



THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

ANILCA Implementation Program
OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PERMITTING

550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1430
Anchorage, AK 99501
Main: 907.269.7529
Fax: 907.269.5673

February 27, 2015

Mr. Don Striker, Superintendent
Denali National Park and Preserve
P.O. Box 9
Denali Park, AK 99755

Re: Comments on Gorge Creek Trail Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Striker,

The State of Alaska reviewed the Gorge Creek Trail Environmental Assessment (EA), addressing the trail rehabilitation in the Eielson Visitor Center area of Denali National Park. The following comments represent the consolidated views of State resource agencies.

We support the Service's intent to provide increased hiking opportunities for visitors and to consolidate trail use, allowing the Service to rehabilitate the web of social trails in the vicinity of the Visitor Center. This strategy is consistent with the Park's 1996 Final Entrance Area and Road Corridor Development Concept Plan, Backcountry Management Plan and General Management Plan.

The strategy is also consistent with ANILCA which, in addition to the benefits your EA mentions, directs the Service "to provide continued opportunities, including reasonable access, for mountain climbing, mountaineering and other wilderness recreational activities." The Gorge Creek trail provides access into backcountry units 12, 13 and beyond.

This practical approach to addressing a resource issue while at the same time providing improved access reflects a commitment to administering a wilderness area in a manner such that it can be used and enjoyed by the public now and into the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please call me at (907) 334-2563 or email at jennifer.wing@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Wing".

Jennifer Wing
ANILCA Project Coordinator

cc: Susan Magee, ANILCA Program Coordinator; Paula Homan, NPS