

PRD Comments - Vision Statement

Commenter #	Comment
019	Amend to read "...that enhance the enjoyment and stewardship for the state's outdoor recreation, historic, cultural 'and natural' resources;"
020	<p>I have given much thought to the message that the Vision Statement should convey, and am suggesting revised wording, as follows: "The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation envisions an affordable system of parks and recreation areas that provide a wide diversity of high-quality outdoor recreation experiences; conservation and sound stewardship of the natural, historic, and cultural resources and values of our parks and recreation areas; and a dedicated, knowledgeable, and professional staff that enables the public to experience our parks and recreation areas to their fullest extent, now and in the future."</p> <p>Here is an explanation of my suggested changes: 'family-oriented' should be removed because the users of the parks and recreation areas are often not families. Although families can participate together in most kinds of outdoor recreational activities, the term 'family-oriented' implies a limited range of activities (e.g., public use cabin weekend, picnic, swimming in a lake, car or tent camping at Byer's Lake campground, etc.) I, for example, wander about or mush my dogs alone. This is not 'family-oriented' per se, but it is as legitimate as any other use. My recreation needs (and those of the many people like me) should not be excluded from State Park's vision.</p> <p>'Safe' should be removed because the Vision Statement refers to 'experiences'; not facilities. Visitors to a state Park, especially when it is a wilderness Park, expect the natural systems to be intact, and they sometimes are looking for a backcountry or wilderness experience where self-reliance and an element of risk is inherent in the activity. State Parks simply cannot ensure safe experiences, but it can (and should) ensure safe facilities. The word 'safe' is only applicable to facilities, but safe facilities should go without saying. State Parks has a duty to ensure the safety of its facilities (e.g., a boat launch).</p> <p>I inserted 'diverse', because that is what State Parks is and should be offering the public: from non-motorized to motorized; from quiet solitude to weekend crowds at a lake shore; from wilderness muscle-powered traveling to concentrated development, and from facilities to no facilities. Diversity of recreational opportunity (and this includes wilderness, natural quiet, solitude, self-reliance and absence of facilities) is an essential component of a Vision Statement.</p> <p>'High-quality', which I left in and which I think everyone wants, encompasses proper maintenance of park and recreation area facilities, such that the \$43 million deferred maintenance backlog would be eliminated and future maintenance would be performed timely as needed (i.e., 'high-quality' addresses the concern over deferred and timely maintenance).</p> <p>And I added 'conservation and sound stewardship of the natural, historic, and cultural resources and values of our parks and recreation areas' because, clearly, the natural, historic, and cultural resources underlie the very existence of our parks and recreation areas and must be protected and preserved if they are to be available for future generations to enjoy.</p>
042	<p>I think this needs revision, first, because it doesn't even mention natural resources, and, second, because I am not sure what the clause, "statewide programs that enhance the enjoyment and stewardship for the state's outdoor recreation, historic, and cultural resources;" means. What kind of program enhances stewardship? I would like to recommend the wording proposed by John Strassenburgh. I read his comments, and I think not only this wording, but also the reasoning behind them are compelling. Therefore, I recommend you reword the Vision Statement to read:</p> <p>The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation envisions an affordable and accessible system of parks and recreation areas that provide a wide diversity of high-quality outdoor recreation experiences; statewide programs that enhance the enjoyment of our parks and recreation areas; conservation and sound stewardship of the natural, historic, and cultural resources and values of our parks and recreation areas; and a dedicated, knowledgeable, and professional staff that enables the public to experience our parks and recreation areas to their fullest extent, now and in the future.</p>
044	<p>I wonder why the plan in general and the Vision Statement and section on Natural and Cultural Resources de-emphasizes the wilderness character of Alaska's larger parks. The larger parks - most notably Chugach, Denali, Kachemak Bay, Shuyak, and Wood-Tikchik - and their wilderness values are in large part what separate Alaska's State Parks system from those in the rest of the nation.</p> <p>I can't understand why the vision statement makes no reference to preserving Alaska's State Parks wilderness and wilderness values, including solitude and "natural quiet."</p>

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048	Include "natural" as one of the resources on page 7.
063	The Vision Statement needs to incorporate the mission of conservation and protection of natural resources for future generations of Alaskan's. We would suggest a Vision Statement along the lines of: "The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation envisions an affordable and accessible system of parks that provide diverse and high-quality outdoor recreation experiences; statewide programs that enhance the enjoyment of parks, conservation and protection for historic, cultural, and natural resources of our parks; and a dedicated, professional staff that meets the needs of the public, for future generations."
068	I am concerned about the emphasis on "affordability and accessibility", with no counter point of "conservation and preservation" of park resources. Without conservation and preservation, in the end, no one will desire accessibility. The mention of "statewide programs that enhance enjoyment and stewardship" is very vague, to say the least. Following the Vision Statement, I find no specific articulation of this goal.
074	The Vision Statement should specifically mention natural resource protection - any vision for the next decade must include protection of the natural resources of the parks. State Parks are not places for resource development or extraction - be assertive in stating this!
075	We suggest that the phrase "family-oriented" be deleted from the Vision Statement. We saw no reference in the rest of the draft to "family-oriented" activities, emphasis, etc. Moreover, we are concerned that emphasis on "family-oriented" changes the entire point of parks which are considered special lands because of their unique physical characteristics, such as beauty, recreational opportunities, natural settings, etc. We do not want to change the natural character in order to accommodate children. To do so would steal from their future.
081	I also disagree with the Vision Statement (which explains the "agency's future"). The Alaska DPOR "envisions" "high-quality, family-oriented, outdoor recreation experiences." The "high-quality" phrase needs to be dropped from the Vision Statement; this wording renders the Agency as a developer, rather than a conserver. I believe that Alaska's State Parks should be accessible - but wild. If Alaska's Parks become "high-quality," then cement trails, multi-million dollar nature centers, and new, paved roads will become part of the Alaska landscape. This image is not consistent with the true Alaska: wild, breathtaking, untouched.
083	The mission statement places conservation as a priority, however the Vision statement has no mention of natural resource protection.
085	Front country picnic areas might be "safe" and "family-oriented", but much of State Parks' is wild backcountry, where safety is an individual user's concern. This vision statement does not seem to make provision for this type of park use. Line 5: "the enjoyment and stewardship for the state's outdoor" - change "for" to "of".
086	Nothing in Vision Statement that reflects (conserves...natural...resources) language found in mission. Add "natural" to this list of resources to be enhanced for enjoyment and stewardship.
088	Natural resources aren't even mentioned in the Vision Statement - they should be.
091	Put "provides year round" in Mission Statement and Vision Statement.
096	Mission and Vision: The statements are good as written. The politically charged term "multiple use" should not be added (as representative Mike Kelly suggested). The Division of Parks is frequently mediating between the motorized users and the quiet users. Multiple use results in multiple abuse.