



PO Box 78, Denali Park, Alaska 99755

Since 1974

February 7, 2002

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Dear _____,

On behalf of the Board and members of Denali Citizens Council, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on your draft vision for the Parks Highway Corridor. Although the Denali Borough encompasses much of what you have named "rural" highway, the highway here has special problems associated with seasonal tourism. Because growth is unpredictable and the future uncertain, we are expecting to be involved in this process over the long term. We hope that you will continue to check back with the citizens who live along the corridor regarding their concerns and needs, as time goes by. Our particular concerns are presented below.

- The Nenana Canyon Safety Project is necessary. However, the 2003 -2004 project is considered to be an interim one. The ultimate transportation solution must take into account the scenic qualities of the area, its nearness to a National Park, and the needs of local residents. Local residents have aesthetic concerns regarding bypasses, interchanges, and other infrastructure. Relocation behind Sugar Loaf Mt. is impractical, cost prohibitive and cuts through a winter recreation area used by trappers, hunters, skiers, snowmobilers and summer recreational users. Tourists use the river to see wilderness they would not see otherwise. Denali Citizens Council is working to try to avoid overdevelopment in the Canyon and Montana Creek areas. However, growth of private tourism may occur. In order to keep the highway safe, difficult decisions may present themselves. We ask that community involvement remain a long term strategy for highway planners in this area.
- You cite lack of visitor capacity in the surrounding area. How did you obtain this impression? There may be days in the summer when unusual peaks occur, but most of the time, rooms are available. It is our belief that limits to total visitation in a single area are necessary in order to retain the quality of the visitor experience there. We think that the current level of development around the entrance to Denali National Park is near or at those limits.
- Cantwell - Tourism development in Cantwell could change the use levels fairly dramatically over the next few years. Paving the Denali Highway could also increase use levels. How will the plan deal with unforeseen consequences in this case?

Please keep Denali Citizens Council on your mailing list. If openings occur in the Corridor Planning Team, we would welcome the opportunity to provide a representative.

Sincerely,

Nancy Bale
President, DCC

Sue Deyoe
Community Organizer, DCC