

**National Park Service - Denali Park Visitor Destination
Access**

**FY2004 Request: \$600,000
Reference No: 39296**

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Planning

Category: Natural Resources

Location: Denali

Contact: Gary Morrision

House District: Denali/University (HD 8)

Contact Phone: (907)269-8701

Estimated Project Dates: 03/01/2004 - 06/30/2005

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

The U. S. Department of Interior's budget contains a line item for the National Park Service (NPS) in the amount of \$750,000. These funds are being appropriated for the purpose of planning and design of new visitor facilities on lands surrounding the south side of Denali National Park and Preserve. These funds will also be used in cooperation with the Matanuska Susitna Borough for improvements to the Petersville Road between the Parks Highway and the Forks Road House at Mile 18. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) anticipates receiving \$600,000 of the \$750,000 budget (the remainder will be used by the NPS and the Mat-Su Borough).

Funding:	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$600,000						\$600,000
Total:	\$600,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$600,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

This is a new project request.

Project Description/Justification:

DNR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NPS and the Borough in the fall of 2003 to formalize a cooperative effort to plan, design, and construct new visitor facilities on lands surrounding the south side of Denali National Park and Preserve. The \$750,000 is not sufficient to fund construction of a visitor facility most likely to be located in Denali State Park. However, it will be stretched to implement portions of the August 1998 Petersville Road Corridor Management Plan, support the development of an EIS for the preferred location for the visitor facility, for the planning and design of an access road to the facility, and the design of the facility itself. DNR anticipates receiving the funding in February, 2004 and can start work as soon as this authorization is in place. This funding should be expended by October, 2005.

This supplemental capital budget request will provide support for this project in the following ways.

- ? Redesign and upgrade of the Kroto Creek parking lot at Mile 14 Petersville Road.
- ? Design and construction of turnouts including guardrails and interpretive signage at three locations on the road.
- ? Cultural Resources Inventory and Historic Structures Report of areas being considered for development.
- ? Soils investigations, wildlife and fisheries impact analysis.
- ? Site assessment, engineering, and design of access to preferred location of visitor facility.
- ? Site assessment, engineering, and design of visitor facility and associated amenities, hiking trails, maintenance building, etc.

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- ? Preparation for and attendance at scoping meetings being held in affected communities to gather public input on the project
- ? Revising the Denali State Park Master Plan or other state plans as necessary to accommodate the development of a visitor facility.

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (Parks) within DNR is the lead agency for the State. Parks has a Design and Construction Section containing personnel that are certified to plan, design, and contract for the construction of roads, campgrounds, and a variety of visitor facilities. The State Office of History and Archeology is also housed in Parks and will complete a cultural resources inventory and historic structures report for the areas being considered for development.

The scoping process which the supplemental request funds will lead to the design of and an operational feasibility assessment of visitor facilities in the study area. The agency partnership between the Matsu Borough, the State and NPS will lead to some formula for shared costs for staffing, utilities, maintenance, refuse service, sanitation, etc. There is opportunity to privatize some aspects of the operation but we have not completed the process of identifying what that operation will be. For instance, an ambitious vision of what visitor facilities might come about as a result of south side development might be a nature center with attendant caretaker and staff support facilities, trails, a two lane road from the Petersville Road across state land to the Park, campground and trail heads. Or we might not develop more than a trailhead outside of the Park on state land. The results of this project will be the long-term plan for the operation.