

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Goal

Commenter #	Comment
020	<p>I suggest that this goal (page 8) be revised to read: "Provide and promote affordable, sustainable, high-quality, and diverse recreational opportunities for both Alaskans and visitors to enjoy, now and in the future."</p> <p>My reasons are similar to those of the Vision Statement wording. The goal should not have the word 'safe' in it for the reason stated above. I have recommended adding 'now and in the future' to expand on and confirm 'sustainable'. I have removed 'to keep pace with' because it is (or can be) incompatible with 'sustainable'. The two points that I want to make are first, there should be language in this section (perhaps as caveats to strategies or actions, or as statements in the introductory narrative) that emphasizes the inextricable connection between recreation and the Parks' natural and cultural resources and, second, that recreation involving minimal or no facilities should be provided for in the Plan on an equal footing with facility-based recreation. This section, as currently drafted, deals comprehensively with "Facilities", but fails to fully address "Recreation".</p> <p>In reading the narrative that follows the goal statement on page 8, the objectives, and the action strategies, it is evident that the Plan is focusing almost exclusively on developed facilities. This is a problem because the Plan does not look beyond the facilities themselves to what underlies them, which is an intact natural environment. I use Denali State Park as an example because I am most familiar with it. But my argument applies to many other park units.</p> <p>My use of the Parks (primarily Denali State Park) often, but not always, involves trails and parking, which I consider 'minimal' facilities. Sometimes I use no facilities at all. A hike up Little Coal Creek, a camping trip on Curry ridge, a rafting trip down the Chulitna River, a mushing trip down the Tokositna River are recreational opportunities that I experience. And these are the kinds of opportunities that almost everybody I know experiences. And not just Alaskans. I ran into a group of about 20 folks from Norway who were hiking, unguided, up Little Coal Creek trail to the tundra. And I have encountered groups on the same trail who were visiting from the lower 48 specifically to hike and camp along Curry-Kesugi Ridge.</p> <p>The point is that a trail or parking facility is, for most, essential but, at the same time, secondary to the opportunity to experience a beautiful, abundant natural environment. That is true for me, and I think it is true for most visitors. So, as you address facilities, I urge you to also address protection of the natural environment that is the reason the Park and a trail and a parking facility exist. The opportunities available in Denali State Park are extraordinary, and we are fortunate to have a Park that offers such wonderful, and increasingly rare, largely intact natural environment.</p> <p>Under this Goal, Objective I is all about "park grounds, equipment, and facilities." Objective II addresses "park facilities and infrastructure." Objective III considers access and new park lands from the perspective of meeting future demand. None of the first three Objectives addresses natural resources and values.</p>
035	<p>The 2004 SCORP survey found that 79% of people surveyed wanted existing parks and outdoor recreation facilities maintained before new ones are built. With \$43 million in maintenance backlog, Parks need to fix what it has (and have adequate staffing) before expanding facilities. SCORP also found (Issue 4) a shortage of tourism opportunities on public lands and recommended an increase in capital spending to rehabilitate and expand facilities and to expand the number of public use cabins. We have found that cabins demonstrate an increase in revenue in the northern region because capital costs are negligible (donated materials), volunteers donate construction labor, and maintenance tends to be minimal for several years.</p>
038	<p>Backlog must somehow be addressed. The bottom line to maintaining these valuable Alaskan gems is acquiring a healthy operating budget and additional needed staff to acquire these goals.</p>
039	<p>Money for boat repair and mooring buoy repair and expenses.</p>
042	<p>I don't think state parks should ever have a goal that says, in effect, meet demand. Demand is a continuum, and the supply required to keep pace with the rising demands, needs and diversity of everyone is infinite. You can't do it. It would destroy the resource, and it would cost too much. I suggest rewording this goal to read:</p> <p>Provide and promote high-quality, sustainable and affordable recreational opportunities for Alaskans and visitors.</p>

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043	You discuss deferred maintenance backlog- this is something that should receive greater emphasis as it is a key issue that must be addressed. I suggest that you increase the size of the photos on page 9, and identify the most impacted areas and associated costs as examples.
046	<p>First, I would break out type of recreation activity, such as hiking, fishing, boating, winter uses, etc., and separate out parking / camping issues and link those issues to the type of recreational activity. By breaking out types of recreational uses, you can then analyze on a regional level how you are accommodating each type of use. Many times parking and camping needs are a reflection on the major type of recreational use an area gets.</p> <p>For example, if you look at Objective 2, there are six action strategies - while those are great they seem to be all oriented around summer hiking / camping / interpretive activities. Not much in there specifically for fishing, boating and winter uses. By organizing a regional analysis to an activity, you can see if you are providing for the major uses in that region.</p> <p>An advantage in organizing an analysis on type of recreational use is that people tend to identify themselves by type of use - KRSA is a fishing organization; Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers is a snow machining group. One of your objectives is to form alliances with others - it would be helpful from our perspective if you give yourself a method of reporting on how you are doing in terms of our interest area - fishing, and it would be helpful to other groups formed around a specific recreational activity.</p> <p>What is your report card in the Southcentral regional on fishing access, boat launches, bank angler access, fish cleaning tables, parking areas at boat launches for trailers, law enforcement, etc. How much of your deferred maintenance background is specifically related to the recreational activities of fishing? What are your priorities over the next ten years in improving recreational fishing in Southcentral Alaska? If you organize analysis around an activity, the potential partner can look at your report card (annual report) and give feedback, and also go lobby on your behalf. If I have that information, then we can go advocate on behalf of fishing needs in the parks in our area.</p>
050	<p>We would like to see stewardship better incorporated into the recreational goal. A way to do this would be:</p> <p>Goal: Provide and promote high-quality, sustainable, safe and affordable recreational opportunities 'that protect park resources and are consistent with park unit management plans' to keep pace with the rising demands, needs and diversity of Alaskans and visitors.</p>
056	To ensure that the purposes of the preserve established in Alaska Statutes are clearly followed when managing recreation activities in the preserve, I suggest that the goal be re-worded to include "...recreational opportunities that protect park resources and are consistent with park unit management plans to keep pace with the rising demands, needs and diversity of Alaskans and visitors." All parks should be managed to protect the resources that make each park unique, but this is especially important in the Bald Eagle Preserve where recreation is not the primary purpose of the preserve, but protection of the bald eagle and its habitat in perpetuity is.
067	I find it astounding that our state parks system has 43 million dollars in deferred maintenance cost. I sit on a state parks advisory board and had no idea of this debt and problem. The legislature must come up with a fiscal plan to eliminate this debt with money devoted on an annual basis.
086	"properly maintained" Amen! "effieent energy use"
091	Put somewhere on this page that our maintenance goal is "to maintain the useful life of all of our facilities and equipment with proper maintenance and care".
093	<p>A comprehensive user survey in the parks would be helpful.</p> <p>Some people feel that if they support State Parks it brings more opposition to the way they want to use the park system, so they are against it for the reasons that they think if they get more money there will be more rangers, more enforcement against the activities that they want to participate in.</p>

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094            You could collect more user fees if you had a public airstrip, or maybe even some camping; if you had a sidewalk and could provide another access for more local usage.  
More access is needed for aviation entrance in State Parks.

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective

Commenter #	Comment
009	Personal opinion - working at adding new facilities or lands when you cannot maintain existing facilities is making the white elephant even larger.
014	<p>As a frequent, all seasons user of the Park, I have seen the erosion of the quality of the trails infrastructure including cabins, docks, bouys - despite best efforts of very capable professional Park personnel. Rescue capability is compromised, trail markings signage &amp; condition of vast magnificent trail system is rapidly deteriorating - despite vastly increased visitation.</p> <p>Increase financial attention &amp; budget increase need for additional personnel and equipment to bring this valuable asset to a standard that Alaskans can be proud of!!</p>
018	Somehow maintenance operations need to be increased dramatically. Not only the maintenance backlog needs to be addressed, but day-to-day maintenance has to be improved. The restrooms along Turnagain Arm are a pit. The ones we have used have been vandalized and were filthy. There is an old saying in park management: The quality of a park organization can be judged by the cleanliness of the restrooms and the condition of the signs.
025	Recommend that more maintenance be done in the regular parks - replace old outhouses that are more than 30 years old, update campsites for modern camping uses like RVs with slide outs, 5th wheel rigs, etc. Many of the campgrounds around the state were constructed in the 1950s and 60s when most campers used tents. A big push to renovate the campgrounds is needed, but then they also need operating funds to hire staff to maintain what they have. When I heard that there are only 3 full time maintenance workers in the whole state park system, I was shocked, and disappointed that we let this happen. I support funding for more maintenance to be done!
029	Signage and parking for Cottonwood/W. Fork Northwest side of Kachemak Bay State Park (mile 15-16 East End Road). Kachemak State Park needs "signage" at trailheads stating status of trail - at least a couple fairly maintained (well marked, maintained, etc.) trails.
038	Kachemak Bay State Park is seriously understaffed. It could use a paid trail crew and one more full time Ranger as well as another Ranger Tech. The Grewingk river tram is in serious need of attention as I experienced on a hike this summer. Too few mooring buoys exist at Kachemak Bay SP and we need more.
040	I think that this plan would include some general statements regarding fire management - perhaps putting the burden of a true fire management plan to the park level. It would seem appropriate to have strategies in place to manage the threat of wildfire at your infrastructure sites and perhaps throughout a park in general.
044	I would ask state parks planners to emphasize the maintenance and repair of existing facilities, before adding any new parks or facilities. As an example, the condition of several popular trails in Chugach and Denali State Parks is an embarrassment; several trails across wet terrain either have been improperly routed, or lack the necessary materials (for instance boardwalks) to prevent hikers from creating ever-expanding mud bogs. Either park visitors have to walk through mud holes, or they circumvent the mud, which only increases the size of the problem. At the very least, Alaska's premier state parklands should have properly placed and maintained trails.
045	<p>In Kachemak Bay State Park:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Existing trails need to be maintained. This will require more funds for staff and equipment.</li><li>2. Existing structures need to be maintained - i.e. outhouses, public use cabins, the Ranger Station in Halibut Cove Lagoon and mooring systems throughout the Bay.</li><li>3. The tram is a disaster. It takes a great effort to pull across the river and some day someone is going to get stuck out there. It needs to be replaced with a bridge.</li></ol>

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070	<p>During the last 10 years, Homer has increasingly become a destination for adventure and education-oriented travelers. All of our member businesses and non-profit organizations with visitor facilities depend on the accessibility of the Kachemak Bay State Park for a substantial portion of our revenues. Visitation can be expected to increase during the next ten years. The State of Alaska must take responsibility for this situation of deteriorating facilities and severe understaffing with reliance of volunteers for maintenance of 90 miles of trails and a single ranger and technician for Kachemak Bay State Park and other units on the southern Kenai Peninsula.</p> <p>We strongly support adoption of the draft plan, more funding for state parks, and attention to the backlog of maintenance and construction projects already identified for Kachemak Bay State Park. Existing bridges, mooring buoys, trails, and public use cabins require ongoing maintenance and more are needed.</p>
073	<p>I would like to see that grant funds be used efficiently to meet the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreations needs in regards to maintenance, while at the same time provided grant funds statewide to other entities. This can be accomplished by setting aside a percentage of funding within the grant programs which would be allocated in deferred maintenance projects within the State Park system, that were not funded through the State Park budget.</p>
082	<p>Add an Action Strategy to conform all park facilities to the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p>
086	<p>Strategies 1 &amp; 3 are higher priority.</p>
091	<p>To establish a measurement for the functional life of all of our facilities and equipment. Establish strategy to maintain these facilities and equipment to the extent of their useful life. Everything on this page needs to remain.</p>
093	<p>Deferred maintenance in the parks is a significant problem.</p>
095	<p>If you are a legislator you would want a dollar figure on all of the deferred maintenance.</p> <p>Deferred maintenance - trail system is not part of the deferred maintenance. Deferred maintenance seems to concentrate on roadside areas.</p>

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective I - Strategy 1

Commenter #	Comment
035	Top priority.
052	I support sustainable trails inclusive for all Alaskans. As the state system becomes ever more popular it is imperative that a plan exist to maintain these trails and the deferred maintenance list be carefully monitored and assessed on a regular basis. Local legislative representatives need to be apprised and receive deferred maintenance lists and include this as a priority for promoting community health and wellness.
057	Where do we address the life expectancy of certain facilities and incorporate their depreciation in our Def. Maint. projections, so for example, we can say if we build 10 new outhouses this year, we'll need to replace them in 15 years or whatever the appropriate time span is.
072	We would also like to see the division establish a formal program of monitoring trail degradation throughout the State Park system in order to evaluate and prioritize trail maintenance. Given limited resources, this goal can be accomplished by fully developing this strategy. We would encourage the division to build its GIS/GPS capacity by adding qualified staff to ensure state planners, managers, and administrators have the best tools available to understand the complex infrastructure, legal boundaries, and the relationships of the Parks' myriad resources. The importance of this objective cannot be overstated. Once again, the division will have opportunities to receive guidance by a host of agencies that have tackled this very issue.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective I - Strategy 2

Commenter #	Comment
035	Second priority (focus 2 on 5-10 year plan and an itemized list to legislators).
043	I suggest that you add the words "and public" after the word legislator in the 4th bullet, and add a 5th bullet that says "Establish a "Adopt a Parks Maintenance Program""
067	Here is another example where residents can become very helpful and with the proper guidance could become the state parks system strongest ally. Include another bullet under this strategy that reads: "Develop information program for the residents of Alaska to understand state park needs and enlist their help in persuading legislators to devote funding for parks."
072	One frustration that we know we share with many groups is the lack of available maintenance funds for facilities and trails. It seems there is often money for new construction, but little for maintaining the buildings, trails, and other infrastructure. We strongly support the division's effort to include maintenance funds in any and all new capital improvement projects in order to lessen the future backlog of deferred maintenance, and to provide more consistent services and financial stability.
082	This would be my highest priority.
096	In a state as rich as Alaska we should not have to resort to debt financing to cover deferred maintenance. The fourth bullet should be moved to the top - the legislature should fund repair of our parks! What fund stream would pay off the bonds? Are there grant opportunities? Corporate funding?

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective I - Strategy 3

Commenter #	Comment
057	Camp hosts with running water & elec. is unrealistic in most park units, because you want the hosts near the campers - move to a lower priority.
066	Improve efforts to attract and retain quality camp hosts by providing high standard host sites, preferably with running water, electricity, telephone access, and convenient dump station access.
086	Add: holding tanks for septic.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective I - Strategy 4

Commenter #	Comment
043	I suggest that you clarify whether the revenue is to pay for the facility maintenance and operations or for the park's maintenance and operation. Additionally, there is no reason that a commercial operation outside a park can not provide office or housing space for park staff as part of a lease.
057	We have kept the public's needs as a higher priority than basic staff needs for deferred maintenance for too many years. We have staff without basic work spaces or good visitor contact sites. Move this to a higher priority.
066	Funding adequate work space for employees should be part of the regular CIP process in terms of both deferred maintenance and emergency maintenance (code and labor law violations). This area has received little attention due to perceived priorities for recreation funding.
086	Add: OSHA to "...meets state standards..."

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective I - Strategy 5

Commenter #	Comment
012	Our mooring buoys are also in need of repair and maintenance. Some that were in place are not there now and are a must for boat owners to visit the parks. Please give more money to this gem of a park.
029	Kachemak State Park needs public boat anchorage buoy at each trailhead.
039	Money for boat repair and mooring buoy repair and expenses.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective I - Strategy 6

**Commenter #**

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047	Instead of "...in the U.S. Department of the Interior's..." it should read "...in the Secretary of the Interior's..."
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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II

Commenter #	Comment
004	<p>While the document addresses the long-range plans for the parks it does not address accessibility for 20% of the population of the United States who have a disability. There are not only individuals who have a disability but also the population of Alaska is aging and the younger families with small children cannot generally enjoy all the offerings of the parks due to physical limitations. The "ALASKA RECREATIONAL TRAILS PLAN" published in October 2000 devoted 2/3 of a page to disability issues while the only place access is addressed in the Strategic Plan is a general statement made in the Vision Statement and on page 8 "accessible outdoor recreation".</p> <p>The US Forest Service has adopted the "Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas" standards published by the Access Board and all other federal agencies are now voluntarily following the standards. Within a short time the accessibility standards for outdoor recreation will fall under the American with Disabilities Act, become federal law, and be mandatory for all outdoor public facilities.</p> <p>As a private citizen, member of the Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board, Alaska Trails, both the National &amp; Alaska Recreational &amp; Park Association, Iditarod National Historic Trail, and a Universal Trail Assessment Process instructor; I feel that all individuals must have access to the outdoors. A strong position on accessibility should be addressed in your document.</p>
005	<p>Every year I take a bicycle trip in Alaska. Water, toilets and campgrounds are very important since I am limited how far I can travel in a day and reach a campsite.</p> <p>In Juneau, I use Point Bridget for duck hunting, hiking and cross-country skiing. I have used the cabins there and I love them but they are often booked during times I want them. I would like to see another cabin or two there.</p> <p>Juneau has a perfect place to create another cross-country ski trail, behind the Methodist Camp. The land is partly owned by the state and partly owned by the federal government. The area is flat and has some very beautiful meadows, ponds and streams.</p> <p>I also like to ride my bicycle on some of the trails in Juneau. The Herbert Glacier Trail is my favorite. Last year it was upgraded to about four feet wide with a hard packed gravel/sand surface. It is not better for cross-country skiing on because widening the trail opened up the canopy above to let the snow hit the ground. There is one major problem with the trail. There are two hills that end with 90-degree turns at the bottom. It is almost impossible to make the turns so I have to remove my skis and walk down the hill. Cross-country skiing should be taken into account when designing a trail.</p>
008	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="268 971 1892 1024">1. State Parks should be open year round for Alaskans and not seasonal for tourists. Alaska is a winter state and State Parks should look at more winter recreational users. Both motorized and non-motorized users.</li><li data-bbox="268 1029 1241 1057">2. Lack of ADA acknowledgement. Should have something in preface on plans for ADA.</li></ol>
010	<p>I suggest adding the following two action strategies to support this objective: 1) Conduct a trail inventory and condition assessment on all high use trails in parks that have trails. (This will allow parks to prioritize maintenance needs, assign work crews, develop cost estimates, and be more successful in obtaining funding.) 2) Secure funding to develop GIS capacity for State Parks. (A GIS database would allow managers to operate state parks more efficiently with ultimately lower costs, while providing improved opportunities for park users. A GIS database would facilitate searches and rescues, indicate where crime happens, where wildlife viewing opportunities occur, where optimal soil and water conditions exist for developing facilities. Managers could determine why parking areas need to be expanded and which trails are getting the most use. They could provide web-based mapping programs so park users could go online and print out maps of routes they want to do, and maps could be provided at all trailheads. If there was a fire and they needed to get trucks into an area, they could quickly determine trail widths and know instantly how wide a vehicle to dispatch.)</p>

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- 020 The "Recreation" section, if it is to be representative of the range of Park users, must address, in terms of goals, objectives, and action strategies, the recreation needs of those visitors who use no facilities (not even trails), and come to the park exclusively to experience the quiet wilderness in an entirely natural setting. For example, Objective II, states "Provide sustainable park facilities and infrastructure that meet visitors' present and future needs and enrich the state park experience." I think that this should be expanded to include sustaining (I discount Objective IV for the reasons listed in that objective) the public's need for a no-facility backcountry wilderness experience.
- The huge deferred maintenance backlog is cause for concern. There is also a pressing need to educate and persuade those with the "power of the purse." But in reading the draft Plan, my impression is that the focus is on these two concerns and that the remarkable natural resources and values of our Parks are not fully appreciated or considered. These natural resources and values are significant, and they must be protected, not only to preserve the unique and popular backcountry recreational opportunities that are available today, but also for the sake of the overall health of the ecosystem. This 10 year Strategic Plan must provide for this protection.
- There is no caveat in the Action Strategy or in most other Action Strategies in the draft Plan, that stipulates that these "actions" are compatible with the Park carrying capacity, maintaining a top quality visitor experience, and maintaining the integrity of the natural resources and values.
- I get a little queasy when I see the word "sustain" because it is open to varying interpretations. It is not a strong word. I would much prefer "protect" and "preserve" when referring to natural and cultural resources and values.
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- 032 For Chugach Park and probably the parks: building additional huts or the development of a backcountry hut system.
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- 036 At the meeting in Anchorage, we heard from ASP that this Strategic Plan is intended to help take ASP in the direction that Alaska residents want it to go and that perhaps ASP has had a restricted vision in the past. The obvious implication was that ASP has not been catering to motorized recreationalists as much as it should. There was also talk about how quickly motorized recreation is growing and that ASP should get on the bandwagon.
- We believe that is the wrong approach. We have observed the serious damage that ATVs can do - witness, for example, the trails on BLM land along the Denali Hwy and on the Hicks Creek trail. Portions of those trails have been turned into mud bogs due to motorized traffic. In addition, every time we have hiked at the Bird Creek park near Anchorage, we have observed ATVs churning up the river bottom where one of the spur trails leads to a stream. If motorized access is to be expanded (and we hope it is not), ASP should very carefully evaluate the suitability of the trail surface and adjacent terrain.
- The concept of "family-based" motorized recreation was also lauded at the Anchorage meeting. That seems like a reasonable concept and brings to mind conscientious, law-abiding moms, dads, and kids traveling at reasonable speeds and carefully following the regulations. Unfortunately, along with the "families" come those who have no regard for the regulations or fellow citizens and who are capable of quickly creating nearly permanent damage or injury. Opening more areas to motorized recreation should only be allowed if ASP significantly increases its ranger presence in those areas.
- A few years ago we were fortunate to spend some time with the holder of a mining claim in a park near Palmer. His facility includes a number of historic (or nearly so) buildings. He had an interesting observation that we believe is likely universal: the instant that motorized vehicles were banned from his valley, the vandalism and littering on his property stopped.
- We want ASP to go in the direction of quiet (non-motorized) recreation on a substantial portion of ASP land. We believe that ASP should primarily encourage human-powered recreation to reduce or eliminate the tremendous damage that ATVs can do to wetlands and streams, reduce environmental pollution, reduce noise pollution, reduce littering, help combat obesity, and decrease American's reliance on foreign energy.
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- 038 Having intermittently volunteered for Kachemak Bay State Park since 2001, I am well aware that additional crews are needed to maintain the existing trails. Because of spruce bark beetle kill, emphasis is placed primarily on removing downed spruce trees from the winter and spring season that block trail passage. With only enough staff to open trails to make them passable, trail conditions will continue to deteriorate without necessary maintenance to protect their integrity. There is high demand for public use cabins and more cabins would be a welcome addition.
- Kachemak Bay State Park could use a Visitor Center and a staff person to man the center.
- Bear resistant food storage boxes should be placed at all developed campsites in order to protect the public as well as the bears.
- Chainsaws, boats, tools and public use cabins must be maintained and funds available to keep them maintained.
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042	For the same reason, this objective would need to be reworded to read: Provide sustainable park facilities and infrastructure with provisions for diverse user groups that enrich the state parks experience for its visitors.
051	Parks should be managed to preserve the natural beauty. Avoid a too heavy development. Don't create amusement parks. Road building, parking lots, motorized usage should be kept to a minimum. This will ensure that future generations can enjoy untrammelled nature. Encourage non-motorized travel in the parks. Encourage car pooling and public transportation to the parks. Avoid use of fossil fuel for energy production and rely more on wind and solar power. This will avoid noise and air pollution.
071	In addition to repairs and on-going maintenance of existing facilities, Katchemak Bay State Park needs more bridges, mooring buoys, one or two group camping areas, and bear-resistant food storage containers, both at developed camping areas and on a portable "check-out" basis. The Diamond Creek unit needs an expanded parking area, latrines, trail improvements and considerable potential for trails and access exist on the Cottonwood Eastland Unit. The addition of Bradley Lake lands to the park has never been completed but this would increase recreational opportunities and access with already developed airstrip, road and campsites.
072	We think the state would be better served if the Trails Coordinator for the Department of Natural Resources becomes more involved in setting trail standards, evaluating the existing trail infrastructure, and becoming a more active resource for building sustainable trails throughout the system. This position is now primarily involved in grant administration, and the state would benefit from hiring an additional person to meet the growing need for both responsibilities. Additionally, we would like to see the Alaska Recreational Trails Plan, completed in 2000, be fully implemented.
085	Initiate and develop additional partnerships with non-profits, universities, etc., to maintain trails and other facilities.
086	Strategies 1 & 3 have highest priority. Review remote energy needs (at park facilities, host cabins, ranger stations, etc.) for opportunities to reduce energy costs with renewable energy applications. Seek partner funding (feds mostly) for pilot projects.
090	When adding new trails, new access points, new campsites, or other amenities in State Parks, these new amenities should be assessed not only for their sustainability, but also for their impacts on the use and enjoyment of existing amenities. New access points can allow more people to use an area, but can also increase crowding or reduce the quality of experience for existing users. These factors should be taken into account, and care should be taken that a range of more-remote and less-remote options are available. This is touched upon under "planning" but is not fully described.
091	Prioritize the list: 1st. Do recreational assessments for all units of the division; and, from these establish goals for outdoor recreation enhancement. Work to expand appropriate outdoor recreation and education opportunities for all units. The down the list 2, 5, 3, 4, 5, 6.
094	ADA accessibility and viewing opportunities need to be addressed. Vegetation along Chilkoot Road needs to be cleared.
096	The word "sustainable" bothers me. Nothing last forever. It just seems like a popular catch word - sustainable. The Compeau trail is billed as sustainable but at best it is going to grow lots of brush as it is overly wide and at worst it will erode or wash out.

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II - Strategy 1

Commenter #	Comment
010	I support this goal of maintaining existing trails and constructing additional sustainable trails. Strengthen this statement by replacing "seek new funding" with "acquire funds".
015	<p>I have served pm the CSPAB for several years and also worked with the Division of State Parks as a Park Ranger for both Kenai River and CSP. I could not help but notice that designing and constructing additional sustainable trails was part of this strategy.</p> <p>I strongly believe the existing trails are years behind in upkeep and maintenance and deserve "full attention" first and foremost. The additional sustainable trails dilutes this strategy especially since it will take years to catch up to existing problems with trails. A heavy emphasis should be placed on "maintenance" with qualified and paid trail crews for parks with major trail infrastructures, ie. CSP.</p> <p>Let's create high-quality trails that are in a state of "repair" or in some cases "no maintenance" before embarking on new trails. It has been already proven year after year that existing trails do not have a consistent maintenance program which in my experience boils down to training and retaining highly skilled trail crews. Other federal agencies in lower 48 have already adopted this concept of hiring seasonal crews to maintain trail infrastructures and rarely embark on new trails, unless they are keeping up with existing trails.</p> <p>Let's not take the most basic need for repairing existing trail systems which aims to improve their usefulness and safety and camouflage it with new sustainable trails. I think the word "sustainable" says it all.....</p>
019	Consider trail access for disabled park users, elderly.
028	The goal of State Parks should be to build and upgrade all of its trails to a "sustainable" standard. It will take well over 10 years to accomplish this, but this plan should identify that as a long term goal.
029	Kachemak State Park needs budget for maintenance for trails and facilities (\$\$ plus season personnel increase).
035	First priority.
045	At Kachemak Bay State Parks maintenance is the priority. Would also like expansion of trails in the Park.
051	<p>Sustainable low maintenance trails need to be built according to the newest technological insights. The chronic shortage of personnel and lack of maintenance in the parks warrants the initial expenditure for the construction of high quality trails that are not prone to degradation from normal use and erosion.</p> <p>Restrict equestrian and mountain bike use to certain trails that can withstand these more destructive activities. Special trail hardening may be necessary.</p>
052	I support sustainable trails inclusive for all Alaskans. As the state system becomes ever more popular it is imperative that a plan exist to maintain these trails and the deferred maintenance list be carefully monitored and assessed on a regular basis. Local legislative representatives need to be apprised and receive deferred maintenance lists and include this as a priority for promoting community health and wellness.
055	Where trails are addressed, emphasize sustainable design for non-motorized as well as motorized uses (where appropriate).
057	Trails need to be addressed in a similar way that other facilities are - included in the Deferred Maintenance Plan & Priority list. We should be careful not to assume we will maintain existing trails without addressing lost effort to maintain unsustainable trails. Maybe adapt the sentence to "maintain and improve existing trails and design and construct sustainable trails to and . . ." This makes "sustainable" apply to existing as well as additional trails.

**Commenter #****Comment**

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066	Revise to: "During the 2004 SCORP survey, Alaskans identified that they participate in trail-related activities more than any other recreational pursuit. Develop a commensurately stronger statewide trails program and seek new funding opportunities to repair and maintain existing trails to a defined set of statewide standards that incorporate the concepts of sustainable trails. Design and construct all additional trails to these new standards to and within state parks. Strive to become the model trail management organization for Alaska." [NOTE: Walking for fitness or day hikes ranked consistently within the top recreational activities identified by Alaskans during the 2004 SCORP survey. These activities ranked second only to driving for pleasure in the Top 10 Participation Activities survey. The use of trail related equipment (cc skiing + snomo + atv, etc.) plus walking constituted a majority of the "Favorite Activities" identified.]
071	More trails are possible in the 400,000-acre Kachemak Bay State Park and would provide more outstanding recreational opportunities as well as spread out visitors and visitor impacts.
072	<p>As an organization dedicated to building sustainable trails for all Alaskans, we heartily support the concept of planning all new trail construction. Planning with established design standards will reduce long-term maintenance costs, lessen erosion and resource degradation, and result in trails to provide Alaskans with enjoyable walking, skiing, paddling, and riding trails for generations to come.</p> <p>We would support the addition of an ATV/OHV registration fee, similar to the current snowmobile registration fee which helps fund trail grooming, to fund trail maintenance, restoration, and construction for ATV/OHV trails.</p> <p>We are somewhat concerned about this strategy, specifically, easing restriction and requirements too much on groups applying for trail funds. Though we agree with the principle of making it easier to apply, we would like to ensure that all groups building trails pledge to build trails to sustainable standards before receiving funds, and to see that the division holds groups accountable for building good trails.</p>
074	Development, construction, and maintenance of trails, especially non-motorized trails, should be an especially high priority of ASP.
076	<p>We encourage you to fully develop a sustainable trail planning process, and dedicate additional resources and personnel to this end, if possible.</p> <p>Alaska Trails is developing state-wide trail classification standards for the purposes of measuring trail conditions, estimating maintenance and improvement costs, and facilitating the exchange of information between partner organizations. They are also teaching principles of trail sustainability. We encourage you to fully adopt these standards and principles as well.</p>
080	I really want to support the recognition for needs for sustainable, legal trails for diversity of users and for obtaining access rights where needed. I think there was something also for a database of trails that would be available online.
082	This should be a stronger statement regarding commitment to increase funding.
096	This one should be bold in flashing lights. State Park trails need serious work. Considerable money has been spent improving trail heads while the trails that lead from those trailheads fall into disrepair (Angel Rocks, Granite Tors, Styles Creek, etc.).

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II - Strategy 2

Commenter #	Comment
010	Commercially operated services can play an important role in the state park system; however, such partnerships are not always beneficial to the park or to the commercial operator. These partnerships need to be made only after very careful analysis and only after strong evidence exists that the partnership will benefit the park and its visitors, and that it supports the purposes and goals for that particular park unit. I urge you to add language that conveys that sentiment. I also suggest replacing "most valued by the public" with "that are not inherently governmental" to more accurately convey the circumstances that are most appropriate for commercial partnerships.
026	I think you should call for RFP's to privatize all of the Parks. The administration of these facilities would be much better accomplished in the private sector.
035	Third priority.
068	<p>This strategy concerns me greatly. To openly include, in a public document of such sweeping impact, not only support for, but encouragement for development of commercial facilities in State Park units, with "emphasis on services most valued by the public" is extremely worrisome. This begs the question as to exactly who will determine the "services most valued by the public"? If history is to provide any insight, such decisions could well be motivated by large, financially (and politically) influential commercial entities..... perhaps, a Princess Lodge (or more) in every State Park? Even the thought of small commercial venues strays from the "conservation and preservation" of the resource the wider public expects. While I completely understand the desire for citizens to recreate with a certain level of convenience and comfort, and I wholeheartedly support responsible commercial developments to provide this, I feel the laundromats, gas pumps, convenience stores and their accompanying impacts should remain on private land in private hands. There will always be a need for the quiet contemplative enjoyment of Alaska's natural landscape, and it is incumbent upon our State Park system to provide this. True conservation and preservation of our natural resource lands is manifested in clean, well maintained, low impact, accessible experiences. I believe THIS is what our citizenry expects from their State Parks System.</p> <p>To further elaborate the potential for abuse of even well intended "low impact" public accommodation, consider Byers Lake. A true (and rare) gem on the road system, visitors come for its quiet, contemplative experience. There have been considerations for installing "several" more public use cabins on the "back side" (east), across from the campground. This would be the antithesis of what the visiting public expects at this exquisite lake. Additional funding through reservation receipts should not override and impose upon the experience expected by visitors. Rather, if additional cabins are desired, they should be placed on the campground side of the lake. Providing a much upgraded trail circling the lake, with a large rest stop/observation deck midway on the eastern shore to revel in the Denali viewshed would provide for increased revenue, plus assure Alaskans this gem of a parks resource is being "conserved and protected" for their benefit. (If we can clear the way for motorhome sewage/water facilities, surely we can find better places for additional public use cabins, than along the quiet viewshed shores of the lake.)</p>
079	If jet-skis, for example, aren't accommodated at Byers Lake, the solution is 'not' start courting the private sector to start a rental operation there; the solution is to encourage recreators to visit a different area. If a church group wants to meet in an outdoor pavilion, they can find it on city property; Alaska State Parks does not need to transplant a piece of city into a wilderness park for them -- compromising the "wilderness" value in the process.
085	Commercial facilities denigrate the parks experience for users who value wildland recreation.
088	This should include caveats and warnings that this strategy can easily subvert the intent of Objective II and lead to an abuse of the goals of the Park system. It is a "Department of Parks & Outdoor Recreation" not a "Department of Recreation Facilities". There is a danger that commercial facilities develop via the DPOR in places & ways the public would never stand for if a business were to request to buy a piece of a park & open a business - yet the same impact and effectively same operation may evolve through DPOR's inability to finance or maintain a site by turning it over to a commercial or concession operator.

**Commenter #****Comment**

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096

I don't think privatization of public resources belongs in a ten year strategic plan. The plan should be to de-privatize parks that for budget reasons have been handed over to the highest bidder.

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II - Strategy 3

**Commenter #**

**Comment**

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Commenter #	Comment
057	We need more group activity areas - keep this strategy high on the priority list.

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II - Strategy 4

Committer #	Comment
035	Second priority.
082	I suggest changing 'a campground...' to 'an on-line campground...' - just to be clear.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II - Strategy 5

Commenter #	Comment
010	Recommend replacing "When funding becomes available" with "Secure funding to".
042	I strongly object to including this strategy. It has nothing to do with the Goal, and, in fact, could very well diminish the state park experience for current South Denali State Park users. Furthermore, if this goal belongs anywhere, it belongs in a strategic plan for Denali State Park, not in a strategic plan for the entire park system. I suggest you remove this Action Strategy.
043	I suggest you change "When" to "Seek" and remove "becomes available" and add "and" as this is an action strategy.
067	I don't understand why the South Denali Visitor Center Complex should be included here. There are 100's of projects planned for state parks; why is this one singled out and detailed. I think a more general statement about "partnering" would be appropriate.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective II - Strategy 6

Commenter #	Comment
043	I suggest you state that it will be located where it can be used by the greatest number of people.
062	We like the idea of the challenge courses in state park units.
066	Is this really meant to recommend one (1) challenge course statewide, or per region? I suggest adding a mountain bike challenge course to the list.
085	Why? This will increase liability and cost \$ to develop and maintain, while we cannot maintain existing facilities.
096	State Parks are full of natural challenge and obstacle courses. Ropes courses require constant supervision and are more suitable for scout camps.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III

Commenter #	Comment
007	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Would love to see the Causeway State Park listed specifically in Objective III, Pursue new state parks . . .</li><li>2. Overall comment: Would like to see the goals and objectives matched with specific levels of management or administration. I think things will be accomplished more so if there is a responsible party or division named with the tasks.</li></ol>
038	<p>Bradley Lake State Lands were identified to be included years ago. This addition would be an asset to Kachemak Bay State Park by adding an airstrip and road to Kachemak Bay State Park land use.</p> <p>The heavily used Diamond Creek area along Kachemak Bay is in need of a parking area and latrines. The piles of toilet paper and human waste along this route are not a pretty sight.</p>
052	<p>I encourage parks to provide access to the public and plow some lots in order to continued use by visitors. Some states include road conditions on their websites. A visitor turned away from visiting an Alaska state park sends a strong message.</p>
053	<p>We request that you add an Action Strategy: "Prioritize development and improvement of existing and additional access points to state parks." This would open the door for the prioritization of access points shown in the Chugach Park Access Inventory.</p>
061	<p>I request you add an Action Strategy: "Prioritize development and improvement of existing and additional access points to state parks." This would open the door for the prioritization of access points shown in the Chugach Park Access Inventory.</p>
062	<p>We request you add an Action Strategy: "Prioritize development and improvement of existing and additional access points to state parks." This would open the door for the prioritization of access points shown in the Chugach Park Access Inventory.</p>
070	<p>Facilities in the Diamond Creek and Cottonwoods East area, and the addition of Bradley Lake state lands, which have already been identified for inclusion, would add additional recreational opportunities and access for visitors.</p>
086	<p>Strategies 2, 3 &amp; 4 have highest priority.</p>
087	<p>List action strategies designed to enable DPOR to acquire new lands and access to meet current and future demand.</p>
090	<p>When adding new trails, new access points, new campsites, or other amenities in State Parks, these new amenities should be assessed not only for their sustainability, but also for their impacts on the use and enjoyment of existing amenities. New access points can allow more people to use an area, but can also increase crowding or reduce the quality of experience for existing users. These factors should be taken into account, and care should be taken that a range of more-remote and less-remote options are available. This is touched upon under "planning" but is not fully described.</p>
091	<p>Prioritize list: 1, 7, 3, 4, 5-Add: Assist Division of Mining, Land &amp; Water in developing recreational opportunities on general state land. 6. Consider acquiring additional recreation land for ORV/ATV Parks. 2. Also, define types of Land DOPOR manages: Park, Recreation Area, Historic Park, etc.</p>

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 1

Commenter #	Comment
018	Be cautious in aggressively pursuing new state park lands without associated funds to operate them. Although there may be political pressure to expand the system, it is difficult to do with a flat budget.
034	Make it a high priority to have a readily available fund for acquiring access points by working with the Legislature to create such a fund.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 2

Commenter #	Comment
035	First priority. The person should work with boroughs and municipalities to focus on easements across private property so trails to and from Parks don't get closed off as development occurs.
043	It would be nice to have the expertise in Parks but not at the expense of giving up staff or a position better used in higher priority areas. The fall back is DMLW but that service is not always readily available.
057	Very needed.
087	We agree that DPOR needs realty services expertise within the division. However, if that expertise cannot be found within DPOR, they should have an agreement with DNR/DMLW to use existing DNR expertise. Any action that leaves the state vulnerable to litigation should be pursued consistent with statutes, regulations, and policies and in the same manner throughout the department.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 3

Commenter #	Comment
019	What land exchanges for Hatcher's Pass are planned? Will there be public comment period?
074	The plan should take an assertive stance toward expansion of the ASP system in anticipation of increased use by residents and visitors.
085	Delete extra space between "parking access," and "Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park".

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 4

Commenter #	Comment
006	It is my understanding that there is one big problem for users of CSP that the park, politicians, and the concerned public needs to address as the number one issue. That is trailhead access. As far as trails are concerned volunteers can take care of those. If enough people care they will be kept clear. If they don't, they won't. What we need is for the state, CSP, and all parties to work to keep the many trailheads that are being closed one after another open! The one area that is of most concern to me and many others is the access to Ram Valley from Prudhoe Bay Road near the Nature Center in Eagle River. This has been an important trailhead for decades. We all need to work together to secure this trailhead for the public. Other than public safety I do not think there is a more important priority for state parks. Please put your energy into this goal. Everything else will take care of itself if you can at least keep the access open.
009	Encouraging increased reliance on motorized access to points of interest. A graying population is not interested in walking any distance to unsure destination. Would most people walk a ways to see Old Faithful - Yes. A place called Echo Bend - Not likely.
021	Year round access to state parks. Open park units to winter use.
032	For Chugach Park and probably the parks: increasing the number of small, neighborhood trail heads and avoiding replicating mega trailheads such as Glen Alps.
034	Make it a high priority to develop a process for acquiring access to parks especially near high population areas like Anchorage and Chugach State Park where development is rapidly closing off key access points. This should include a more cooperative and perhaps legalized partnership with the associated town/city. Continue to update the Chugach State Access Inventory as needed and to follow through with funding and acquisition.
035	Second priority.
036	Please consider changing the wording of this strategy as follows (text in quotes is a proposed addition, deletions are in parenthesis): Consider and provide for present and future access to state parks (and anticipated access needs of adjacent landowners) when reviewing proposed subdivisions, plats, and easements adjacent to park areas. "Ensure that appropriate public parking is platted in the vicinity of access points. Design and construct trailhead and parking facilities compatible with the character of the local neighborhood. Develop relationships with local planning staff to help achieve these goals." Rationale: We propose deleting "consider and provide for the anticipated access needs of adjacent landowners" because it is ambiguous at best. Alaska's parks should not be the private playground of the fortunate few who live adjacent to the parks. The ASP Strategic Plan should focus on the goal of providing access for the public and should not promote for single out access for adjacent landowners as it currently does. The August 7, 2006 Municipality of Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission action on the proposed Canyon Villas Estates subdivision plat is a good example of the type of distributed ASP access "and provision for small-scale parking" that should be promoted in the Strategic Plan. To learn more about that action, please visit: <a href="http://www.chugachpark.org/basher/UpperBasher.html">http://www.chugachpark.org/basher/UpperBasher.html</a>
041	I have lived in AK for 25 years and have certainly got my share of great fun out of playing in the wilderness outside of Anchorage as well as many far more remote places. I think far thinking into their future needs is a MUST DO. Access is paramount to being out there. Also it is high time to realize that more trails are needed mainly for mountain bikes we need sustainable trails and bikers need to have a voice in where and how they need to be built. Thanks for the work you do to maintain good easy access and that is far more important than some new home owner wanting the park as their back yard and NO visitors!
048	Add statement about considering impacts to adjacent lands from people using area to access a state park. This is a major issue with snowmachines between the Petersville Road and Denali State Park.

**Commenter #****Comment**

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054	<p>One of my concerns is public access to state parks, as private land becomes subdivided and developed around them. I am most familiar with the situation regarding access to Chugach State Park.</p> <p>I think that the Division needs to adopt (as a specific strategic goal) coordination with local governmental planning and zoning bodies to provide for platted and dedicated public access (whether by trail or by vehicular road) to existing, traditional public access points at park boundaries. As an alternative, with public input an local platting-board assistance, feasible alternative routes can be required to be dedicated if an existing route needs to be shifted to accommodate subdivision plans. But in no case should the present degree of usefulness of an existing public access route to a park be lost through the subdivision process. Further, the protection of existing public access to a state park should not come at a financial cost to the park -- the Division should insist that the provision of such access is a reasonable expense for the developer to bear, just as the developer must provide paving, utilities, sidewalks, lighting, and other amenities that protect and enhance the public interest. These are all simply the necessary costs of subdividing. The public should not have to pay (through the Legislature) to preserve a right of public access to a public park that it already possesses.</p> <p>I am concerned about your inclusion of the phrase requiring the Division to "consider and provide for the anticipated access needs of adjacent landowners." If this means a subdivision's request for the provision of access through a state park to the subdivision, I think the Division needs to think long and hard about whether such a request would be in the best interests of the park and the general public; and whether other alternatives for access are available. If this means to consider and possibly accommodate a subdivider's desire to have any public access through the subdivision to the park restricted or foreclosed, in order to give the subdivision's lot owners more of a felling that they have exclusive access to and use of "their" little corner of the park, then this should be resisted by the Division at all costs.</p>
055	<p>Where access is discussed, emphasize protection and development of "neighborhood trailheads" rather than large, concentrated parking areas.</p>
061	<p>I strongly agree with this strategy and request that you add platting of appropriate public parking in the vicinity of the access points.</p>
062	<p>We strongly agree and request that you add platting of appropriate public parking in the vicinity of the access points.</p>
064	<p>Maintaining and enhancing public access to and connectivity between Municipal public land and CSP is a high priority. Anchorage Parks and Recreation supports action strategy 4 to provide for and improve present access while anticipating future access to CSP. This should include strategies to maintain and possibly acquire historic CSP access routes.</p>
073	<p>Recreational Access is a critical step in the process of protecting the public's rights to recreational area and public lands. The joint effort by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Division of Mining, Land and Water for the Recreational Trails Program's Easement Recording Project was an effort to adjudicate legal access for public trails. Recording of legal easements is a vital step in protecting the public right to recreational public lands as well as an essential step in the trail grant process. In recent times the Easement Recording Project has been put "on hold" due to a lack of funding through the Recreational Trails Program. It is critical to the development of Alaska's recreational opportunities and to the health of the state's residents to insure Alaskans and her visitors have legal access to trails and a diversity of recreational opportunities.</p>
080	<p>I really want to support the recognition for needs for sustainable, legal trails for diversity of users and for obtaining access rights where needed. I think there was something also for a database of trails that would be available online.</p>
086	<p>Work closely w/local land trusts to help ensure this strategy. Partnering with land trusts is a very cost-effective way to protect access.</p>

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 5

Commenter #	Comment
064	Parks and Recreation supports action strategy number 5, to consider linear parks and greenbelts. This will enhance connectivity between CSP and other Municipal parks within Anchorage.
090	We support the idea of expanding the park system where such expansion does not push heavy use - particularly motorized use - into previously unfragmented areas. Greenbelts may prove particularly advantageous as a means of enhancing opportunities.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 6

Commenter #	Comment
035	Third priority.
044	I would suggest the No. 1 priority be to ensure access and sufficient parking at existing entryways into the park. This is a large and growing problem at Chugach in particular, as development increases along park boundaries.
053	Consider amending Action Strategy #6 to add multiple smaller parking areas at other access points to spread impacts. We strongly agree with this strategy and request that you add platting of appropriate public parking in the vicinity of the access points. Appropriate parking can be limited on-street parking that minimizes impact to adjacent landowners and maintenance costs.
054	In addition to protecting public access to parks, the Division should insist that platted and dedicated vehicular roads to park entrance points be designed so as to permit limited public parking along the margins of the right-of-way, unless and until the Division develops a parking area inside the park.
057	Very needed.
061	Appropriate parking can be limited on-street parking that minimizes impact to adjacent landowners and maintenance costs. Consider amending this strategy to add multiple smaller parking areas at other access points to spread impacts.
062	Appropriate parking can be limited on-street parking that minimizes impact to adjacent landowners and maintenance costs. Consider amending this strategy to add multiple smaller parking areas at other access points to spread impacts.
067	"mindful of the capacity of the park"... I think a "carrying capacity" and/or a maximum development level should be planned and initiated for 'every' state park unit and that "action" be addressed in this Action Strategy.
085	Run-on sentence - reads poorly.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective III - Strategy 7

Commenter #	Comment
021	Recognize overtly and clearly the winter component of parks use.
024	Parks should be open year round.
042	Needs wording similar to #6 that says, "while being mindful of the capacity of the park unit."
049	Also at this meeting it was suggested that the parks remain open all year for the enjoyment of winter activities. I think there should be more motorized use in the parks, especially during the winter months. There is a strong support for this activity.
080	Keeping more roadside areas open in winter might be really helpful for travelers. Although there are some businesses along the way (Parks Hwy), they may not be open late at night for a break. But it does seem like the park lands may be clustered in the Lower Troublesome to Veterans' Memorial area and not much beyond there (i.e. no state lands to put a wayside on elsewhere). Or should this be a DOT issue, rather than State Parks. (I recognize the plowing is DOT responsibility, but not sure about wayside provisions.
085	Winter plowing could also be funded by a snow Park permit system, as is done in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective IV

Commenter #	Comment
009	USFS surveys show OHV use is fastest growing and largest user group - the plan does not recognize this as the new direction of public desires.
020	This objective refers to "a diversity of recreation opportunities to explore our natural and cultural environments" I am glad that that clause is there, but unfortunately, none of the Action Strategies under Objective IV mentions natural resources, much less provides for their protection or conservation. Clearly, an Objective that "provides .... for opportunities to experience and explore our natural environments...." must include at least one Action Strategy that relates to that part of the Objective.
021	Recognize overtly and clearly the winter component of parks use.
024	Add new Strategy: Parks should be open year round.
032	For Chugach Park and probably the parks: opening of additional areas to motorized use.
033	The parks should be open year round and equal amount should be spent on winter as summer.
035	Order is fine, but don't diminish the few remaining non-motorized areas in state parks by expansion of motorized trails, regardless of legislators or interest groups offering capital funds as incentives. Remember that "stewardship" is in your vision statement, and that means preserving some of the quiet uses and areas for future generations!
037	I would like the park to be open and managed for the entire year. I would like to see equal money spent for winter uses which benefit the residents of Alaska much more than summer tourists.
040	I enjoy hiking, skiing and mountain biking on state park lands. I was surprised to see no mention of mountain biking opportunities and hope that you would consider adding a statement about maintaining and improving opportunities for mountain-biking recreational activities in addition to the motorized recreation activities that you describe. At least mentioning the activity as something that commonly occurs on state parks should be somewhere in the document.
047	We would like to see a photo such as a historic shipwreck that would demonstrate maritime heritage.
048	Add Action Strategy 4 about evaluating conflicting uses and protecting user groups like skiers from being over run by snowmachines.
049	<p>I attended the meeting held in Palmer. The discussion was to open the parks to more user groups. I would like to have roads and trails that were open to highway vehicles into the Eklutna Glacier area reinstated. I realize the glacier has receded and there isn't much to see of it, but the area is still a destination worth visiting.</p> <p>When we first came to Alaska the road was open to the glacier. It is a beautiful road trip and one more people should be able to access with the use of a highway vehicle. When the Army stopped using this area for training the state parks stopped maintaining this road. It is currently open to the "Fit Generation" and Four Wheelers and excludes those of us who are past their prime or don't own a recreational vehicle. I have not been to the glacier in 35 years and would like to be able to go there again. I am certain it isn't the same as I remember, but I did enjoy the trip. Tourists would like to see more of the Chugach State Park than just the lake and I think this would be a trip they would enjoy.</p>
055	Include an action item to explicitly protect established park wilderness areas and the opportunities they provide from development under Objective IV [Provide for a diversity of recreation opportunities...].

**Commenter #****Comment**

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058	We support the majority of the 10-year strategic plan as it is currently written. We believe, however, that the recreation section should more clearly recognize the importance of opportunities for remote, backcountry recreation (areas where there are no human-built facilities, just natural and cultural resources) and the need to provide opportunities for remote recreation in addition to all the facilities.
063	The Recreation section of the plan seems to spend a large amount of time addressing access, facilities, and maintenance and very little time addressing recreation that requires little or no use of these amenities. Many backcountry users are not looking for, or interested in toilets, paved boat ramps or interpretive signs during their visit. The plan could do a better job of tackling recreation issues related to the natural environment. Not to say that facilities and amenities are not important, but they should be secondary to the very reason people are there, to experience the natural world. The plan should strike a balance between access, facility development and natural resource protection along with some mention of a wilderness experience (wilderness and quiet recreation are not even mentioned in the plan).
072	Water trails have shown to be highly popular in Alaska and our organization would like to establish more of these unique linkages throughout the state in both freshwater, and saltwater. A growing new trend is the advent of the "pack-boat" or "pack-raft". These small, light, highly transportable rafts are opening the doors to overland travel in the state. The Upper Winner Creek Trail that the US Forest Service recently built in Girdwood was planned specifically to allow this type of activity. By combining land and river trails, the Division of Outdoor Recreation can diversify recreation opportunities for its constituents.
080	Included in the "diversity of recreation opportunities" should be accessibility (wheelchairs, etc.) issues for sure, but also recognizing different kinds of trails for different kinds and experience levels of users - beginners, advanced; horse, ski, hike/run, mtn bike, ATV, etc. While some kinds of trails may serve all users, they may not be ideal for any particular group of users. That is, hardened trails may be needed for horse and ATV usage, but hikers may prefer narrow, twisty, rooty, rocky single track with comparatively soft or uneven footing (Dew Mound Trail at ERNC comes to mind). During breakup, everyone should probably be on the hardened trails. While accessibility should be addressed for each park unit, the overall diversity of trails could be considered in the overall landscape of land ownerships, esp. when state park is adjacent to federal, borough, or city lands that are being used recreationally. For instance, topography on borough lands may be more suitable for more advanced trails, while that on state lands may be more suitable for easy trails. The system of trails across all the land ownerships should be diverse, although not necessarily within each unit.
096	This objective is very good as written. State Parks should provide a diversity of recreation opportunities but the focus should be on nature and culture (not thrill sporting) and the activities should be sustainable (should not cause erosion, resource damage, etc.). An action strategy is needed to discuss how management plans are written to meet this objective...an action strategy that provides for a fair balance between motorized areas and non-motorized areas.

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# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective IV - Strategy 1

Commenter #	Comment
068	This strategy is puzzling in its logic. While on face, it seems this would be a sensible strategy, in actual practice, there appears no explanation as to how it would be carried out. I believe that visitors will naturally be encouraged to visit other "non favorite" park units only if upgrades and maintenance, are shown to be more inviting. Hence, if these goals are met, then the Plan's vision will be realized naturally.
086	How? Give example: lower fees.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective IV - Strategy 2

Commenter #	Comment
032	For Chugach Park and probably the parks: actively considering and planning for increased demand for helicopter- based recreation in the Park.
042	I do not see any need for state parks to establish motorized recreation parks. Aren't state parks currently open to motorized recreation unless specifically closed to protect the resource? Why isn't establishing non-motorized recreation parks included? I think this is a controversial and problematic area, and you would be well advised to leave it as, "...such as underwater and maritime heritage parks."
047	One possible way that may "expand diverse recreational opportunities" is to create marine parks around known historic shipwrecks that are popular recreational dive sites. As part of an Underwater Trails Program (in areas such as Eldred Rock or Vanderbuilt Reef) specific areas could be set aside for mooring purposes that would aid in protecting these important cultural resources.
053	We request that you allocate resources to mitigating existing ATV damage and preventing further ATV damage to trails and natural resources in Alaska State Parks. We think the Action Strategy of innovative motorized recreation parks is a bad idea.
054	I am also concerned over the mention of possibly providing a "motorized recreation park" under Division of Parks auspices. If such an area is developed, it should come from other state land, and not out of (or be located within) an existing state park. It must be recognized that such a recreation area will become essentially a "sacrifice area," a wasteland denuded of vegetation, rutted, pot-holed, and re-contoured by vehicle use. There are no areas within any existing state park that deserve such a fate. Any area so designed should be closely examined, to be certain that it has no other reasonable use than as a off-road vehicle park. If an area of state public domain land is found appropriate to be designated as a motor park, this designation should be accompanied by serious efforts by the Division of lands to restrict the uncontrolled recreational use of motorized off-road vehicles -- and consequent spreading and long-term terrain, vegetation and stream damage -- on other state lands that are much too fragile to support such uses, and that are now being irreparably harmed as a result of no state stewardship, protection, or enforcement. Just take a look at the Caribou Hills area on the Kenai, or areas off the Denali Highway, and you will understand what I am talking about.
061	I request that you allocate resources to mitigating existing ATV damage and preventing further ATV damage to trails and natural resources in Alaska State Parks. The Action Strategy of innovative motorized recreation parks is a bad idea.
062	We request that you allocate resources to mitigating existing ATV damage and preventing further ATV damage to trails and natural resources in Alaska State Parks. We think the Action Strategy of innovative motorized recreation parks is a bad idea.
090	In general, we do not support the creation of motorized recreation parks unless such parks 1) are sustainable, in the sense that they can be used for motorized use indefinitely without the need for resiting, constant renovation, or expansion into other areas; 2) effectively divert motorized use away from other areas which are then made permanently non-motorized; and 3) do not result in high costs that disproportionately draw funds away from other lower-impact projects such as creation of non-motorized trails and maintenance of existing facilities. Motorized use should be funded by motorized user fees and by money drawn from registration fees for vehicles, boats, RVs, and off-road vehicles.

# PRD Comments - Recreation - Objective IV - Strategy 3

**Commenter #**

**Comment**

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057      Use consistent structure for the Strategies. For example, this strategy should be rewritten as "Establish additional historic parks and sites to preserve . . ."

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