

Subsequently the Director, National Park Service will be responsible for amending or ratifying the recommendations and transmitting the completed Special Resource Study to the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary determines the final recommended actions to be submitted for Congress' consideration.

Dated: January 13, 2006.

George J. Turnbull,

Acting Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

[FR Doc. 06-2407 Filed 3-13-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision for the Environmental Impact Statement on the Backcountry Management Plan and General Management Plan Amendment, Denali National Park and Preserve, AK

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision for the Environmental Impact Statement on the Backcountry Management Plan and General Management Plan Amendment, Denali National Park and Preserve, Alaska.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service (NPS) announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Environmental Impact Statement on the Backcountry Management Plan and General Management Plan Amendment, Denali National Park and Preserve, Alaska.

This Record of Decision documents the decision by the NPS to adopt a Backcountry Management Plan for Denali National Park and Preserve and to amend the park's General Management Plan. The Backcountry Management Plan addresses management of all park and preserve lands, except the park road corridor and adjacent development zones and backcountry day use areas, which were addressed in the 1997 *Entrance Area and Road Corridor Development Concept Plan*. Winter management of the park road corridor west of park headquarters is also addressed. The plan includes management area zoning, access, wilderness management, commercial services, backcountry facilities, administrative and research uses, and boundary changes. The plan also serves as a *Soundscape Preservation and Noise Management Plan* as required by NPS Director's Order 47, a *Wilderness Management*

Plan as required by NPS Director's Order 41, and a *Commercial Services Plan* for the backcountry.

The NPS selected the modified version of Alternative 4, as described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS). Of the four action alternatives, this alternative best meets the objectives of the plan for park resource protection and recreational use, and has a high degree of implementation feasibility.

The ROD briefly discusses the background for the planning effort, summarizes public involvement during the planning process, states the decision and discusses the basis for it, describes other alternatives considered, specifies the environmentally preferable alternative, identifies measures adopted to minimize potential environmental harm, and provides a non-impairment determination.

ADDRESSES: The ROD can be found online at the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/index.cfm>. Copies of the ROD are available on request from: Adrienne Lindholm, National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office, 240 West 5th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. Telephone: (907) 644-3613.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mike Tranel, Chief of Planning, National Park Service, Denali National Park and Preserve, 240 West 5th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. Telephone: (907) 644-3611.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The NPS prepared an EIS, as required, under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and Council of Environmental Quality regulations (40 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 1500).

A Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement, published in the **Federal Register** on August 31, 1999 (64 FR 49503), formally initiated the NPS planning and EIS effort. A Draft EIS was issued in February 2003 (68 FR 8782). Following a 90-day public comment period, a Revised Draft EIS was prepared and issued for a 75-day public comment period in April 2005 (70 FR 21440). A **Federal Register** (FR) notice announcing the availability of the Final EIS was published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on January 20, 2006, commencing the required 30-day no-action period (71 FR 3290). The Final EIS describes and analyzes the environmental impacts of four action alternatives and a no-action alternative.

The NPS selected the modified version of Alternative 4, as described in

the Final EIS. The overview of the selected alternative is as follows:

This backcountry management plan will guide the NPS in providing opportunities for a variety of wilderness recreational activities and experiences while recognizing and protecting the premier wilderness resource values of the entire backcountry. Areas in the Dunkle Hills and around the Ruth and Tokositna Glaciers on the south side of the Alaska Range will be managed for those visitors who want to experience the wilderness resource values or other resource values of the Denali backcountry but require services or assistance, or who are unable to make a lengthy time commitment. Areas along the park road in the Old Park and the Kantishna Hills will provide accessible opportunities for short- or long-duration wilderness recreational activities with only limited options for guidance or assistance the farther one gets from the park road. The remainder of the backcountry will be managed for dispersed, self-reliant travel, and will include opportunities for extended expeditions in very remote locations.

Major actions of the selected alternative include:

- Subdivision of the "Natural" zone in the 1986 *General Management Plan* into a variety of management areas that are designed for different types of backcountry experiences: The management areas are defined by indicators and standards for resource and social conditions, which establish a carrying capacity for the area. These management areas include a few areas of relatively dense use and higher levels of impacts. These high use areas accommodate transportation into the backcountry and visitors who want to experience the wilderness resource values or other resource values of the Denali backcountry but require services or assistance, or who are unable to make a lengthy time commitment.

- Management of visitor access through adaptive management: Resource and social conditions will be monitored and access management tools will be used to achieve the standards for each management area. This approach is consistent with the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection framework used by the NPS to address carrying capacity.

- Establishment of wilderness management criteria, group size limits, restrictions on use of climbing tools, and a strategy for preventing social trail formation: The entire park and preserve backcountry will be managed to preserve wilderness resource values and provide wilderness recreational opportunities.

- Provision of commercial services in the backcountry associated with wilderness recreation and transportation to wilderness recreation, and scenic air tour landings.

- Limited development of visitor facilities in the backcountry, including a continuation of the “no formal trails” policy park wide (with minor, specific exceptions), no public use cabins or shelters in the backcountry, and up to five designated campsites in the southern Kantishna Hills.

- Application of the minimum requirement/minimum tool process throughout the park and preserve backcountry, research permit requirements for all NPS and external research, and development of a plan for NPS administrative and research use of aircraft.

- A land exchange with the State of Alaska to align the park boundary with the Ruth, Tokositna, Chulitna, and Coffee Rivers.

Dated: February 21, 2006.

Victor Knox,

Acting Regional Director, Alaska.

[FR Doc. E6-3558 Filed 3-13-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Final Environmental Impact Statement/ Fire Management Plan Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, CA; Notice of Approval of Record of Decision

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190, as amended) and the implementing regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service has prepared, and the Regional Director, Pacific West Region has approved, the Record of Decision for the Fire Management Plan for Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The formal no-action period was officially initiated December 23, 2005, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s **Federal Register** notification of the filing of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Decision: As soon as practicable the park will begin to implement as its updated Fire Management Plan the “Mechanical Fuel Reduction/Ecological Prescribed Fire/Strategic Fuels Treatment” alternative (also described and analyzed as the *Preferred Alternative* (2)) contained in the Draft

and Final EIS. The selected plan provides the maximum potential environmental benefits and minimizes adverse effects of fire management activities. *Alternative 2* is the most flexible alternative, utilizing all available fire management strategies deemed to be appropriate for the mediterranean type conditions found in Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. As documented in the EIS, this plan was also deemed to be the “environmentally preferred” alternative.

This course of action and three alternatives were identified and analyzed in the Final EIS, and previously in the Draft EIS (the latter was distributed in June 2004). The full spectrum of foreseeable environmental consequences was assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures identified, for each alternative. Beginning with early scoping, through the preparation of the Draft and Final EIS, numerous public meetings were conducted (in Thousand Oaks, Malibu, Los Angeles, Agoura Hills, Calabasas) and newsletter updates were regularly provided. Approximately 25 written comments responding to the Draft EIS were received and duly considered. Key consultations which aided in preparing the Draft and Final EIS involved (but were not limited to) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State Historic Preservation Office, native American Tribes, air quality management districts, adjoining land managing agencies, and U.S. Geological Survey. Local communities, county and city officials, and interested organizations were contacted extensively during initial scoping and throughout the fire planning process.

Copies: Interested parties desiring to review the Record of Decision may obtain a complete copy by contacting the Superintendent, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and 401 West Hillcrest Dr., Thousand Oaks, CA 91360-4223 or via telephone request at (805) 370-2300.

Dated: February 16, 2006.

Jonathan B. Jarvis,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

[FR Doc. E6-3557 Filed 3-13-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Inventory Completion: U.S. Department of Defense, Air Force, 15th Airlift Wing, Hickam Air Force Base, HI

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

Notice is here given in accordance with provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), 25 U.S.C. 3003, of the completion of an inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects under the control of the U.S. Department of Defense, Air Force, 15th Airlift Wing, Hickam Air Force Base, HI. The human remains were removed from the Bellows Air Force Station, Island of O’ahu, HI.

This notice is published as part of the National Park Service’s administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA, 25 U.S.C. 3003(d)(3). The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the museum, institution, or Federal agency that has control of the Native American human remains and associated funerary objects. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

A detailed assessment of the human remains was made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (Bishop Museum), Honolulu, HI, and the 15th Airlift Wing, Hickam Air Force Base professional staff in consultation with representatives from Aloha First, Hui Malama I Na Kupuna ‘O Hawai’i Nei, Kaiwi Olelo ‘O Hawai’i Nei, Nation of Hawai’i, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Puuhonua ‘o Waimanalo, and State of Hawai’i Burial Sites Program.

At an unknown date, between 1955 and November 16, 1990, human remains representing a minimum of 15 individuals were removed from along Bellows Beach on Bellows Air Force Station, Waimanalo ahupua’a, District of Ko’olaupoko, Island of O’ahu, HI, during excavations and as a result of inadvertent finds. No known individuals were identified. The 28 associated funerary objects are 1 gastropod exoskeleton, bone fragments from 6 fish, 1 pig, 1 medium mammal (pig or dog), 1 shark, and 1 bird; 1 kukui nut shell, 2 pieces of waterworn coral, 1 unmodified wood fragment, 4 pieces of basalt lithic debitage, 1 basalt hammerstone, 1 basalt adze, 1 sample of red ochre-colored sand, and 6 samples of unmodified sand.

The human remains and associated funerary objects were placed in the collections Bishop Museum between 1955 and 1990. Prior to November 16, 1990, the Bishop Museum repatriated most of the human remains and associated funerary objects from the Bellows Air Force Station. Between 2001 and 2002, the Bishop Museum reviewed its collections and found additional human remains and