involve direct contact with the recreating public in their area. (See Appendix I, Reports from Interview Survey.) Information obtained from these interviews was compiled on maps showing the regional pattern of recreational activities. This system proved to be a simple and effective method of gaining an overall picture of the locations and types of recreational use within the sample regions.

From our survey it became clear that recreational activities do not take place exclusively on designated recreation lands (parks, waysides, etc.), but are dispersed throughout the State wherever opportunities exist. It was also apparent that the areas of most intensive recreational activity follow access routes, primarily highways and convenient waterways. In less accessible areas, activity is sparse and dispersed; in summers consisting primarily of backpacking, fly-in hunting and fishing, hiking, mountain climbing, horsepacking, and float boating; and in winter of ski touring, snowmobiling, and dog sledding. On summer

weekends in the Kenai Peninsula, thousands of fishermen cluster at the points where the highway crosses major salmon streams, such as Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik, and the Kenai River. Use of these areas is highly seasonal and fluctuates greatly depending on holidays, weather, and fish runs. In 1977, about 6,000 canoeists used the Swanson River Canoe Trail System, which is accessible from roads running through the Kenai National Moose Range. In less accessible areas, like the south side of Kachemak Bay which must be reached by boat or plane, recreational use is relatively dispersed along rivers and lakes, beaches, and mountain valleys. Even in these areas, however, use tends to remain relatively concentrated around float-plane lakes and natural coastal harbors.

It also became clear that, in some communities, local recreation facilities serve large numbers of people from other parts of Alaska and the Nation, as well as local residents. The Homer Spit, for example, is a major destination for tourists, as well as residents from throughout southcentral Alaska.

### Ownership of Public Recreation Lands

Who owns the public lands which are most heavily impacted by recreational use? For the most part, such lands are in municipal or State ownership, or are held by the Federal government under special purpose withdrawals, such as the Kenai National Moose Range and the Chugach and Tongass National Forests. Other federally owned lands are beyond the range of most intensive activity. The reasons for this pattern lie in the land selection criteria used by the State and municipal governments, as well as in the historical sequence of land status changes.

Federal withdrawals, accomplished long before statehood, established several important holdings of Federal lands near main communities in areas of high recreational use. Thus, on the Kenai Peninsula, the accessible portions of the Kenai National Moose Range and the Chugach National Forest receive intensive recreational use. In southeastern Alaska, main communities are surrounded by Tongass National Forest lands. In both the Fairbanks and Anchorage areas, large military withdrawals encompass lands which are used by recreationists and have potential for even greater recreational use.

To some extent, Federal withdrawals have been adjusted to reallocate high demand areas to State or private ownership. The Moose Range boundaries have been moved back about a mile's distance from the coastline along Cook Inlet, and the State has recently completed a series of selections of areas desirable for community growth or recreation from the national forests. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act allowed a limited amount of Native corporation selections from national forests and wildlife refuges. Still, because of their combination of accessible lands and waters attractive for outdoor recreation, the Chugach and Tongass National Forests and the Kenai National Moose Range remain important to the supply of outdoor recreational opportunities in southcentral Alaska.



However, on an overall basis, State and municipal lands are located where they will receive more intensive use than most Federal lands. This is because State selections of lands granted at Statehood have given priority to accessible lands with a combination of values for people, often including recreational values, such as water frontage or fish and wildlife resources.

Following the pattern of the Federal government, State law gave the municipalities the right to select 10 percent of the vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved State lands within their jurisdictions. Thus, municipalities have been able to select some of the best State lands including areas which are most accessible and desirable from the point of view of human use. A number of municipalities are still entitled to substantial additional acreage. The municipal land selection law adopted by the Legislature in 1978 specifies additional acreage amounts for each municipality, but also includes a procedure allowing the State to retain lands where there is an identified State interest, for example, future State parks. From the existing pattern of municipal ownership, it is clear that State recreation planning will often involve cooperation and exchange with municipal governments.

In summary, the public lands where existing recreational use is most intense are lands with some form of access, often lands in State or municipal ownership. This pattern of recreational activity tends to be linear, along highways or shorelines. Since access is also the prime factor in real estate value, areas with high recreational values tend to be subject to heavy demand for private acquisition. In waterfront areas, the pressure for private acquisition is especially strong. Private owners have already acquired much of the western Kenai Peninsula coast, lake shore areas of the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, and around Fairbanks.

Where recreation lands near communities remain in public ownership, the pattern of surrounding land ownership is often complicated. In many accessible areas, State, municipal, and private lands are intermixed. It is often difficult to distinguish between public and private lands. On the Kenai Peninsula, for example, there are several popular fishing sites where people commonly trespass on private property.

Under these circumstances, State lands needed for present and future recreation use should be clearly identified and reserved for public purposes. Without positive action in this direction, private land interests will be the dominant influence on State land disposal decisions and, eventually, most accessible land will be conveyed to private ownership. The State is required by recent legislation, the 1978 "Land Policy Act" (A.S. 38.04.005), to seek a reasonable balance of developed lands and accessible public open space and recreation areas. Without such a balance, Alaskans will lose much of the easy contact with nature that has long been accepted as part of the Alaska lifestyle.

## Federal, State, and Municipal Roles\*

Given the pattern of recreation activity described in previous sections, what should be the role of the Federal, State, and local governments in providing outdoor recreation opportunities on public lands? It is easier to answer this question as it applies to national and local governments than as it applies to the State's role. The national and local governments are at either end of a spectrum, and they have a more clear-cut and easily defined function. State responsibilities overlap and interrelate with those of the other two governmental levels. As the government with major statewide jurisdiction, the State has unique responsibilities for involving the Federal and municipal governments in area-wide planning and program coordination. In Alaska where there are some areas with no local government, the State has even broader responsibilities.

Most sources agree that the primary national role in recreation management in Alaska is in preserving and managing lands and resources of outstanding value for the nation as a whole. With a basic emphasis on the quality and perpetuation of the resource itself rather than on recreation services, the choice of areas is dominated more by the nature of the land than by accessibility or location in relation to communities.

The areas of Alaska currently withdrawn for addition to the Federal conservation systems are generally far more remote and isolated from highways and communities than are State or municipal lands, or lands which were previously withdrawn for Federal purposes.

In keeping with this basic emphasis on the resource per se, recreation activities generally are managed to disperse or otherwise minimize the impact of human activities on Federal lands and resources. A Bureau of Land Management recreation planner describes their emphasis as being towards "dispersed wildland recreation management." Concentrated usage is directed toward certain rivers and trails.<sup>3</sup> In a similar vein, the U.S. Forest Service reports that future emphasis in managing national forest lands in Alaska will be towards "providing dispersed recreation, as opposed to featuring opportunities that have a specific site (e.g. a campground) as the focal point of use."<sup>4</sup> The Fish and Wildlife Service reports a decreasing agency emphasis on recreation services in relation to resource management objectives. The National Park Service has traditionally exercised strict control over access in national park areas, including prohibition of private vehicles on park roads and strict regulation of wilderness or back-country use when these measures are determined necessary to maintain the quality of the park.

Though the National Park Service, Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service provide campgrounds, there is a basic difference between their approach and that of the State towards this public service. Campgrounds

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\*Appendix II summarizes correspondence in which Federal, State, and municipal entities expressed their view of different governmental roles in public outdoor recreation.

of the three Federal conservation systems are accessory to the lands within the systems and, hence, campground location is guided by the nature of an area more than the convenience of the public. Similarly, the campgrounds that are under BLM jurisdiction are on the more remote stretches of Alaska's highways in areas held by the BLM. The Federal approach assumes that the public will travel to resource destinations, whereas the State campground system is oriented and located more as a convenience to the traveling public. State campgrounds have natural characteristics which contribute to a pleasurable camping experience, but the basic orientation in site selection has been towards accessibility and a desirable distribution along the main highway system. This difference in approach towards campground location expresses an underlying difference in the recreation policy of the national and State governments in Alaska.

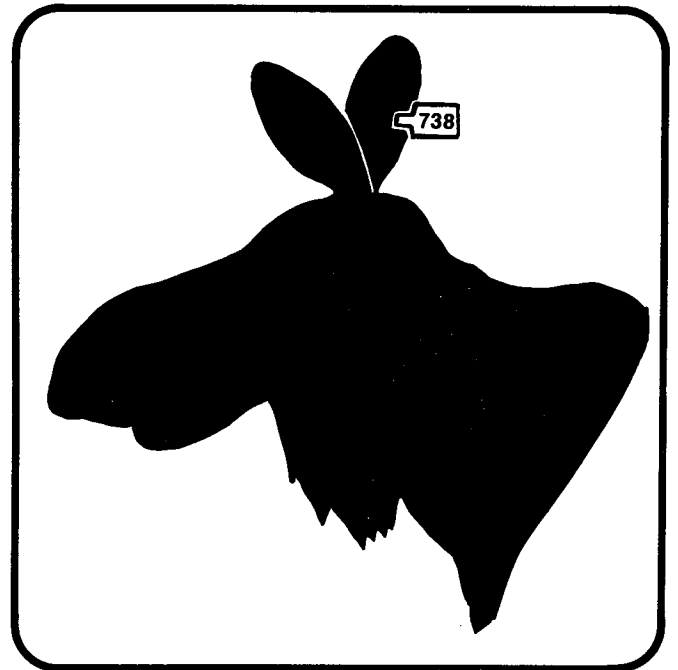
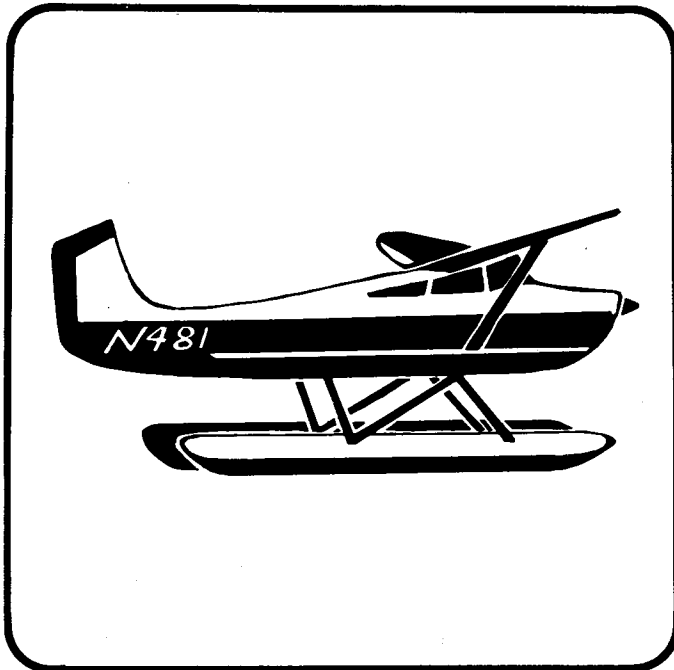
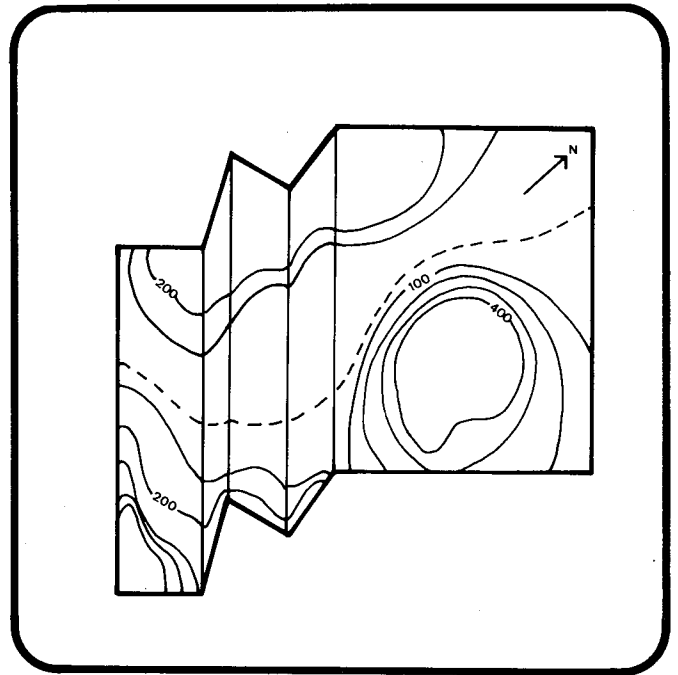
Municipalities in Alaska have yet another orientation towards public recreation. Municipalities that do provide public recreation services generally emphasize recreation programs, organizing indoor and outdoor recreation activities for local populations. Most larger municipalities maintain open spaces for outdoor recreation, primarily for the use and enjoyment of local residents rather than for visitors. But many local communities in Alaska are destinations for tourists, and recreation sites within the community are heavily used by nonresidents, as well as residents from other communities. Though the local community may derive some benefit from tourism, the cost of developing and maintaining a recreation site that is heavily used by nonresidents may be out of scale with both local resources and local benefits to be gained. Here, State and local governments have an overlapping responsibility. The State also has a unique responsibility in areas with little or no local government where tourists have a significant impact on the lives or recreational opportunities of local government.

The State's role in public recreation is to provide accessible outdoor recreation opportunities to Alaska residents and visitors while protecting the natural resources of the land. State park policy is use-oriented, like that of the municipalities, yet has aspects of the Federal orientation towards natural resource protection.

As the government whose jurisdiction extends over all lands in Alaska, whether in private, municipal, State, or Federal ownership, the State also has a special responsibility for comprehensive planning of recreation lands and services throughout the State and for coordinating the recreation services of various governmental levels. State recreation planning must also recognize and consider private or commercial recreation providers.

Federal law recognizes and encourages the State role in recreation planning and coordination. Each state is required to prepare a Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan as a condition to receiving financial assistance from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. In its role as the sovereign government responsible for the welfare of its people and their communities, the State should also provide technical and financial

assistance to communities for local governmental recreation projects. Finally, the State has primary responsibility for identifying and preserving areas and structures of historic value and for eliciting the participation of individuals, organizations, and communities in accomplishing this objective.



**THE CENTRAL ROLE OF THE STATE**

## Overview

There is a basic complementarity in the different roles which Federal, State, and municipal governments have assumed in providing outdoor recreational opportunities in Alaska. Each governmental level provides an essential component of the array of outdoor recreational opportunities sought by the people of the State and the Nation. The active recreation programs of some municipalities are a vital part of everyday life in Alaskan communities, just as it is important to the well-being of the people of both the State and the Nation that part of Alaska be maintained in its natural character. The State's role to provide accessible natural lands for more active recreational use, as well as campgrounds for the traveling public, is equally needed.

However, despite these basic distinctions, there are many areas of overlap and potential conflict in the recreation policies and programs of the three governmental levels. The State has several campgrounds which better fit the purposes of municipal governments than of the State. In the Anchorage municipality, for example, the Mirror Lake State Recreation Area is used primarily by residents of the municipality. Near Fairbanks, the Chena River Wayside was jammed with campers who made it their place of residence during the pipeline boom, forcing the State to close it to camping. Urban sewer and water facilities must be provided before it can be reopened because it is now surrounded by urban development. The city of Homer would like the State to assist in providing expanded harbor facilities, camping areas, and parking for people who travel through Homer to reach the Kachemak Bay State Park.

Generally, the municipalities argue that the State is financially better equipped to maintain these recreation facilities, whereas the State's position is that the municipality is better able to identify local needs and to program, administer, and police local facilities and services. Since the State must be consistent and even-handed in its relationship with all municipalities, it is particularly important that it have a clearly articulated and firm policy regarding the division of responsibility between itself and local governments.

The State is also involved in municipal recreation programs, but only as a source of financial and technical assistance. Federal recreation grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund are channeled to local governments through the State Division of Parks. In addition, the State and the U.S. Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (formerly the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation) are developing a program through which they will provide municipalities with advice and assistance in the development of recreation programs. The State fosters the organization of local park and recreation councils (PARCs) which work to establish park and recreation areas and programs within the community. Representatives of local PARCs, together with the Lt. Governor and the Director of the Division of Parks, make up the Recreation Advisory Committee which participates in the allocation of Federal and State funds to local communities.

There is at least as much overlap between State and Federal recreation policies and programs as there is between those of the State and the municipal governments. As a generality, it is true that Federal lands, which are often remote, mountainous, or marshy, are better suited for management which protects the lands and resources by minimizing human intrusion; and that State lands, which are often more accessible lowlands, are better suited for more intensive use. However, these statements are only accurate in a broad statewide context. There are important exceptions to this generality on both State and Federal lands. With 104,000,000 acres of existing and potential ownership, State lands inevitably encompass many remote areas with outstanding natural values of a quality similar to those identified for the national conservation systems. On the other hand, there are several Federal withdrawals, mainly withdrawals dating from before Statehood, which are located where they will be subjected to heavy recreational use from nearby communities and, as such, are important elements in State and municipal recreation planning.

As noted in the preceeding chapter, sections of the Kenai National Moose Range and the Chugach and Tongass National Forests combine accessibility with land and waters which are attractive to recreationists. Potentially, such areas are subject to intensive use more like that anticipated by State than by Federal land management policies. The Kenai National Moose Range receives intensive recreational use, yet the national mandate of the Fish and Wildlife Service requires that recreation be secondary to wildlife and habitat protection.

There are advantages to these occasional inconsistencies between the location and characteristics of the land and the management policies of the owners. A mixture of Federal and State ownership of accessible recreation lands provides the public with greater assurance of a range of recreational opportunities than might be provided if the ownership were more unified. Recently, State land policymakers have been heavily pressured to convey large quantities of accessible State lands to private ownership. Under current Federal law, Federal land managers are less vulnerable to such pressures, and public land ownership has more stability. The presence of some Federal lands in the zone of heavy recreational activity near communities may be viewed as insurance that some natural lands will remain within easy traveling range of major growth centers.

Assuming a more balanced approach to State land management, the mixture and juxtaposition of State and Federal recreation lands under differing management policies enables the State and Federal governments to work together to provide the public with a range and variety of recreational opportunities. If some lands are to be maintained in a wild and natural condition, other lands must be managed to accommodate public demand for more intensive recreational use. For example, State lands can provide the threshold or point of entrance to wildlands under Federal management.

In addition to its role as a landowner, the State has a more comprehensive responsibility for recreation planning and development. As the government for the whole of Alaska, the State is concerned that lands and resources be managed for the maximum long-range benefit of the people of Alaska

regardless of ownership. To this end, the State of Alaska has regional and statewide land planning powers and authority under its general police powers to regulate private property. As the sovereign government, the State, if it so chooses, could assert State interests in the management of municipally owned lands.

By specific legislation, for example, air and water quality laws, Congress can give the Federal government comparable sovereign authority in relation to State and municipal lands. However, it should be noted that both Federal authority over the State, and State authority over municipalities has recently been tempered by a trend in Federal and State law to require land planning by the higher level of government to conform with the more local governmental unit. Clauses requiring a degree of Federal compliance with local planning are included in both the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act. At a State level, the recent Land Policy Act requires State's planning to conform with local planning except where there is an overriding State interest.

None-the-less, the State has a responsibility to initiate action to involve both Federal and municipal land managers in regional or statewide planning for public recreational use. The State could coordinate various governmental entities to identify public recreation demands and opportunities and to provide public lands and services where they would be of most overall public benefit.

Currently, responsibilities for State land and resource management are diffused among a number of State departments and divisions. There is some ad hoc coordination between State agencies on recreation matters, and the Alaska Park and Recreation Council is a nominal coordinating branch, but in actuality, there is no funded and effective structure through which State and Federal agencies can coordinate activities which influence public recreational opportunities on public lands.

Before considering the structure and powers of such an entity, this report will review the role of various State agencies which affect outdoor recreation in Alaska. Actions which could improve the recreation planning capability within each agency will be suggested.

#### Division of Parks

The one agency identified by law as having primary responsibility for State park and recreation services is the Alaska Division of Parks within the Department of Natural Resources. The primary function, which requires most of the Division's staff and budget, is the development, operation, and maintenance of the State Park System. In addition, the Division prepares and annually updates a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and manages recreation research projects on which the plan is based. Federal grants to Alaska under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act are administered by the Division, as are matching State funds and funds for the State Trails and Footpaths Program. Through the Division, these funds are allocated to local governments and



to State Park System projects. A branch of the Division administers the Alaska Historic Preservation Act and serves as staff to the Historic Sites Advisory Committee. Finally, the Division has legal authority to "provide for consulting services designed to develop local park and recreation facilities and programs" (A.S. 41.20.020(a)), and to "provide clearinghouse services for other State agencies concerned with park and recreation matters" (A.S. 41.20.020(11)), but neither of these functions has been funded to the point where it can be accomplished effectively.

### The State Park System

The State Park System includes 5 State parks, 1 State wilderness park, 50 waysides, 4 historic sites, 2 trail systems, and 4 recreation areas totaling approximately 2,800,000 acres. A number of additional parks are in the planning and proposal stages. During the 1978 legislative session, adoption of the 1,428,320 acre Wood-Tikchik State Park proposal added a spectacular region of interconnected lakes and rivers to the System.

Over the eight years since its creation, the special role of the State Park System has been defined and refined as Division of Parks personnel have developed the System and interacted with recreation providers within other State agencies. Through this process, the following elements have emerged as primary characteristics of the State Park System:

1. A major function of the System is to serve the traveling public by providing areas and sites with recreational opportunities accessible from main travel routes. This function benefits visitors to the State almost as much as it benefits residents of Alaska. Preliminary data for 1977 indicate that 50 to 60 percent of the visitors to Alaska's waysides are Alaska residents. Thus, nearly half are from other parts of the Nation or from foreign countries. The State's role in providing campgrounds and recreation areas for the traveling public is an important complement to the national parks, wildlife refuges, and forests, which are the destination of many of Alaska's visitors.
2. Convenience to major communities and travel corridors is a primary consideration in designating areas for the State Park System. The Division concentrates on "recreation hinterlands" defined by scribing arcs of 50-mile radius around existing and potential communities of a thousand or more people, and by scribing parallel lines along travel corridors. As evidence of this emphasis, 95 percent of the existing or proposed area of the State Park System is within a hundred miles of communities of more than a thousand people.
3. The Division of Parks has recently extended its definition of "main traveled ways" to encompass waterways, as well as highways. The Division has recommended to the Governor establishment of

a Marine Park System including a series of sites along the coast of Prince William Sound and Southeastern Alaska. People would have access to these sites from charter boats or private crafts which could connect with the State's Marine Highway in the area.

4. Many areas of the State Park System are intended to accommodate a higher use per acre than are Federal recreation lands. As such, sites are generally smaller and more intensively developed with picnic areas, trash barrels, pit toilets, trails, foot-bridges and other facilities. Though any area intended for recreation must be managed to preserve the natural values of the land, State policy generally allows for more intensive use than Federal policy.
5. In designing campground facilities, State policy has been to keep them simple and rustic. In this manner, the State maintains a desired distinction between public and private visitor accommodations and tends to minimize maintenance costs.

Like any ongoing public service, management of the State Park System continuously changes and adjusts to reflect changing public needs and opportunities. From our survey of recreational activity in various regions of the State, and from a review of recent shifts in land status and management throughout Alaska, the following areas of change are identified:

1. Under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Native corporations have concentrated land selections along riverways. With this major change in land status, there is a need to designate and preserve certain remaining State lands as public recreation sites or, where needed, to purchase or trade such sites from Native corporations. Without designated public recreation areas, people traveling along waterways are liable to trespass on private property or to misuse easements which are reserved solely for the purpose of providing rest areas and stopping points necessary for travel rather than for recreation. Public planning for waterway sites should be closely coordinated with local Native corporations and other private land owners. Such coordination will also avoid unnecessary duplication of possible private recreational development.
2. In recent years, use of campgrounds and waysides has shifted from predominantly tent campers to greater use of truck campers and self-contained recreational vehicles. This shift has cut down considerably on the demand for the traditional campsite, complete with tables, fire pits, level tent spaces, and adequate spacing for privacy. In fact, many recreational vehicle campers seem to prefer a more social or "parking lot" atmosphere. For example, a random spot check at the Chatanika River Campground on the Steese Highway in June, 1978 revealed that there were eight recreational vehicles parked side-by-side in an

unimproved, open-gravel area near the road, despite the fact that there were two empty campsites available. Also, there were only two "traditional" tent camping parties (having no camper or recreational vehicle) out of a total of 23 parties using the improved campsites.

Before developing or improving a campground or wayside, the State should assess the type of demand and plan accordingly. Spacious, developed campsites should not be emphasized if a majority of the users don't need them. At the same time, it may also be appropriate to "zone" campgrounds to separate tent campers from recreational vehicles. Often tent camping spaces are polluted by sewage and other waste released by previous recreational vehicle campers. An area set aside specifically for tent campers would alleviate this conflict.

3. The Division of Parks, the Department of Transportation, and certain Federal land managers each handle maintenance at certain public campgrounds and/or waysides. There are locations and situations where overall economy and efficiency could be improved if agencies exchanged maintenance responsibilities or contracted with each other for needed services. To maximize efficiency and economy, the Division of Parks should look for opportunities to form contractual or joint agreements with other State, Federal, local agencies, or the private sector for services such as litter collection, maintenance of sanitary facilities, etc. For example, if the Department of Transportation is routinely picking up garbage in the vicinity of a campgrounds, the Division of Parks could reimburse them for the costs of including the park facility in their service area.
4. State parks and recreation areas adjacent to Federal lands in the national conservation systems can serve a complementary function by providing threshold areas between the primary points of access and the national lands. Where State lands fulfill this role, it is more feasible to manage Federal lands to preserve natural resources and accommodate low intensity uses. However, management for more intensive recreation uses is costly. Federal land managers may need to provide financial assistance for State management of thresholds to Federal lands.
5. The State owns some lands of outstanding natural and recreational value that should be designated for public recreation despite relative inaccessibility and the probability that use will be very light in the near future.
6. The State is still in the process of selecting, receiving, and classifying its 104,000,000 acre land entitlement. The State should take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity to establish areas for future, as well as present public recrea-

tional needs and to assure that Alaska will maintain a desirable balance and mix of public and privately owned land as population increases in the future.

7. The State Park System includes a variety of lands and recreational opportunities, and its future development must reflect the range of public demands and needs for State recreation areas. Though the Division names different areas of the System in different ways, there is a need to clarify the categories within the State Park System. Parks, recreation areas, and campgrounds each have different purposes. The following criteria could be used to distinguish elements of the System and to determine which designation is best suited for a particular area. The term "wayside" has not been used in these categories in an effort to find a term that is more descriptive of the purpose of the unit.

#### Park

- emphasis on important natural values
- opportunity for recreational activities compatible with natural landscape and feeling of open space
- emphasis on dispersed recreational use (though not necessarily exclusively)

#### Recreation Area

- primary purpose to encourage and manage a variety of recreational activities in an area with multiple recreational opportunities
- greater emphasis on improvements (trails, campgrounds, etc.)

#### Recreation Site

- emphasis on camping with additional site specific recreational opportunities (fishing, boating, historic site, hiking, etc.)
- campsite facilities designed to maximize and encourage participation in recreational activities
- suitable for use for more than one night

#### Campground

- primary purpose to serve the traveling public on an overnight basis
- located on main traveled routes and placed at convenient intervals, considering demand and the location of other overnight facilities, including private campgrounds
- adjacent recreational opportunities possible but not necessary to the purpose of the units

Picnic Area (These areas need not be operated exclusively by the State Division of Parks but may be created by or transferred to other State agencies or local governments to promote more efficient management where appropriate.)

- primary purpose to facilitate day-use activities, (picnicking, walking, berry-picking, scenic and wildlife viewing, etc.) including access to adjacent public lands for these activities
- not intended for overnight use

Rest Areas (These stopping points along highways and waterways should also be considered in overall System planning, even though they will often be provided and operated by agencies outside the System, generally the Department of Transportation.)

- primary recreation purpose is to provide a point of access between the highway and adjoining public lands
- minimal facilities such as trash cans, pit toilets, and public trails should be provided as need demands

These designations are not mutually exclusive. For example, a picnic area could be incorporated within any of the previous categories or a recreational site could be part of a park. The use of standardized signs and symbols would assist the public in identifying available recreation opportunities in different areas.

#### Municipalities and the Division of Parks

The Division of Parks' statewide recreation responsibilities include the establishment of a relationship with municipalities. This relationship has evolved over time and has been shaped by experience.

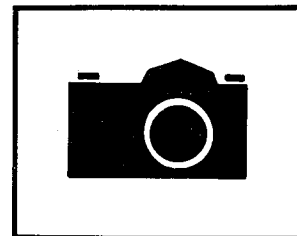
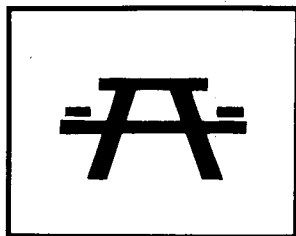
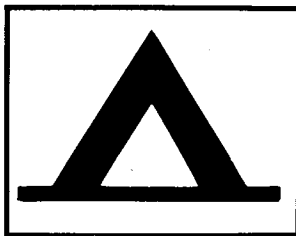
The need for close cooperation between statewide and local recreation interests is especially important because the spectrum of recreation needs in Alaska varies considerably depending on cultural background, population, geography, and climate.

Because the boundaries of Alaska's municipalities often encompass rural areas far beyond developed communities, State parks, and recreation sites located within municipal jurisdictions do not necessarily duplicate local park and recreation functions. Instead, sites such as the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Chugach State Park in the Anchorage municipality, or the Captain Cook State Recreation Area in the Kenai Peninsula Borough provide intra-borough recreation opportunities serving a regional population, as well as the traveling public.

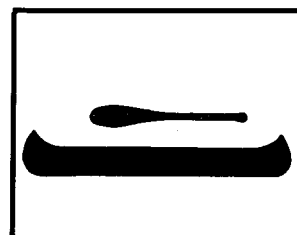
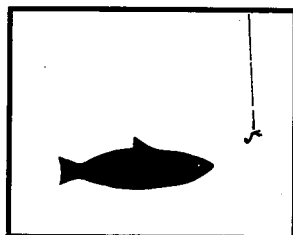
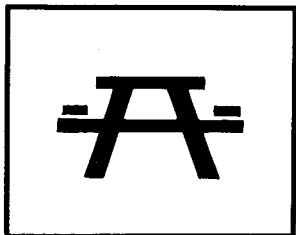
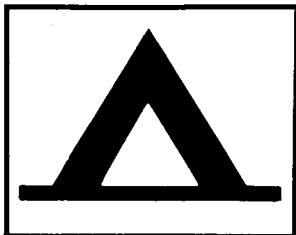
When State recreation sites are located within developed communities, such as the Chena River Wayside in Fairbanks or the Mirror Lake Wayside in the Anchorage municipality, State policy has favored transfer of the unit to the local municipality. The State supports

## EXAMPLE OF THE USE OF SYMBOLS

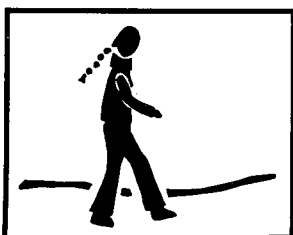
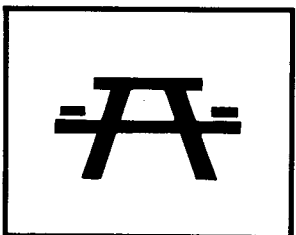
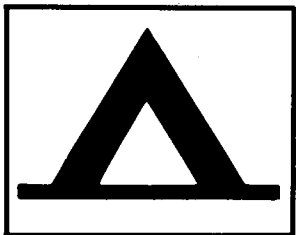
### ■ State Park



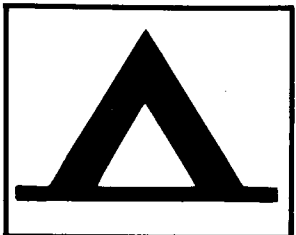
### ■ State Recreation Area



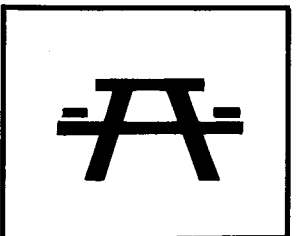
### ■ State Recreation Site



### ■ State Campground



### ■ State Picnic Area



This example is not a specific recommendation, but illustrates the concept of the use of symbols to inform the public about recreation opportunities available in a given area. The symbols would be combined with simple signs identifying the place (e.g. Nancy Lake State Recreation Area). Federal, State, and municipal recreation managers should work together to develop a common set of recreation symbols for statewide use.

These symbols were borrowed or adapted from the Symbol Sourcebook, Henry Dreyfuss, 1972.

this policy on the grounds that local government is more familiar with local use patterns and, thus, better able to manage such facilities. However, municipalities are sometimes unable or unwilling to accept the added responsibility, and often State technical and financial assistance is necessary to enable local communities to provide these services.

The Division of Parks has statutory responsibilities as a park and recreation "consultant" to municipalities, but the Division currently has no budget to carry out this responsibility. Per capita State and Federal revenue sharing for recreation is insignificant in Alaska's smaller communities. Additional State financial assistance through Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants is usually limited to capital expenditures. Resulting maintenance and operating costs may be too costly for some communities. Such assistance is limited and difficult to obtain without substantial municipal effort.

The size and complexity of local governments in Alaska varies greatly. Most Alaskan communities are small and have insufficient professional or technical capacity to plan and administer local recreation programs. Though many communities are small, recreation demands may be relatively high because of physical isolation, seasonal unemployment, or a relatively large influx of non-local recreationists. Clearly the State needs to work closely with such communities to provide recreational opportunities which are needed for the social and physical health of the people.

Very few of Alaska's communities have the financial and technical ability to develop and maintain adequate recreation facilities. By the same token, the State, with its own budgetary limitations, cannot be expected to finance all non-Federal rural recreation facilities. The following procedures should improve coordination between State and local governments and maximize implementation of local recreation goals.

1. The State should encourage municipalities to develop recreational opportunities at the local level through municipal acquisition and development of land, facilities, and programs to meet the recreational needs of local residents. The State should also encourage local governments to actively plan and participate in the development of State and Federal recreation programs and help them coordinate with the private sector to meet local recreational needs.
2. If State parks and recreation sites are located within developed communities, they should be managed by the governmental unit which is most familiar with local demand and use patterns. This will encourage better facility operation, maintenance, and enforcement. Continuing technical and financial assistance from the State will be necessary to enable some local communities to accept expanded recreation management responsibilities.

3. The Division of Parks should take an aggressive role in providing technical and financial assistance to local communities for recreation planning. This is especially important for smaller communities where limited staff energy may be diffused or overshadowed by other essential responsibilities, or for those communities that are destinations for non-local visitors.
4. State technical and financial assistance to local governments should be well planned to promote maximum coordination with community requirements and aspirations. Resulting local recreation areas and facilities should require minimal maintenance and operating costs to insure their long-range viability.
5. When a municipality is unable to take the initiative to provide needed recreation opportunities, the State may wish to proceed with development of an area or facility and then sell or lease it to the local government for management and maintenance.

#### Division of Lands--Management of Most State Lands

State lands dedicated to the State Park System currently total 2.8 million acres, leaving approximately 32 million acres (101 million acres if selected lands and potential selections are included) under the management of the Alaska Division of Lands within the Department of Natural Resources. Planning and classification is handled by a section within the Division of Lands, and land selection is handled by the Department's Planning and Research Section.

Much State land outside the Park System has scenic and recreational values or a combination of recreational values with other resources such as grazing, fish and wildlife habitat, and minerals. A less recognized value of State lands is open space which can serve to surround and shape areas of settlement and community growth.

Because of the extent of these recreational values, actions by land management branches of the Department of Natural Resources outside the Division of Parks can have a major effect on the supply of recreational opportunities in the State. In the past, prime recreation sites have been lost to the public because of disposals which were planned without consultation with the Division of Parks and without adequate consideration of recreational values. For example, the open-to-entry sites are typically clustered around rivers and lakes. Along the Talachulitna River and Chumilna Creek, desirable public fishing sites have been acquired as private open-to-entry sites and closed to public use. On the Kenai Peninsula, State and borough land disposals have created a barrier of private ownership between the main highway and the coastal area. Recently the State has had to spend \$110,000 to purchase 14 acres on the Kenai River in the vicinity of comparable property that was sold by the Division within the last few years. The Division of Parks expects it will have to make similar acquisitions in the future to ensure public access to public waters.



To adequately protect recreation resources on State lands outside the State Park System, the following measures should be considered.

1. Staff responsible for selection, classification, and disposal of general State lands should include people with expertise in recreation planning and management and with a specific responsibility to assure that recreational values are adequately considered. Selection, classification, and disposal should reflect the fact that the recreational values of general State lands are at least as important to the public as the commercial resource values. In the past, land branches of the Department of Natural Resources have made a practice of asking for comments from the Division of Parks when a decision was identified as involving recreational values. However, to adequately identify and highlight recreational values in day-to-day decisions about general State lands, people with expertise in recreation land management should be part of the staff. This in-house expertise should not replace referral of specific recreation matters to the Division of Parks. In fact, one method of establishing the necessary liaison would be for the Division of Lands to hire a recreation planner who would be stationed in the Division of Parks and would have the responsibility of reviewing all pending State land actions, as well as initiating action that may be needed for recreation purposes.
2. For much of the public recreation land, the critical need is not preservation exclusively for recreational purposes, but, instead, protection from those disposal actions which would preempt important public recreational use. Because of other public use values, the Park System may be inappropriate or unacceptable for many State lands that none-the-less should be retained in public ownership. Such lands are well suited for dedication to the Alaska Public Reserve System adopted by the 1978 Legislature (AS 38.04.070). Under this system, lands would be retained in public ownership but managed for a variety of compatible public uses including the protection of recreational values.
3. The Division of Lands should instigate a standard procedure for alerting the Division of Parks and other State agencies with an interest in the land use of the area about plans for any significant change in State land status through dedication or disposal. For effective communication, it is important that this notice include a map allowing easy identification of the lands in question.
4. Planning and management of State lands should include consideration of the relationships between surface and subsurface uses.

#### Department of Transportation--Access to Recreation Lands

It is clear from the way people use highways and recreation areas that roads and recreation are closely interrelated. Driving for pleasure is a major recreational activity in Alaska, and access is the main factor

which limits the effective supply of recreation lands. Because of this intertie, close cooperation between transportation planners and recreation planners is essential to providing good service to the general public through either function.

Nearly all outdoor recreational activity involves some travel. Often the trip is a major part of the experience. It is obvious to anyone driving Alaska's main highways that a substantial share of the vehicles are driven by people on a recreation trip. During the summer weekends, close to half the vehicles on the Glenn or Seward Highways are recreational vehicles. A survey of persons driving the Fishhook/Willow Road over Hatcher Pass in August, 1976 found that only 10 of the 137 persons queried had any nonrecreation purpose to their visit. Over three quarters of those interviewed volunteered that driving for pleasure is a form of recreational activity.<sup>4</sup> In a statewide survey of State park users conducted by the Division of Parks in 1977, respondents ranked driving for pleasure as their most frequent summer recreational activity and their second most frequent winter recreational activity.

Most people on recreation trips drive to their destination. The map of Alaska's park and recreation system shows that nearly all of the developed recreation facilities have direct access to a main highway. The extent to which Alaska's wealth of recreational opportunities can be made available to its residents and visitors depends heavily on the availability of road access. This pattern is likely to continue even though other modes of travel are available and utilized by the public.

Yet, in interviews with staff of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Commission staff found that recreation considerations are brought into highway and road planning only when the route involves a designated unit of the State Park System, lands of the national conservation systems, or when affected landowners have a clearly identified interest in recreation. Typically, in designing a highway that passes through general State or BLM lands, there is no special attempt to consider and plan to maximize the recreation and scenic values of the route, nor is there any established procedure during the design process for gaining input from recreation planners in other State and Federal agencies. When an environmental impact statement is prepared, the Division of Parks is contacted only when the highway route passes through a unit of the State Park System.

Some highway planners recognize that roads could be planned with far more consideration of recreational values. One example which highway planners have cited is the road beyond Egan Drive in Juneau which was planned in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. The route is located in relation to the topography to maximize scenery viewing, and there are numerous pull-offs, access points to the beach, and other recreational amenities. After considerable dialogue between the Division of Parks and the Department of Transportation, the realignment of the Seward Highway as it passes through the Chugach State Park will provide access to historic trails, and rock blasting will be adjusted slightly

to safely accommodate rock climbers. However, according to park planners, the immense scenic value of this highway has been largely ignored in the realignment design.

Obviously, even if recreational considerations were one of the active factors in highway design, there would be situations where recreational opportunities would be overridden by considerations of safety and traffic movement. Still, these examples indicate that there is additional room for accommodating recreation interests in highway planning.

The attitudes of recreation planners also contribute to the separation of recreation and highway planning. In the inherent dichotomy between protecting the land and enabling people to reach and enjoy it, the tendency to conserve and protect is often dominant. In the development of the Taylor Highway which parallels the Forty-Mile River, highway planners sought to redesign the highway for economy and ease of construction, but also to allow people to view the river and occasionally have access for boating and fishing. Federal land managers discouraged this effort on the grounds that a nearby road would damage the recreational value of the river. It is worth asking whether Federal recreation planners gave adequate consideration to the recreational values of viewing the river while driving and of physical access to the river from the highway. On the other hand, transportation planners may have used recreational access as a justification for expedient construction.

In a similar vein, State recreation planners have not sought involvement in planning for use of the State Local Trails and Service Road funds. Nor have they actively studied the recreational use of a road connection to Whittier, even though many would argue that such an improvement would lead to a better distribution of recreational activity on the Kenai Peninsula.

On occasion, highway location seems to be influenced more by the highway planners' assumptions about recreation interests than by actual coordination between highway and recreation planners. As an example, preliminary plans for a highway between a future Knik River Crossing and the Parks Highway to Fairbanks shows the highway avoiding the Nancy Lake Recreation Area by veering to the east. The recreational value of a shorter and more direct northward route warrants further consideration. Such a route would go through the western edge of the Nancy Lake Recreation area. By providing access to this part of the Recreation Area, the public's ability to use and enjoy the Area may be substantially enhanced. In addition, travel distance would be reduced.

All of these examples point to the need for institutionalizing systems of coordination between recreation and highway planners. Alaska has a wealth of opportunity to plan and design transportation improvements which will provide magnificent recreation routes, as well as safe and efficient means of travel. Towards achieving this goal, the following steps are suggested:

1. Highway design staff should include people with expertise in planning for the recreational functions of the highway and with an assigned responsibility to assure that recreational interests are adequately considered in highway design. Preparation of the environmental impact statement for highway projects should include the participation of one or more recreation planners, regardless of whether the lands involved are designated as recreational areas.
2. Through administrative regulation, a formal procedure should be established whereby highway planning and design receive specific review for recreational opportunities by other agencies and governmental levels concerned with recreation. The ongoing participation of the Division of Parks and the Department of Fish and Game is particularly important. It should be mandatory that the Division of Parks review highway designs at the early stages of a project.
3. Parking should be provided at periodic intervals along highways for berry picking, wildlife observation, etc. Pull-off parking is especially needed in less developed areas where there is limited access on and off the main road system. Generally, parking "facilities" could range from merely a wide shoulder to a separate parking area with pit toilets and litter containers. Such parking should be in safe, clearly marked locations. The choice of highway pull-off locations and rest areas should be carefully planned in relation to the adjoining lands. In some locations, additional pull-offs would enable public use of natural recreation areas; in other locations, they would encourage trespass or damage to critical environmental or wildlife values.
4. In acquiring property for rights-of-way, the Department of Transportation or the Division of Lands should have the authority and funding to acquire scenic easements or development rights in locations where open space should be preserved along the highway route. Any such action should be in accordance with a detailed land use and recreation plan for the highway corridor and related area so that public expenditure is limited to those areas where a clear public benefit would be achieved by restricting development to low density residential, agricultural, or other open space uses. This is not an unusual procedure. In Virginia, for example, much of the scenery along the Blue Ridge Parkway has been preserved through acquisition of development rights to adjoining privately owned property.
5. The Department of Transportation should work with the Division of Parks, Division of Lands, and the Department of Fish and Game to identify and map existing and potential access to recreation lands and resources. The Department of Transportation should then place emphasis on maintaining and developing recreation roads, harbors, trails, and other forms of access as budget and other priorities allow.

## Department of Fish and Game--Management of a Major Recreational Resource

As the manager of fish and wildlife resources throughout the State, the Department of Fish and Game has an influence on the supply and availability of recreation opportunities in Alaska that rivals that of the Division of Parks. In particular, the Department's work in stocking lakes, enhancing fisheries, and securing access to fishing sites has a powerful influence on the location and concentration of recreational activity. Yet, the Department has no means of providing the garbage pick-up and pit toilets that may be necessary to prevent the site from becoming littered and losing its intrinsic recreational value.

Acquisition of access is often essential to public enjoyment of waterways and wildlife areas. To avoid excessive pressure on fish and wildlife in any one area, there must be enough access to disperse use. But acquisition of access is also outside the purview of the Department of Fish and Game. Thus, coordination with State agencies which can provide other needed components of a recreational site is essential in planning fisheries enhancement activities.

Recently, the Department and the Division of Parks have developed a workable system of informal communication for coordinating their activities; yet, there is no formalized structure. There is enough difference in the basic philosophy of the two agencies that informal communication should not be relied upon indefinitely.

In some respects, the Department of Fish and Game has been a forceful advocate for recreational values in State land use. The reservation of public sites adjoining lakes and other waters in areas subject to State land auction and open-to-entry was a Departmental effort. However, in their approach to recreation management, the Department of Fish and Game and the Division of Parks differ in several respects. The Department of Fish and Game prefers that public use be as dispersed as possible since a wide range of fishing and hunting sites tends to minimize impact on the resource they seek to protect. On the other hand, the Division of Parks tends to prefer concentrated activity in well-defined sites since concentration facilitates management.

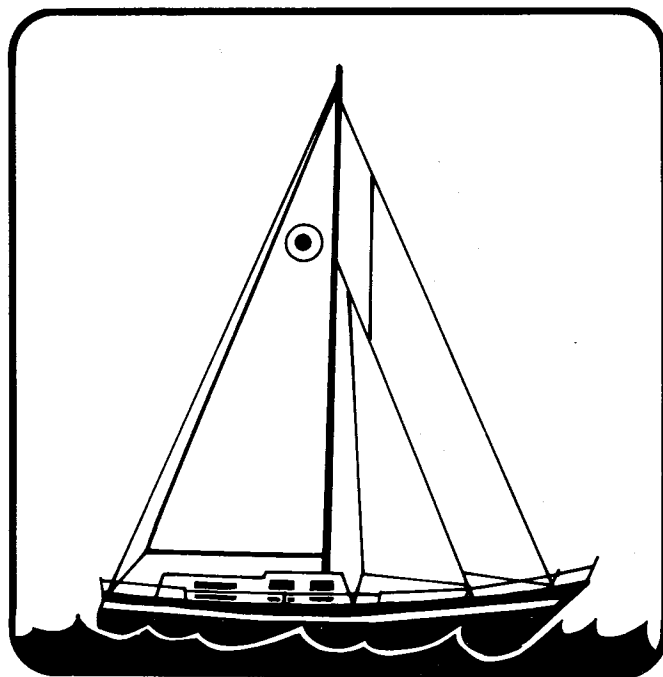
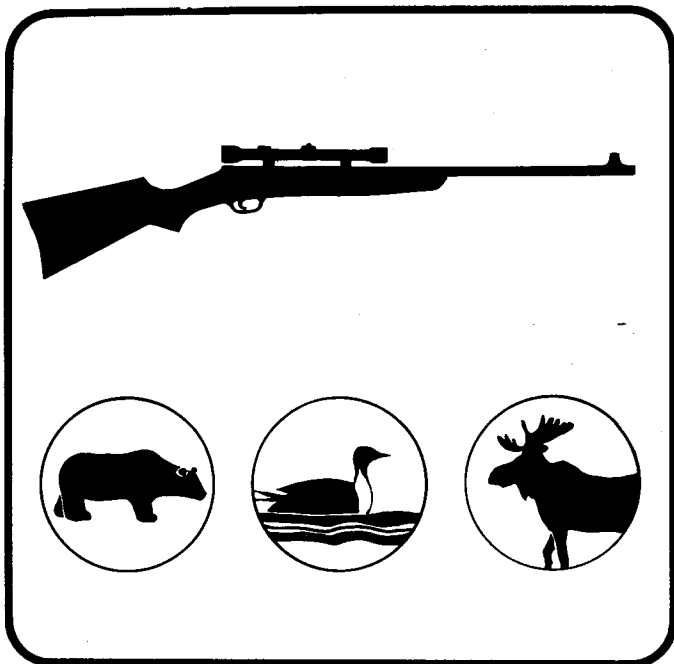
The two agencies also have a long-standing difference in their approach to consumptive and nonconsumptive uses of fish and wildlife. License revenue is a major source of funding for the Department of Fish and Game. As a practical result, their management is oriented heavily towards fishing and hunting. They tend to rate the success of their program in terms of numbers of fish or animals taken in different areas. The Division of Parks, on the other hand, places greater emphasis on observation or photographic uses of fish and wildlife. The dispute between the Department of Fish and Game and Division of Parks over hunting in State parks is well known.

These differences in approach and philosophy only underscore the need to establish permanent systems for cooperation in fulfilling interrelated responsibilities. Differences can be minimized through mutual adjustment.

The public interest requires that this be done, and that the two agencies plan together when hunting and fishing is an important activity in a recreation area.

Measures which would improve the accommodation of recreation interests in the programs of the Department of Fish and Game are suggested as follows:

1. Statewide or regional planning for fisheries utilization or enhancement and for State refuge designations should be integrated with Division of Parks planning for extension of the State Park System. At a minimum there should be some method of coordinating the allocation of facilities to accommodate the public at intensively used fishing sites and hunting access points, especially if use is encouraged by enhancement.
2. Through administrative regulation or legislation, formal methods of coordinating programs of the Department of Fish and Game with other State agencies involved in land and recreation should be established. Specifically, there is a need for coordination with (a) the Division of Parks so that facilities and site maintenance services can be provided at heavily used fishing sites; (b) the Division of Lands so that decisions about land classification and disposal adequately consider fisheries and wildlife habitat; and (c) the Department of Transportation so that access planning is integrated with planning for fish and wildlife management.
3. At a national level, the State should support pending legislation which would provide funding for nongame species management. The Department of Fish and Game's emphasis on hunting and commercial uses of fish and wildlife stems in large part from the fact that their source of Federal funding is tied to harvest. Passage of the national bill would help achieve a desirable balance between the objectives of the Division of Parks and the objectives of the Department of Fish and Game.
4. The Department of Fish and Game should place greater emphasis on accommodating the public interest in nonconsumptive uses of fish and wildlife. The Department should consult with the Division of Parks in identifying locations where management should accommodate this interest.



# **COORDINATING RECREATION PLANNING**

### Why Coordination is Needed

The Commission's survey and mapping of recreational activity patterns showed that people frequently pay little attention to ownership boundaries when they venture forth on an outdoor recreation trip. Their interest is focused on a destination or an experience; they head for a creek where the salmon are running, a mountain they think they could climb, an area where the raspberries are ripe, or an old trail they would like to explore. Whether the lands are in State, municipal, or Federal ownership is only an incidental consideration. Often people are unaware of ownership, except that, because the area isn't posted, it is probably public land.

The ownership of the lands which receive heavy outdoor recreational use is quite mixed. Along roads, waters, and other means of access, private ownership is preempting many of the areas which would otherwise be desirable for public recreational use. Waterfront locations are especially attractive both as private real estate and as public recreational areas. Beyond the private lands which surround Alaska's larger communities and adjoin main highways, the predominant land owners are the State of Alaska and, to a lesser extent, the municipalities. However, several major Federal withdrawals which were established before Statehood are also located within the range of the heavy recreational use radiating from Alaska's larger communities. The military withdrawals near Fairbanks and Anchorage, the national forests in Southeastern and Southcentral Alaska, and the Kenai National Moose Range are the most significant.

As explained in the preceding chapter, even within the category of lands under State ownership there is considerable diversity of management. The Division of Parks and the Division of Lands within the Alaska Department of Natural Resources have jurisdiction over different State lands, and there is no overall system of planning for recreational activities which extends across both types of State lands. The Department of Fish and Game and the Department of Transportation influence the patterns of outdoor recreational activity and the recreational use of lands under all owners, yet there is no effective system enabling these agencies to participate in an overall recreation planning program. Other State agencies, such as the Department of Community and Regional Affairs and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development, have a significant, though less direct, influence on the outdoor recreational opportunities on State lands but little chance to participate in the recreation program planning of other agencies.

Similarly, the Federal lands impacted by outdoor recreation are under a range of separate management entities, primarily the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the various branches of the military. The U.S. Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the Department of the Interior administers Federal funding for both State and Federal recreation projects. Recreation policies of these different Federal



agencies vary considerably, and again, there is no overall entity which actively coordinates the recreation programs of Federal agencies at a regional level, nor is there a mechanism for coordinating Federal, State, and municipal activities affecting recreation on public lands in interrelated areas.

A regional context for planning and agency coordination in Alaska is important because of the State's wide variation in geographic and social make-up. In the series of interviews conducted by the Commission, it became apparent that a different attitude toward recreation prevailed in each region (see Appendix I). In Fairbanks, interviewees often expressed an independent "frontier" feeling that may reflect the relatively great amount of public land available for recreation. The immediate demand for government-provided recreation services and facilities was less in Fairbanks than elsewhere. Some people recognized the diminishing supply of unrestricted open space and foresaw the need to reserve recreation lands and to maintain access to these lands for the future. By contrast, the Kenai Peninsula is already experiencing a recreation shortage. The supply of recreation opportunities, and especially facilities, no longer comfortably meets the demand. As a result, the prevailing view favored more government involvement to increase the recreation capacity of existing public lands.

Planning at a small region level has the added advantage of being at a scale and level of detail that is easily related to agency programs and budgets, and hence, is easily translated into action. At a statewide or larger region level planning recommendations are in terms of broad policies or general land use recommendations. It is often difficult to make the connection between general recommendations and agency budgeting which is in terms of specific improvements at individual sites. Regional plans which set forth recommendations for specific locations are more directly related to agency programs and budgets. Thus, regional plans encompassing lands under the jurisdiction of all agencies and governmental levels within the region can serve as comprehensive blueprints for interagency coordination.

Effective regional coordination of the many agencies which influence outdoor recreation opportunities on public lands could have significant public benefit. If each agency acts in isolation within its jurisdiction, the regional pattern of recreational service and opportunity will be a random and accidental composite. It is doubtful that such a composite of separate actions will maximize benefits from the public resources available for outdoor recreation. Further, the definition of public benefit will be from the limited perspective of the individual agency, omitting the far wider range of factors which are usually involved in decisions affecting regional land use and public service.

To develop a definition of a coordinative entity for recreation planning, it is necessary first to make certain assumptions about the nature and purpose of such planning. The institutional structure should be designed to fit its mission. For purposes of this report, the following goals for regional recreation planning have been assumed. These goals are

interrelated. In the process of decision making, each must be weighed and balanced against the others:

1. To allocate public recreation services and to manage public lands in the manner which reflects identified public preferences and recreational use patterns; to provide a range of recreational opportunities with sufficient variety and quantity to accommodate different public preferences.
2. Not to exceed the natural carrying capacity of the land nor the point where the over use of recreation land significantly detracts from the value of the experience.
3. To weigh recreational values against other public values such as the protection of natural ecosystems, safe and efficient transportation, development of commercial resources, and the social and economic values gained through private land ownership.
4. To allocate the recreation resources of various State, Federal, and municipal agencies so that their special abilities and authorities are used as well as possible in accomplishing an overall plan for public recreation.
5. To provide the public with sufficient information about regional recreational opportunities on all public lands so that use is distributed in relation to available recreation lands and services.

These goals indicate the following features of a coordinative entity for outdoor recreation planning:

1. It should focus on regions which are small enough to enable consideration of the distribution and pattern of recreational activity and the impact of recreational use on specific sites.
2. It should be designed to elicit and incorporate local knowledge about recreational use patterns and opportunities.
3. It should be related to a more comprehensive land planning process which considers social and economic, as well as natural and geographic, factors.
4. It should elicit the participation of public agencies and private parties involved in recreational opportunities at a small regional level.
5. Since the State has comprehensive planning jurisdiction, the entity itself should be located within State government.
6. It should coordinate recreation related activities of separate State departments.

7. Planning recommendations should be directly tied to management, and for this purpose, the entity should have a voice in budgeting for recreational purposes.
8. The entity should be assigned other duties which involve a responsibility for public recreation transcending the jurisdiction of any one agency. Such duties should include coordinated public information services, coordination of recreation research, identifying trail needs, and assisting local governments in developing local recreation projects.

#### Existing Coordinative Mechanisms

Before considering the structure of an organization with the features listed above, it is useful to review existing coordinative entities to determine to what extent they could provide coordinated interagency planning for outdoor recreational opportunities on public lands. The most obvious existing entity, established to support dedication and preservation of recreation and park lands, is the Alaska Park and Recreation Council located in the Division of Parks and chaired by the Lt. Governor. PARC includes an interagency committee charged with coordination of Federal and State recreation programs. Though PARC is well located to elicit participation of separate Federal and State agencies in furthering the purposes of public recreation, its accomplishments to date have been minor. The final section of this report discusses PARC in more detail and outlines measures which would strengthen its coordinative role. Still, other existing coordinative mechanisms should be considered.

New coordinative structures have recently been established at both the Federal and State level. In Washington, four Federal resource management agencies, the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Soil Conservation Service, recently agreed to standardize their systems for collecting and maintaining natural resource data and to look for ways to coordinate their programming and planning both among themselves and with State government. Within Alaska, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the State of Alaska, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Interior have agreed to promote coordinated land planning and cooperative resource management. Toward this goal the four entities have joined to form the Alaska Land Managers' Cooperative Task Force which will identify issues and concerns deserving cooperative efforts, as well as areas requiring cooperative planning and will initiate and facilitate cooperative agreements and projects.

Both of these new coordinative agreements represent progress toward coordinated recreation planning in the sense that they provide supporting structures at the Federal and State level. But neither entity can be expected to provide the specific focus on recreation lands and services at a regional level that is needed as a basis for interagency coordination. The Alaska Land Manager's Cooperative Task Force could be of direct help in highlighting this need and eliciting necessary support.

At a local governmental level, planning can offer the advantages of direct contact with the people most affected. Local planning is a useful vehicle for assessing recreation land use proposals in relation to the public values of other types of land use. However, it must be recognized that, in some regions of Alaska, local planning is weak or nonexistent and lacks authority to provide an effective system for coordinating State and Federal agencies. A number of Alaska's larger municipalities do have active comprehensive land use planning programs. Typically, consideration of outdoor recreational opportunities on public lands is incorporated in the overall land planning process, and a system of recreation areas is designated on a comprehensive plan map.

As Alaska's new Coastal Zone Management Act is implemented, local comprehensive land use planning will be extended to more remote regions of Alaska. Under this Act, a region without municipal government may be organized as a coastal resource service area and represented by an elected board of seven members. Boundaries are to follow already established boundaries for Rural Education Attendance Areas. The board or the Department of Community and Regional Affairs has the duty of preparing a district coastal management program which could include recommendations for recreational land use, as well as other forms of land use. Coastal zone planning, by definition, deals with the coastal area, and may or may not encompass the whole of areas that would be suitable for regional recreation planning. Similarly, the boundaries of existing municipalities do not necessarily encompass areas that are workable for small region recreation planning.

At its best, local planning can provide a detailed knowledge of existing recreation sites and how they are used, as well as information about new areas where outdoor recreational opportunities are desirable. Since the municipality or coastal zone planning board evaluates recreational land use in relation to other public and private land use needs, local planning may offer an opportunity for balanced consideration of the public interest in land use. The local plan could provide a blueprint for action around which local, State, and Federal agencies can coordinate their programs. But without a coordinative arm at a higher governmental level, as well as considerable agency involvement in preparing the plan, it is unlikely that State and Federal agencies will be sufficiently committed to adjust their programs as needed to implement a local plan.

The primary coordinative mechanism at a State level is the A-95 Clearinghouse administered by the Division of Policy Development and Planning in the Office of the Governor. Established under a Federal law, the A-95 Clearinghouse deals with projects which involve a component of Federal funds. Through the Clearinghouse, information about all projects involving Federal funding is distributed for comment to a large group of Federal and State agencies. Where a conflict or a need for coordination is identified, the Clearinghouse takes steps to elicit the necessary cooperative action from other agencies.

The Clearinghouse does not deal with projects which are exclusively funded by the State and/or municipalities, and since an action must

involve some expenditures to be included, the Clearinghouse deals primarily with development projects and capital improvements. This orientation means that the Clearinghouse generally does not handle land management, disposal, or dedication decisions, many of which are very significant for recreation planning. Though the Clearinghouse is a useful check to assure that State and Federal agencies are aware of each other's projects, it is not well-suited as a structure for coordinated planning. The Clearinghouse deals with actions that have already been initiated. Coordinated planning is most effective if agencies work together from the inception of a project, identifying needed action and outlining their respective roles.

At a Federal and State level there are numerous examples of coordination between agencies, though none of them provide the comprehensive inter-agency coordination at a regional scale that is needed for recreation planning. The BLM regional planning program involves consultation with adjoining landowners and affected State and local governments. The State Department of Fish and Game has a cooperative management program through which they work with various landowners in the management of fish and wildlife resources. The Forest Service planning program includes the identification of regional land use issues and incorporates a thorough assessment of the views and wishes of other governmental agencies, as well as the general public. Though these and other cooperative efforts have potential value in facilitating cooperative planning for recreational opportunities, they lack the needed comprehensive review of recreational use and opportunities throughout a region, as well as the institutional structure which enables coordination of a number of diverse agencies. The focus on each of these cooperative projects is on the lands under jurisdiction of the agencies involved rather than the overall pattern of recreational opportunities throughout the region.

In the absence of an entity specifically charged with regional planning and coordination, the participants tend either to seek a lead role or else to avoid the necessary commitment of time and money. Thus, volunteer or ad hoc efforts at planning and coordination often fail because of interagency competitiveness or lack of agency effort. An entity specifically charged with coordination has more success in obtaining the budget and staff needed for coordinative projects than an agency which has other predominant duties.

### Strengthening Coordination

The statewide Alaska Park and Recreation Council (PARC) was organized in the mid-1960's "to foster the acquisition and dedication of land and water areas and the development of facilities and programs that preserve the beauty of the environment and provide recreation opportunities." Headed by the Lt. Governor, the statewide PARC provides advice and support to local PARCs which have been organized in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Ketchikan, Sitka, Valdez, Homer, Kodiak, and North Kenai. Membership of the local PARCs includes private citizens interested in advocating for parks and public recreational opportunities.

At a State level, PARC has an Advisory Committee made up of three representatives from the local PARCs plus the Director of the Division of Parks and the Lt. Governor, who serves as chairman. Nominally, at least, there is also an interagency committee comprised of representatives from Federal, State, and local governmental entities. The executive coordinator of the statewide PARC is the Director of the Division of Parks. The statewide PARC has no staff of its own. PARC is not a statutory entity, though there is a written charter.

The primary function of the five-person PARC Advisory Committee has been to meet annually to prepare recommendations on priorities for municipal use of Federal Land and Water Conservation funds and matching State recreation funds. At times, the Advisory Committee has also dealt with the other 50 percent of the Land and Water Conservation fund and matching State funds which are allocated to the State Park System.

The PARC interagency committee, which, on paper, includes representatives from eighteen Federal and State agencies, has never met as a full committee. There have been two subcommittees of the interagency committee, one to evaluate pipeline impact on recreation and the other responsible for coordinating the collection of information on recreation facilities and opportunities and recreation preferences. The pipeline committee met once, six years ago, and the subcommittee on recreation information met once about one and a half years ago.

Without staff of its own and a stronger legal mandate, it is doubtful that the statewide PARC can accomplish much more than it has in the past, principally to provide minimal advice and oversight on projects conducted by staff of the Division of Parks. Actual coordination of a number of State and Federal agencies requires substantial administrative time and could not be accomplished without staff especially assigned to this function. Funds would also be necessary to develop regional recreation plans and programs to serve as a basis for coordinated agency action. However, the existing PARC has several features that give it a nucleus from which a more effective entity for recreation planning and coordination could be built. Its membership is based on local representation; its leadership by the Lt. Governor gives it a potential for strength within the context of State government; and it has the beginnings of an interagency committee for coordination of recreation plans and programs.

The following changes would build on these desirable features and develop PARC into the coordinative entity for recreation planning described in the first section of this chapter.

1. PARC should be established as a statutory advisory committee attached to the Division of Parks. As in any working relationship between a citizens' advisory committee and a full-time staff, the basic work of researching and preparing plans and otherwise accomplishing PARC responsibilities would fall to the staff. The PARC committee would meet intermittently to review staff progress, provide advice and make major policy decisions. In this relationship, PARC would be comparable to the existing Historic Sites Advisory Committee.

The new PARC should have responsibility for providing advice and policy guidance on aspects of recreation planning which transcend the jurisdiction of any one agency. Specifically, PARC, which is partially comprised of local citizen representatives, should strengthen public involvement and interagency coordination in recreation planning. Though PARC should continue to provide oversight in the preparation of the Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan, the core of PARC duties should be the preparation of regional recreational plans taking into consideration lands under all ownerships. PARC should involve local citizens and agencies at all levels in the preparation of these plans and use the plans as blueprints for interagency coordination in budgeting, programming, and other aspects of plan implementation. To achieve the specificity that is necessary to coordinate budgeting and programming, planning regions will need to be relatively small, for example, regions of the size of the Kenai Peninsula rather than the whole of Southcentral Alaska.

Since the Division of Parks will be responsible for providing the staff work necessary to accomplish PARC responsibilities, the expansion of PARC must be accompanied by an expansion of Division staff capability in the areas of recreation planning, recreation services, and interagency coordination. At present, the Division's budget and staff is very heavily weighted towards planning and management of the State Park System per se. Funding for overall recreation planning is minimal and operates only at a statewide level.

The State has a major role in recreation planning and interagency coordination, but this role cannot be filled without significant changes both in the structure of PARC and in the duties and funding of the Division of Parks.

2. The Lt. Governor's role as chairman of PARC should be maintained. Involving several State departments in recreation planning, as well as Federal agencies, municipal governments, and in some cases, private landowners, requires leadership at the level of the Chief Executive of the State. Since the State has comprehensive planning authority for its entire jurisdiction, it is appropriate that the State take the lead in this type of planning coordination.
3. The existing responsibilities of PARC and the Division in relation to the allocation of recreation project funds should be expanded and tied more directly to statewide, regional, and local recreation planning. The connection between recreation planning and fund allocation established by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act is an important step towards increasing the utility of planning as a blueprint for agency action and coordination. The revised PARC could build on and strengthen this tie between planning and funding by having PARC also advise on the allocation of other special Federal and State recreation monies available to municipalities and State agencies.

4. PARC and the Division's recreation planning staff should identify regions of intensive recreational activity where Regional Outdoor Recreation Plans would be most useful. There is probably no necessity to cover the whole State with Regional Outdoor Recreation Plans. In a number of sparsely settled regions the pattern of outdoor recreational activity is light, and there are relatively few situations requiring agency coordination. As outlined by the Division of Parks, the need in most rural areas appears to be more for assistance to municipalities in developing local recreation sites and community recreation programs than for providing regional recreational opportunities. To allocate scarce planning resources as effectively as possible, regional outdoor recreation plans should be prepared first in those locations where recreational activities are intense, land ownership patterns are complex, and a number of different agencies are involved.
5. In preparing Regional Outdoor Recreation Plans, PARC should seek local assistance in defining the pattern of regional outdoor recreational activities and potentials. The Commission's interview survey indicated that recreation preferences and activity patterns vary widely from locality to locality. Only by contacting people directly involved with public recreation in each locality can an accurate picture of the region's recreation needs and preferences be developed. The interview survey technique described in Appendix I should be useful in preparing Regional Outdoor Recreation Plans (RORPs). In some cases it may be appropriate to contract with the municipal government to prepare the RORP as an element of a regional land use plan. In other cases, private consultants may provide the necessary expertise. In either case, the contracted work should include a careful survey of local recreation patterns.

Local PARCs should serve as advisory committees participating in the development and review of RORPs for their locality. Where there is no existing local PARC, the process of regional planning should provide sufficient impetus to involve people in the establishment of a local PARC.

6. The municipal, State, and Federal agencies which influence recreation opportunities in the region under study should be involved in the preparation of Regional Outdoor Recreation Plans from the early stages to the finalization of recommendations. For this purpose, it is suggested that PARC call together regional interagency committees of representatives from agencies active in the particular region under study at the time. Recommendations in the RORP should be organized in a format and at a level of specificity that is easily incorporated in agency programs and budgets. In addition, elements of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan should continue to be reviewed by a statewide interagency committee or, as has proved more practical in the past, by subcommittees made up of agency representatives knowledgeable in a particular subject.



7. In addition to the planning, coordinating, and funding responsibilities described above, PARC and accompanying Division of Parks staff should provide other public services which involve aspects of public recreation transcending ownership boundaries and agency jurisdictions. Foremost among such services are:
  - a. Recreational Information Services: Providing the public with current information about the availability of campground space and other recreational opportunities would help relieve overcrowding. To do this effectively, information must be gathered from a number of local, State, and Federal entities. As such, monitoring and informing the public about the use and availability of recreation sites is an appropriate function for the revised PARC. In some situations, current information about the availability of recreation areas can be as effective in distributing use and reducing overcrowding as the provision of additional sites. Certainly the informational approach would be less expensive. In developing an information program, a variety of approaches should be considered.
    1. A consistent statewide system of signs and symbols which mark and distinguish between highway pull-offs, recreation areas, overnight campsites, trailheads, and other types of recreation areas. If the various agencies and governmental levels which provide these areas could agree on one simple statewide set of words and symbols to inform the traveler about the facilities and opportunities at each site, public information would be much improved. For example, there should be an easy way to distinguish between areas with overnight camping sites, daytime recreation areas with picnic tables and other recreational opportunities, and highway pull-offs with no facilities other than a trash barrel and a safe place to stop.
    2. Use of radio during busy summer months to alert travelers about overcrowded, as well as underused, recreation sites, particularly in areas of intensive use such as the Kenai Peninsula. Recently, several agencies have cooperated to pool information about winter and spring avalanche danger and to alert the public through public service announcements on the radio. Perhaps a similar cooperative system could be used to inform people about crowding in recreation areas and locations where use is light.
    3. Visitor centers at the highway entrances to recreation regions could provide information about recreational opportunities on public lands throughout the region. The visitor center at the proposed State "Gateway Park" at the border crossing of the Alaska Highway should combine

information about recreational opportunities throughout the State regardless of land ownership. Similarly, a visitor center at Potter Marsh or some other point of entrance to the Kenai Peninsula could provide information about recreational opportunities throughout the Kenai Peninsula on the Moose Range and the Chugach National Forest, as well as on State lands.

Several Native corporations have expressed interest in working with the National Park Service or the State in interpreting and explaining Native cultural background and the flora and fauna of their region at visitor centers. Their participation could greatly enhance the visitors' recreational experience.

4. Mapped information about recreation lands and opportunities could best serve the public if it were handled as a cooperative venture. For areas of active recreational use, maps should be prepared and distributed showing the regional recreation attractions and the public recreation facilities. Mapped information should be distributed where recreationists will have a good opportunity to use it. For example, the Alaska Bicentennial Commission found that by printing maps on restaurant placemats they were able to give travelers information in an opportune manner.
- b. Coordination of Recreational Research: A number of State and Federal agencies must obtain information about various aspects of public recreational supply and demand. Often agency recreational research needs overlap, and in the past, some research of this type has been duplicative. Recently, agencies have recognized the need to cooperate in recreation research projects, and, currently, several State and Federal agencies are jointly conducting a statewide survey of public recreation participation and motivation, park preferences, and community perceptions. Though coordinated research of this type can and does occur voluntarily, it would be beneficial if an ongoing entity such as PARC had specific statutory responsibility coordinating recreation research.
- c. Municipal Recreational Assistance: Assisting municipalities to provide local recreational opportunities is another function for which the revised PARC would be well suited. A number of agencies have partial responsibilities in this area. The National Park Service can assist Native villages in developing park and recreation areas; the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service can provide technical assistance to communities; the State Department of Community and Regional Affairs can assist municipalities in planning public recreation lands and services; and the State Department of Education can develop its community schools program to encourage community recreational use of school buildings during after school hours.

Thus, in this aspect of recreation planning, there is a need for a coordinative entity with the staff time to help agencies to work together to best serve the public. PARC could provide the leadership that is needed to establish a coordinated program to assist communities in planning and developing local recreational opportunities.

- d. Trail Inventory and Needs Assessment: Alaska has relatively few trails that have been formally designated by municipal, State, or Federal agencies. However, there are numerous trail routes located throughout the State in the form of traditional dog sled (or snowmobile) trails, seismic trails, traplines, old mining and homestead roads, etc. The State's sparse highway system places a unique emphasis on the use of trails for transportation in addition to recreational use or access to recreational opportunities.

In Fairbanks, for example, trails are used for recreation, commuting, exercise, and/or access to other recreational activities. They traverse both public and private land, and are used by skiers, dog mushers, snowmobilers, horseback riders, joggers, hikers, and all terrain vehicles. As urban and suburban areas have grown, trail use has increased, and problems over trespass, management, and conflicting trail activities have arisen (see Fairbanks trip report, Appendix I).

The Alaska Trail Plan prepared by the Division of Parks in 1975 inventoried existing designated trails. This document provides a useful basis for a more detailed and continuing program of trail mapping and inventory. Given the importance of trails in Alaska, the Division should establish a program for regional trail inventory in sufficient detail so that trail locations can be mapped. The Department of Highways has prepared a set of maps showing existing trails (at a scale of 1" = 2 miles) which should be incorporated in the inventory. However, their work should be updated and reviewed to identify trails with significant recreational use or potential. Other sources, such as easements that have been proposed for Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act conveyances, should be investigated.

A system for periodic updating should be established, and most importantly, the inventory should include assessment and mapping of potential trail needs, as well as traditional routes that have been established by public use. The Department of Fish and Game, the Division of Lands, the Department of Transportation, and other agencies and private citizens familiar with each region should be actively involved in the identification of existing trails and trail needs. This inventory and identification would provide a regional context which could be used by Federal, State, and local agencies for coordinated trail planning, formal trail designation, or right-of-way protection, if needed, as well as trail use management.

The existing State PARC Advisory Committee handles allocation of grants under the Trails and Footpaths Program. Trail inventory and needs assessment would be a logical extension of their existing function.

The statutory revision which would expand the responsibilities of PARC and the Division of Parks in the areas of recreation planning and coordination should be accomplished in the context of a more comprehensive review and revision of A.S. 41.20, the chapter of Alaska law dealing with parks and recreation. The role of the Division of Parks and its relationship with PARC should be clear. At present, the statutes are general and ambiguous regarding the purpose of the State Park System and the different functions of the System. There is no mention, for example, of the fact that a major function of the System is to serve the traveling public by providing campgrounds and recreation areas along main traveled routes. If the System is to extend to traveled waterways, that purpose should be clear in the legislation. Criteria for designating lands to the State Park System should be specified. Characteristics of the State Park System which distinguish it from the National Park System, principally its orientation towards Alaska's settled areas and towards a more intensive use, should also be set forth in the legislation. Similarly, State policy in relation to municipal recreation areas and services should be articulated in statutory language.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Alaska State Park Visitors, Alaska Division of Parks, Department of Natural Resources, Anchorage, January, 1978.
2. Division of Economic Enterprise, Department of Commerce and Economic Development, Visitor Census and Expenditure Survey, Summer, 1977.
3. Letter of January 6, 1978 from Cary F. Brown, Outdoor Recreation Planner, BLM, Alaska, to Co-Chairmen.
4. Letter of January 9, 1978 from John A. Sandor, Regional Forester, U.S. Forest Service, to Co-Chairmen.
5. Visitor Survey of Fishhook-Willow Road Travelers, Neil C. Johannsen, Alaska Division of Parks, August 1, 1976.

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# **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX I

### Current Patterns of Recreation Activity

#### Introduction

This recreation study is based in part upon the "supply and demand" of recreational opportunities, in particular the availability of lands with recreational value and the existing patterns of recreational use. This information should assist the Legislature and recreation managers in defining the State's role in providing recreational opportunities on public lands, and specifically, to identify the kinds of policy and management actions needed to maximize recreational opportunities for both present and future generations.

The recreational potential of lands in Alaska has been addressed in an array of existing reports and has been generally and in many cases specifically analyzed and depicted by the Commission's resource planning team, and more recently in a study of Alaska landscapes by Benjamin Shaine and Richard Gordon.<sup>1</sup> However, the geography of recreational activity appears to be a missing factor in determining effective supply and demand.<sup>2</sup>

#### Research Methods

In order to gain a better understanding of current recreation patterns, the Commission conducted a series of interviews in three regions of the State (Kenai Peninsula, Fairbanks region, and Juneau). We contacted individuals in direct contact with local recreational use, for example sporting goods store managers, air taxi pilots, and local land managers. By putting together information for a given area from a variety of sources, a total picture of recreation patterns emerges. The reliability of the information is supported by the fact that each individual's contribution generally meshes with the whole, and overlapping information tends to be complementary. Participants were also sent written summaries of all interviews related to their respective regions and invited to respond with corrections or additional comments. (Out of 36 participants, only two relatively minor responses were received).

The informal interview method was used because it could cover several different aspects of recreation at the same time, depending on the participant's perspective and knowledge. It's subjective qualities led directly to a better understanding of relative over all patterns without getting bogged down in details (e.g. number of seasonal fishing man-days) that are sometimes difficult to interpret. It also allowed for occasional unanticipated yet important considerations to emerge. Given the range of information sought, the diverse background and interests of the participants; and the short time frame for obtaining results, a questionnaire format would not have been as effective.

For consistency, all interviews were conducted by the same person. Each interview began with a brief explanation of the purpose of the study. Then a map of the study region was presented and the participant was invited to point out where and what kinds of recreational activities tended to take place or concentrate. Usually the information exchange centered on the specific activity (s) that he or she was most familiar with (skiing, fishing, river running, etc.). Each person was given the opportunity to draw directly on the map if they wished, or the interviewer made map notations in addition to taking written notes. Generally, the same map was used for all interviews and participants were also encouraged to modify or elaborate on the map notations from previous interviews. It is interesting to note that there was very rarely any disagreement with a note from a previous interview, which tended to help verify the results.

Occasionally the participant was asked for additional clarifying questions about the comparative intensity of an activity in relation to other activities, other places within the region, or changing patterns over several years.

Next, the interview shifted to recreation management and the roles of government entities (especially the State), and their attitude toward the level of governmental involvement in providing recreational opportunities. The depth and direction of this portion of the interview varied considerably. Its greatest value was in identifying a broad range of recreation management considerations and in detecting basic regional differences to the whole approach to recreation supply and demand.

At the conclusion of the series of interviews for each region, a map was prepared that combined all the input into an overall pattern of recreational activities. An accompanying memo summarized each interview, including additional modifying information not shown on the maps, the policy considerations, and individual attitudes and opinions.


1. Richard J. Gordon and Benjamin A. Shaine, An Evaluation of Alaska Natural Landscapes, Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission, December, 1977.
2. This lack was also identified in the recent report by Robert Childers, Alaska Outdoor Recreation Resource Needs, prepared for Dave Spencer, AEIDC, January 20, 1978.



Federal-State  
Land Use Planning Commission  
For Alaska  
MEMORANDUM

TO: Walter B. Parker  
State Co-Chairman

Esther C. Wunnicke  
Federal Co-Chairman

FROM: Sally Gibert   
Natural Resources Specialist

SUBJECT: Kenai Peninsula travel report and findings on local recreation  
use and current policy.

DATE: April 1, 1978

On March 27th and 28th, I talked to the following people about current recreation use patterns and policy on the western side of the Kenai Peninsula:

John Yerkes, Assistant Harbormaster, Homer  
Roy O'Dell, Cook Inlet Aviation, Homer  
Allen Hensen, Four-Seasons Sports Center, Homer  
John Brown, horse packer, Homer  
Larry Thompson, Homer Air Taxi  
Gary Williams, Mayor of Homer  
Frank Tupper, Ninilchik  
Al York, Ninilchik  
Fred Braun, Sporting Goods Store, Kenai  
Linda Gintoli, Kenai National Moose Range, Kenai  
Bob Richie, Kenai National Moose Range, Kenai  
Phillip Waring, Planning Director, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Soldotna

Generally, each interview consisted of identifying the most common recreational activities and when and where they occur. Most of the people I talked to also had a strong interest in overall recreation patterns on the Kenai Peninsula and gave me their ideas about the problems or possible solutions related to meeting the increasing recreational demand.

My first interview was with John Yerkes, the Assistant Harbormaster on the Homer Spit. I gave him a map of the lower Kenai Peninsula, and he drew in the areas used by Kachemak Bay recreational boaters. Most of the recreational boaters spend their time fishing for salmon, halibut, shrimp, and crab; or they use their boats as a means of access to fresh-water sportfishing areas, clam beaches, hiking, duck hunting, and occasional goat hunting. Tourist cruise ships and sailing are two less-common uses that have been increasing rapidly in the last couple of years.

Yerkes noted that the demand for expanded harbor facilities is tremendous. There are only 383 stalls in the city-owned harbor, and there are over 1,000 on the waiting list who will have to wait about two years for a stall. Everyone seems to be in agreement about the need for expanded facilities, but the city cannot afford the cost of development. Kachemak Bay has high potential for increased boating use and harbor facilities. It is, by far, the best accessible natural harbor on the Peninsula. Seward's harbor on Resurrection Bay directly faces the open ocean, and the Cook Inlet harbors (Ninilchik, Kasilof, Kenai, etc.) are also relatively unprotected. The demand for expanded boat facilities at Homer comes from all over the State. Yerkes noted that several boat owners in Fairbanks are planning to move to Homer with their boats as soon as stalls are available.

Yerkes also stressed that the Homer Spit itself is extremely important for recreation, especially beach combing and camping. The Spit is city-owned and camping is currently allowed, although the Homer City Council is considering closing the Spit to camping to allow additional industrial development. Use of the Spit by tourists has been increasing. Generally, they start arriving on the weekends in late March or April. Visitation peaks in July and again in late summer. Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day weekends are particularly intensive. Visitation also fluctuates with weather conditions. The Harbormaster's Office supplies weather forecasts by telephone to tourists and boaters who frequently plan their trips around good weather forecasts.

I had a relatively short interview with Roy O'Dell, an air taxi pilot with Cook Inlet Aviation in Homer. He said that most of their business comes from fishermen and moose and goat hunters. They also operate a package tour to a remote fly-in horse ranch on the Fox River for sport fishing, hunting, and photography. O'Dell is satisfied with the existing recreational air taxi situation except that he is worried about the future possibility of popular fly-in lakes being closed to air access.

Al Hensen, owner and manager of the 4-Seasons Sport and Music Center in Homer, was very helpful in identifying overall recreation patterns on the lower Peninsula. In addition to specific map information, he provided some general comments about the relative intensity of recreation in the Homer area. Many of the local people with small fishing boats launch them from the beach at Whiskey Gulch, north of Anchor Point. There are no improved launching facilities there, but it is the only feasible access between the Homer Spit and Ninilchik for trollers.

The uplands around Homer are used extensively for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing in the winter. The open rolling terrain is well suited for these uses. The 8-10 mile trail to Caribou Lake is used intensively, and there is some conflict between snowmobiles and skiers there. Common winter activities at Caribou Lake include ptarmigan hunting, ice-fishing for trout and land-locked salmon, and chasing

coyotes and wolves. In the summer, the area is visited by hikers and fishermen. Fall use consists mainly of moose hunting by ATV's or horseback. Use of the Homer uplands and the surrounding dome country by ATV's and snowmachines is increasing. Hensen estimated that Homer dealers sold at least 150 snowmobiles last year.

Hensen is anxious to see additional State camping and fishing areas on the lower Peninsula. The relatively small waysides at Ninilchik, Deep Creek, and Anchor River are totally inadequate to accomodate the literally thousands of campers that come for King Salmon fishing, etc. His store alone sold 2,500 fish and game licenses in 1977, which is double what he sold in 1976. The State should put in a boat launching and camping facility at Whiskey Gulch and should also open off-season wayside facilities for the increasing number of winter and spring travelers. Hensen is particularly concerned that the only camping areas south of Anchor River are city-owned. He felt that since the State had bought back the Kachemak Bay oil leases to protect the fishery and recreation resource, they had an obligation to provide recreation facilities. He acknowledged that finding good locations for State waysides would be difficult and expensive and that encouraging privately owned and operated campgrounds could be an alternative. He also felt that it would be better to develop recreation areas in accessible locations rather than encourage increased use of more remote areas.

Hensen was the first of several people to mention the "myth of Alaska recreation." He sees lots of tourists from Anchorage or the "lower 48" that come to Homer without any idea of what they are going to do or how they will do it. They hear about the fantastic fishing, clamming, etc., and they are frustrated when they don't find people and facilities to accomodate their desires.

While waiting to interview another air taxi operator, I had the opportunity to talk to John Brown who operates the Fox River horse ranch connected with the previously mentioned Cook Inlet Aviation package tour. He and several other families in this roadless area raise beef cattle on a 20,000 acre State grazing lease. Brown conducts horse trips to the Caribou Hills and the Sheep Creek drainage. He would prefer to see the area managed for a "quality hunting experience" using only primitive means of access. Glacier Lake, at the head of Sheep Creek, is used extensively by fly-in goat hunters. According to the Department of Fish and Game, 28 goats were taken from the area by float plane while only 4 were taken by horse packers. He would like Glacier Lake closed to air access which would enhance the quality of goat hunting on horseback in that area and protect it from overuse. The Fox River area is one of the few places in the State where it would be feasible and desireable to limit access to primitive means.

Larry Thompson, a pilot for Homer Air Taxi, went over the maps and filled in data about local recreation patterns that rely on air access. While most of the use takes place on the Kenai Peninsula, there are some

people (particularly local residents) who fly to the west side of Cook Inlet or Afognak Island primarily for hunting, clamming, and sport fishing. One relatively common destination is the McNeil River area where there is good clamming, beach combing, and bear observation. Thompson felt that most of the fly-in hunting parties are local residents, while most other parties tend to be from outside the area. Overall, their total air taxi business is fairly evenly divided between wheel planes and float planes (including sea planes). Thompson also estimated that most of their business relates primarily to hunting and fishing, while about 25% is for non-consumptive recreation.

Before leaving Homer, I spoke briefly to Gary Williams, Homer's mayor. His schedule was too tight for an interview, but he did mention one of his concerns about recreation in the Homer area. As the use of Kachemak Bay State Park increases, more parking will be required on the Spit or some other suitable location. So far, the State has not provided any parking or staging area facilities, so this increasing burden has fallen on the City of Homer.

Later that evening I drove to Ninilchik and talked at length with Frank Tupper, a part-time commercial fisherman who also directs the local community school program. He mentioned some specific inadequacies of the existing recreation areas on the western Kenai Peninsula. During the intensively used summer weekends, as many as 2,000 people and their campers come to Ninilchik and Deep Creek to fish. The lack of facilities and enforcement has caused problems related to trespassing, destruction of property, vegetation damage, littering (including dead fish, etc.), theft, noise, discharging firearms, alcohol problems, lack of firewood, water pollution, and competition with local people over the consumptive use of resources.

The State ends up responding to existing demands and rarely creates new recreational needs. Tupper sees this as a little understood concept. The State needs to back-off from their quick solution approach of trying to meet the massive use demands. They need to inventory areawide or regional recreation needs, fish and wildlife resources, cultural and historic values, and other values and resources. This inventory should be similar to the environmental impact statement process so that there will be some assurance that any new or improved developments will not create more problems than they would solve. This is especially important to protect the local communities. Local hearings should be conducted for all recreation improvement projects that would have an effect on the local residents.

The State should carefully consider the impact of expanded tourism on subsistence. Competition for clams, fish, berries, beach coal, firewood, etc., should not be allowed to infringe on the subsistence needs of local residents. Parking and camping areas should be visually insulated from communities to protect scenic values. Flush toilets should be avoided to cut down on water waste (aerobic outhouses could be used

instead.) Garbage collection systems should be enclosed and frequently maintained to prevent overflow and wind scattering. Developed recreation areas should be avoided in areas with particular vulnerability to geologic hazards, especially tsunamis. Beaches are not appropriate locations for intensive wayside use.

Tupper also suggested that the State enhance recreation areas north of Ninilchik to take some of the pressure off the Homer/Anchor River area. Generally, the State should change their emphasis from acquisition to enforcement and development. The Division of Parks, Department of Transportation, Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Fish and Game all need increased funding to monitor recreational activities. The State should establish frequent communication between Anchorage and the local parks to monitor recreation activity. This could be used for public information about the vacancy rate of the various waysides.

Ultimately, the State should strive for quality recreation opportunities by limiting the intensive use areas to a level of development that will be compatible with the area. Tupper feels strongly that it will be impossible for the State to fully meet the Peninsula's recreation demand, so they should not get involved in a vain attempt to do so. A permit system (similar to that used by the National Park Service in McKinley Park) would cut down on overuse and guarantee a quality recreation experience for the visitors.

The public needs to be educated about recreation in Alaska. With proper information signs and interpretive facilities, the public tends to act more responsibly toward the land. This is partially a public relations effort that should be the responsibility of the Division of Tourism. Tupper's final point related to the reluctance of the Division of Parks and other State agencies to acknowledge coastal zone management (CZM). He felt it was important for CZM's role to be defined as to whether it will be active, subordinate, or coordinating.

In Ninilchik, I also talked to Al York, a long-time Alaska resident who is working with Mike Lee, District Superintendent of State Parks, on developing an interpretive program for tourists. Visitors from Anchorage or outside Alaska read or hear about Alaska's traditional rural lifestyle, and they want to be able to see some of it during their travels. Many tourists are frustrated in their attempt, which is an extension of the "myth of Alaska recreation." York is working on a series of evening demonstration/presentations that could be presented in State campgrounds by park rangers. He is writing a manual and teaching aid for rangers on the topics of (1) traditional methods of catching and preserving fish; (2) historic methods of mining gold; (3) Native trapping techniques; (4) collection and preservation of wild berries; (5) construction of dog sleds; (6) construction of traditional Native saunas; and (7) Alaskan gardening techniques. York was concerned that the Division of Parks would not have enough money to develop the program, although he felt that it should have high priority. Once the series is developed, it



could be expanded and used all over the State with great benefit to the public at a relatively small cost.

The next day, I interviewed Fred Braun of Fred Braun's Sporting Goods in Kenai about local recreation use patterns. He said that most of the heavy use takes place on the lower Kenai River from Memorial Day to late July for king salmon, with another peak period in late August and early September for silver salmon. The river has no reliable public boat access. The city launch area is usually blocked by commercial fishing activity, and the State launch is too steep to be useable. There is a real need for a good small boat harbor with related parking and camping facilities near the mouth of the Kenai River.

According to Braun, most of the other heavy recreation use in the area takes place on the Kenai National Moose Range. He has noticed an increase in canoe sales because more and more people want to get away from heavily used area. Use of Tustumena and Skilak Lakes is increasing because of the crowding on the Kenai and Russian Rivers. Tustumena is particularly popular with local hunters because it has road access and a boat launching area. Hunters use the lake for access to moose and sheep on northeast shore areas.

Braun pointed out two areas that he feels are under-utilized: the Captain Cook State Recreation Area and the beaches adjacent to the Coho River. The Captain Cook area has developed camping spaces, trout fishing, fresh water swimming, and beach access. So far, it is used mostly by Kenai/Soldotna residents because it is not widely known Statewide. Braun thought that there was good potential for another developed recreation area off of the Coho Loop Road. The area has beach access and good clamming.

Linda Gintoli, recreation specialist for the Kenai National Moose Range, tended to support Braun's previous remarks. She also noted that most of the use on the Moose Range results from incidental stop-overs by travelers to Homer, although an increasing number of people are coming there to stay for awhile. Fishing is particularly popular, especially on the Russian River and below Skilak Lake. Use of the canoe trails is increasing from both day and weekend use to longer trips taking two weeks or more. About 6,000 canoeists used the Moose Range last year. Hunters mainly take moose, with occasional black bear and sheep. A trophy moose area between Tustumena and Skilak Lakes is used primarily by hunters on horseback. The main canoe trail area, Ski Hill (near Soldotna) and the southeastern mountain areas are closed to snowmobile use. Virtually all other areas on the Moose Range receive snowmobile use. Each year they tend to go farther from the roaded areas. Most of the hiking is associated with the camping areas. Most of the trails in the area are undeveloped natural wildlife trails.

Camping takes place on developed campgrounds (flush toilets, etc.), semi-developed campgrounds, and on the wilderness trails. Most of the

campgrounds have become established as a result of de facto public use patterns with little or no planning. The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is attempting to upgrade the semi-developed campgrounds to better manage their use. The FWS interpretation and recreation funding is limited to about one-third of the entire Moose Range budget. Current policy states that they cannot develop new campgrounds until they have upgraded those already in existence.

Bob Richie, also of FWS at the Moose Range, added that, despite increasing pressures, recreation is a secondary management objective that should be allowed only when and where it is compatible with the primary FWS objective of wildlife and habitat protection. National policy is encouraging the FWS to cut back on intensive recreation within refuges, although it is doubtful that this policy will be strictly implemented on the Moose Range in the foreseeable future. In the long run, Gintoli and Richie would hope to limit use of most of the Moose Range campgrounds by shifting the heavy use to private campgrounds. In the meantime, they are continuing to improve camping facilities while redirecting their use more toward enjoyment of the Moose Range, rather than as a stop-over on the way to other areas.

They are particularly concerned about the impact on Federal lands of the State's fishing policy on the Russian River. The State allows intensive salmon and sport fishing but has not taken responsibility for providing any supporting camping or parking facilities. Consequently, the adjacent Kenai Moose Range and Chugach National Forest receive the impact of the intensive use. The State has also created an undesirable and sprawled private land use pattern which makes Federal management in the area even more difficult. Other areas that experience similar overuse as a result of lax fish and game policies include the lower Kenai River, Deep Creek, and Anchor River.

Gintoli noticed that most people are looking for quality recreation opportunities but won't take the time to get to them. Many of these people who want more access are (once again) hung up on the Alaska recreation myth that they should be able to drive to easily accessible, yet remote quality recreation areas.

Next, I talked to Phillip Waring, Planning Director for the Kenai Peninsula Borough. He acknowledged the need for expanded recreation areas but is concerned that the State has been unable to provide adequate maintenance and enforcement in existing areas during the peak tourist season. The Division of Parks and the Kenai Borough are currently negotiating a land exchange so that new parks and waysides can be created in accessible high use areas. As one of the preconditions of the trade, the Borough has asked that the State do a comprehensive recreation management study for the area which will be affected. The Borough wants some assurance of the State's capability to handle additional recreation responsibilities before they relinquish any Borough lands for State recreation purposes.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough has not assumed any recreation responsibilities to date. Waring noted that the Borough Assembly has not addressed the issue. There is no indication if or when they will, or what direction they might take if they ever do provide for recreation in the Borough. Private recreation developments within the Borough are welcome, although there is no policy that encourages them. The Borough does have a policy relating to public access across private lands to public waters. Their subdivision ordinance requires that developers dedicate easements to lakes surrounded by private lands, usually a 50-60 foot road easement.



Federal-State  
Land Use Planning Commission  
For Alaska

MEMORANDUM

TO: Walter B. Parker  
State Co-Chairman

Esther C. Wunnicke  
Federal Co-Chairman

FROM: Sally Gibert *SG*  
Natural Resources Specialist

SUBJECT: Fairbanks Region travel report and findings on local recreation  
use and policy.

DATE: October 5, 1978

From June 20 through June 25, I travelled to Fairbanks, Livengood, Central-Circle, the Chena River Recreation Area, and points between. I interviewed the fifteen people listed below and made numerous other informal contacts "on the road."

Ginny Wood, Fairbanks resident  
Al Townsend, Habitat Protection Section, ADF&G  
Herb Hunt, Bureau of Land Management  
Clem Rawert, Clem's Sporting Goods  
Dave Snarski, Alaska Division of Parks  
Bill Creighton, Fairbanks Parks and Recreation (Borough)  
Delores O'Mara, Fairbanks Planning Dept. (Borough)  
Hannon Harland, Al Wright's Air Service  
Larry Miller, Frontier Air Service  
Jim Pippin, Aurora Air Service  
Gail Mayo, Fairbanks resident  
Mary Bishop, Fairbanks resident  
Dick MacIntoch, Frontier Sporting Goods  
Sandie Parrish, Circle Hot Springs Lodge  
Lou Marifke, Livengood resident

Most of the data I collected that deals with specific recreation uses is on an accompanying reproducible map at 1:250,000 scale. This memo includes other information related to use patterns as well as recreation policy considerations. The use and management of trails was a particular issue discussed by many of the persons interviewed, so trail-related comments have been grouped together at the end.

My first interview was with Ginny Wood, who has been involved at the citizen level with borough parks and recreation for many years. Over the years she has soured on bureaucracies that administer parks and recreation because they tend to approach their responsibility as if it were a public work project. She felt that Alaska needs increased recreation land acquisition to preserve recreation opportunities now, before the population increases and more land is put into private ownership (Beirne Initiative, etc.). Public easements, especially to and along waterways, need to be reserved to protect access to recreation lands.

Development of designated recreation lands need not take place rapidly. They should be developed slowly as demand evolves while also keeping in mind that developed areas can't be "un-developed." Currently, Wood thinks that recreation areas are being over-managed in order to perpetuate the bureaucracy. For example, wilderness lands need very little "management" and may be regulated merely by not providing easy access or amenities. At the same time, intensive use areas can be identified that will take the pressure off the less developed areas. The intensity of use of the land should be determined by its natural carrying capacity. For example, heavily used trails could follow ridges or rocky sheep trails rather than tundra.

The State also needs to decide if it wants to actively encourage outdoor recreation for the mental and physical health of Alaskans. If they do, then they need to be prepared to meet the demand as well as acknowledge that some places will inevitably become over-run. It is also important to separate "passive" and "active" types of recreation (e.g., roadside picnicing in a camper trailer vs. backcountry hiking). Both types of recreation need to be provided for, though it is often desirable to separate them to maximize individual enjoyment and impact on the land.

Although Wood acknowledged the need for waysides along the highways, she felt that they generally aren't used for "outdoor recreation" purposes. They also need better maintenance and trash collection, so maybe the Department of Transportation should administer them instead of the Division of Parks.

Al Townsend, Habitat Biologist in the Habitat Protection section of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, was very helpful in outlining Fairbanks regional recreation patterns, especially those related to fishing (see map). The Salcha River seems to be Fairbanks' answer to the Russian River on the Kenai Peninsula, although it is not quite as crowded. The Salcha and Goodpasture Rivers, Shaw Creek, and to a lesser degree, Clear Creek, all receive relatively heavy grayling fishing pressure and all have numerous private recreational sites along their shores (from over 60 on the Salcha to about a dozen on Clear Creek). Townsend estimated that most of these recreation sites were between 2-1/2 and 5 acres each. On the weekends, Fairbanks residents launch their boats from access points where the Richardson Highway crosses these streams. Fishing in Chena Slough off Badger Road is also very popular. There is relatively little salmon fishing in the interior rivers around Fairbanks. Most of the fish taken are grayling, sheefish, and northern pike. Some of the lakes also have good rainbow trout fishing.

Townsend also mentioned some of the more popular float trips around Fairbanks (see map). He noted that Beaver Creek is one of the streams receiving increasing use. At the same time, gold mining activity, especially along Birch Creek, has also increased dramatically. There are now over 100 miners in the Circle quad area, some of which are large scale using thousands of dollars worth of equipment. This has caused a direct conflict over use of water between mining and fish habitat, and consequently affecting fishing potential.

Most of the larger rivers and streams marked on the map are identified in BLM's brochure, "Alaska's River Trails, Northern Region," except for the Hess Creek float which starts from the haul road and goes to the Yukon River. Townsend felt that this stream had good floating potential though it has some difficult sections. It is quite heavily floated during moose season.

Townsend also had some suggestions concerning parks and recreation management. More roadside pullouts are needed along the highways, in addition to waysides, to accommodate day uses like gold panning, berry picking, hiking, picnicing, etc. He noted a particular lack of pullouts on the Elliott Highway where there are many good berry picking areas. He also thought that the Snowshoe Pass pipeline storage area would make a good wayside once it is surplus, because it has good berry picking. The Livengood Camp near Livengood might make a good campground because it is near water. Townsend suggested that DOT could design and construct the pullouts while ADP could provide park-like information signs and litter barrels.

Next I talked to Herb Hunt, a recreation specialist for the Bureau of Land Management. He outlined what BLM is and will be doing in terms of recreation research and management. So far, their efforts have been sparse, but as a result of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 (FLMPA), research is being increased. Inventory and analysis of recreation data is one element in their mandated planning process. "Unit resource analysis" is part of that planning process. BLM will identify all possibilities for recreation in a given area (or unit) and then evaluate their potential importance based on accessibility, desirability, and other considerations. The recommendations regarding recreation are then put together with recommendations on other resources (mining, timber, wildlife, etc.) and conflict areas are identified. When a land management decision falls within an identified conflict area, the local manager will weigh the issues and make a decision.

Hunt also described another process affecting recreation known as "visual resource management," which is intended to minimize or prevent visual surface disturbance. Before any surface disturbing activity is allowed to take place, a "quality evaluation" is completed. For example, a gravel pit might be required to be revegetated or otherwise concealed from prominent view.

Hunt noted that (not surprisingly) most recreation use takes place adjacent to the road system, although "bush" recreation is popular and increasing, especially float trips. Recreation use is more intensive closer to Fairbanks and drops off considerably in outlying areas (even along roads). Access to water recreation is in the greatest demand yet is the most difficult to acquire and/or manage around a growing city.

Compared to intensive use areas in the Lower 48, Alaska still does not receive heavy recreation pressure. BLM would like to avoid intensive use areas where possible, especially in rural areas. However, they do not intend to "prevent use." Instead, BLM's goal is to modify and manage use to reduce the impact on the physical environment.

Off-road vehicle use is an example of a recreation activity that BLM will "manage." Currently there are no restrictions or closures on ORV use. BLM is in the process of finalizing regulations that will determine areas that will be open, closed or restricted. Hunt anticipated that most BLM lands in Alaska will be in a restricted category. (For example, winter use only with a minimum amount of snow cover.) Use of vehicles, such as caterpillar tractors, will likely be limited to existing trails even though some of the trail use is damaging the ground surface. In the long run, some of the heavily used routes through environmentally sensitive areas may be improved with a gravel surface (and possibly even camping areas) to halt additional damage. Closure of poorly routed trails is not practically feasible because of lack of enforcement and the strongly established patterns of use.

Clem Rawert of Clem's Sporting Goods, was very helpful in identifying patterns of recreation use, especially float-boating and cross-country skiing. Most of the areas he mentioned are shown on the map. The Tanana River provides excellent cross-country skiing and good opportunities for snow camping. It is "remote" yet very close to Fairbanks. Gold King Creek, on the north side of the Alaska Range, is the only place near Fairbanks that is used significantly for fly-in skiing, snow camping and winter mountaineering. The area is just a short flight from Fairbanks, and has numerous tributaries with high quality wilderness and scenery.

Wickersham and Haystack Mountains along the Elliott Highway also have excellent out-of-town skiing. The vegetation is open (primarily tundra) and they have good wildlife viewing opportunities. At an elevation of over 3,200 feet, Wickersham Dome is the first good place to ski, with adequate snow usually by mid-October.

Virtually all of the floatable, accessible streams around Fairbanks are used for fishing, floating, and/or access to adjacent land oriented recreation. One of the most popular is the Nenana River with several put-ins and take-outs along the Parks Highway. McKinley Park, Rex, and Nenana have train access also. The railroad will accept collapsible boats as personal baggage but full size boats must be transported by freight train. Rawert and others are attempting to change Alaska Railroad policy so that full size kayaks and canoes can be carried on the passenger train baggage cars.

Rawert expressed strong opinions about the role of the State in managing recreation. His attitude reflects that of several Fairbanks residents that I talked to. Generally he feels that people need to take responsibility for their own recreation needs because there is plenty of public land to use. The State should only become involved when areas are already over used, in which case they should either be closed or carefully regulated with adequate enforcement. People lose their initiative to recreate when the State provides them "something for nothing." When the State sets up a recreation

area, these people will flock there and cause abuse or over use of the land. Instead, they should be encouraged to disperse and provide for their own enjoyment--which is in turn much more personally meaningful. The State should spend more energy on public education to encourage responsible attitudes toward litter, off-road vehicle use, and over crowding.

Rawert feels that roadside campgrounds with a recreation orientation should not be constructed within 50 miles of cities. The State should acknowledge that close-in campgrounds are only used as a substitute for hotels and so they should be managed differently--if they are provided at all. Away from urban areas more roadside campgrounds are needed. They should be well marked and adequately enforced--with an emphasis on education so that people will clean up after themselves. Rawert is particularly concerned about segregating tent campers from the vast majority of truck campers and trailer campers. He noted that there aren't any clean places to tent camp anymore because of all the sewage that is dumped in campgrounds now.

I also talked to Dick MacIntosh of Frontier Sporting Goods. He has been in the recreation business for many years and was able to identify many recreation areas. All of his information has been incorporated on the accompanying map.

Next I talked to Dave Snarski, who heads up the Fairbanks office of the State Division of Parks (ADP). He was pleased that the Commission and the Legislature were finally addressing State parks and recreation policy because he has virtually no clear guidelines at this time. He identified the policy questions that the State needs to face and outlined some background which has lead to some of the existing problems.

Much of ADP's energy is currently directed towards management of waysides. Most of these sites were inherited from BLM after Statehood. They were built partly as make-work projects for BLM fire crews and partly to control the already existing use of some of the defacto campgrounds in fire danger areas. Consequently, the current wayside "system" came about with little or no prior recreation planning. Since Statehood, the population has grown and many waysides (like Chatanika) are under managed and over used. Before it was closed to camping, the Chena Wayside was jammed with "resident" campers (beginning with the pipeline era), and as Fairbanks grew, it became an urban campground but without adequate facilities. ADP would like to turn it over to the borough, but the borough won't accept it without the expensive additions of sewer and water, which the Division of Parks can't afford (a sort of Catch 22).

The recently expanded Chena River State Recreation Area is the largest unit of the State Park System in the Fairbanks area. Currently the park is undeveloped, except for Department of Transportation pulloffs that are indirectly the result of massive flood control efforts. There are a number of defacto camping areas and primitive trails but these have evolved through public use over the years. ADP is in the process of formulating a development plan, and public hearings have shown that the public does not want large scale development. They primarily want ADP to "legitimize" existing use by providing pit toilets, litter pickup, etc., at the existing camping areas. The hearings generally supported the attitude toward State recreation responsibility that was expressed earlier by Clem Rawert.



Snarkski goes along with this attitude that ADP should manage existing use rather than intensively encourage use of new areas in interior Alaska. Use of ORV's in the Chena River State Recreation Area is an example of such management. The area supports mainly snowmobile use in the winter--which ADP plans to allow to continue. The area is now officially closed to horses and ORV's in the summer to protect the trails. Even though summer horse and ORV use has been very light in the past, ADP is getting pressure to open it up again. The public has not been receptive to a closure of existing use even if that use has been light. Ideally, Snarkski hopes that someday ADP will have some Statewide ORV policy and regulations.

To further complicate access considerations in the Chena area, there are a number of roads and jeep trails in the adjacent military reservation that provide unregulated access to the Recreation Area in the vicinity of the Granite Tors. These roads are generally open to the public. (Although sometimes they are closed during military activities.) A portion of the military reservation extends into the southwest corner of the Recreation Area which ADP is trying to get from the military. Snarski noted that they have been reluctant to give up anything there because land is the military's main "commodity" in Alaska.

Snarkski feels that the State should be spending more of its energy in reserving public land and easements for recreation purposes. They don't need to be developed--but merely retained in public ownership as open space. Fairbanks is spoiled on its tremendous amount of public access and opportunities for unregulated recreation activities. But that is changing rapidly--especially as more private land along roads is posted and/or fenced. For example, there are many miles of old roads and trails around Esther that have been used by the public for years. But most of these trails are on private land and no trespassing signs are cropping up with increasing frequency. Snarski said that large remote parks (like Wood-Tikchik) are alright, but more emphasis needs to be placed where more people live.

To many people in Alaska, State parks mean waysides. More public involvement is necessary to educate the public about Alaska's State Park System. ADP needs to be more responsive to public needs as well as other local, State, and Federal agencies. It is also important for other agencies and the public to understand that State parks can't be managed like national parks because ADP is not a total land manager and has limited management authority.

The State needs to decide if it will get into the "tourist business." If so, does it want to promote recreation? Is it cost efficient? The State also needs policy statements regarding habitat management and a more clearly defined relationship with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. In short, Snarski feels the DOP needs to define itself, a process that will involve some natural growing pains.

Bill Creighton is Director of the Parks and Recreation Department of the Fairbanks North Star Borough. We talked about the interface between State and local roles regarding parks and recreation. Creighton was concerned that once State policy is set, what happens if local responsibility doesn't fill in the gaps at the local level? He felt that generally the State should

assume responsibility for waysides and other recreation areas outside the urban areas. The borough should take care of the urban areas (though not in the outlying portions of the borough). Creighton agreed with the Division of Parks that the "downtown" Chena Wayside should be transferred to the borough--but they can't afford to take it in its present condition due to cost of improvements (\$269,000) and maintenance. The borough has not provided any other near-town camping facilities because the Assembly has been unwilling to compete with private enterprise. More waysides are needed, however, and Creighton suggested that maybe this could be one of the functions of the Department of Transportation. He also felt that no new developed State parks were needed in the Fairbanks area.

Most of the borough's parks and recreation activities have been directed toward sports oriented athletic facilities. (Even the office is located in an indoor ice rink facility.) The borough has a heavy recreation program and is habitually short of play space. For example, there are 142 softball teams. One of the problems that Parks and Recreation has faced is that most of their activities are tied to the short summer season. The single purpose capital intensive playing fields are unused for the remainder of the year. They do, however, convert outdoor tennis courts to ice rinks in the winter.

To round out recreational information from the urban area, I also interviewed three air taxis. Each one had a different emphasis and/or type of customer. Taken together, they appeared to represent a cross section of the air taxi and charter business.

Al Wright's Flying Service handles quite a few recreational charters. According to pilot, Harland Hannon, most of their business comes from Fairbanks residents, except that outside tourist use is heavy "in season." From June until Labor Day they fly an average of four parties a day into guiding camps in the Minto Flats, primarily for fishing. In the fall, duck hunting increases and continues until freezeup.

Al Wright's used to fly lots of moose hunters, but in recent years this has decreased substantially due to a decline in the moose populations. On the other hand, fly-in fishing and hiking has increased. Most of the fly-in backpackers prefer to fly to the Brooks Range, but those that can't afford it, fly to the White Mountains or other relatively close, yet roadless areas. As Fairbanks has grown, more and more recreationists are flying farther from town. Hannon estimated as much as 75 percent of their chartered destinations are off the USGS quads encompassing the Fairbanks study area.

Recently, flight-seeing tours to view wildlife and scenery have become popular. A typical tour might include looking for bears and moose over the Blair Lakes Reservation, sheep in the Japan Hills, the mountains and glaciers of the Alaska Range, and sometimes buffalo around Delta. When flying over military lands, most pilots check in to make sure everything is clear, but there generally are no fly over restrictions.

Larry Miller, a pilot for Frontier Air Service, noted that nearly all of their business charters to the Brooks Range. Charters to the Arrigetch Peaks, Wild Lake, and the John, Anaktuvuk, and Noatak Rivers account for

about 95 percent of their business. Most of their customers are from out-of-State. Most common activities are hiking and float-boating, and a little fishing. Some hunters also go in because they anticipate that it will be closed in the future and they want to hunt there before that happens. Last year it seemed that there were more Federal and State government employees in the Central Brooks than any other user group.

A few people also fly to the Arctic National Wildlife Range but it is so expensive that most people are unwilling to afford it. Miller noted that there are a few tour packages to the Brooks Range, but that the tour market is mostly untapped. About half the groups that Frontier flies in set up a base camp and about half wish to be picked up at a different place from where they started. Miller estimated that use has been increasing about 10 percent/year, and he expected that the increase would continue in the future. He also felt that the reason most of their business was from outside the State is because so many residents have their own plane or a friend who has one.

The third air taxi, Aurora Air Service, does less recreational chartering. Jim Pippin said this was because they didn't want to get into the "guiding business." Most of their time is contracted to mining companies for hauling people and supplies. Mining is increasing and most of the old claimed areas are being reworked.

Pippin was critical of hunting patterns around Fairbanks, which is the main reason he avoids fly-in hunting trips as much as possible. He cited poaching (especially for sheep in Victoria Mountain), too much demand on the moose population, and snowmobile and other ORV over-use. He did note, however, that "non-consumptive" recreation like hiking and float-boating is increasing while "consumptive use" is on the decline.

Pippin noted that local residents generally fly to areas closer to Fairbanks, like Minto and Tanana Flats, and the North Slope of the Alaska Range. Non-residents frequently charter long distances. A typical non-resident request goes like this: "I've read about \_\_\_\_\_ and I've got to see it."

Aurora Air Service also gets lots of requests for fly-in recreational mining. However, unless the prospective customer has a specific place in mind, Pippin is unwilling to recommend a place because it very likely will be in trespass. Pippin described a "recreational miner" as someone with a gold pan or a small suction dredge.

In Livengood on the Elliott Highway, I talked to Sam, who runs Sam's Place, the only business establishment in town. When I asked him about recreation in the Livengood area, he chuckled and said, "They drink." When I told him that I meant visitors to the area, he said that they come in and ask thousands of questions, buy a candy bar and leave. Based on my own visit to Livengood, I suspect that he was mostly right. Sam was busy, so he referred me to a long-time resident and miner, Lou Marifke.

Marifke was initially skeptical of my project, but he eventually was helpful regarding local recreation patterns. The area is currently being intensively

mined and explored for gold. Trespass is a problem because many miners guard their claims jealously. The area is not heavily used by recreationists; however, snowmobiling, bear hunting and berry picking by local residents occurs. Most of the visiting tourists who come to Livengood are in campers and are on their way to Manley Hot Springs or the Yukon River. Marifke pointed out several remote hot springs that are used mostly by miners because of difficult access or the fact that they are within mining claims. Poor driving conditions beyond Wickersham Dome is one reason why recreation use on the Elliott Highway is somewhat sparse.

At Circle Hot Springs near the end of the Steese Highway, I had a good conversation with Sandie Parrish, part owner-manager of the Circle Hot Springs Lodge. The Hot Springs are open year around despite the fact that the Steese Highway is closed in winter. There is a lighted, well maintained State airstrip, and whenever the temperature is above -20° F., they get two to ten planes a day. Parrish noted that there is considerable recreation potential in the area (in addition to the hot springs) and recreation use is likely to increase significantly when the present Steese Highway reconstruction is completed. Local feelings about increasing tourist visitation is mixed between those who wish to see a modest recreational economy established and those who wish to have the area preserved as it is. About 90 subdivided lots are currently being sold and the State plans a land disposal program around Circle Hot Springs also. Parrish complained about the lack of maintenance on a State road that winds around the hills from Circle Hot Springs to the historic Miller House on the Steese Highway. The road was upgraded several years ago, but has not been touched since and is now impassible. She said that the road should be graded occasionally so that it can be used by recreationists for access to some of the local back-country.

#### Fairbanks Trails

The countryside immediately adjacent to downtown Fairbanks is interlaced with many miles of trails. These trails follow old traplines, dog sled routes, and mining roads, or have been cleared over the years by local residents or the University of Alaska ski team. Most of these trails have never been formally designated, signed, mapped, or even systematically identified. They have evolved through ad hoc neighborhood efforts over the years. Most of the main trails and feeder trails cross private land and serve to connect neighboring communities and individual households. These "backyard" trails have mostly been used by local skiers for transportation and recreation over the years. Landowners have generally not been concerned about trespass because use of the trails is light.

A few years ago, some of the local residents foresaw the need to formally protect some of the major trails from being blocked off by subdivisions or other indications of continued urban expansion. Ginny Wood is one of those that has actively participated in preserving a portion of the trail network. Partly as a result of her efforts, the Ivar Skarland Memorial Ski Trail System was formally recognized and designated by the University and the borough. The forty-year-old ski trail system consists of five loop trails beginning at the University gymnasium. Problems related to the maintenance

and management of the Skarland System typifies the problems other trails may have in the future.

Wood is concerned that borough responsibility for the trails will have counter-productive results. Skiers can request that trails be maintained, but borough funding for maintenance comes from a grant through a State bond issue (Roads and Trails). Use of this money requires "multiple use" of the trails, including snowmobiles, which are incompatible with the purpose of the trails. Maintenance also requires that the trails be designated rights-of-way or easements. Private landowners are fearful that easements may become roads in the future. Skiers and landowners alike are also concerned that "maintenance" will require the use of trucks or other heavy equipment, therefore losing the woods trail atmosphere. A number of trails crossing private land have already been posted against trespass for these reasons.

Wood felt that this sort of bureaucratic inconsistency was the result of a changing urban attitude ("Why don't 'they' clear these trails?") She feels that smaller scale local maintenance would be better, especially if it were done by local residents as it has been done in the past. She also suggested that the designers and planners of trails should also be trail users who are familiar with the local situation. Another problem is that the "backyard" or "feeder" trails should not be designated, mapped, or officially maintained. These trails are almost always on private land and are not meant for heavy use. Protection of these trails would best be accomplished by neighborhood agreements rather than formal easements. It is also important to plan for new and existing trails before new areas are developed or subdivided.

Dave Snarski of the Division of Parks was concerned about trails in the Fairbanks area, including those in the outlying areas. Many of them are being lost to development or from lack of use because the public doesn't know about them. In response to the public demand for more trails, Snarski would rather see a comprehensive inventory of existing trails, survey lines, mining roads, trappers' trails, etc. The only Statewide attempt that he knew of was the work done by Fish and Game for identifying easements under ANCSA.

I asked Bill Creighton (borough Parks and Recreation Department) about their role relative to trails. He said that most of the new trails in Fairbanks have been built by the Department of Transportation. The borough only maintains about ten kilometers of trail, while the City of Fairbanks owns and maintains about 1.5 miles of trail. Creighton did not view trails as a Parks and Recreation responsibility, and referred me to the borough Planning and Zoning Department for more information.

Delores O'Mara, who works on trail-related issues in the Planning and Zoning Department, explained some of the problems they are having. The borough has not dedicated trails specifically for non-motorized use. Bike trails, which are closed to motorized vehicles, belong to the State. The borough is attempting to maintain three ski trails and a nature trail with money from the Local Service Roads and Trails Fund. Use of this money demands that trails be used for both non-motorized and motorized use. Before funds may be used, the trails must also be a legal right-of-way. I asked O'Mara if there is a way of having non-motorized use only. She responded that "Trails and

Footpaths" grants could be used, but that the borough had not yet investigated this possibility. She also felt that what is needed most of all is a good inventory of local trails. No one in the Planning and Zoning Department has done that, although there are a few individual trail users that have a good idea of the overall picture.

O'Mara felt that blocking public use of trails on private land was not a serious problem at this time. Most of the trail users' concern has stemmed more from fear of trail closures than actual closures. The trails that have been blocked were generally closed because of snowmachine use (not skiers). Property owners were unwilling to subject themselves to the possibility of an easement in the future that might result in unregulated motorized use.

The borough is in the process of revising their Comprehensive Plan. After several hearings, O'Mara noted that it appears that the opinions of borough residents are split on the amount of borough involvement in maintenance of the trail systems. About half would prefer that they be left alone and half want intensive borough protection. Interestingly, both groups wanted to preserve the trails, but their methods differed depending on how they perceived the effect of borough management.

I also talked to Gail Mayo and Mary Bishop. As Fairbanks residents and trail users, they are also active in the protection of Fairbanks trails and trail-related recreation. They confirmed the previous information that I had collected and added a few other ideas.

Part of the problem with trails goes beyond merely mechanized use vs. non-mechanized use. There are also conflicts between skiers, dog mushers, horses, joggers and bikers. Ideally all of these uses should have their own trails. Of course this is not practical. The most important distinction is between snowmobiles and skiers. Summer trail use by horses has also caused conflicts, especially with joggers, although there are still relatively few horses around Fairbanks. As horses become more popular, they should be allowed only on those trails which will not be damaged. Low, wet areas are not suitable for horse trails.

Dog mushers also have some difficulty sharing trails with snowmobiles and skiers. Both can scare the dogs, and ski tracks are not compatible with tracks left by sled runners. Dirty snow is also a problem for skiers who use dog sled trails.


Another suggestion for alleviating problems of conflicting uses would be to have wide enough trails for different modes of travel. But this is also difficult to enforce and would take an intensive public education campaign.



Federal-State  
Land Use Planning Commission  
For Alaska

MEMORANDUM

TO: Walter B. Parker, State Co-Chairman  
Esther C. Wunnicke, Federal Co-Chairman

FROM: Sally Gibert, Natural Resources Specialist 

SUBJECT: Juneau travel report and preliminary findings on recreation patterns and policy.

DATE: June 15, 1978

On April 20-22, 1978, I contacted the following people about recreation use patterns and policy for the northern portion of Southeastern Alaska, especially as it relates to Juneau.

Jim King, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Jim Dumont, Director, Juneau Parks and Recreation Department  
Charles Low, U.S. Forest Service  
James Calvin, U.S. Forest Service  
Myrna Brower, Juneau Travel Agency  
Eaglecrest Ski Area Employee  
Gail Trivette, Juneau Heliport  
George Thomas, Southeast Skyways Air Taxi  
Aral Hagerup, Ward Air  
Joan Dittier, Juneau Chamber of Commerce

Two maps accompany this memo which detail specific recreation use areas, as well as selected areas that have been proposed for future recreation oriented management designations.

My first interview was with Jim King who has been involved at the citizen level with Juneau area parks and recreation planning for a number of years. He summarized some of the past history of recreation policy and identified several publications by the city and borough of Juneau, Parks and Recreation Department, as well as the Planning Department.

In 1970 King was part of a volunteer citizens Parks and Recreation Committee which completed an expansive comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The Plan which contained numerous large and small recreation parks and open space areas was adopted in concept by the Juneau Assembly but was never actually implemented. Tools such as zoning for open space were not used--even though current public opinion surveys showed strong support for more open space and recreation facilities.

Recently the State had a new comprehensive plan prepared under contract by the ORB Organization in Washington State. Their detailed report concludes that the role of local government as a provider of parks and recreation should be more narrowly defined than it has in the past. Generally, the new plan is oriented toward small developed urban parks.

It also criticizes the State for its lack of preservation of "Spacious areas of outstanding scenic, historic or wilderness character... and regional waterfront areas... which in essence... provide non-urban recreation opportunities for the State's citizens and visitors."(page 6-16)

King feels that ORB's narrow interpretation of local responsibility is detrimental because if Juneau doesn't preserve large areas of open space the city will become a "disaster area". He sees great potential for large local parks and recreation areas and feels that Juneau's impressive natural characteristics are what make it unique. He acknowledged that one of the biggest hurdles to open space planning in Juneau is that virtually every place has high quality natural values. Consequently it is difficult to set priorities for preservation of individual areas.

King noted that in the last few years the State and Native Corporations have selected most of the beach areas around Juneau. A notable example is the popular Forest Service campground at Auk Bay which has been selected by Sealaska Natives under 14 (H) 8 of ANCSA. The area has also been topfiled by the State. The uncertainties of the impending Capital move is another factor affecting Juneau recreation planning and open space identification. The planning department is consequently skeletal and unwilling to create many new or large parks in view of the possibility of a drastic reduction in population.

King also feels that developmental opposition to parks and recreation is strong in Juneau. He is concerned that the Assembly is not sympathetic enough to open space values. He cited a case where the Corps of Engineers had placed a "floodway" designation along the Mendenhall River which prohibited development. The Parks and Recreation Department then identified the area as a greenbelt. Later, the Corps lifted the floodway designation which opened the area to subdivisions. Since then the Municipality's greenbelt "zoning" has been virtually ignored, partly because the land is so valuable. (\$22,000 per 90 running feet of river front). Recently however, river bank erosion has been rapid (measured at 70 feet since 1960 in places) which may again limit development in the future.

I next spoke with Jim Dumont, Director of the Juneau Parks and Recreation Department. He started out by relating how little the State had done in Southeastern Alaska to meet State or regional recreation demands. He cited the following statistics:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Acres of Parks</u>	<u>Acres per 1,000 residents</u>
Southcentral	244,000	1,077
Interior	30,700	396
Southeast	5,000	82

Juneau's facilities are frequently forced to respond to regional or even Statewide needs, including summer tourism. The Juneau Comprehensive Plan recommends cooperation between federal, state and local recreation planners; however little has actually been accomplished in the way of



coordination.

Dumont explained that the ORB report stressed urban parks because analysis of the need for large scale wetland and open space preservation was beyond the ability of their relatively short term contract. He agreed with ORB however that the State had shirked its responsibility in Southeast but that the Municipality also had some responsibility for regional recreation. He felt that the best course for the Municipality would be somewhere between ORB's approach, and the one advocated by Jim King.

On a federal level, CZM's local plan is nearly completed. It identifies numerous areas of prime wetlands that need protection, although Dumont noted that they are being lost to development because the Municipality can't afford to purchase them. The Municipality gets a generous share of money from the Heritage, Conservation and Recreation Service (formerly Bureau of Outdoor Recreation), but this money can only be used for capital costs. Dumont noted that their greatest burden is the cost of ongoing maintenance once facilities are developed. For example, every ninth beach front lot on Douglas Island has been retained for beach access. But they are not clearly marked or identified and most people aren't aware of them.

Dumont also discussed the kinds of demands for recreation in the Juneau area. The Forest Service cabins are some of the most popular destinations for hiking, hunting, boating, and numerous other recreation uses. Cabin reservations must be made far in advance. Campgrounds in the Juneau area are filled to capacity during the summer and some Forest Service picnic areas have also been used as defacto campgrounds. Dumont also said that other communities in Southeast, particularly Ketchikan, Sitka and Haines, experience a severe shortage of camping areas. For all these areas the demand is greatest when ferries arrive and visitors with campers disembark looking for a place to park. There are no camping areas near downtown Juneau to serve these visitors, who are then forced to "commute" between downtown Juneau tourist attractions and the outlying campgrounds.

A similar shortage of preceived opportunities also exists for fishing, and other recreational activities that visitors from other Alaska communities and elsewhere in the nation are seeking. The easily accessible lakes and streams (i.e. near roads) have not held up to heavy fishing pressure. In order to get to really good fishing (for example), recreationists must hike greater distances or rely on boats or small planes to get to the more remote high quality recreation areas. There is a common notion - especially among lower 48 tourists, that these high quality "wildland-oriented" recreation activities are easily available a short distance from the ferry terminals. I ask if this might be another example of the Alaska recreation myth and Dumont fully agreed.

I ask him how he felt about developed recreation areas beyond the Juneau area (within the Tongass National Forest). His response was that it would not be desirable to have new major recreation facilities in remote areas, because they are more suited for dispersed recreation, especially

by boat from Juneau. Boating recreation demand is quite high as reflected in the fact that there is one boat moorage in Juneau for every 8 residents, and there is a waiting list of others who want one.\*

I ask Dumont to elaborate on the Mendenhall greenbelt situation that King had noted earlier. He said that the municipality doesn't have a subdivision ordinance for greenbelts so that when the Corps of Engineers' floodway designation was lifted there was no tool to control or restrict development. Dumont stated the Juneau Planning Commission doesn't like ordinances as they prefer to work individually with the developers to negotiate appropriate subdivision open space. Unfortunately, in reality the open space that is left is usually undevelopable or otherwise undesirable or is land that the developer wants to get rid of anyway. Consequently the greenbelt classification carries little significance.

Dumont then mentioned the trust lands in and around Juneau. The Parks and Recreation Department would like to buy key trust lands for recreation purposes, but the Planning Commission has discouraged them from doing so.

He also mentioned the fate of the capital move affecting future parks and recreation facilities. If the capital move bond issue fails in November, then a local special election will be held in January or February 1979 on a Municipal bond issue to fund a local Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan. If this passes, the Municipality will have the mandate and money to acquire and develop new recreation areas and upgrade existing facilities.

Dumont was concerned that if the capital moves away from Juneau there won't be enough left to sustain the community. Summer tourism and the municipality - owned Eaglecrest Ski Area won't pull Juneau through. He felt the only way the community could survive the move would be to legalize gambling or use some other creative method of attracting and holding a viable economy. In the meantime it is difficult to foresee what kinds of parks and recreation areas or facilities will be needed in the long run.

Next I talked to Charles Low in the U.S. Forest Service research department. He directed me to several sources & publications for information about recreation use patterns on the Tongass National Forest.

Generally the Forest Service in Southeast is striving to manage primarily dispersed recreation and has avoided new developed areas. They plan to maintain those developed recreation sites that are already in existence while encouraging wilderness - oriented, non-intensive recreation activities throughout the remainder. The only likely exception to this in the future may be a series of campgrounds along roads on Prince of Wales Island.

\* The ORB report states that there is one boat stall for every 20 people. However, even this lower ratio is five times more than the Puget Sound area and twelve times more than the nation as a whole.

I asked about the possibility of Forest Service boat moorages at key harboring areas for safety and recreation access. Low responded that since the State owns the land below mean high tide it would not be something that the Forest Service would want responsibility for. Most of the existing moorages and boat ramps in Southeast are on or adjacent to private land. Low did not feel there was a significant need for more boat access development in view of the Forest Service's dispersed recreation policy. He also noted that although the Forest Service cabin program was quite popular, they did not intend to expand the system by adding new cabins. At this time the Forest Service does not coordinate its recreation planning or management with the State, and Low did not anticipate any formal cooperative efforts in the near future.

Next Low commented on the recent State selections within the National Forest. He anticipated that the Forest Service would disagree with the State on interpretation of criteria for these State selections. The difference lies in determining what qualifies for "community recreation". The State has selected areas scattered throughout the Tongass, not just around existing communities, to meet future recreational needs. The Forest Service apparently feels that the State should be limited to lands in the immediate vicinity of existing communities. Low cited Eaglecrest near Juneau as an example of what the Forest Service considers an appropriate State selection. Low felt it would probably be a long time before all the State selections within the Tongass are resolved, though some of the less controversial selections may be transferred more quickly.

Later I talked to James Calvin who gave me more specifics about State and Native Selections in the Forest. Many of the areas around Juneau, especially beach and other waterfront areas important for recreation, have been selected. In the case of Sealaska's selection of Auk Village which includes the heavily-used beach area, Calvin felt that the area would probably be managed to continue certain public recreation activities. Echo Cove and portions of the shoreline of Douglas Island have also been selected by both the State and Natives. It remains to be seen how these and other selections in existing or potential recreation areas will be managed.

On Saturday I talked to various individuals connected with private recreation services. The first was Myrna Brower of the Juneau Travel Agency. She identified the most common trips that the agency arranged and made some other useful observations about local recreation. Package deals for the Eaglecrest Ski Area and the White Pass-Yukon train trip from Skagway to Whitehorse are commonly arranged. During the summer months, glacier flightseeing tours of the icefields behind Juneau are becoming increasingly popular. The agency also handles air charters to the Forest Service cabins as well as other locations including Hoonah, Tenekee Springs, Glacier Bay (summer only), Elfin Cove, and Skagway. These are some of the more popular destinations - although there are numerous others. Recreational fishing trips are also common though they fluctuate from year to year and season to season depending on local regulations. This is true for both salt and fresh water fishing. Boat charters generally don't begin operating until after June 1. Brower

said that boat charters are highly seasonal, loosely organized and depend pretty much on what the owners or skippers of the individual boats want to do.

(Later I tried to contact several people who operated boat charters and was unsuccessful. Since it was still early spring, they apparently were out of town or otherwise beyond easy communication.)

Brower noted that their travel agency business is fairly evenly divided between local residents and out-of-state visitors. The out-of-state people generally tend to want more package tours, although there seems to be a general trend among everyone for more flexible scheduling of tours and free time. Many of the local residents who come to the travel agency do so because they are expecting out-of-state visitors and wish to arrange a special trip. Also, the travel agency will frequently merely direct an individual to a particular air or boat charter and leave the detailed plans and scheduling up to the individual.

Brower felt that recreation use of all kinds has been increasing rapidly in Southeast Alaska. She noted also that some of the large commercial tour ships (like Westours) were altering their schedules this year to include extra dock time in the Juneau area which would increase the tourist dollars coming into the local economy.

I also visited Eaglecrest and talked to an employee at the office where cross-country skiers are supposed to register if they use the area. She said that X-C skiing is very popular all along the ski area road that follows the Fish Creek valley and in the lower reaches of the ski area itself. Cropley Lake receives a lot of overnight snow camping use. The upper slopes of Douglas Island are used less frequently for winter mountaineering. The area is also used for hiking in the summer.

One of the Eaglecrest brochures mentions the possibility of helicopter skiing, so on my way back to town I stopped at the Heliport on Douglas Island. Gail Trivette, the receptionist/office manager, said that even though the brochure advertises helicopter skiing they have never actually flown anyone to Eaglecrest for skiing. In fact they do very little recreational flying and virtually their entire operation is industry-oriented. She felt this was primarily because of the relatively great expense (a minimum of \$200 an hour) for helicopter services.

My next interview was with George Thomas, a pilot with Southeast Skyways, a charter air service. Southeast Skyways' main office is at the Juneau Airport, although they maintain a small seasonal office and float plane dock on the downtown waterfront adjacent to Merchants Wharf. Thomas noted that most of their business comes from their frequent one-hour flight-seeing tours of the Juneau Ice Cap during the summer season. On good days last summer they had six or seven planes flying continuously, (7-9 flights per day) carrying full loads of 6 to 9 people each. The popularity of these glacier tours has increased dramatically during the last few years. In April they were already taking reservations for August flights.

In addition to the glacier tours, Southeast Skyways also handles quite a few fishing trips and other fly-in charter to numerous locations. Thomas felt that even the more common flying locations were too numerous to list, although he did mention Lake Florence and Lake Louise. Fly-in boaters with kayaks and canoes are also becoming more numerous but as of last year only one charter operation (Channel Flying Service) had planes suitable for carrying full size boats to water recreation areas.

Southeast Skyways is one of the few charters in Juneau that work with large tour operators, like Westours, or major travel agents. Thomas noted that in the past the large cruise ships have remained docked in Juneau for only a few hours. (Sometimes they come in early in the morning or late in the evening, so many of the shops, especially in nearby Merchants Wharf, arrange their store hours around docking times.) This summer Westours (22% of the cruise ship business) plans to overnight in Juneau to allow their passengers more time to visit the area. Thomas pointed out that this will naturally increase the amount of tourist dollars spent in the Juneau area.

Thomas generally felt that the tourist industry had widespread "great expectations" for increased tourism of all kinds this season. He attributed this to the surge felt last year which was partly a result of the exceptionally good weather. Given the capital move situation Thomas welcomed the possibility of an expanding tourist economy.

I also talked to Aral Hagerup, a pilot for Ward Air. He gave me a summary of the more common destinations (shown on the Juneau recreation work maps). Forest Service cabins are the most popular especially those closest to Juneau, and private cabins are their next most common destinations. The highest density of private cabins are along Seymour Canal on Admiralty Island. Other recreationists charter primarily to lakes for a variety of activities, including camping, fishing, hiking and hunting. Winter charters are still less common but are increasing faster than summer charters, so Ward Air is hoping to have one or two ski planes available next winter.

Hagerup contrasted Ward Air and Southeast Skyways because each has a different set of customers. He felt that Southeast Skyways caters more heavily to non-resident seasonal tourists and pulls most of their business through tours and travel agents. Ward Air does relatively little advertising and does not work through package tour organizations. They experience less of a seasonal business boom but receive a steadier year around business primarily from local residents. Hagerup noted that a significant portion of the local people who arrange recreational charters do so because they have a friend or relative visiting from outside the area that they wish to "show around."

Lastly I talked to Joan Dittier, a representative at the Juneau Chamber of Commerce visitor information office, kitty-corner to the Baranof Hotel. She has been noticing that the number of new people getting into the recreation & tourist business is radically increasing this year. She specifically cited plans for a new Juneau area tour bus and numerous

new boat charter operations. She felt that this was probably based on several factors: (1) last years tourism successes, (2) desire for job security after the capital move, (3) a way of working seasonally with attractive secondary "Alaska Lifestyle" benefits, and (4) the opportunity to make a living from a renewable resource.

#### Personal Impressions:

Recreation patterns in Southeast, especially around Juneau, are difficult to describe because they are highly dispersed and oriented toward a variety of transportation methods. But more importantly it is especially difficult to differentiate between national, state, and local recreation responsibilities because they tightly overlap. Despite the fact that Federal, State and local responsibilities can usually be defined, their application in Southeast is less than clear. Numerous studies have already been done, but debate about the role of the various levels of government regarding parks and recreation management continues. Since the State has the "middle ground", they are in the toughest position. The short time I spent in Juneau talking to people was not enough to adequately touch on all aspects of recreation in northern Southeast and the Juneau area, but I did sense an overall feeling that the State needs to take more action to provide and manage recreation there. There was less of a consensus about what methods the State should use to fulfill its responsibilities, or what exactly its responsibilities are.

## APPENDIX II

### MUNICIPAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL ROLES Providing Recreational Opportunities on Public Lands

#### Introduction

In the spring of 1977 Senator Kay Poland, Chairman of the Senate Resources Committee, asked the Land Use Planning Commission to analyze the location, availability, and demand for parks and recreation services in Alaska. Primarily, Senator Poland was interested in studying exactly what State lands should be considered for park and recreation status. In order to accomplish this, the Senator felt that the Commission could study the role of the State Division of Parks in the Alaska park and recreation picture and prepare specific recommendations concerning criteria and policy for establishing State parks. In addition, Senator Poland wanted to know how municipal, State, and Federal government programs fit together for the provision of parks and recreation services.

In order to collect a wide range of responses, the Commission gathered information from three levels of government. More than 30 municipalities were asked to provide their view of the different recreation program roles that municipal, State, and Federal government agencies should play. A second round of letters was sent to State agencies that have a role important to parks and recreation or are actually involved in the management of parks and recreation activities. State agencies were encouraged to suggest how they thought the Department of Fish and Game, Division of Lands, and the Division of Parks should divide their responsibilities regarding management of opportunities for public recreation on State-owned lands.

The final round of policy inquiries was sent to Federal agencies that have a land management role in the State. The Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service were contacted. The Federal managers stated that their emphasis was shifting from the provision of site specific localized recreational opportunities to more dispersed national interest opportunities.

#### Municipal Views on Recreation

The letter which was addressed to the municipalities posed four questions.

- (1) What different roles should the municipality, State, and Federal governments play in providing public recreation opportunities in Alaska?

- (2) How do you define the cut-off point between recreation services which are or should be the responsibility of a municipality and those which are or should be the responsibility of the State? Are there any examples you could cite?
- (3) Should the State take an active role in trying to identify and classify State lands for future municipal recreational needs until such time as a municipality is established or has assumed recreation functions?
- (4) What do you think should be the role of the State park system or other State recreational programs with respect to communities which are not on the main highway system?

Kristy A. Nelson, the City of Seward's Recreation Director, responded for that municipality. She thought that the State government should provide funding and facilities along the highways. Camper parks, picnic areas, and bike trails for the out-of-town tourists were the examples cited. Recreation facilities maintained primarily for the benefit of people visiting the area should be the responsibility of the State. Tourism is a major industry in Alaska and facilities which accommodate the visitor to Alaska should largely be funded and developed by the State. Nelson recognizes the importance of the State highway system to the tourism industry, although she also feels that the State should develop facilities which will provide incentive for tourists to visit those off-highway parts of the State. Additionally, the State should identify lands for recreational purposes in those areas where no municipalities have yet been formed.

Michael Schmidt, Planning Director for the City and Borough of Sitka, provided a number of useful insights on the Division of Parks' recreation role. He thought that the Division should be involved in major facilities that were of more than local use and interest. The State should also provide grants and technical assistance to municipalities to meet the recreation needs of their citizens. Along the highway network, Schmidt thought that areas of more than local use such as wayside picnic areas should be supported by State funds.

Schmidt recognized a role for the State Division of Parks to play in identifying recreation lands in areas that were not formal municipalities. However, he made a special point to stress the fact that understanding local needs requires careful consultation with local people. Technical assistance should not be designed to standardize recreation services or parks but to enhance local variety and differences.

Mayor John A. Carlson replied for the Fairbanks North Star Borough. Mayor Carlson thought it was the role of the State to insure that the special recreation needs of Alaskans are met. The first task would be an inventory of what Alaskans want for recreation. Once these recreation demands have been identified, a resource inventory should determine



which State-owned or State selected lands have recreation potential to meet these demands. Lands identified should be classified accordingly. Comprehensive municipal planning documents should include a recreation element which identifies which State land the municipality wants for recreational use. In addition, the State should act as a source of funding and technical assistance in the development of local parks and recreation programs. Furthermore, the State should remain the level of government most concerned with providing recreation facilities for tourists who visit Alaska.

Carlson suggested several criteria for a flexible approach to establishing the cut-off point between municipal and State activities. The first criteria would be based on USERS. City parks and picnic areas which serve local residents should be locally administered. However, those recreation areas heavily oriented to State highway traffic should fall into the responsibility of the State Division of Parks. Tourism is an important industry in Alaska and it is most appropriate that the State develop and maintain recreation areas that attract and serve the tourist. Criteria two would be based on LAND requirements. Carlson thought that the State could better meet the large land requirements of certain kinds of recreation. While municipal selection entitlements provide the Boroughs with the opportunity to identify some recreational lands, it should be remembered that recreation is only one of the many uses for which that land is destined, and may be a lower priority use at that.

A third criteria suggested by Carlson was based on certain resources or UNIQUE FEATURES which might themselves dictate or suggest the appropriate jurisdiction for management. For example, important wildlife habitat, valuable archaeological remains, or outstanding examples of particular landforms may exist in the midst of prime recreation territory. Where values exceed local interest, it makes practical administrative sense for recreation to be managed by the same jurisdiction necessary for the unique resources. The final criteria is based on EFFICIENCY. The question should always be asked which jurisdiction can manage the recreation services most efficiently in terms of energy use and overall cost-effectiveness.

In conclusion, Carlson pointed out that Alaska is very fortunate to have recreation sites which are accessible by a wide range of transportation modes, including automobile, boat and ship, airplanes, snow machine, dog sled, and foot or ski. He thought that it would be unfortunate if the State oriented its recreation programs solely to the main highway system. Although it is true that accessibility is key to many of Alaska's recreation opportunities, it is equally clear that all patterns of recreation do not stick to the "main highway." Communities off the main highway system, or on the oldest highways in Alaska, the rivers, should also be given recreation service and consideration, although with an approach designed to fit their local style and needs.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough responded through its Planning Director Phillip Waring. Waring believed that the State Division of Parks should exercise overall responsibility for outdoor recreation planning. In this role the Division should identify and reserve State lands which are most suited for current and anticipated further recreational purposes. The State should also assist or jointly develop recreational facilities which offer benefits to both local and statewide users. Waring identified a particularly important role for the State of Alaska in the development of tourist-related facilities. Some examples of State responsibility or regional facilities proposed by Waring were natural areas, campgrounds, trails, boating facilities, waterfront access sites, highway rest stops, and historic sites. As the guiding arm in the identification and development of recreation services, the State Division of Parks should provide grants and technical assistance to municipalities when their activities meet recognized demands.

Steven J. Tuma, former director of the Bethel Parks and Recreation Department, wrote from that "bush" municipality. He thought the State should be meeting regional needs such as the visiting tourist and the traveling Alaskan family. He recognized a need for regional nature study areas that permitted camping and hiking. State agencies should meet recreation demands that do not serve the local population or involve resources of more than local interest. Tuma thought that with State assistance municipalities should plan and designate lands to be used for recreation and park needs. This activity would be appropriate whether the State was reserving lands for future municipalities or aiding existing municipalities make future park plans. Tuma realized that in order to be effective a good deal of park land should be accessible to the citizens of the State. Since his community is not connected to the main highway system, however, he feared that State parks might only be set up along the major highway routes. He suggested that rivers or other transportation routes that were available to village Alaska should also be connected to State park lands.

Leroy P. Godes, Soldotna's Public Works Director wrote the Commission that the State Division of Parks should be more concerned with outdoor activities located a convenient distance away from the population centers. State park programs should cater to vacationers and families on weekend outings. These centers should provide camping, hiking, canoe areas, and boating opportunities. Godes thought that State recreation planning should recognize that fishing and hunting were significant recreational activities and should be incorporated into the future management of all State lands. He also believed that the State should make a concentrated effort to identify lands for future recreational sites because a problem faced by the City of Soldotna was that the costs of acquiring parklands were tremendous. Consequently, the State has to look into the future and set aside recreational areas if possible whether a municipality is organized or not.

Godes mentioned that individuals and families who live in Alaskan cities are finding it increasingly difficult to locate uncrowded recreational areas. As the more accessible out-of-the-way places gain interest and use by out-of-state visitors, the State must anticipate these trends and provide assistance to smaller communities who must meet the recreational demands of their own citizens and increased visitor use. Visitors to remote areas will begin to expect more facilities as well as the fame of Alaska's recreation resources spreads.

Ivan L. Widom, Kodiak City Manager, referred the Commission's questions to the director of that city's parks and recreation division and its community advisory board. However, Widom did point out that during the summer ferry service brings many tourists and vehicles to the island. There are few established areas for these tourists and their campers. Facilities to accommodate the tourist load are expensive, and the city is only able to provide a skeleton response. Widom thought that when a city becomes a major destination in the State's tourism program, it should qualify for grants and technical assistance to enable them to meet the demands.

The Kodiak Parks and Recreation Advisory Board felt that the municipality has a responsibility to identify its recreational needs and these should represent local, State, and national requirements for recreational services within that municipal area. Once these needs have been identified, it becomes the State's responsibility to aid the municipality meet these demands. For instance, Fort Abercrombie State Park is locally popular but serves statewide and national visitors as well. It is one of the primary destinations in the Kodiak visitor's schedule. But very little has been done to keep up or improve this area. Kodiak citizens feel Fort Abercrombie serves more than local visitors, and the State should develop them to their full potential to handle the increasing tourist load.

The Kodiak Parks Board thought the State should provide technical and financial assistance for municipal recreation programs and capital improvements. In addition, the State could aid the municipalities acquire land for recreation purposes. However, when the State is providing assistance to a municipality, the citizens of Kodiak feel that the municipality should have the right to decide what its needs are, and how it wants to satisfy those needs. The Board also felt that the State should be providing for future park lands in municipalities which are yet unformed. They thought this would be an excellent opportunity for the State to make it easier for municipalities to acquire land. Criteria for establishing State parks should include preservation, conservation, recreation, cultural and historical and natural beauty values.

Kenai responded through it's city manager, John E. Weiss. He felt that the role of each level of government in the provision of parks and recreation services should relate to its specific constituency. The State of Alaska should provide areas for camping, sport fishing, hunting,

and, of course, maintain and guarantee access to such areas. Weiss thought that communities not on the State highway system will also need the provision of recreational sites and park areas. He felt they should only be provided, however, if the community wanted them. In high use areas, like the Kenai Peninsula, provisions should be made for highway-related camping, parking, and recreation. He said that economic reasons suggest Tyonek would soon be a city and the State should identify recreation areas if State lands were available for these purposes.

The final municipal respondent was the Municipality of Anchorage. Mayor George Sullivan argued that Alaska has very few communities that can support diversified park and recreation facilities and programs. The State should fill the role of "prime mover" in this area. Sullivan thought the State government should offer planning and technical assistance to small communities. In addition, the State should assist the parks and recreation funding of the smaller municipal units. Sullivan designed a role for State park activity both within and outside municipal boundaries. He thought the State should provide for recreation facilities such as trails, picnic and camping facilities, and game sanctuaries on parks and other State lands. Chugach State Park, Potter Marsh, and the Palmer Highway bike trails are examples of excellent State efforts. Sullivan also made the telling point that the State should bear the cost of maintaining its recreation facilities, either directly or through reimbursable maintenance agreements with the host municipality.

State recreation administrators should also assist communities off the main highway system develop park and recreation programs. Through technical assistance, the State could work with communities in programming, development and management of recreation programs. Statewide athletic programs need this central coordinative assistance as well. This function should be carried out through the State parks system since they have contact with recreation programs in all parts of the State.

In addition to these comments and suggestions, Mayor Sullivan submitted a draft of a organization plan for the Recreation Coordinating Council (RCC). The program described in his paper is somewhat similar to the Park and Recreation Council (PARC) that now exists. However, as proposed by Sullivan, the RCC would have considerably more power and influence than the existing PARC. The purpose of the RCC would be to assist in the planning, development, management, and, particularly, the acquisition and maintenance of funding for recreational facilities in the State. Coordination and cooperation among recreation providers and a more regular dissemination of ideas and solutions to common problems would be useful.

Sullivan agreed that when the State is in position to identify and classify recreational lands in areas where no municipal government exists, the State should do so. Without a municipal vehicle for park land identification potential recreation lands could be lost to the public or become a costly acquisition burden at a later date. When a

municipal government does exist, the State parks division should make the recreation land selection process a joint venture between the two levels of government.

#### State Agency Viewpoint

State agencies, as well as municipalities, are involved in Alaska's recreation picture. The Commission wrote to those that manage land, transportation, fish and game, and other resources that have a place in the recreation equation. Some of these groups have yet to respond and their viewpoint will have to be collected. However, the issues identified by those responding deserve attention.

The Commission asked the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G):

- (1) How do you think the Department of Fish and Game, Division of Lands, and the Division of Parks should divide responsibilities regarding provision of opportunities for public recreation on State-owned lands?
- (2) How successfully has this division of responsibility been accomplished in the past, and what statutory, regulatory, or administrative changes would improve this relationship for the future?

Commissioner Ronald O. Skoog wrote that recreational use of State lands will be one of the biggest issues the State must face. As Skoog sees it, the issue is larger than just those lands that must be addressed with State park policy (maybe up to 5% of all State lands will be legislatively reserved for park and recreational purposes); it must also address all State lands. Skoog recognizes that the types of recreation on State-owned lands are as diverse as the resources themselves. Skoog believes that it is incumbent upon each resource agency to represent their interest groups in the planning and use of State park lands. For example, the interests of the ADF&G are centered on the use of fish and wildlife resources within park boundaries. ADF&G advocates hunting, trapping, and fishing as compatible uses within the primary intent of park management. While Skoog feels that these activities may need to be constrained when other resource users safety is threatened, generally he does not believe that there is a conflict between these and other park uses. In the past, ADF&G has actively participated in management planning and consultation with other groups for State park lands. Skoog feels that there is a need for administrative or statutory changes that articulate the specific responsibilities of all parties involved in developing State park policies. In addition, ADF&G believes that it is mandatory to expand recreational-use thinking beyond State park boundaries.

The Alaska Division of Parks (ADP) of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responded to questions similar to those asked of municipal and State agencies. The ADP views its role as falling between that of local

government and the Federal government. The ADP is more concerned with active recreational pursuits and their attendant facilities than is the Federal government, which is viewed as being more oriented to preservation. The Division feels a stronger orientation to communities and the major travel corridors which tie these communities together. ADP offers examples such as the Valdez Glacier Wayside, the Chena Wayside and the Mirror Lake Wayside, as examples of State park activities within municipal boundaries. In general, the Division has developed these areas but believes that they can be more effectively managed at the municipal level. Consequently, the Division favors a process through which an area remains a State park unit in title, but through contractual agreement, the community assumes maintenance and operation responsibilities.

The State Constitution and Title 41 of the Alaska Statutes identifies the Division of Parks as the State's lead recreation agency. As such, the Division has a coordinating function to define roles between various State agencies. The Division suggests that the PARC should serve as a forum to discuss the best way to resolve possible definition problems and conflicts between the Division and other agencies involved in recreation. For instance, it would be useful for each recreation providing agency to identify and tightly define its respective recreation role for the lands they have or seek for recreation purposes. In order to achieve these ends, the Division feels that the PARC should meet on a more frequent basis and expand their cooperative management efforts.

Another activity assumed by the Division was the identification and classification of zones within established parks for application of particular management techniques and programs. The Division believes that it is its responsibility to institutionalize and establish policies for the specific resource management zones established within designated State parks. The identification of management zones will permit the development of criteria which will give an easy and workable yardstick for land managers.

#### Federal Agency Perspective

Federal responses, to the State Park Study Questionnaire, were received from the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service. Don Redfern of the Fish and Wildlife Service wrote that recreational opportunities duplicated by other State and Federal agencies should be of minor concern as public demand exceeds available recreational facilities. He expected this trend would continue. Redfern recognized that most Federal lands are distant from urban centers. Therefore, the State Division of Parks would be expected to meet recreation demands nearer to population centers as urban populations grow and leisure time increases. Redfern identified a role for State parklands as buffer zones for nationally significant Federal lands. State parks could provide threshold camping and people services which may not be compatible with the management of adjacent Federal lands. The resource management staff at the Fish and Wildlife Service thought that State

parks should represent examples of significant State scenic, historic, natural, geological, and cultural areas which are primarily managed for the benefit of people in the State or visiting it.

Cary F. Brown, outdoor recreation planner for BLM State office, replied from that agency. From his perspective, the State parks system should provide recreational opportunities at a comparatively high participation rate per acre in comparison to those opportunities provided by Federal agencies. In the future, BLM expects that their recreation programs will be oriented toward wildlands recreation and concentrated use will be directed towards certain rivers and trails. Brown believed that the Alaska Division of Parks had a unique responsibility to develop distinctive opportunities for recreationists. He suggested that the Division of Parks should work closely with the Division of Tourism. Brown recognized that there are unique recreational resources located on State land and in many cases resources such as the the Wood-Tikchik Lakes, McNeil River, Kachemak Bay Wilderness Park, and Denali State Park represented examples of distinctive resource values. In areas like these Brown thought that the State should work closely with tour operators, air taxi operators, and even concessionaires to develop programs compatible with land use plans that offer recreational opportunities to tourists.

Brown understood that the Alaska Division of Parks management philosophy was based on a single use orientation. He thought that this was appropriate for lands which were actually identified as State parks by the Legislature but it also meant that the Division of Parks had a major responsibility to be an advocate for recreation resource values in the development of the management plans for all of the State's lands.

James A. Calvin wrote for the Regional Forester in Alaska and described briefly the role of recreation on lands managed by the Forest Service. Calvin identified a spectrum of recreation use ranging from highly developed sites, visited by thousands each year, to vast remote areas suited for a wilderness experience. Most developments within the Forest are provided by the Federal government but there are considerable instances where the private sector provides the service on National Forest land. Calvin believed that future National Forest recreation plans will emphasize dispersed recreation as opposed to opportunities that have a specific site, such as campgrounds. Although National Forests will continue to be managed for local and State users, there will be an increasing orientation to meeting national needs.

From the National Forest perspective, the role of the State parks system should primarily be to meet the specific recreational needs of Alaskans. If the State system featured developed sites, the approach would be highly complementary to the policies of the National Forest. However, if the State were to only encourage dispersed uses, there could be a tendency to create a gap within the spectrum of opportunities. Calvin focused on the location of recreational opportunities. For example, the Chugach State Park provides fast access to more than half

of the State's population. He saw a need to encourage daytime use and a variety of recreational opportunities on State park lands that were readily accessible to urban population concentrations.

In some cases, Calvin thought that a duplication of recreational opportunities could actually be desirable. For instance, multiple trail systems not only disperse use and reduce the impact on the ecosystem but also increase the opportunities available to the public. But, he also recognized a need to allow for more coordination between recreation planning entities. Like the Division of Parks, Calvin saw a need for a strong cooperative management program--cooperative management which permitted the coordination of all those agencies and landowners which provide recreation opportunities. The developments possible through the private sector should be recognized during the planning stages as well. This would help to insure that all potential users are provided with a wide range of activities and that no undesirable duplication occurs.



### APPENDIX III

#### PAST STATE RECREATIONAL POLICY Review of Previous Policy Statements

A basic dichotomy underlies much of the past debate about public recreation policy and the role of the State of Alaska in providing recreation opportunities on public lands. On the one hand, there is an orientation towards managing lands for protection of the resource. On the other hand, the orientation is towards management for human use. Ted Smith, then the State Park and Recreation Officer, expressed this dichotomy in a report he wrote in 1966.

"Parks and recreation areas have only two basic reasons for existing: (1) to preserve some special value, or (2) to provide for use by people. These two are generally mutually exclusive. They may permit a limited amount of compatible use but are essentially single use areas."

In selecting and designating areas for recreation purposes, the same dichotomy becomes the choice between selection based primarily on the scenic or natural values inherent in the land, or selection based primarily on accessibility and usability. There is a general tendency among those dealing with land and recreation issues to identify the Nation and the State with the two sides of this dichotomy. Withdrawal of Federal lands for national conservation systems has been on the basis of the nature of the land and its resources, whereas the State has given far more weight to proximity to communities in making its land selections and in identifying lands for recreation purposes. Of the 3.7 million acres either within the State parks system or proposed for State park status, 95 percent of the area is within 100 miles or more of communities of over 1,000 people.

However, a clear-cut alignment of Federal recreation management with natural values and State recreation management with human values is far too simplistic to be accurate, except as a very general characterization of predominant orientation. Certainly, the natural values of the land have been a determining factor in State park designation, and the State's vast and varied landholdings include a number of areas with natural values that argue strongly for recreational designation, despite relative inaccessibility at the present time.

Within the State Administration, the debate between those who would emphasize the nature of the land and those who would emphasize accessibility to people has continued over the years. The pattern of existing State park holdings reflects both views. At present, the system includes 50 highway waysides, located primarily along the main traveled routes in Southcentral and Southeastern Alaska; and nine larger areas, including four recreation areas, four State parks and one State wilderness park. The primary factor in wayside location was highway access and, to some extent, distribution at regular intervals along the highway. Within

these basic constraints, sites were chosen for their natural recreational values. On the other hand, the primary factor in designating recreation areas or parks was the natural recreational value of the sites, though, in weighing one prime recreation area versus another, accessibility to major communities was a factor.

The policies which have governed selection and administration of State recreation lands in past years can be traced by reviewing several key documents as they address the following issues: (1) For whom should the State provide recreation opportunities? (2) What type of recreation opportunities should be provided? and (3) Where should the State provide parks and services? As mileposts of State policy over the years the following documents were selected: (1) Alaska Statutes, Sections 41.20.010 to .060, adopted in 1959; (2) a 1969 report prepared by Theodore G. Smith, then Chief, Parks and Recreation, Division of Lands, entitled "Alaska State Parks System, 1970-1976;" (3) a 1974 element of the Alaska Outdoor Recreation Plan entitled Outdoor Recreation Responsibilities in Alaska, published by the Division of Parks, Department of Natural Resources; and (4) a 1976 "white paper" prepared by Russ Cahill, then Director of the Division of Parks, Department of Natural Resources. A current white paper is under preparation by Terry McWilliams, Director of the Division of Parks.

For whom shall the State provide recreational opportunities?

The initial statutes deal with this topic in an expansive and inclusive manner. Under the declaration of purpose, the State's park and recreation facilities are for the "enjoyment of its citizens and for the attraction of visitors to the State." Further, the State is given specific direction to encourage the "organization of State public park and recreational activities in the local political subdivisions of the State." These policies reflect the emphasis on economic development through tourism or other means that dominated public policy making during the State's early years, as well as the fact that local governments were relatively weak or nonexistent. Few at that time could envision that local governments in Alaska would be able to afford the luxury of their own park and recreation systems.

The policies expressed in Ted Smith's paper, written ten years later, are quite different and reflect a recognition, developed through experience, of the need to limit and focus. The attraction of tourists is no longer a stated objective, and there is a clear direction to leave the provision of local park and recreation facilities to local governments. To encourage local governments to assume this role, the State is to provide technical assistance and State-owned lands suitable for local recreation purposes will be transferred to local entities without cost. The State system should avoid providing "day use" facilities on the grounds that such facilities are the prerogative and responsibility of local government. Instead, the focus is on serving the "traveling public" and on providing recreational areas or waysides for "interborough use."

The recommendations expressed in 1974 in Outdoor Recreation Responsibilities in Alaska, in an element of the outdoor recreation plan, repeat this emphasis on serving the traveling public and on filling the gap between Federal and local responsibilities. There is a new recognition of the need for coordination among the providers of recreation opportunities at a Federal, State, and local level; and particularly, on the importance on State recreational services of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

A 1976 "white paper" prepared by Russ Cahill, then Director of the Division of Parks, emphasizes the accessibility of the State's park and recreation facilities, pointing out that on a per acre basis, the State's recreational lands are far more heavily used than Federal lands and that the predominance of visitation at State parklands is by residents of Alaska. His summary of the people who should be served by the State system reads, "the State needs to respond to the needs of its residents and those of the traveling public." Cahill's statement expresses a new and growing interest in the role of the State parks system in historic preservation and close-in wilderness areas. He notes that such areas are important as destinations for tourists as well as for local residents.

What should be the purpose of designating lands to the State parks and recreation system?

The theme of preservation versus use recurs in each of the four sample policy statements, but there is some shift in emphasis and interpretation. The 1959 statutes parallel the State's constitutional mandate to provide for maximum use consistent with the public interest while maintaining principles for resource conservation. The statutes are written to include the full range of possible purposes: lands are to be designated to the system for "scenic, historic, archaeological, scientific, biological, and recreation purposes." There is little sense of focus or direction for administrative decisions.

The 1969 plan for the Alaska State Parks System, by Ted Smith directs the State to preserve historic and natural areas of statewide significance and to provide recreational destinations and waysides. The 1974 report carries forth the same theme, but places greater emphasis on the rural outdoor quality of the recreational experiences that should be available on the State lands. Russ Cahill's 1976 "white paper" adds more dimension to the subject by acknowledging that the State is primarily interested in providing for the use of recreation lands, but he points out that the State has ample lands to serve both use and preservation purposes and suggests that the State should find workable compromises between resource preservation and use. He states: "perhaps the vagueness of the middle ground between the preserve and the intensive use park is benefit. Perhaps this is the place to find compromise and real multiple use designations." As an example, he notes that in the Talkeetna Mountains, elimination of mining is not essential, but it is important to prevent "shabby land subdivision proposals" and conveyance of additional property to private ownership, while at the same time, developing recreation opportunities for the many visitors to the area. Although he does not

propose a new system, he does introduce the concept of a more flexible method of designating and managing State lands for public recreation purposes.

Where should State park and recreation facilities be located and services be provided?

The initial statute contains little specific direction on this question. The first formal statement of policy about location and distribution of State park and recreation facilities is in Ted Smith's 1969 paper which begins, "Recreation facilities shall be so located as to provide a geographically balanced system, giving consideration to population distribution, intrastate travel, and out-of-state visitors...." These policies are further specified through direction that overnight campgrounds be provided at intervals not greater than 50 miles. Though geographic distribution has been emphasized in prior policy statements, in actual fact, most of the State's facilities are concentrated in Southcentral and Southeastern Alaska. During his administration, Russ Cahill expressed a concern that people in rural Alaska may not be receiving their fair share from the State's park and recreation program, and from Federal funds available through the Land and Water Conservation Funds. Since Federal grant administrators look for a high potential participation rate as one of their criteria for funding, and since most rural communities lack the experience necessary to prepare a grant application, the program tends to be weighted in favor of larger communities. However, recently the Division of Parks has been attempting to provide assistance to rural communities which will enable them to share more equally in the State's recreation funds and programs.

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1. Theodore G. Smith, Parks and Recreation Officer, "A Proposal for the Reorganization of Parks and Recreation Functions in the State of Alaska," 1966, pg. 10.



The Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission for Alaska was created by Congress and the Alaska Legislature to provide a statewide land use planning process that will insure the economic development of the State in a manner that is compatible with the social and economic well-being of the public, their interests, and the environment.

The Commission also is to improve coordination and resolve conflicts between the State, Federal government, and private landowners in the State, and recommend laws, policies and programs to the President, Congress and the Governor of Alaska for a coordinated comprehensive statewide land use planning process.

The Commission, created by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971, is headed by the Governor of Alaska or his full-time Co-Chairman, and by a Federal Co-Chairman appointed by the President of the United States. Four Commissioners are appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, and four by the Governor of Alaska.