

Land Management on the Alaska State Parks



Alaska State Parks

Jason Okuly

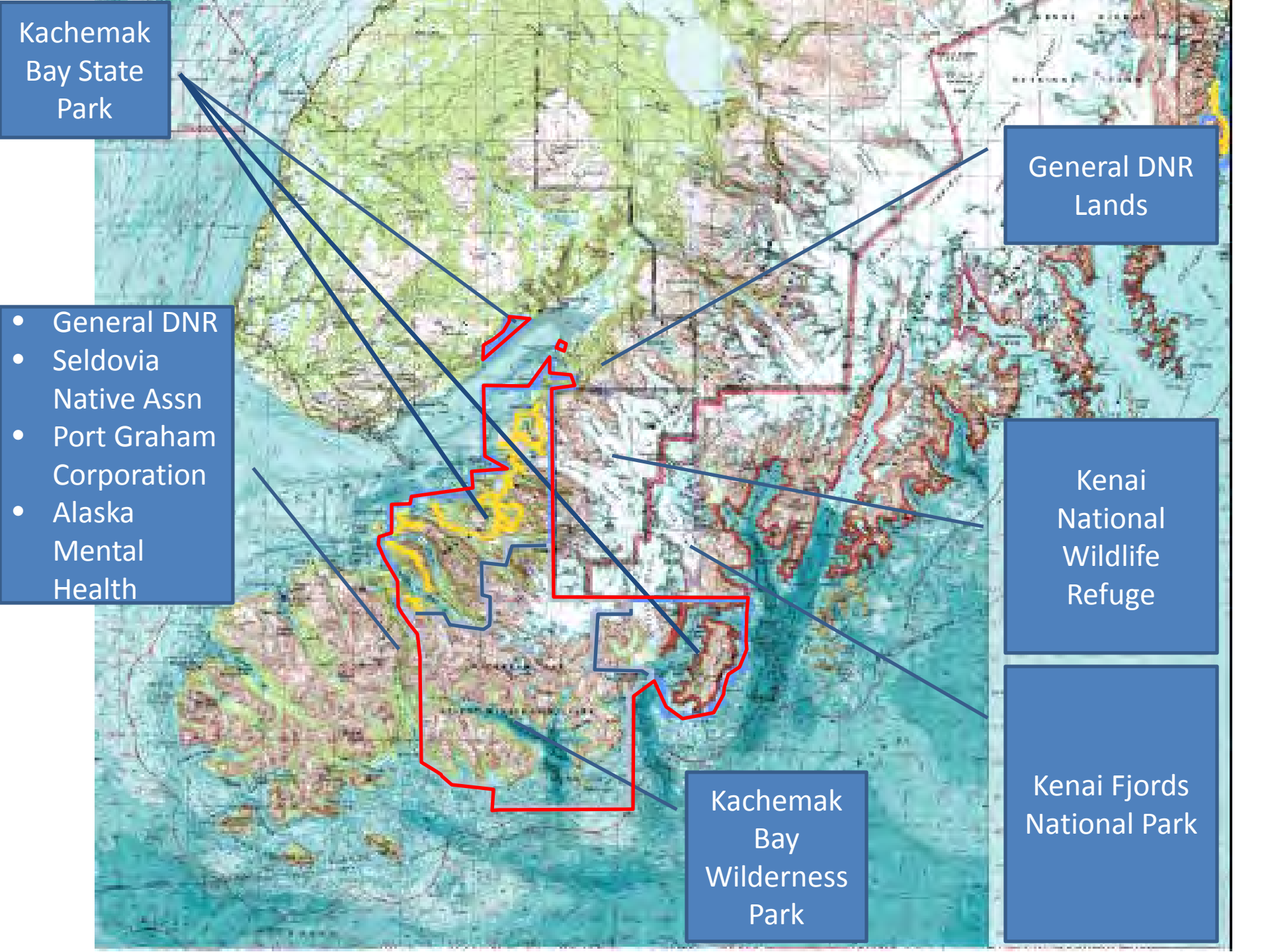
March 7th, 2017

What I Do



Mission

- ***The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation provides outdoor recreation opportunities and conserves and interprets natural, cultural, and historic resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people.***



Kachemak Bay State Park

General DNR Lands

- General DNR
- Seldovia Native Assn
- Port Graham Corporation
- Alaska Mental Health

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

Kenai Fjords National Park

Kachemak Bay Wilderness Park

Planning Process

- Why do a management plan?
 - Legislatively mandated
 - **AS 41.21.020**
 - “...develop a continuing plan for the conservation and maximum use...”
 - Update management plans every 20 years.
 - **AS 41.21.132. Incompatible Uses.**
 - The commissioner shall designate by regulation incompatible uses within the boundaries of the Kachemak Bay State Park in accordance with the requirements of AS [41.21.130](#) - [41.21.142](#), and those incompatible uses designated shall be prohibited or restricted, as provided by regulation.
 - Funding
 - Employees, trails, public use cabins, campgrounds, etc.
 - Provide guidance to managers
- **AS 41.21.140. Kachemak Bay State Wilderness Park Established.**
 - (a) The presently state-owned land and water, and all that acquired in the future by the state, lying within the parcels described in this section are designated as the Kachemak Bay State Wilderness Park. In order to protect and preserve this land and water for its unique and exceptional wilderness value, the park is established and shall be managed as a wilderness park. The land and water lying within the following described parcels is reserved from all uses incompatible with its primary function as a wilderness park and is assigned to the department for control and maintenance:
- **AS 41.21.131. Kachemak Bay State Park Established.**
 - (a) The presently state-owned land and water, and all that acquired in the future by the state, lying within the parcels described in this section are designated as the Kachemak Bay State Park. In order to protect and preserve this land and water for its unique and exceptional scenic value, the park is established and shall be managed as a scenic park. The land and water lying within the following described parcels is reserved from all uses incompatible with its primary function as a scenic park and is assigned to the department for control, development, and maintenance:
- AS 41.21.990. Definitions.
- In this chapter,
 - (1) “scenic park” means relatively spacious areas of outstanding natural significance, where major values are in their natural geological, faunal or floral characteristics, the purpose of which is directed primarily toward the preservation of its outstanding natural features and where development is minimal and only for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment in a manner consistent with the preservation of the natural values such as camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, riding and related activities which involve no major modification of the land, forests or waters, and without extensive introduction of artificial features or forms of recreational development that are primarily of urban character;
 - (2) “wilderness park” means an area whose predominant character is the result of the interplay of natural processes, large enough and so situated as to be unaffected, except in minor ways, by what takes place in the nonwilderness around it, a physical condition which activates the innermost emotions of the observer and where development of man-made objects will be strictly limited and depend entirely on good taste and judgment so that the wilderness values are not lost.

Planning Process

STEP 1: Identify Issues - Identify issues and concerns through a public involvement process. - Spring/Summer 2014

STEP 2: Gather Information - Throughout the planning process collect information about natural resources, present and past land use, land ownership, and the local economy. - Ongoing

STEP 3: Prepare and Evaluate Land Use Alternatives - Describe possible choices for management based on public interests, local resources, and state policies. Describe the effects of each choice on goals for the management of an area. – Winter 2014

STEP 4: Prepare Draft Plan - The planning team and advisory board create a draft plan that reflects resource values and public and agency goals. The agencies review the first draft and settle any land use conflicts that remain, or propose the best alternatives for public review. - 2016

STEP 5: Public Review of Draft Plan - Hold public meetings to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the draft plan and to identify parts that need to be changed. – 2016

STEP 6: Prepare Final Plan - Review agency and public comments and revise the plan as needed. - 2016

STEP 7: Approve Plan - The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources approves and signs the plan. - 2017

STEP 8: Adopt and Implement Plan - Plan guides management decisions for state lands in the planning area. - 2017

STEP 1: Identify Issues - Identify issues and concerns through a public involvement process. - Spring/Summer 2014



Initial Scoping Open House Recreational Use and Facility Suggestions



Between November 2013 and May 2014, the Department of Natural Resources held open houses in Homer, Anchorage, Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek as part of the initial scoping phase for the Kachemak Bay State Park and State Wilderness Park management plan revision process. The planning team was on site to discuss issues, gather information, and learn more from the public about current or future goals and uses related to the management plan revision. Additionally, the planning team supplied maps of the parks and encouraged the public to put their ideas regarding recreational use directly onto the maps.

The planning team would like to thank those that took the time to attend the open houses. This is a summary of what we learned.

Homer Open House – November 13, 2013	
Location	Suggestion/Comments
Inland Bear Cove	Add Land Trail
Below Bear Cove, above SP boundary	More trails, access
Along SP boundary slightly below Portlock Glacier	Cabin on Portlock
Inland Mallard Bay, near Humpy Creek	Open trail to river
In K-Bay between Mallard Bay and Glacier Spit	No jet skis
Between Humpy Creek and Grewingk Creek	Snowmachine
Between Humpy Creek and Grewingk Creek	No snowmobiles
Between Humpy Creek and Grewingk Creek	Open to bikes
Grewingk Creek area	Back country
Grewingk Lake	Promote pack
Grewingk Lake area, diagonal to Glacier Spit	Open to bikes
Grewingk Lake area, diagonal to Glacier Spit	Open to bikes
Lower Glacier Spit	Keep yurts
Beaches below Glacier Spit, within Halibut Cove	Open beaches
Halibut Cove	Allow for commercial
Beginning of Halibut Cove (upper side)	Mooring buoy
Entire State Wilderness Park	No commercial
Below and slightly to the left of Section 15 marker in area by	Build a tent platform



Kachemak Bay State Park and Kachemak Bay State Wilderness Park Planning Update

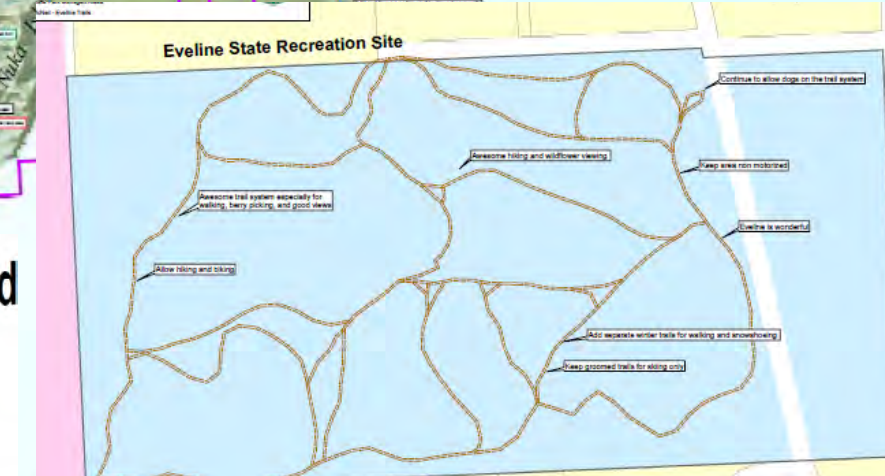
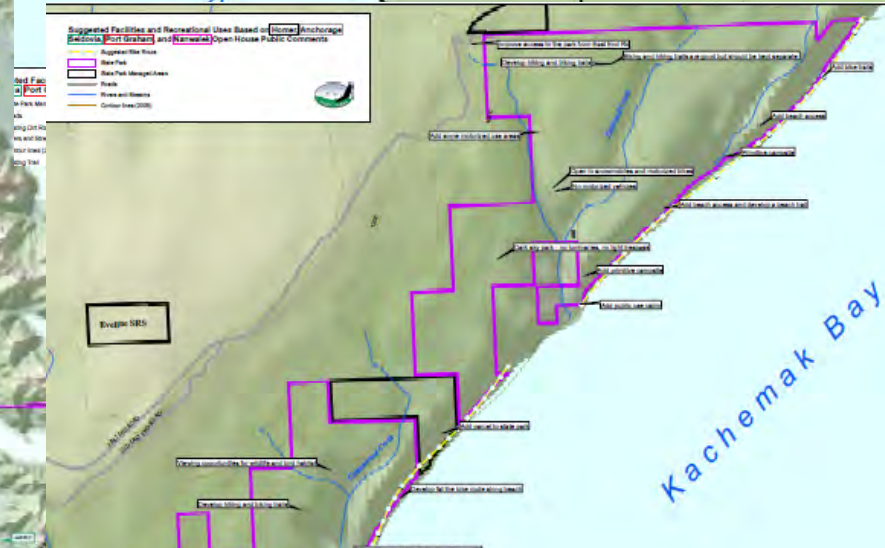
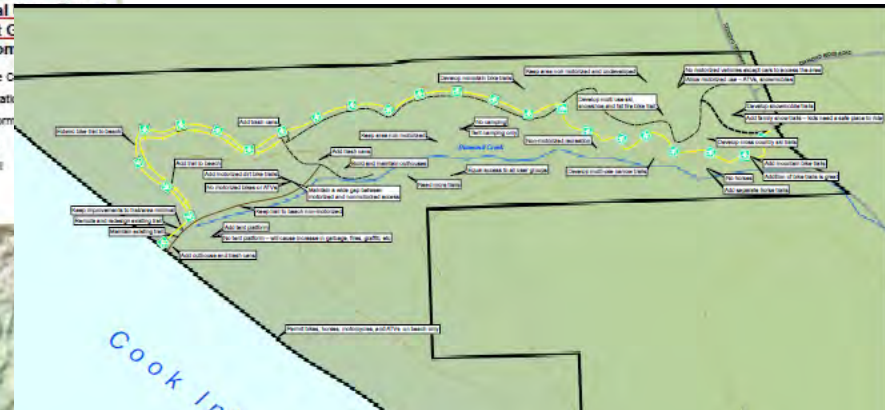
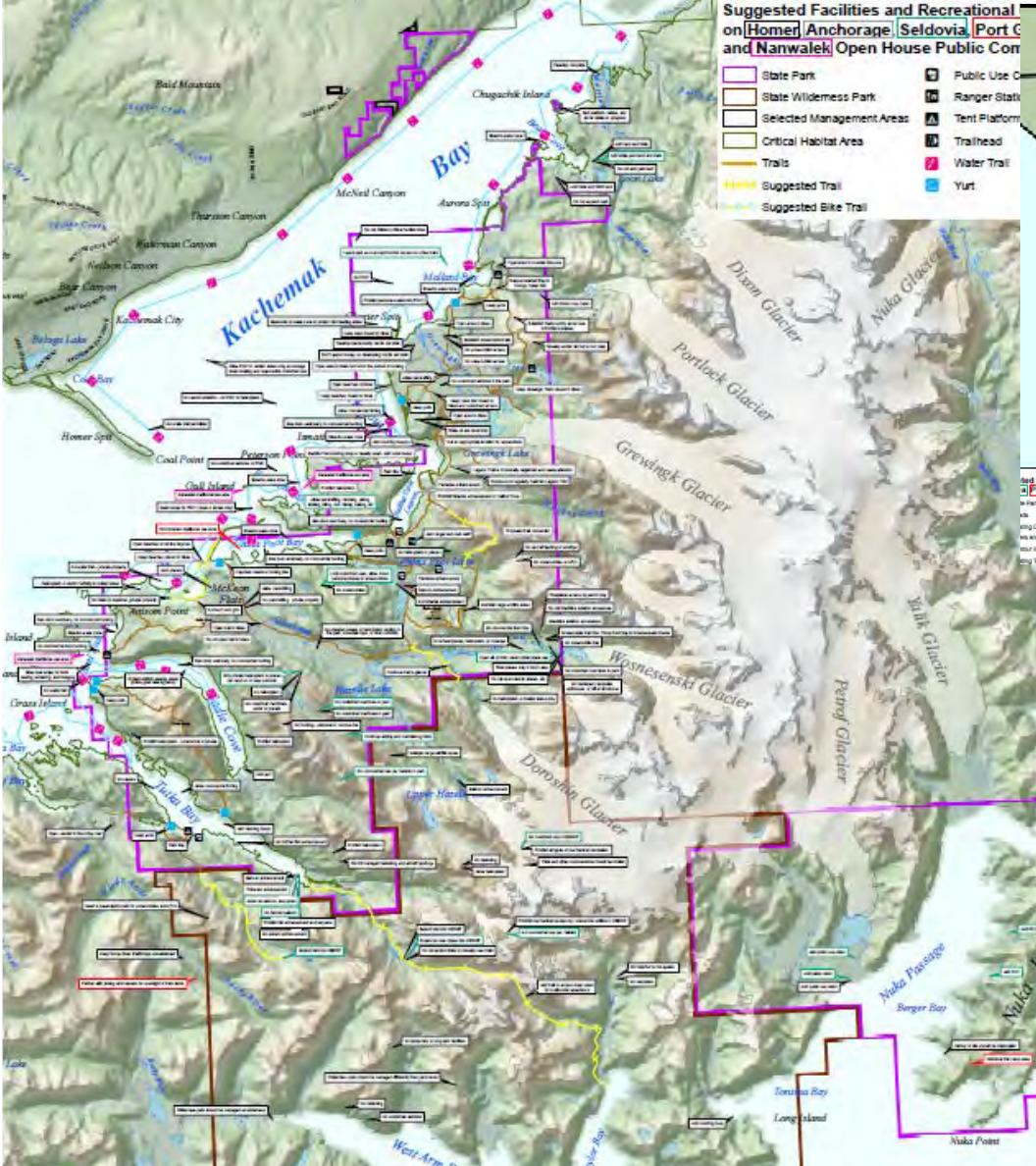


In November 2013, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) released a questionnaire seeking public input regarding recreational use, access and facilities for Kachemak Bay State Park and Kachemak Bay State Wilderness Park (KBSP and KBSWP respectively). The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part A consisted of ten questions related to recreation and facilities in KBSP and KBSWP. Respondents were asked to make selections from a list that was provided and were given the option to fill in any additional information on the line listed as "Other". Part B consisted of six questions that were specific to those who own land within or adjacent to the park. The purpose of the landowner specific questions was to better understand where private property is located, how it is being used, and how it is being accessed. One hundred twenty two completed questionnaires were received by the January 31, 2014 deadline.

Summary

Nearly all of the respondents indicated they had visited KBSP and the majority of respondents indicated they had visited KBSWP. Issues related to accessibility, including distance and cost, were the main reasons listed for not visiting KBSWP. Question three asked respondents to indicate why they chose to visit KBSP. Respondents were given a list of twelve options, including an "Other" line where they could write in any additional information, and encouraged to select as many options as applied. Top selections for why respondents chose to visit KBSP were scenic beauty, established trails, and nearby and convenient. A number of responses under this category were listed on the "Other" line including

Suggested Facilities and Recreational Uses Based on Homer, Anchorage, Seldovia, Port G and Nanwalek Open House Public Con



Suggested Facilities and Recreational Uses Based on Homer, Anchorage, Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek Open House Public Comments

STEP 3: Prepare and Evaluate Land Use Alternatives - Describe possible choices for management based on public interests, local resources, and state policies. Describe the effects of each choice on goals for the management of an area. – Winter 2014



Recreational Development Zone

Purpose and Characteristics

Recreational development zones are established within State Park System units to meet the more intensive recreational needs of the public with convenient and well defined access via roads, railroads, boating anchorages, airstrips, and high standard trails; with more intensively-developed recreational facilities such as campgrounds or picnic areas; with guided activities; and with information centers to orient visitors to the unit's special features.

The landscape within this zone can be modified to support educational and recreational activities and/or to enhance wildlife habitat and scenic qualities. These zones are established where soils, slope, drainage and vegetation can support more intensive recreational activities. Fire suppression and insect and disease control may be used where an-

Developments and Activities

The highest level of developments and activities is meant to occur in this zone within park units. The developments allowed in this zone include - but are not limited to - roads and trails, private vehicle and public transportation routes or access, campgrounds, picnic areas, visitor and interpretive centers, high-standard trails for all ages and abilities, park management facilities and commercial lodges or resorts as provided for within the unit management or site development plan. High intensity activities related to the use of these developed facilities are generally encouraged. Summer and winter off-road vehicles (ORVs) and other motorized recreational vehicles may be allowed in this zone within specifically designated areas or through management techniques such as time and/or space allocations.



Natural Zone

Purpose and Characteristics

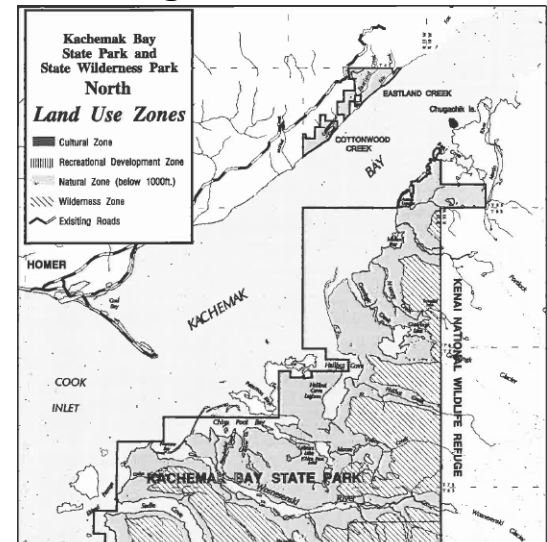
Natural zones are established to provide for moderate to low impact and dispersed forms of recreation and to serve as links between recreational development and wilderness zones. These zones are relatively undeveloped and undisturbed, and are managed to maintain high scenic qualities and to provide visitors with opportunities for significant, natural nature experiences. An area's natural biological character is the dominant feature within this zone. Landscape modifications may be allowed to enhance the range of user

Developments and Activities

Developments in a natural zone are intended to provide for the safety of park visitors and to provide for moderate use or convenience in a high-quality natural setting. Allowable developments include, but are not limited to: backpacking shelters, public-use cables, high standard hiking and bicycle trails, open or gravel, bridges and trails, where necessary to access development zones and as provided for in an approved management plan. A medium level of activity is encouraged in this zone. Activities include, but are not limited to: hang gliding, bicycling, backpacking, fishing, hunting, recreational birding, rafting, kayaking, water-

Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework

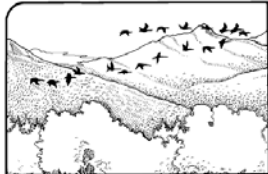
1995 Management Plan Land Use



Guidelines for Activities

FIGURE 3. Guidelines for Activities within Land-Use Zones

Developments and Activities	LAND USE ZONES	RESOURCE MODIFICATION FOR:		INTENSITY OF RECREATION FACILITY DEVELOPMENT IN DESIGNATED LOCATIONS															
		Educational Purposes	Recreational Purposes	Health/Entertainment	Scenic Enhancement	Resource Restoration	INTENSITY			EXAMPLES									
							High	Medium	Low	Trail Bridges	Skilifts	Wildlife Observation/Blind	Visitor Centers	Winter/Warmup Huts	Public Use Cabins	Trail Shelters			
Generally Compatible ●																			
Conditionally Compatible ●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Not Compatible ○																			



Wilderness Zone

Purpose and Characteristics

Wilderness zones are established to promote, to perpetuate and, where necessary, to restore the wilderness character of the land and its specific values of solitude, physical and mental challenge, scientific study, inspiration and primitive recreational opportunities.

Wilderness zones are of such size as to maintain the area's wilderness character, are tailored to protect the associated values and, if possible, are defined by watershed bound-



Cultural Zone

Purpose and Characteristics

Cultural zones are established to promote, to perpetuate and, where necessary, to restore the wilderness character of the land and its specific values of solitude, physical and mental challenge, scientific study, inspiration and primitive recreational opportunities.

Developments and Activities

The intensity of development in a cultural zone is managed to meet the use level in the area or to protect the area's

Activity/Facility

WILDERNESS ZONE
Docks. Anchored or piling supported floating docks, for public use.

Natural Zone
Compatible, as developed and maintained by Alaska State Parks. Docks subject to ADF&G Critical Habitat Area permit, if in those waters.

Wilderness Zone	Cultural Zone	Recreational Development Zone
Not compatible	Not compatible	Compatible, as developed and maintained by Alaska State Parks. Docks subject to ADF&G Critical Habitat Area permit, if in those waters.

Who are the Stakeholders

- Lodge operators
- Commercial helicopter and airplane operators
- Kachemak Bay Conservation Society
- Homer Electric Association
- Kachemak Bay Water Trail and Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park
- Homer Cycling Club
- Water Taxi Operators
- Jet ski Advocates
- Cook Inlet Keeper
- CIAA
- Fish and Game

Challenges

HEA



Access



Moorage/docks



Helicopters



Water rights



Trail Maintenance



CIAA



Needs

- Are there information needs that could be addressed through shared inventorying and monitoring?
 - YES!!!!!!

- **11AAC18.025**

c) The director may, upon proper application, issue a permit for activities described in 11 AAC [18.010\(2\)](#) - (11) if he or she determines that

- (1) park facilities and natural and cultural resources will not be adversely affected;
- (2) the state park is protected from pollution;
- (3) public use values of the state park will be maintained and protected;
- (4) the public safety, health, and welfare will not be adversely affected; and
- (5) the activity is consistent with the Alaska Coastal Management Program (AS 46.40), if applicable.

Contact Information

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 - Jason.Okuly@Alaska.gov
- Alaska State Parks
 - <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/>
- Link to planning process or document
 - <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/plans/kbay/kbayplan.htm>
- Google it!
 - Kachemak Bay Management Plan