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# ALASKA STATE PARK SYSTEM: STATEWIDE FRAMEWORK

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## Department of Natural Resources' Land Management and the Alaska State Park System

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is manager of state-owned surface and subsurface natural resources, except for fish and wildlife. The department's long-term management goals and objectives are spelled out in the Statewide Natural Resources Plan prepared by the department's Division of Research and Development, Land and Resource Planning Section. To insure compliance with these management objectives, specific land-use decisions made by the department must be made within the context of that plan.

The Alaska Division of Parks has developed this document, the Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework, to further define the department's goals and policies with regard to the management of state park units on state-owned lands with recreational, natural and cultural values. This document has been developed within the scope of the Statewide Natural Resources Plan.



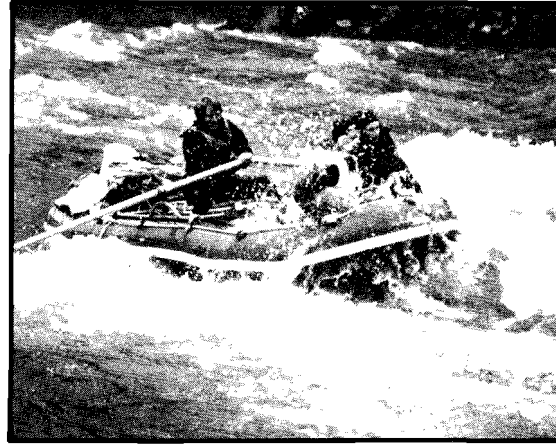
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# **ALASKA STATE PARK SYSTEM: STATEWIDE FRAMEWORK**

Prepared by Park Planning Section  
Division of Parks  
Alaska Department of Natural Resources

June 1982

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**FIGURE 1. Laws Pertaining to the Alaska State Park System**

The legislature may provide for the acquisition of sites, objects, and areas of natural beauty or for historic, cultural, recreational, or scientific value. It may reserve them from the public domain and provide for their administration and preservation for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people.

**Art. VIII, Section 7.  
(Special Purpose Sites)  
Alaska State Constitution**

The commissioner shall establish a policy and prescribe rules and regulations by which parks and recreation areas, including public scenic overlooks and cultural sites, shall be developed and managed in a manner that will best serve the interests of the people of the state. The commissioner may classify public lands as parks, scenic overlooks, cultural sites and recreation areas as long as the general intent of this chapter is maintained.

**Sec. 38.05.295.  
(Parks and Recreation Areas)  
Alaska Statutes**

The commissioner of natural resources may establish within the Department of Natural Resources a separate division to perform the functions relative to parks and recreational facilities specified in sections 10-40 of this chapter and related or additional functions as are otherwise assigned to the department by law.

**Sec. 41.20.040.  
(Division within Department  
of Natural Resources)  
Alaska Statutes**

It is the purpose of this chapter to foster the growth and development of a system of parks and recreational facilities and opportunities in the state, for the general health, welfare, education, and enjoyment of its citizens and for the attraction of visitors to the state.

**Sec. 41.20.010.  
(Declaration of purpose)  
Alaska Statutes**

The Department of Natural Resources shall

- (1) develop a continuing plan for the conservation and maximum use in the public interest of the scenic, historic, archaeological, scientific, biological, and recreational resources of the state;
- (2) plan for and develop a system of state parks and recreational facilities, to be established as the legislature authorizes and directs;
- (3) acquire by gift, purchase, or transfer from state or federal agencies, or from individuals, corporations, partnerships, or associations, land necessary, suitable and proper for roadside, picnic, recreational or park purposes;
- (4) control, develop and maintain state parks and recreational areas;
- (5) provide for the acquisition, care, control, supervision, improvement, development, extension and maintenance of public recreational lands, and make necessary arrangements, contracts or commitments for the improvement and development of lands acquired under sections 10-40 of this chapter;
- (6) establish, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, [AS44.62] rules and regulations governing the use and designating incompatible uses within the boundaries of state park and recreational areas to protect the property and to preserve the peace;

(7) cooperate with the United States and its agencies and local subdivisions of the state to secure the effective supervision, improvement, development, extension, and maintenance of state parks, state monuments, state historical areas, and state recreational areas, and secure agreements or contracts for the purpose of sections 10-40 of this chapter;...

(11) perform other duties as are prescribed by executive order or by law.

**Sec. 41.20.020.  
(Duties of Department of  
Natural Resources)  
Alaska Statutes**

# Introduction

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## Purpose and Scope

The purposes of this document are to

- define the purposes and goals of the State Park System;
- establish criteria for the selection of state park units;
- define the eight types of state park units;
- establish a land-use zone classification system for the management and development of lands and resources within park units;
- establish goals and policies for the management of the State Park System; and
- facilitate the consideration of State Park System issues and concerns in the preparation of the Department of Natural Resources Statewide and Regional Resource Plans

This document is intended to provide the framework within which more detailed planning efforts and management actions can be undertaken over a twenty-year period (1982 to 2002).

## History

What today is the Alaska State Park System began in 1957 when Congress authorized and funded the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to develop and operate a system of roadside campgrounds.

On July 1, 1959, the federal government transferred ownership of 32 campgrounds and recreational sites to the new State of Alaska. Management of these sites was assigned to the Forestry, Parks and Recreation Section of the Division of Lands, which later (September 1966) became the Parks and Recreation Section of the Division of Lands and finally became the Division of Parks on October 1, 1970. The

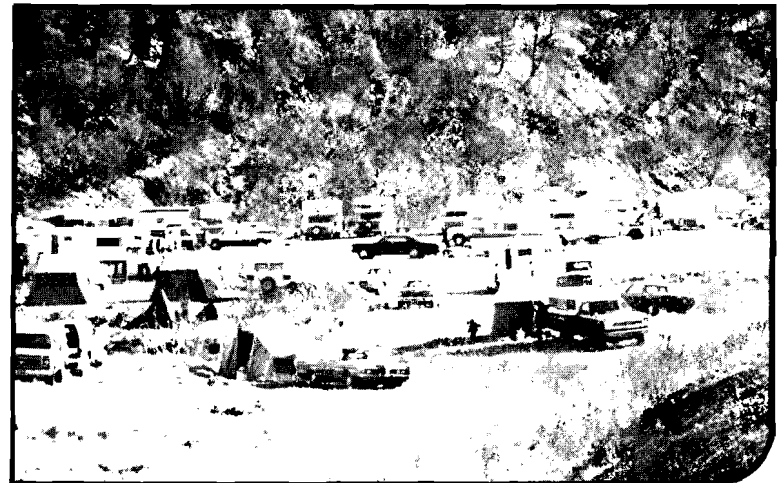
management authority of the Division of Parks and the Alaska State Park System comes from the Alaska Constitution and Title 41.20 of the Alaska Statutes.

Laws pertaining to the Alaska State Park System are shown in Figure 1. Please refer to Appendix II for a more detailed history of the State Park System.

## Role of the Division of Parks

The Alaska Division of Parks is responsible for a variety of the state's recreational, scenic and historical resources management functions: managing the State Park System, administering grants for recreational and historic preservation purposes, managing the Youth Conservation Corps and youth hostel programs, administering the Alaska Historic Preservation Act, and serving as the state's clearinghouse on park, recreational and historic preservation matters.

This document, which addresses only one of those functions, has been prepared to guide the Division of Parks in carrying out its mandates relating to the Alaska State Park System. Please refer to Appendix I for additional information on the Division of Parks and its various functions.



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## Park System Purposes

The Alaska State Park System is composed of park units which are managed to

- provide for the outdoor recreational needs of present and future generations;
- preserve and protect areas of natural significance;
- preserve and interpret Alaska's cultural heritage;
- protect and manage areas of significant scientific or educational value; and
- provide support to the state's tourism industry.

## Park Unit Selection Criteria

To represent the state's most significant recreational, natural and cultural resource values, a state park unit will meet the following criteria:

- The area possesses, or provides access to recreational, cultural or natural resources of statewide or regional significance; and/or provides, or will provide in the future, for regional or statewide public use. While state park units may provide for significant use by local residents, units shall not be established solely on the basis of meeting community recreational needs or desires.
- The establishment of the area as a park unit is within the scope of the mandates, goals and policies of the State Park System.
- The area meets existing or future recreational, educational, or scientific needs and/or helps to resolve outdoor recreational conflicts and issues.
- Management of the area as a unit of the State Park System is feasible.

- The area meets the purpose and characteristics of one of the eight types of state park units.
- Establishment of the unit will not duplicate opportunities which are more adequately provided by other public agencies or by the private sector.
- Public, local government, and/or legislative support exists for establishment of the unit.

## Setting

As the 1980's begin, the Alaska State Park System is in a dynamic period of change reflecting the larger changes occurring in the state's economy and land ownership. These changes include the development of the Prudhoe Bay oil fields and trans-Alaska pipeline; conveyance of 44 million acres of land to Alaska's Natives; establishment of 104 million acres of new national parks, forests and refuges; selection by and conveyance to the state of 104 million acres of land under the Statehood Act; transfer of state lands to municipalities; the sale of hundreds of thousands of acres of public land by state and local governments; increasing development of the state's fishing, forest products and tourism industries; and an influx of new residents and visitors from the Lower 48.

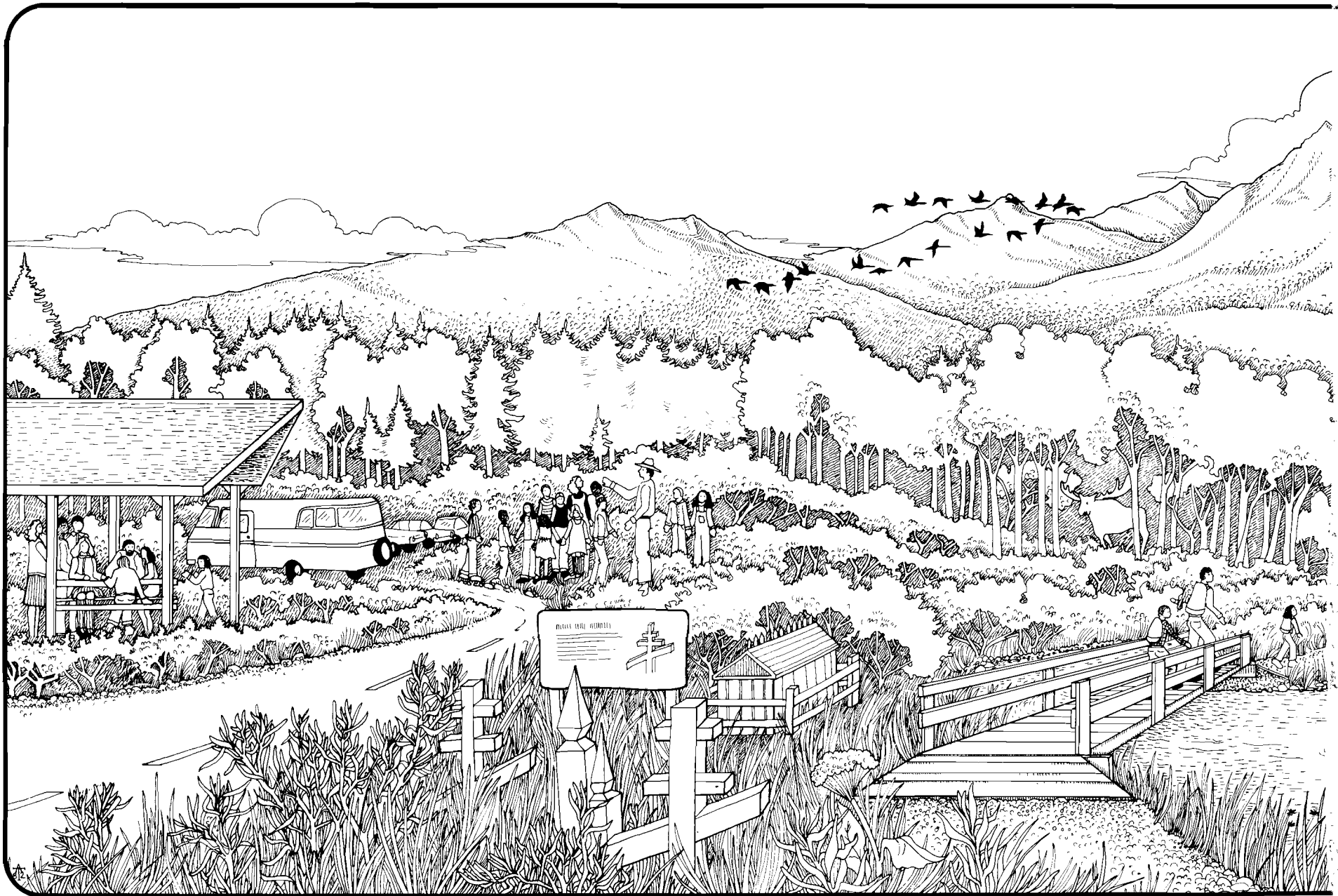
These economic and land-ownership activities have directly and indirectly changed the outdoor recreational opportunities available to most Alaska residents and visitors. Although some developed public recreational opportunities have always been needed, many people simply relied on roughing it. They travelled and camped without concern for land ownership or the need for developed recreational facilities. In the past, almost all recreational lands in the state were publicly owned and had no competing land uses. The ability to go wherever, and do whatever, one desires is an important component of the highly valued "Alaska lifestyle."



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As an individual's ability to gain access to recreational lands and resources has been decreasing due to the settling and development of the "last frontier," the need for designated and actively-managed lands for outdoor recreation has increased. Yet the State Park System simply cannot, and should not, attempt to meet all outdoor recreational needs. However, because of the pattern of state land ownership, location of population centers and public transportation systems, a role is emerging for the Alaska State Park System as a major provider of outdoor recreation experiences.





# Classification of Park System Units



## Purpose

The State Park System comprises eight different types of park units to

- reflect the Division of Parks' mandates to insure, provide and enhance access to and enjoyment of state-owned recreational, natural and cultural resources of statewide or regional significance;
- insure that the state manages a system of diverse park units to meet differing public needs (i.e., more intensively-developed state recreation areas or recreation sites versus less-intensively developed state parks); and
- define, for the public and for park managers, a unit's general natural and cultural resource management goals and the types of public-use opportunities to be provided.

Each park unit is classified first by its title, which sets general management direction; then lands within a given park unit are classified into one of four land-use zones.

## Park Unit Titles

The eight types of units of the Alaska State Park System are

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| State Park            | State Trail  |
| State Historic Park   | State Recreation River                                     |
| State Historic Site   | State (Scientific, Ecological,<br>or Educational) Preserve |
| State Recreation Area |  |
| State Recreation Site |  |

Figure 2, found at the end of this section, provides a comparative summary of characteristics of park unit types.



## STATE PARK

### Definition and Purpose

A state park is a relatively spacious area possessing outstanding and distinct natural, cultural, scenic and/or scientific values. The dominant management objective of the unit is to maintain the park's natural and cultural resources for long-term use and enjoyment by the public. A level of recreational opportunities, which is compatible with the unit's resource values, shall be provided. In most cases, the primary purpose of a state park unit is set forth by the legislature through its enabling legislation and accompanying reports.

### Characteristics

State parks have statewide or regional significance. As much as possible, state parks should be established to represent physiographic provinces of the state and be geographically balanced on a statewide or regional basis to provide high quality natural areas for use by nearby residents as well as by visitors. State parks should be of sufficient size to insure long-term protection of an area's primary resource values. To this end, watershed boundaries should be used wherever possible.

The majority of lands in a state park normally will be classified as natural and wilderness zones. Recreational

development zones will be strategically located to provide public access to, and enjoyment of, park resources. Cultural zones will be established only where significant cultural resources occur.

### Developments and Activities

Recreational developments and activities which provide access to, or enhance enjoyment of, the natural environment of state parks are encouraged. The development of a state park must insure that use levels do not diminish the values of the park's resources. Manipulation of the natural environment within a state park shall be limited to the immediate vicinity of a development. The introduction of non-native plant and animal species is prohibited within state parks, except where native plant species are not available or suitable, and a revegetation project is necessary.



## **STATE HISTORIC PARK**

### **Definition and Purpose**

A state historic park is an area containing an assemblage of significant historical, cultural, archaeological, or anthropological resources from representative eras of Alaska's history or prehistory. The dominant management objective of a state historic park is to preserve and interpret historic resources for Alaskans and visitors to the state.

### **Characteristics**

State historic parks possess cultural resources of statewide or regional significance. A unit's size should be capable of providing adequate protection of historical, cultural, archaeological and/or anthropological resources. State historic parks are generally larger, in terms of land use, than state historic sites.

In most state historic parks, a majority of the land area will be classified as cultural zone. Recreational development zones will be designated for the development of visitor support facilities (i.e., parking lots, interpretive centers, and toilets). The natural zone classification may be used for lands which are managed as buffers between the unit's historical and cultural resources and existing or anticipated adjoining land uses. Normally, wilderness zones will not be designated in state historic parks.

### **Developments and Activities**

Developments and activities which foster the preservation, protection and interpretation of the unit's cultural resource values are encouraged. The development of a state historic park is designed and managed to insure that the use levels do not diminish the historical, cultural, archaeological or anthropological values for which the unit was established. Development should involve minimal introduction of objects or plant species not in context with the historical period the park is established to represent. Recreational activities which are compatible with the purposes of a state historic park may be allowed. Units may include certain agricultural, mercantile or commercial activities provided those activities are properly regulated, are part of the history of the individual unit or support adaptive reuse efforts, enhance the historical scene and provide a needed service to the public.



## STATE HISTORIC SITE

### Definition and Purpose

A state historic site is a relatively small area established and managed to preserve, interpret and/or commemorate a structure, object, and/or event of historical, cultural, archaeological or anthropological value which represents an era of Alaska's history or prehistory.

### Characteristics

State historic sites possess a cultural resource of statewide or regional significance. They differ from state historic parks in terms of size and general focus; sites are smaller and focus on single items or events rather than on a complex or assemblage of historic resources. Although some historic sites will be quite small, efforts should be made to acquire lands sufficient for long-term protection of the cultural resource and its setting and for provision of visitor-accommodation facilities.

In most state historic sites, a majority of the land area will be classified as cultural zone. Recreational development zones will be designated for the development of visitor support facilities (i.e., parking lots, interpretive centers, and toilets). The natural zone classification may be used for lands which are managed as buffers between the unit's historical or cultural resources and existing or anticipated adjoining land uses. In almost all cases, wilderness zones will not be designated in state historic sites.

### Developments and Activities

Developments and activities which foster the protection and interpretation of the unit's cultural resource values are encouraged. Recreational development and activities compatible with the preservation and interpretation of the unit's historic resources may be permitted. State historic sites may include certain agricultural, mercantile or commercial activities provided those activities are properly regulated, are part of the history of the individual unit or support adaptive reuse efforts, enhance the historical scene and provide a needed service to the public.



## STATE RECREATION AREA

### Definition and Purpose

A state recreation area is a relatively spacious unit and possesses a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities. The dominant management objective of the unit is to provide a maximum level of outdoor recreational opportunities based on the natural values of the unit and its ability to sustain use without significant adverse effects on natural systems.

### Characteristics

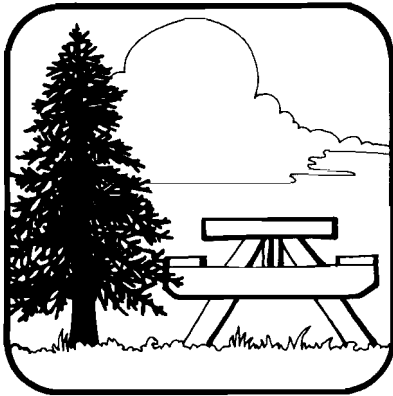
A state recreation area possesses recreational and/or natural resources of statewide or regional significance. Geographical distribution of these units and their relationships to population centers are important factors in the designation of an area as a state recreation area. The minimum size of a unit should be 200 acres so that the unit may have diverse natural landscapes capable of supporting a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities. The uniqueness and significance of an area's natural and cultural resources are not key criteria for the establishment of state recreation areas as is the case with state parks.

The majority of the lands within a state recreation area will be classified as natural and recreational development. Cultural zones will be established where appropriate. Only

in special cases will any lands be classified as wilderness. Wilderness zones, if established, will be based upon documented public desire for wilderness-oriented recreation within the unit.

### Developments and Activities

The management of a state recreation area allows for carefully planned and controlled resource modification to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities as long as the intensity of modification does not diminish the unit's natural and cultural values. Such modifications must be based upon a formal decision to enhance public enjoyment of the state recreation area's natural values or to provide for site-appropriate outdoor recreational activities. Lands within the unit will be developed to provide diverse, high quality outdoor recreational experiences in keeping with regional use patterns and preferences. Other than state recreation sites, state recreation areas are generally the most intensively developed type of unit in the State Park System.



## STATE RECREATION SITE

### Definition and Purpose

A state recreation site is a relatively small area and provides one or more outdoor recreational opportunities. A state recreation site may also be established to provide access to outdoor recreational lands and opportunities not managed as part of the State Park System. Management objectives are site-specific, but generally emphasize recreational use over resource protection.

### Characteristics

State recreation sites possess recreational resources of statewide or regional significance. The unit should be of sufficient size to allow for future expansion of recreational facilities, to provide an adequate buffer between adjoining land uses, and to provide an adequate buffer for the protection of the quality of recreational opportunities in the unit.

Normally, from one-quarter to three-quarters of a state recreation site's land area will be classified as a recreational development zone. Because of the small size and recreation-use-oriented objective of these units, the wilderness zone will not be applied. Sensitive areas such as wetlands, beaches or streambanks normally will be classified as natural zones. Cultural zones will be identified and established where the presence of historic or archaeological resources is significant enough to warrant this designation.

### Developments and Activities

The management of a state recreation site allows for resource modification to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities as long as natural and cultural resource values are protected. Activities and developments will vary according to the intent and purpose for which the unit is designated. Developments and activities which may be found at state recreation sites include - but are not limited to - picnic areas, campgrounds, parking lots, boat launches and scenic overlooks.





## STATE TRAIL

### Definition and Purpose

A state trail is a land- and/or -water-based linear recreation use oriented corridor which possesses significant recreational, natural, cultural, wilderness and/or scenic resource values. The management objective of this unit is to provide for the use and/or protection of recreational, educational, historical, scenic and natural values and opportunities for which the unit was identified and established.

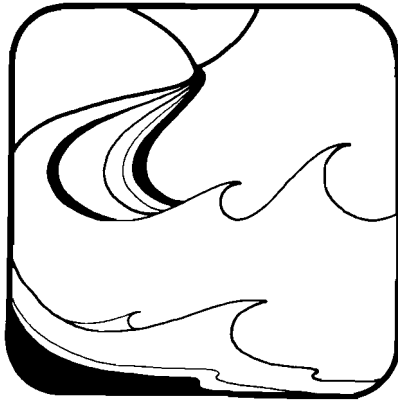
### Characteristics

State trails are of statewide or regional significance. Where possible, the width of a state trail corridor on land will be from 100 feet to one-half mile on each side of the trail centerline. There will be circumstances — such as easement purchases on non-state land — where it will be necessary to establish corridors of less than desired width. A trail can be established on state land or may be designated in areas where other entities manage the surrounding land. The trail corridor shall be acquired in fee simple public ownership wherever practical and shall be of sufficient width to protect the values and opportunities for which the unit is established.

Since state trails are linear corridors, sections of a trail and adjoining lands will be zoned as necessary to protect the associated resource values. The amount of land classified per zone will vary from trail to trail depending on the nature of resource values present and the desired public use of the trail.

### Developments and Activities

State trails will be developed to provide for a diversity of regional or educational opportunities. Development shall not impair the unit's inherent scenic qualities and resource values. Trails shall be developed in conformity with the Alaska Recreation Trail Plan. Facilities such as trail shelters, cabins and overlooks will be provided on the more highly-developed trails, and primitive camping areas and minimum trail development will occur on others. Modes of use (horse, summer/winter ORV's, boat, foot, ski, etc.) may be regulated to minimize conflicts with other users and/or natural and cultural resource values.



## **STATE RECREATION RIVER**

### **Definition and Purpose**

A State Recreation River is a continuous or, where necessary, a discontinuous corridor encompassing a river, or portion of a river, and the associated upland area which possesses significant recreational, natural, cultural, wilderness and/or scenic resource values. The primary management objective of the unit is to provide for the use and protection of the recreational, educational, historical, aesthetic and natural values and opportunities that are associated with the river and its related upland.

### **Characteristics**

State recreation rivers possess recreational, natural and/or cultural resources of statewide or regional significance. Wherever practical, the unit corridor should be from 200 feet to one mile beyond each riverbank, allowing a natural buffer between the river and adjacent land uses.

Since state recreation rivers are linear corridors, sections of the rivers and adjoining uplands will be zoned as necessary to protect the associated public use and resource values. The percentages of land classified per zone are variable depending upon the resources present and the desired public use of the river.

### **Developments and Activities**

State recreation rivers shall be designed to provide for a diversity of water-oriented use-related opportunities. Development shall not impair the unit's resource values. Developments such as day-use and overnight facilities may be developed at specific intervals along the river.



## STATE PRESERVE

### Definition and Purpose

A state preserve is an area having outstanding biological, paleontological, geological or ecological values of scientific or educational interest. The primary management objective of the unit is resource protection. The purpose of these units is to provide for applied research, basic research, and/or outdoor environmental education.

### Characteristics

A state preserve has a resource or resources of statewide or regional significance. The unit should be of adequate size to provide protection of the natural feature(s) for which it is established.

The natural zone will be the primary land use zone within a state preserve, thus helping to guarantee protection of the unit's resource values. If there are cultural values associated with the preserve, a cultural zone will be established to protect these values. Wilderness zones may also be designated to help insure a high level of land and resource protection. Recreational development zones will only be used to allow the provision of scientific or educational support facilities.

### Developments and Activities

Recreational development and activities will generally be prohibited in these preserves. Scientific and educational activities will be encouraged as long as the unit's resource values are maintained. Only minimal developments associated with the purpose of protection of the unit's resource values will be allowed (i.e., boardwalks in sensitive study areas). All, or portions, of state preserves may be closed to public use if such action is necessary to protect the resource and/or scientific research being conducted within the unit.

**FIGURE 2. State Park Unit Characteristics**

	<b>Representative Example</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Management Objective</b>
<b>STATE PARK</b>	Chugach State Park	An area possessing outstanding distinct natural and/or cultural resource values	Prevent the deterioration of the natural and cultural resources while providing for appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities
<b>STATE HISTORIC PARK</b>	Independence Mine State Historic Park	An area containing an assemblage of cultural resources	Preserve and interpret the cultural resources
<b>STATE HISTORIC SITE</b>	Old Sitka State Historic Site	A small area containing a single cultural resource	Preserve and interpret the cultural resources
<b>STATE RECREATION AREA</b>	Nancy Lake State Recreation Area	A spacious area possessing a diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities	Provide the maximum level of outdoor recreation opportunities in a high quality natural setting
<b>STATE RECREATION SITE</b>	Dry Creek State Recreation Site	A small area providing one or more outdoor recreational opportunities	Emphasis on site specific recreational use
<b>STATE TRAIL</b>	Juneau State Trails	A land-based linear corridor	Provide for and protect resource related opportunities
<b>STATE RECREATION RIVER</b>	(Potential) Lake Creek State Recreation River	A corridor encompassing a river (or portions) and associated uplands	Provide for and protect resource related opportunities
<b>STATE (SCIENTIFIC, EDUCATIONAL OR ECOLOGICAL) PRESERVE</b>	(Potential) Augustine Island State Preserve	An area containing outstanding scientific and/or educational values	Prevent the deterioration of scientific, educational or ecological resources

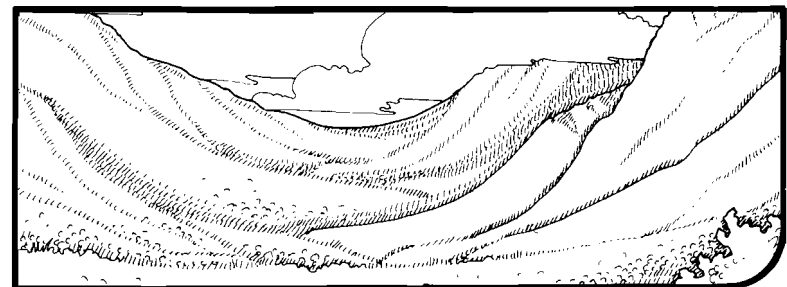
# Land-Use Zones within Park Units

To further clarify the intent for management of land and resources within state park units, all lands within each park unit are classified into one or more of the following zones:

- Recreational Development Zone
- Natural Zone
- Wilderness Zone
- Cultural Zone

Specific land-use zones within park units are to provide more detailed direction as to management of specific lands and resources. For any given park unit, the location of these zones and amounts of land and resources allocated to each zone will be determined during the preparation of a park management plan or site development plan.

Specific developments and activities for a given park unit's land-use zones will be directed by a specific state park unit management or site development planning process. Figure 3 illustrates the compatibility of various public-use activities and developments in each of the four land-use zones. This table is intended to guide preparation of unit management plans and the review of proposed park management actions in park units.



Overall Intensity of Development	Management Orientation	
	Intensive Public Use Management Emphasis	Resource Preservation Management Emphasis
Low	A dashed line on the left side of a vertical dashed center line, transitioning to a solid arrow pointing right.	
Low to Moderate	A dashed line on the left side of a vertical dashed center line, transitioning to a solid arrow pointing right.	
Low to Moderate	A dashed line on the left side of a vertical dashed center line, transitioning to a solid arrow pointing right.	
Moderate to High	A solid arrow pointing left, transitioning to a dashed line on the right side of a vertical dashed center line.	
Moderate to High	A solid arrow pointing left, transitioning to a dashed line on the right side of a vertical dashed center line.	
Varies	A horizontal line of small circles, labeled 'Variable' above it, centered on a vertical dashed center line.	
Varies	A horizontal line of small circles, labeled 'Variable' above it, centered on a vertical dashed center line.	
Low	A dashed line on the left side of a vertical dashed center line, transitioning to a solid arrow pointing right.	



## Recreational Development Zone

### Purpose and Characteristics

Recreational development zones are established within State Park System units to meet the more intensive recreational needs of the public with convenient and well defined access via roads, railroads, boating anchorages, airstrips, and high standard trails; with more intensively-developed recreational facilities such as campgrounds or picnic areas; with guided activities; and with information centers to orient visitors to the unit's special features.

The landscape within this zone can be modified to support educational and recreational activities and/or to enhance wildlife habitat and scenic qualities. These zones are established where soils, slope, drainage and vegetation can support more intensive recreational activities. Fire suppression and insect and disease control may be used, where appropriate, within this zone to maintain or enhance recreational use. A recreational development zone may already have been influenced by prior developments and is intended to provide a transition area to absorb heavy human impacts.

### Developments and Activities

The highest level of developments and activities is meant to occur in this zone within park units. The developments allowed in this zone include - but are not limited to - roads and trails, private vehicle and public transportation routes or access, campgrounds, picnic areas, visitor and interpretive centers, high-standard trails for all ages and abilities, park management facilities and commercial lodges or resorts as provided for within the unit management or site development plan. High intensity activities related to the use of these developed facilities are generally encouraged. Summer and winter off-road vehicles (ORV'S) and other motorized recreational vehicles may be allowed in this zone within specifically designated areas or through management techniques such as time and/or space allocations.



## Natural Zone

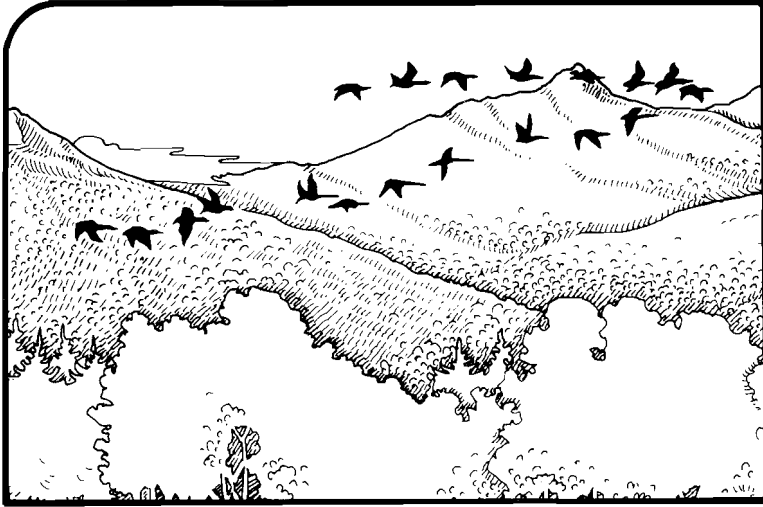
### Purpose and Characteristics

Natural zones are established to provide for moderate-to-low impact and dispersed forms of recreation and to act as buffers between recreational development and wilderness zones.

These zones are relatively undeveloped and undisturbed, and are managed to maintain high scenic qualities and to provide visitors with opportunities for significant, natural outdoor experiences. An area's natural landscape character is the dominant feature within this zone. Landscape modification may be allowed to enhance, maintain, or protect the natural setting according to the unit management plan. Use of fire suppression, insect or disease control, or wildlife habitat enhancement as management techniques in natural zones will be defined in the unit management plan.

### Developments and Activities

Developments in a natural zone are intended to provide for the safety of park visitors and to provide for a moderate level of convenience in a high-quality natural setting. Allowable developments include - but are not limited to - backcountry shelters, public-use cabins, high standard hiking and bicycle trails (paved or gravel), bridges and roads where necessary to access development zones and as provided for in an approved management plan. A medium level of activity is encouraged in this zone. Activities include - but are not limited to - hang-gliding, bicycling, backpacking, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, camping, sledding, tobogganing, berry picking and rock climbing. Snowmobiles may be allowed in this zone - within specifically designated areas - depending on resource sensitivities and potential conflicts with other park uses. Other private, motorized off-road vehicle use is generally prohibited within this zone.



## Wilderness Zone

### Purpose and Characteristics

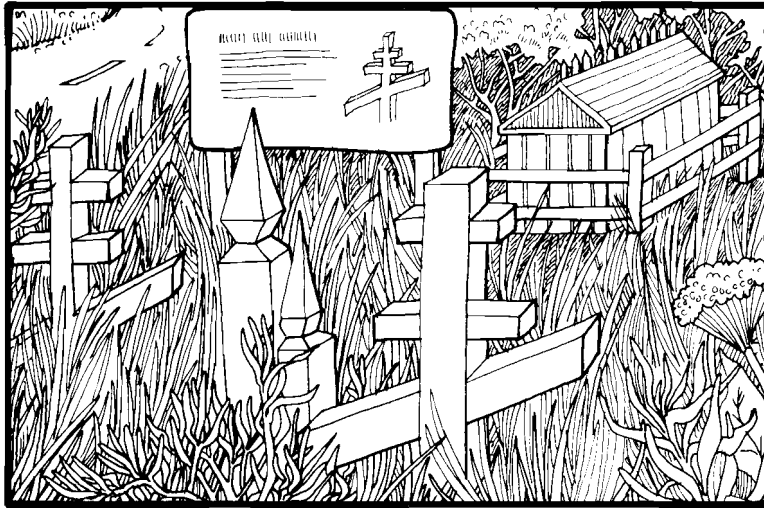
Wilderness zones are established to promote, to perpetuate and, where necessary, to restore the wilderness character of the land and its specific values of solitude, physical and mental challenge, scientific study, inspiration and primitive recreational opportunities.

Wilderness zones are of such size as to maintain the area's wilderness character, are tailored to protect the associated values and, if possible, are defined by watershed boundaries. These zones are characterized by the natural landscape, its vegetation and its geologic forms. Resource modification can occur in this zone only to restore areas to a natural state. Natural processes will be allowed to operate freely to the extent that human safety and public and private property are protected. The use of fire suppression and insect and disease control as management techniques may occur only through the implementation of a plan approved by the director of the Division of Parks. Wildlife habitat enhancement activities, such as vegetation manipulation, may not occur in this zone.

### Developments and Activities

A wilderness zone should have no man-made conveniences within its boundaries except for the most primitive of trails with minimum trail maintenance, bridges, and signing. Developments or other improvements will be undertaken only if it has been determined by the director of the Division of Parks that significant threats to public safety exist or in order to reduce adverse impacts on the area's resources and values. Access to and within this zone, for other than rescue or management purposes, will be by foot or other non-motorized means except for 1) use of designated aircraft-landing access sites where alternative means of access do not exist, 2) authorized research projects, or 3) situations specifically allowed by law. Aircraft landing for recreational access or research purposes may be restricted by the director as to daily time or season of use. The dropping of people or objects from aircraft is prohibited except by special permit issued by the director. Activities which threaten the character of the wilderness zone will be restricted. If overuse or misuse occurs, the director may restrict entry and use of the area. Methods of restriction may include separation and control of use activities through time and space allocation, use/area rotation schemes, and/or a permit system.





## Cultural Zone

### Purpose and Characteristics

Cultural zones are established to preserve, investigate, document and interpret Alaska's cultural resources and heritage.

Cultural zones are designated to provide adequate protection of historical, cultural, archaeological, or anthropological resources. These zones may contain a single feature or an assemblage of historic features.

### Developments and Activities

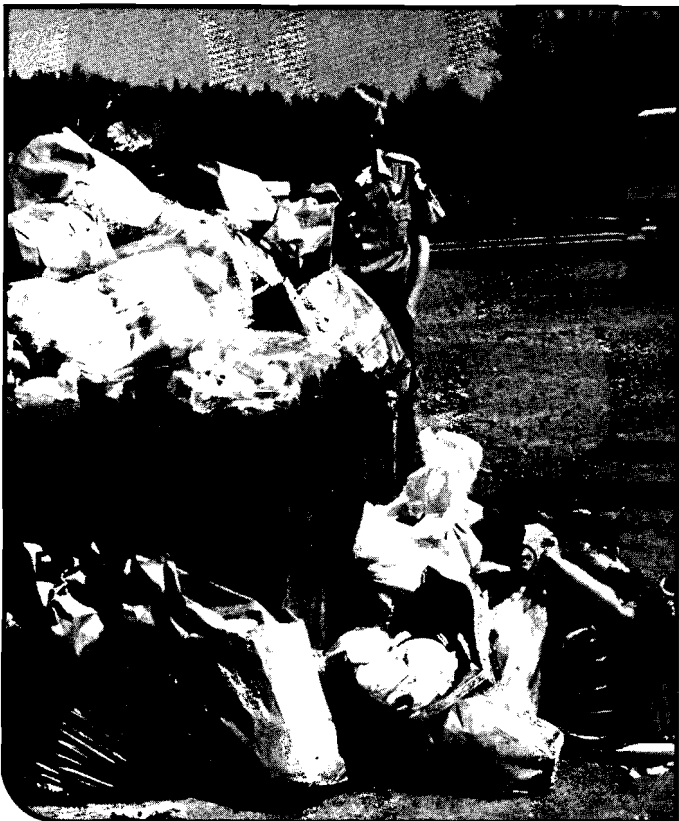
The intensity of development in a cultural zone is managed to insure that use levels in the area do not impair the integrity of historical, cultural, archaeological, or anthropological resources. Any development within a cultural zone should have minimal impact on the cultural and historical values within the unit and should involve minimal introduction of artificial features for activities not related to the cultural

resource and its values. Development generally will be associated with the necessities of public access, safety and interpretation of the cultural resources present. Paved trails, automobile parking, toilets and interpretive displays are examples of such development. Activities in this zone are for educational or scientific purposes. Recreation-related facilities are generally secondary and will be separated from the site(s) of cultural resources by sufficient buffers. Activities in keeping with the historical period of the cultural resource may be encouraged. To protect the cultural values for which the unit was created, resource modification, fire suppression, and insect and disease control management techniques will be utilized only when absolutely necessary in this zone.

**FIGURE 3. Guidelines for Activities within Land-Use Zones**

LAND USE ZONES	RESOURCE MODIFICATION FOR:					INTENSITY OF RECREATION FACILITY DEVELOPMENT IN DESIGNATED LOCATIONS										
	Educational Purposes	Recreational Purposes	Habitat Enhancement	Scenic Enhancement	Resource Restoration	INTENSITY			EXAMPLES							
						High	Medium	Low	Trail Bridges	Ski Lifts	Wildlife Observation Blinds	Visitor Centers	Winter Warm-up Huts	Public Use Cabins	Trail Shelters	
<b>RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ZONE</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>NATURAL ZONE</b>	◐	◐	●	◐	●	○	◐	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●
<b>WILDERNESS ZONE</b>	○	○	○	○	◐	○	○	◐	◐	○	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐
<b>CULTURAL ZONE</b>	◐	○	○	○	◐	○	○	○	●	○	◐	◐	◐	○	○	○

Tent Platforms	Developed Walk-in Campsites	ROADS	SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS	TRAILS	CONCES-SIONS	MANAGEMENT CONTROLS	MOTORIZED ACTIVITIES											FIREARM DIS - CHARGE			
			High Standard	Low Standard	Commercial Lodges	Guiding Permit	Fire Supression	Insect & Disease Control	Wildlife Habitat Enhancement	Private Automobile/Vehicle	Public Transportation	Off-Road Vehicle (ORV)	Snowmachine	Aircraft Landings	Motorboating	Motorcycle	HORSEBACKRIDING	Shooting Range	Hunting		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	●	◐	◐	○	●
●	●	◐	●	●	○	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	○	◐	◐	●
◐	◐	○	◐	○	○	●	◐	◐	○	○	○	○	○	◐	○	○	◐	○	●	●	●
○	○	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	○	◐	○	◐	◐	◐



# Goals And Policies

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To help guide the overall management of the State Park System, the following goals and policies have been established. They have also been developed to help provide accountability to the public for the division's management of the park system as mandated by the State's constitution and statutes.

Stated policies relating to the fulfillment of a particular goal are listed under that goal. Policies which relate to more than one goal are grouped under related policy topics.

It is recognized that new situations may arise requiring the development and adoption of new policies. Operating policies, procedures and detailed management plans will also be developed in the future. However, these new policies, procedures and management plans shall be developed within the context of this document.



## **1: RECREATION GOAL**

**PROVIDE FOR THE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF ALASKANS AND VISITORS TO THE STATE THROUGH THE ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF UNITS OF THE ALASKA STATE PARK SYSTEM**

The Division of Parks shall

- 1.1 develop a statewide system of state park units — which provides a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities for all ages, abilities and use preferences — on lands throughout the state in a manner which protects the resource values of the individual units;
- 1.2 provide for year-round use of State Park System units where appropriate and where management capability exists;
- 1.3 maintain quality outdoor recreational settings and minimize environmental degradation of State Park System unit resource values through appropriate management strategies and development techniques;
- 1.4 identify and assess increasing demands and changes in use patterns for outdoor recreational opportunities and respond to those needs through design, development and park management actions, including expansion and development of existing park system units and acquisition of new areas;
- 1.5 establish State Park System units — which serve a statewide or regional function — in close proximity to, or within, population centers; and
- 1.6 restore to public ownership, as units of the State Park System, lands critical for outdoor recreational use in order to maintain and enhance the public recreational land base and to alleviate the loss of traditional use areas;

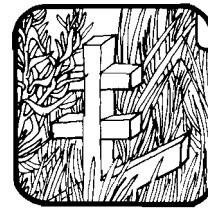


## **2: PRESERVATION GOAL**

**PRESERVE AND PROTECT AREAS OF NATURAL SIGNIFICANCE AS UNITS OF THE STATE PARK SYSTEM FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS**

The Division of Parks shall

- 2.1 inventory all units of the State Park System to identify naturally significant areas and to manage such areas to preserve their values;
- 2.2 acquire and preserve those lands which are appropriate for State Park System management which have statewide or regionally significant natural features and values, and which are not already adequately represented or protected within the State Park System or through other means;
- 2.3 manage all units of the park system so that the natural qualities of each unit are not diminished;
- 2.4 represent the diversity of Alaska's natural environment, where appropriate, within units of the State Park System; and
- 2.5 manage all units of the park system to protect and maintain fish and wildlife populations.



## **3: CULTURAL HERITAGE GOAL**

**PRESERVE AND INTERPRET ALASKA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH THE ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT, AND MANAGEMENT OF STATE PARK SYSTEM UNITS**

The Division of Parks shall

- 3.1 survey all park units systematically for prehistoric and historic resources as part of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey;
- 3.2 acquire, inventory, and manage state historic parks and sites to preserve and interpret significant sites, structures, artifacts and resources representing the major themes of Alaska's prehistory, history and culture;
- 3.3 investigate, stabilize, rehabilitate, restore, adaptively reuse, and/or preserve significant structures, sites or artifacts contained in units of the State Park System; and
- 3.4 provide interpretive and visitor orientation programs and facilities at state historic parks and sites and at other units, as appropriate, to provide for understanding and appreciation of historic and cultural resources.



#### **4: EDUCATION GOAL**

**PROTECT AND MANAGE AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT SCIENTIFIC OR EDUCATIONAL VALUE AS STATE PARK SYSTEM UNITS**

The Division of Parks shall

- 4.1 identify, and establish as state preserves, those areas possessing important scientific or educational resource values;
- 4.2 identify and protect important scientific and educational values within existing State Park System units through ongoing resource inventory efforts, programs of scientific research, and other park management techniques; and
- 4.3 incorporate scientific and educational values of park units into interpretive programs to assist the public in developing appreciation and understanding of the values for which units were established.



#### **5: TOURISM GOAL**

**PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THE STATE'S TOURISM INDUSTRY THROUGH THE ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF STATE PARK SYSTEM UNITS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO ALASKA.**

The Division of Parks shall

- 5.1 support the state's tourism industry through the management of natural and cultural resource attractions, the protection of scenic areas and the provision of year-round outdoor recreational opportunities in units of the State Park System;
- 5.2 provide facilities and services within park units which are appealing to visitors to the state and residents, while insuring that these facilities and services compliment, rather than compete with, the provision of public outdoor recreational opportunities;
- 5.3 provide information on the Alaska State Park System to the private sector for tourism and marketing efforts while insuring that these promotional efforts are compatible with and complement park system management goals and policies; and
- 5.4 encourage the development of cooperative interagency visitor information centers, cooperative data collection and cooperative research.







## 6: ACQUISITION POLICIES

### 6.1

The most appropriate means of land acquisition shall be utilized to include:

- i) legislative action
- ii) administrative action
- iii) fee simple acquisition of private land
- iv) lease or purchase of limited property rights
- v) cooperative management agreements
- vi) land exchanges

### 6.2

The State Park System unit classification system shall be used to guide land acquisition efforts to fulfill the recreational opportunity spectrum and to meet resource conservation goals. Ideal physical and visual boundaries will be identified to

- i) include the natural, scenic, recreational, cultural and other features for which the unit is established to protect and provide;
- ii) provide an adequate buffer to protect the unit features from outside influences or encroachments; and
- iii) provide an adequate buffer to protect private property owners from park users.

### 6.3

The acquisition of new units, or the expansion of existing units, of the State Park System shall be prioritized on statewide, regional and parkwide basis. Land acquisitions should relate to regional park system or unit management plans.

### 6.4

Consideration shall be given to the incorporation, by mutual agreement, into the State Park System of lands, and interest

therein, acquired or developed by other federal, state, local or private agencies if such lands or interest meet State Park System criteria.

### 6.5

Inholdings at existing units will be inventoried and evaluated to determine the relative priorities for acquisition.

### 6.6

Lands will be sought for acquisition on the basis of fee simple title. "Less-than-fee" acquisitions may be used where the acquisition does not involve a key value of the larger park unit, or where public use — other than for access — is not a purpose of the acquisition (i.e., scenic buffers, conservation easements, etc.).

### 6.7

Lands shall be acquired, where desirable and with the owner's agreement, at less than full market value making use of full or partial-donation, life-estate or other methods.

### 6.8

Purchase of land shall be negotiated on the basis of competent appraisals of fair market value, and the approved fair market value will be offered to the owner except as provided in policy 6.7.

### 6.9

State park units, which primarily serve the needs of only one or several communities, may be established provided such units also protect or preserve an area of statewide or regional significance, represent a particular physiographic province of the state, or provide access to larger areas of publicly-owned lands or resources.

### 6.10

Whenever possible, purchases of land will be made on a willing-seller basis. Condemnation, where allowed by law, will be used only when highly significant public resource values are at stake.

### 6.11

Land exchanges will be utilized where possible to achieve park management objectives and to minimize land acquisi-

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tion costs. Any exchange of land must be in the public interest and comply with AS 38.50 (Land Exchange Statute).

#### 6.12

The priorities for land acquisition are

- i) land necessary to prevent the irretrievable loss of valuable public-use opportunities; and
- ii) land which blocks access to other public lands and resources with high public-use values.



## 7: PLANNING POLICIES

#### 7.1

A diverse State Park System shall be planned to be responsive to anticipated changes in available leisure time, population composition and distribution, energy supply and use, resource conservation, transportation modes and travel patterns, regional recreational opportunities, public access, land status, and availability of staff and funds. These changes shall be identified through ongoing research and analysis of resources and public interests.

#### 7.2

State Park System units shall be planned, developed and/or redesigned and maintained, as appropriate in keeping with other policies, for accessibility of and usability by the public. Consideration will be given to a needs assessment of children, the handicapped, those of low income and senior citizens.

#### 7.3

State Park System units shall be established within the weekend-overnight zones of population centers and in primary vacation and visitor-destination areas.

#### 7.4

Duplication of visitor facilities or services adequately provided for at another state park unit or by another government agency or the private sector shall be avoided.

#### 7.5

A management plan shall be prepared for each park unit. This plan will be based on the unit's resource values and public outdoor recreational use patterns and preferences.

#### 7.6

Potential impacts shall be identified in order to plan for and protect State Park System units from environmental quality degradation and loss of recreational opportunities.

#### 7.7

Park unit names shall reflect geographic place-names. The use of a person's name is discouraged except when that person's name is part of a long-recognized geographic place-name.

#### 7.8

Units of the State Park System shall include specialized recreational use units (such as group camps, ORV trails, helicopter skiing areas, etc.) if they possess appropriate resources to satisfy a deficiency for a significantly large group of users and if they may be managed without adversely displacing or conflicting with existing recreational uses or adversely impacting park resources.

#### 7.9

Planning of State Park System units shall be done cooperatively with local governments, other agencies, groups and individuals. The planning and designing of facilities and the preparation of each park unit's management or site development plan shall include use of public participation processes, interdisciplinary planning teams; and input from field personnel, park advisory boards, and public and private agencies.

#### 7.10

To the fullest extent possible, there shall be maintained for each park unit a current inventory of natural and cultural resources and public uses of those resources. However,

cultural resource information may be restricted from general public inspection to discourage looting or disturbance of cultural resource sites.



## 8: DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

### 8.1

State Park System units will be developed to facilitate high-quality outdoor recreational experiences based upon the area's scenic, natural and cultural resource values. Developments will not serve solely as the objects of the recreational experiences nor simply as attractions.

### 8.2

State Park System facilities shall be located, designed and constructed to insure that natural and cultural resources are not unnecessarily impacted and/or degraded. Disturbed areas — particularly material and waste material disposal sites — will be restored, revegetated or adapted to recreational land uses. Material and waste material disposal sites will not be developed inside park units in situations where sites exist outside the unit and their use is economically feasible.

### 8.3

The impact of park unit recreational use and development on adjacent private lands shall be given full consideration during the development of State Park System units. As far as possible, facilities and activities shall be buffered from adjoining property owners through the use of vegetation screens, or other techniques in smaller units, and through adequate land buffers in larger park units.

### 8.4

As far as possible, efforts will be made to develop State Park System unit parking, sanitation and related public-use support facilities in upland areas while avoiding beaches, wetlands, flood-plains, tidal areas or other environmentally-sensitive or geologically-hazardous areas. Where developments must be placed in these areas to provide public access and use of park resources, developments shall be designed, to the extent possible, to

- i) withstand damage from natural conditions,
- ii) minimize the cost to the state if damage occurs, and
- iii) be sited to avoid environmental degradation and/or loss of fish or wildlife habitat.

### 8.5

Giving highest priority to those units experiencing overcrowding and/or unacceptable environmental deterioration, facilities in all units of the State Park System shall be designed to reflect and accommodate appropriate levels of use.

### 8.6

Innovative use of alternative energy sources shall be considered in all park developments.

### 8.7

A visitor information and signing plan shall be prepared and implemented for each park unit or site development. The Division of Parks shall adopt a manual of standardized signing to insure that park signing is uniform throughout the state.

### 8.8

All appropriate public sanitation standards will be adopted to protect public health and to minimize conflicts between park users and large mammals such as bears.

- i) Recreational vehicle sewage dump stations will be provided where appropriate and where the private sector cannot or will not meet this need. Private and local entities will be encouraged to provide this service.
- ii) At each facility which has a suitable water source, an adequate and safe water supply will be provided.

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- iii) By means of pit toilets, vaulted latrines, flush toilets or other sewage disposal methods as appropriate for the site and level of use, provision will be made for the disposal of human wastes in developed areas and at heavily-used back-country sites.
  - iv) To prevent the creation of an attraction for large mammals, suitable containers will be provided for garbage and refuse.

#### 8.9

Construction materials used in State Park System units shall be appropriate to the natural and/or historical environment, and facility designs shall blend harmoniously with the natural or historical setting.

#### 8.10

All utility connections to facilities shall be constructed underground unless technically or economically infeasible or where overhead utilities are historically appropriate, in which case the above-ground presence shall not significantly detract from the unit's historical, aesthetic or natural resource values.

#### 8.11

Park unit roads shall be designed in a manner to reduce speed and dust in congested areas, to follow natural contours to the maximum extent possible, to safely accommodate appropriate levels of use of the unit's resources and to meet the division's park road standards.

#### 8.12

Trails of appropriate widths and surfacing shall be planned and developed in accordance with the State Recreation Trail Plan as an integral part of a park unit's access and circulation system. Trails within the State Park System may be linked with trails, and trail systems, located outside of the park unit boundary when it benefits park users and is consistent with the proper management of park resources.

#### 8.13

While not exceeding an appropriate level of use, properly-designed overflow camping and parking facilities shall be provided.

#### 8.14

Carefully controlled manipulation of the natural environment for aesthetic or recreational purposes may occur within appropriate land-use classification zones of certain State Park System units.

#### 8.15

Areas possessing prehistoric or historic resources shall be developed for use only in accordance with appropriate and generally accepted historic preservation standards.



## 9: MANAGEMENT POLICIES

#### 9.1

Provision shall be made for the effective and efficient management of park resources and for the operation of visitor facilities and services at all units in the State Park System to protect natural and cultural resources, enhance public enjoyment of park units, enhance public safety, reduce vandalism, reduce maintenance costs, promote energy conservation and to educate the public on the purposes and objectives of each unit's management.

- i) New technologies will be used to develop statewide facility inventories, to project facility and equipment maintenance and replacement, to document and project levels of visitor use, to document and project levels of visitor use, to document criminal and depreciative behavior, and to determine costs of providing park facilities and services.

#### 9.2

The organization and size of operations staff shall be developed and maintained at an optimum level of efficiency and effectiveness.

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9.3

Insurance shall be given for adequate and proper management of all natural and cultural resources within the units of the State Park System.

9.4

The monitoring and evaluation of the ability of unit resources to withstand the impacts of visitor use shall take place on a continuing basis. When necessary, resources shall be protected through the structural modification of existing facilities (placing new soil over bare tree roots or placing boardwalk over an eroding trail) or limitation of use.

9.5

Youth employment and job training opportunities shall be provided through State Park System unit operations, maintenance and development projects.

9.6

An effective program shall be established whereby volunteers are used, where appropriate, in units of the State Park System.

9.7

Efforts shall be made to work with local governments and individuals in minimizing conflicts with adjoining landowners and uses.

9.8

Deteriorated or outmoded facilities, other than historical resources, will be replaced, and significantly impacted State Park System units will be restored in a phased manner, with priority given to those facilities that pose health and safety problems or involve high operation and maintenance costs in unrestored conditions.

9.9

As much as possible, all natural and manmade hazards in all park units will be identified and evaluated. Full consideration will be given to the level of public safety threat posed by a hazard and the effect upon park resource values of various corrective measures. Corrective actions may include removal or modification of the hazard; notification of the

hazard to the public through park brochures, signing or news media; or, if necessary, public use restrictions or closures of an area.

9.10

State park citizen advisory boards will be established to represent a broad range of park user groups to advise the division on management matters concerning State Park System units.

9.11

Law enforcement shall be provided as an integral part of visitor services. All permanent field rangers will be trained and commissioned as peace officers.

9.12

There may be established, with the concurrence of the legislature, a system of user fees where necessary to ensure the continued provision of services or where highly developed or specialized facilities or services are provided.

9.13

Major insect and disease control measures in park units may be undertaken only with the approval of the director after consideration of park management objectives, published plans and regional considerations.

9.14

Introduction of non-native plant species into State Park System units may occur only if the species used are approved by the director or if they are in accordance with the unit's management and/or site development plan. A list will be maintained of acceptable exotic species which relate to site characteristics and conditions for use.

9.15

Wildland fires are recognized as a natural process and as a management tool. It can be used to maintain ecosystems or controlled to manipulate ecosystems. To help guide fire management, unit fire management plans will be prepared in cooperation with other agencies. The fire plans will identify resource values, modes of access, fire-breaks and other aspects which may have an impact on the park unit.

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9.16

Where appropriate, encouragement will be given to assistance from other agencies, interest groups and private individuals in the management and operation of state park units. It is recognized that other agencies, interest groups and individuals may have talents and capabilities not available within the division and thus may be able to provide additional services or more cost-effective operation of existing park programs. Involvement of any group or individual should occur through specific and defined management agreements which shall be based on the purposes and management objectives of individual park system units.

9.17

Scientific research shall be encouraged in areas of the State Park System when

- i) the research is directed toward achieving a better understanding of resources and/or public uses within the area,
- ii) the researcher is a qualified professional in his/her field, and
- iii) the research activity is consistent with the purposes for which the unit was established and for the land use zone in which it is to be conducted.

9.18

Sensitive natural or cultural resource values found within park units will be protected by employing off-site interpretive techniques and on-site physical and behavioral management techniques.

9.19

Certain non-exclusive commercial use of park land (i.e., film-making, guiding or transportation services) is permissible when it does not interfere with park users or misrepresent resource or park unit values and when it is appropriate to the park unit land zones. However, these activities shall be managed through a permit system.

9.20

Consideration will be given to the transfer of state park units and their facilities to local governments for public recreational management when a unit is determined to no longer meet the criteria for units of the State Park System.

9.21

The division shall work with the boards of game and fisheries to insure protection of fish and wildlife resources and to minimize public use conflicts and impacts while providing a diversity of opportunities and high-quality experiences in units of the park system.

9.22

The allowance of noncompatible uses within park units will be determined on the basis of park statutes and regulations, impacts to unit resources and use, purposes for which the unit was established, the availability of feasible non-park unit alternatives, and other factors as appropriate.

9.23

Where possible, park staff shall be placed to optimize the use of their special skills or training in appropriate types of park units.



## 10: CONCESSIONS POLICIES

10.1

Consideration will be given to the use of concession contracts with the private sector for services which may be beyond the scope of the division, which provide for an appropriate level of service to the public, which can be routinely performed by a concessionaire, and which provide for more cost-effective management of park units.

10.2

Concession contracts shall be prepared in accordance with the intent of the unit management plan and/or site development plan, with park resource values, with public needs, and with projected markets for the services.

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10.3

Concession contracts will be written only to provide management and visitor services. All concession facilities will be considered as park facilities to maintain management control and, wherever possible, will be designed, financed and constructed by the state within a reasonable price level which provides the contractor with an equitable profit or reinvestment potential.

10.4

Encouragement shall be given to private development of recreational facilities, compatible with park purposes, on private lands outside park unit boundaries.

10.5

Public hearings shall be conducted on any major proposed concession development plan in a state park unit.

10.6

Where appropriate, concession management of state park unit facilities may be used as an alternative to user fees.

10.7

Additional policies and procedures shall be developed by the division to deal with

- i) specific types of facilities and services to be provided;
- ii) procedures for selecting concessionaires;
- iii) contract lengths and renewal procedures;
- iv) performance standards;
- v) termination conditions;
- vi) franchise fees, rates and changes, accounting procedures, bonding and insurance.



## 11: VISITOR INFORMATION POLICIES

11.1

Recognition is given to visitor information and interpretation as fundamental aspects of State Park System management. The primary emphasis of park interpretive programs is to encourage interest in and understanding of park resources. The primary emphasis of park information programs is to identify park use opportunities and constraints.

11.2

Within State Park System units, the division will provide high quality interpretive programs tailored to diverse human needs. These programs will present a message or theme for each unit so visitors may more fully enjoy and appreciate Alaska's natural and cultural heritages. Messages or themes include

- i) interpretation of the natural ecosystem, of its processes, of the features indigenous to the landscape being interpreted, and of man's role in the environment;
- ii) interpretation of the cultural and historic resources of the unit; and
- iii) identification of recreational opportunities of the unit.

11.3

Direct "hands-on" interpretive techniques and self-guided programs will be used to the maximum extent possible to encourage visitor involvement and to reduce management costs.

11.4

Information programs will be provided at park units and within local communities to inform potential users of opportunities, hazards and regulations associated with park use.

11.5

Information programs will be developed at appropriate State Park System units to encourage visitors to respect private property located in and near park areas and to become aware of visitor-use impact on local residents.

11.6

Encouragement will be given to cooperative efforts with other agencies, the private sector and volunteers to promote visitor information services and facilities, and to help inform the public of opportunities related to park resources near and within State Park System units.

# Implementation

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## Introduction

Goals, policies and definitions per se are of little direct value until they are actually put in use by agency staff, the public, legislators and others.

## Regional Plans

In view of the state's vast size, the distinctive characters of its regions and the great diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities, long-range planning recommendations for specific park units will be developed through the preparation of regional park system plans.

To summarize, these plans will identify regional issues and concerns, recreational use patterns and preferences, regional resource attributes, public use determinants, and resource capabilities and sensitivities and will develop recommendations for the acquisition, planning, general development and management of park system units within the region.

Each of these regional plans will be prepared in keeping with this document.

## Park Unit Management Plans

Park unit management plans are prepared for each unit of the State Park System to provide overall guidance to the management, interpretation and development of each unit of the park system. In these plans, an attempt is made to identify and reflect each unit's special qualities and opportunities in their recommended management and development actions. A key step in the management planning process is the application of the land use zones to park lands. Once this has been completed, recommendations for the development of park facilities are developed.

The park unit definition of the type of unit for which the plan is being prepared, should provide general guidance as to the purposes of the unit. In some cases, legislation establishing the unit may provide more specific direction as to its intent.

The goals and policies contained in this statewide framework document will provide further guidelines for the preparation of the management plan.

## Site Development Plans

A site development plan is a geographic portrayal of land and surface water upon which recreational or park facilities are shown in scaled, spatial relationships and which serves to guide engineering designs and construction. The type, location, and scale of facilities to be developed in park system units shall be guided by the information contained in this document.

## Operating Budget

The actual operations of the State Park System are directed by the annual operating budget passed by the state legislature and approved by the governor. Early in the budget cycle, the Division of Parks submits a proposed budget to the Commissioner's Office of the Department of Natural Resources; it, in turn, submits a departmental budget to the governor, who submits an administration's, or governor's, budget to the legislature. This statewide framework plan will provide information on goals and policies for the State Park System to persons preparing the annual budget.

## Capital Improvement Program Budget

As with the operating budget, the Capital Improvement Program budget (CIP) is prepared on an annual basis. Information contained herein should provide assistance for the preparation of the CIP budget.

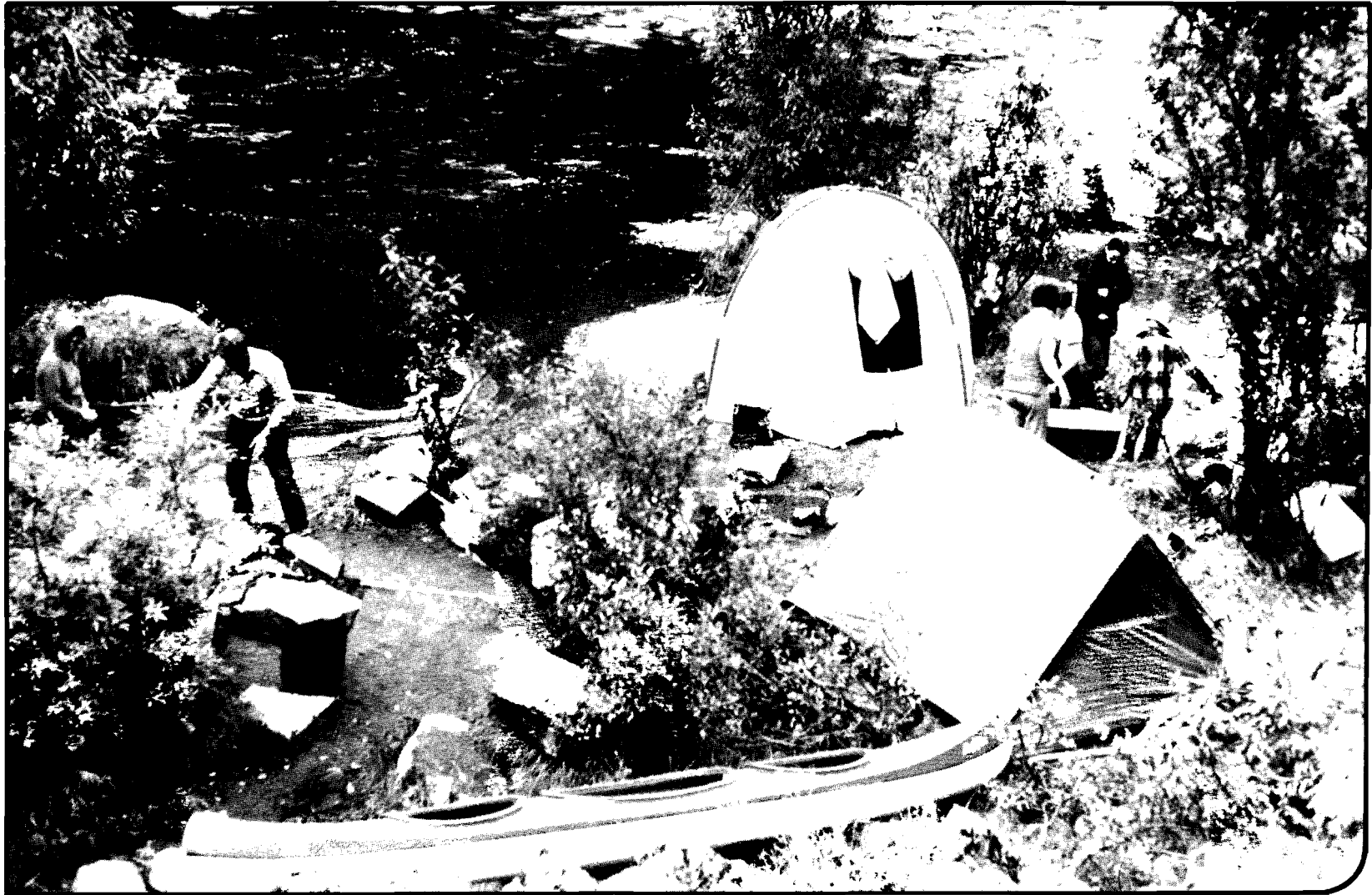
## Ongoing Management Decisions

Probably the most important actions shaping the future of the Alaska State Park System are daily decisions made in the field by Division of Parks personnel. While much of the



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guidance for field-level decisions will come from management or other plans prepared for specific park units or situations, this statewide framework document will provide the overall direction or perspective for the multitude of park management decisions.



# Appendices

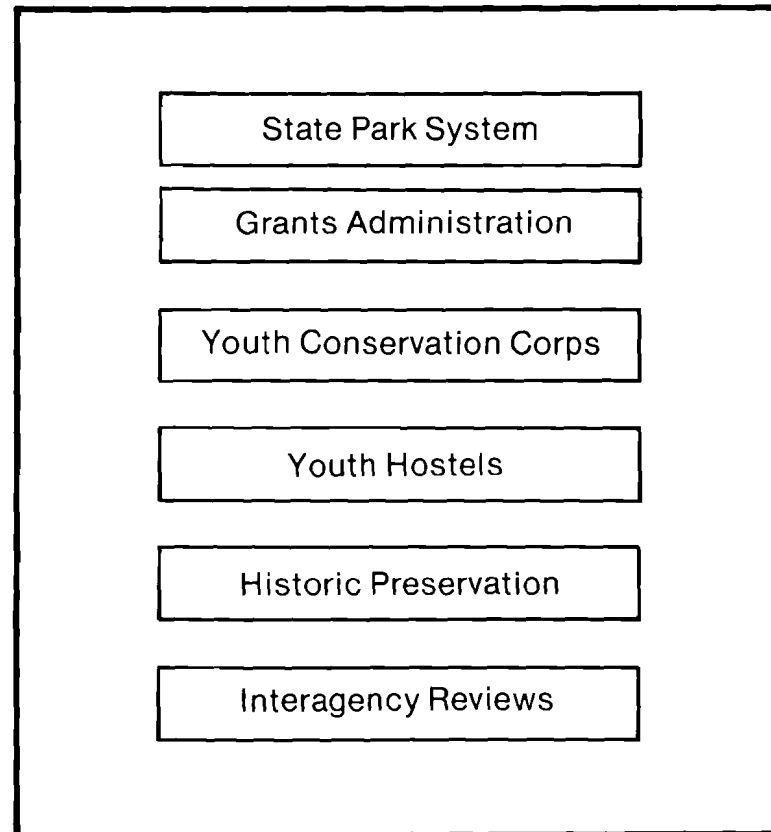
## Appendix I: Role of the Division of Parks

Vested in the Alaska Division of Parks is the state's responsibility for the following recreational and historic resource functions:

- acquisition, development and management of units of the Alaska State Park System
- management of Alaska Conservation Action Corps (Youth Conservation Corps)
- coordination of the Alaska youth hostel program
- provision of grants to local governments and other state agencies for trails and footpaths, historic preservation projects, and park and recreational land acquisition and development (grants for historic preservation projects may also be made to private landowners)
- service as the state's clearinghouse on park and recreational and historic preservation matters. (This function both reviews land and resource development projects to derive benefits for public recreation and historic preservation and provides technical assistance, when requested, to local governments, state and federal agencies, the business community, and interested citizens and groups.)
- administration of the Alaska Historic Preservation Act

This document addresses only the first of those functions. It has been prepared to guide the Division of Parks in carrying out its mandates relating to the Alaska State Park System. Statewide planning for the five remaining functions of the division has occurred, and will continue to occur, through similar, but separate, efforts.

**FIGURE 4. Division of Parks Management Functions**



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## Appendix II: History of the Park System

What is now the State Park System began in 1957 when the principal land management agency in the Territory of Alaska was the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM sought authority to establish roadside campgrounds to reduce the problem of wildfires started by campers. In response to that request, Congress on May 4, 1957 approved Public Law 84-507 giving the BLM the authority and funding (\$100,000 per year for three years) to develop and operate a system of roadside campgrounds.

With statehood in 1959, the Constitution of the State of Alaska authorized the legislature to establish a system of parks, recreational areas and monuments. This authorization was implemented via the Alaska Land Act and passed by the 1959 Alaska Legislature. This act provided that areas with more than 640 acres could not be closed to multiple use, except by act of the legislature.

The Omnibus Act, a federal act passed in 1959 by the 86th Congress, transferred 32 individual parcels (each less than 640 acres in size) to the state. Organizational responsibility for the management of these units was placed within the Department of Natural Resources, and the first Alaska Legislature in 1959 passed an appropriation of \$75,000 for forestry and park activities. The second session of the legislature, in 1960, passed appropriation measures for development of the park system. Capital appropriations for state park functions remained small, never exceeding \$50,000 until fiscal year 1967.

The 1966 legislature, responding to the passage of the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, authorized a vote on a \$900,000 bond issue to match federal grant funds. This issue passed and, together with an additional bond issue in 1970, provided funds for considerable expansion and development of the State Park System.

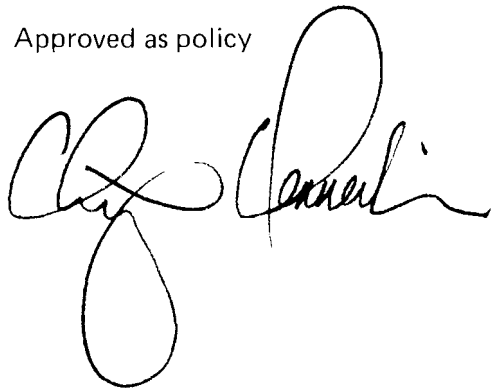
In 1966, the Alaska Legislature established the first State Park System unit with more than 640 acres: Nancy Lake State Recreation Area, comprising nearly 23,000 acres east of Willow. The 15,360-acre Chena River State Recreation Area (expanded to 254,080 acres in 1975) near Fairbanks was created by the 1967 Alaska Legislature. By the end of 1969, there were approximately 40,000 acres in the State Park System.

The 1970 legislature increased the State Park System acreage to nearly one million acres, half of which was the addition of Chugach State Park near Anchorage. Other park units created by the 1970 legislature were Denali State Park, south of Denali National Park, and Kachemak Bay State Park near Seldovia. This expansion, plus the increase in park-unit visitation and new facility construction, led to the establishment of a separate Division of Parks, within the Department of Natural Resources, on October 1, 1970.

With the 1979 addition of the nearly 1.5-million-acres Wood River - Tikchik State Park north of Dillingham and — more recently — other smaller state park units, the State Park System, as of 1982, contained nearly three million acres of state land in more than 80 separate units.

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Approved as policy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chip Dennerlien". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Chip Dennerlien  
Director, Division of Parks

Date: *April 16, 1982*

Graphic assistance by:

Graphics  
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State of Alaska