

July 7, 2005

Dear Superintendent Anderson,

Thank you for soliciting public comment on the construction of new trails in the vicinity of the new Visitor Center and the Riley Creek Campground area.

DCC has reviewed the EA on this matter and studied the maps provided. We are greatly concerned about the McKinley Station Trail, which would go directly past several historic sites. In the past, NPS construction has harmed historic places in this area and we are concerned that the amount of traffic past these sites would further disturb what is left. We are aware that foot paths have been developed in some of the area where you are suggesting new construction, but we would like to suggest that these small trails be left as they are.

We urge you to take the “no action” on this particular EA at this time, for the following reasons:

1. The roadside trail, currently being completed, serves people well for access between the Visitor Center and Riley Creek mercantile.
2. There are a variety of trails in the frontcountry now and all serve a different and beneficial purpose. However, it is unclear to us that the trails listed in this EA are necessary at this time to enhance interpretation or to avoid impairment in the entrance area. A decision as to their necessity can and should be deferred.

We’ve toured the new facilities at the entrance to Denali and find them useful and interesting. However, their construction has come at a cost. No longer can we walk through dense underbrush in the area that used to be the trail from the old hotel to the depot and experience 25 species of flowers, including 3 species of orchids. The area is no longer prime moose calving ground, as buildings now stand in the area where moose would find shelter for their newly born calves. So much change has occurred in a short time at the park’s entrance area, we suggest that NPS use the precautionary principle with the proposed trails, and wait to see the developing pattern of uses around the park’s new facilities before doing any additional trail construction.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions on our comments, please do hesitate to call us. 907-683-3396.

Sincerely,



President, DCC

DCC Board and Staff

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