



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve  
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H30 (WRST-AD)

December 13, 2010

Dear Interested Party:

The National Park Service (NPS) is proposing to revise the 2001 Interim Operations Plan for the Kennecott National Historic Landmark (NHL). The Interim Operations Plan was written to develop management strategies for the NPS at the Kennecott National Historic Landmark in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Such a plan became necessary when the National Park Service acquired the privately owned site in June 1998. The Kennecott site, mined for its copper in the early 1900s, is in the center of the park, approximately 5 miles from where the McCarthy Road ends at the Kennicott River. The NPS acquired 2,839 acres, including much of the historic mill town, the subsurface rights to the mine, and the surrounding natural area.

With the acquisition, the NPS assumed new responsibility for protecting the important elements of the historical, cultural and natural landscape. In addition to being a historic site of national significance, the NHL also includes natural areas easily accessible to visitors and is a gateway to the park's backcountry. Its cultural landscape reflects a mixture of historic mining era buildings and artifacts intermixed with the ongoing life of an Alaska bush community, members of which own lands and businesses intermingled with NPS holdings at Kennecott and in the nearby area of the town of McCarthy.

The 2001 Interim Operations Plan was intended to provide guidance for management of the NHL for a five-year period. The Interim Operations Plan needs to be revised for the following reasons:

- There are major projects on the horizon, including stabilization of the 14-story concentration mill, stabilization of the leaching plant, and construction/installation of a potable water/fire suppression system.
- Much has been accomplished at the NHL since 2001. A revision is a good opportunity to document the stabilization, preservation, and adaptive re-use of historic structures that has occurred.
- There has been discussion and concern within the Kennecott/McCarthy community regarding work that has been accomplished relative to the community vision that was presented in the Interim Operations Plan.
- The Interim Operation Plan call for development of a communication process and procedure for joint NPS/community review of proposed projects. This needs to be described and implemented.

- New issues have developed in light of changes in access to the NHL have occurred since the Interim Operations Plan. There is a growing component of Off Road Vehicle use and easier access to the site with privately owned full-size vehicles.

The revision of the Interim Operations Plan will be accompanied by an Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA will consider the environmental effects of a range of alternative actions proposed within the revision.

At this time, the NPS is asking for comments on our proposal to revise the Interim Operations Plan. To assist the public in making comments, we have posted a copy of the Interim Operations Plan at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/wrst> under “Kennecott Rehabilitation, Maintenance, and Operations Plan and EA”. Within the text of the posted Interim Operations Plan, you will find highlighted text indicating how NPS intends to revise sections of the plan, as well as an indication of new issues that will be covered.

Public comments are requested on the proposed revision through January 31, 2010. To comment, please visit <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, or write to the address above. If you have questions about the revision or need a printed copy of the Interim Operations Plan, please contact Bruce Rogers, planner, at 907-822-7276 or e-mail at [Bruce.Rogers@nps.gov](mailto:Bruce.Rogers@nps.gov).

Sincerely,



Meg Jensen  
Superintendent

