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November 17, 2016

Jonathan Jarvis
Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

R.E.: Director's Order #100—Resource Stewardship for the 21st Century

Dear Director Jarvis:

I write to request a 60-day extension of the public comment period for Director's Order #100, which is set to close on November 18, 2016. Given the gravity of the proposed policy, I am certain that you would want to provide all Alaskans, all Americans, and all who have even a passing interest in the health and future of our nation's parks more than thirty days to participate in a comment period on this issue.

Alaskans, like all Americans, have great respect for the land. With more national parks and preserves than any other state, Alaskans continue to use park and preserve lands for traditional, subsistence, and a variety of other uses. While I respect the National Park Service's (NPS) attempt to incorporate the preservation and restoration of ecological, historical, and cultural integrity into resource stewardship, it is possible that this goal may, at times, conflict with the ongoing and traditional use of resources in and near Alaska parks and preserves.

The draft states that NPS will adopt a number of operational definitions, and provide additional guidance in Reference Manual-100, including "expand[ing] land/seascape-scale resource management and connectivity by increasing the use of existing authorities to manage resources outside parks." I, along with Alaskans and a variety of park stakeholders, have strong reservations about this management approach, and respectfully request that you revisit this policy objective.

The draft also states that, "to achieve the stewardship goal, the NPS will adopt the precautionary principle and adaptive management as guiding strategies for resource management... The precautionary principle requires that, when an activity raises plausible or probable threat of harm to park resources and/or human health, management should take anticipatory action when there is uncertainty. When such uncertainty exists, NPS managers will take actions that err on the side of caution to protect natural and cultural resources."

While this may sound like a lofty and even achievable goal from an office in Washington, D.C., the truth on the ground is much different. Alaskans have used these public lands now called national parks for hundreds of years—long before the NPS was even an idea. Tourists come from around the world to visit Alaska, many to visit our parks, and participate in a variety of recreational activities. Under such a precautionary approach, I am concerned that many of the roads and allowable activities in our parks today would be under assault. Traditional lifestyles and tourism economies do not deserve to be put at risk due to management philosophies developed in Washington.

Given the scope of Director's Order #100, it is my hope that the NPS will provide Alaskans, and all Americans, the opportunity for additional time to comment on this issue. I respectfully request that consistent with all relevant rules, laws, and regulations, all due consideration be given to this request. Thank you again for consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator