



House Resources Committee

February 9, 2015

Ben Ellis, Director

Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Department of Natural Resources

Alaska State Parks: Vast, Diverse, Unique, Popular



- ~3.5 million acres
- Six management areas
- Five million visits

For more information go to www.alaskastateparks.org
Alaska Public Lands Information Center (Anchorage)—907-544-3661 or 866-869-6887
Public Information Center (Anchorage)—907-249-8400 (Fairbanks)—907-451-1705

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Contact: Finger Lake SRA, 7270 E. Howard Rd., Winifred, AK 99634 (907) 745-1977

Contact: Morgan's Landing, Mile 85 Sterling Hwy, Soldotna, AK 99689 (907) 262-5181

Contact: DNR Northern Region Office 3700 Airport Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709 (907) 453-2666

Campsites: Most campsites accommodate RVs up to 60 feet. Dump stations are available at some sites.

■—indicates campsites that accommodate RVs up to 15 feet

Contact: Potter Section House 515, 18620 Seward Hwy, Anchorage, AK 99516 (907) 345-5014

Contact: 400 Wiloughby Ave., Kansas, AK 99811 (907) 461-4161

Contact: Fort Abercrombie SAR 1400 Abercrombie Dr. Kodlak, AK 99615 (907) 486-6329

- available, including accessible facilities
- Spring Creek Station**
- SPK** **Cost Management Area**
- SP** **State Park**
- SPS** **State Recreation Site**
- SPH** **State Recreation Home**
- SPF** **State Recreation Park**
- SPR** **State Wildlife Site**
- ST** **State Trail**
- SWP** **Wilderness Park**
- SWT** **State Wildlife Park**
- ★** Not accessible by road
- Bus** Access: Paved and unpaved
- Bicycle** Access: Yes, it is safe
- Hike** Access: Not recommended
- Hike** Access: Not recommended
- Hike** Access: Not recommended

- State Park Office
- Park Ranger Station
- Information Center
- Junior Public Lands Information Center



Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Sections



Alaska State Parks Field Operations

GF, Program Receipts & Vehicle Rental Tax Funds



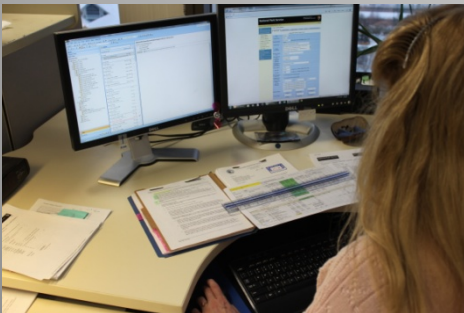
Office of Boating Safety

Primarily Federal Funds



Alaska Trails Office

Primarily Federal Funds with
Some GF



Administration & Grants

Primarily Federal Funds with a small
amount of GF, Program Receipts



Office of History & Archaeology

Separate Budget Component & primarily
Federal Funds

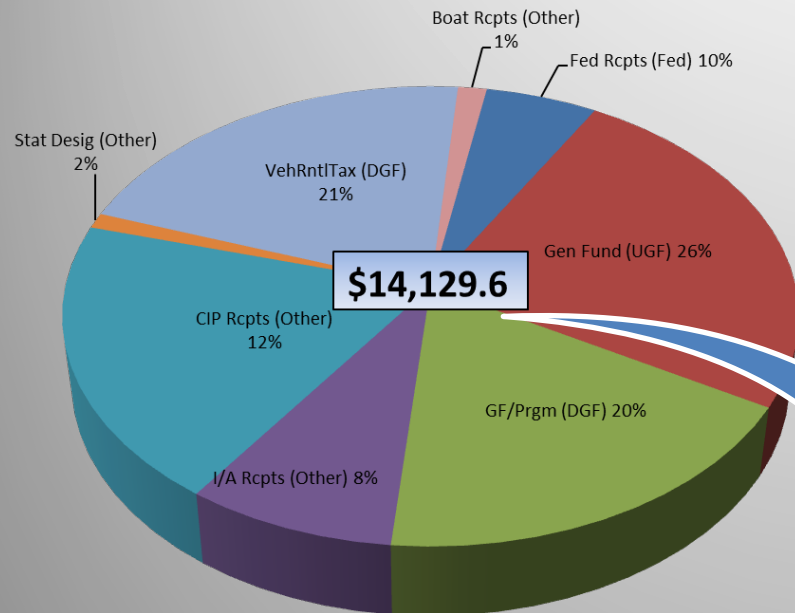


Design & Construction

CIP, SDPR, I/A, very little GF

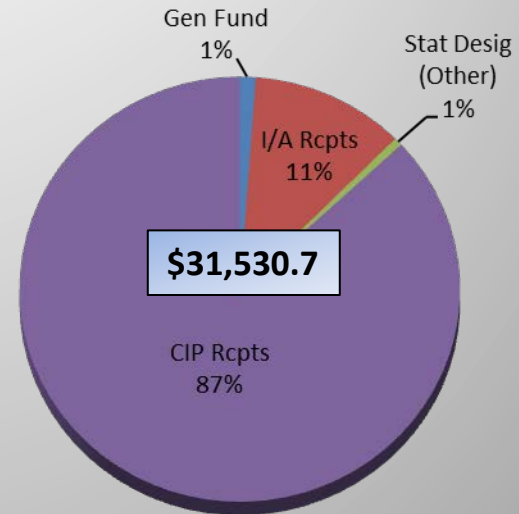
Parks Management & Access Budget

FY2014 Total Operating Budget

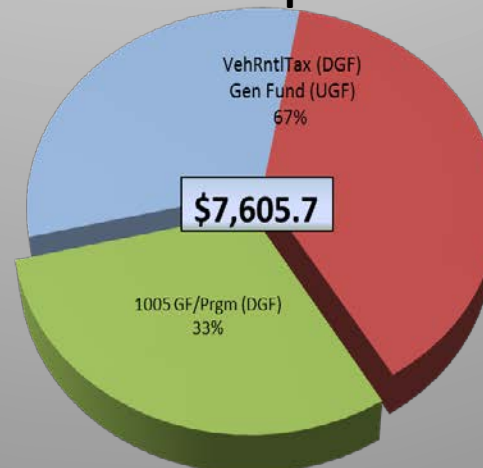


Design & Construction

Approximately 20 contracts were issued in FY2014



Field Operations



FY2014 General Fund Operations Statewide

Represents actuals from 7/1/2013 – 6/30/14

FIELD OPERATIONS SUMMARY ALL AREAS



Staff

81 Permanent Staff (49 year-round & 32 seasonal)

13 Non-Permanent Staff

(seasonal - Only general fund non-perm positions listed here)

121 Volunteer/Camp Hosts

757 Other Volunteers

Features

Approximately 3.5 Million Acres

124 Park Units

71 Campgrounds/Total of 2448 Campsites

52 Picnic Shelters

72 Public Use Cabins

93 Developed Trailheads

900 Miles of Maintained Trail

27 Developed Boat launches

515 Latrine Toilet Stalls

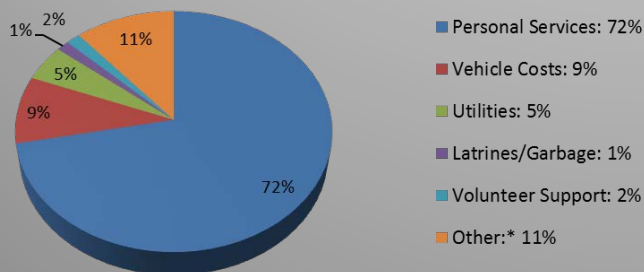
136 Fee Collection Stations

1,300 Commercial Permits Issued

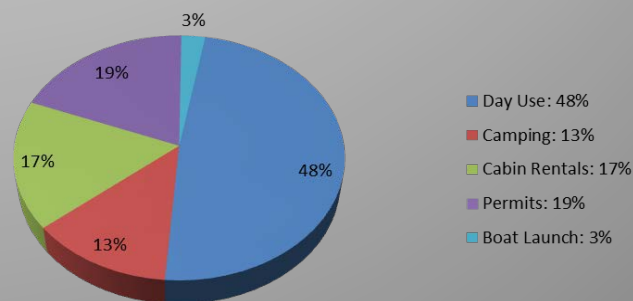
1,207 Special Use Permits Issued

2 Concession Contracts

Field Operations Budget \$7,605.7



Program Receipt Revenue \$2,620.6*



*Includes Communications, Contractual Services, Travel, Repairs and Commodities

Revenue collected 7/1/2013 - 6/30/14
*33% of Operating Budget

2014 Legislative Directive

Increase user fees

- Park fees had been stagnant for many years while the cost to operate the park system steadily increased. Last year, lawmakers replaced \$250.0 in GF with \$250.0 in GF/PR.
- In May, the division began a systematic increase in most Park fees while instituting a more stringent control on Park expenses.



Summary of the fee increases implemented in 2014-2015

May 15, 2014

- Public use cabin fees were raised by average of \$10/night/cabin and non-peak pricing discontinued

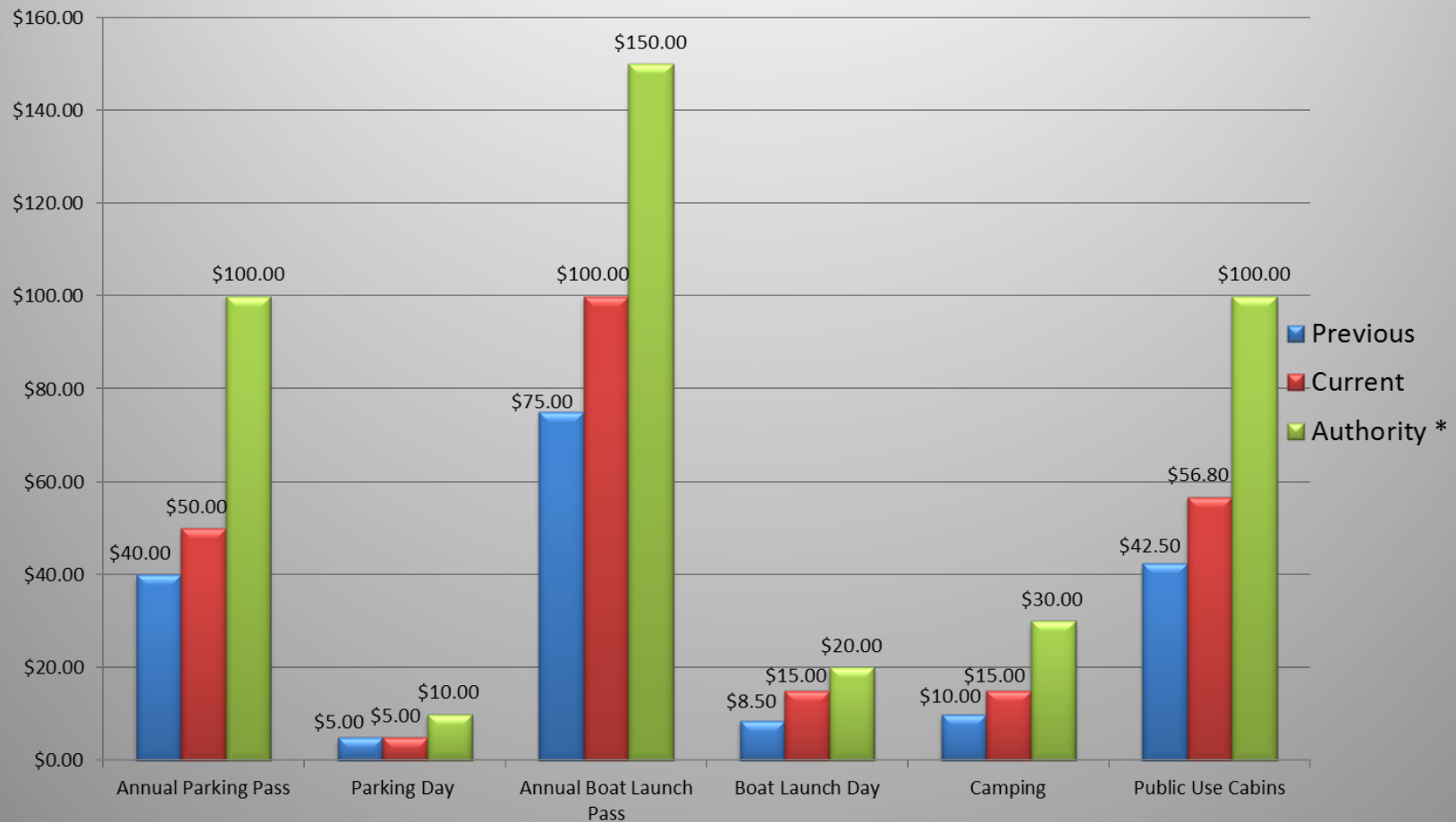
January 1, 2015

- Annual parking pass increased from \$40 to \$50 with second pass sold to same family increased from \$20 to \$25
- Boat launch pass increased from \$75 to \$100 with second pass sold to same family increased from \$40 to \$50
- Daily boat launch fees increased from current range of \$5-\$15 to range of \$10-\$20
- Overnight camping fees raised \$5/campsite/night
- Fees for reserved use of park facilities increased-varies by facility, group size and duration of event
- There was NO change in the \$5 Day Use fee

Changes initiated in FY2015 but from which additional revenue may not be realized until FY2016:

- Commercial use permit fees, which vary by park and nature of commercial activity.

Current Park Fees/Authorization Limit

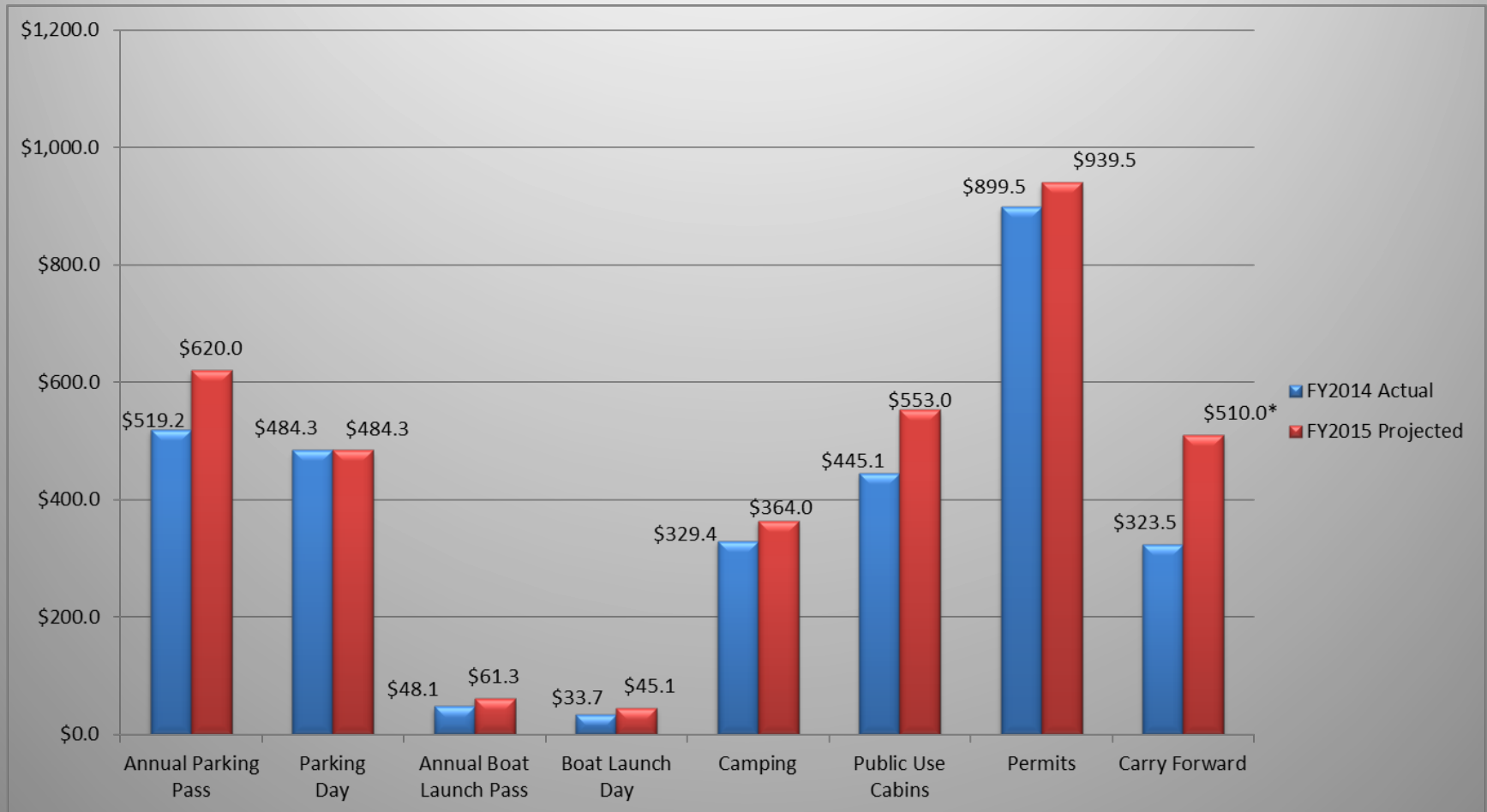


*AS 41.21.026
(11AAC 05.010(a)(12))

Revenue Generated by Park Fees

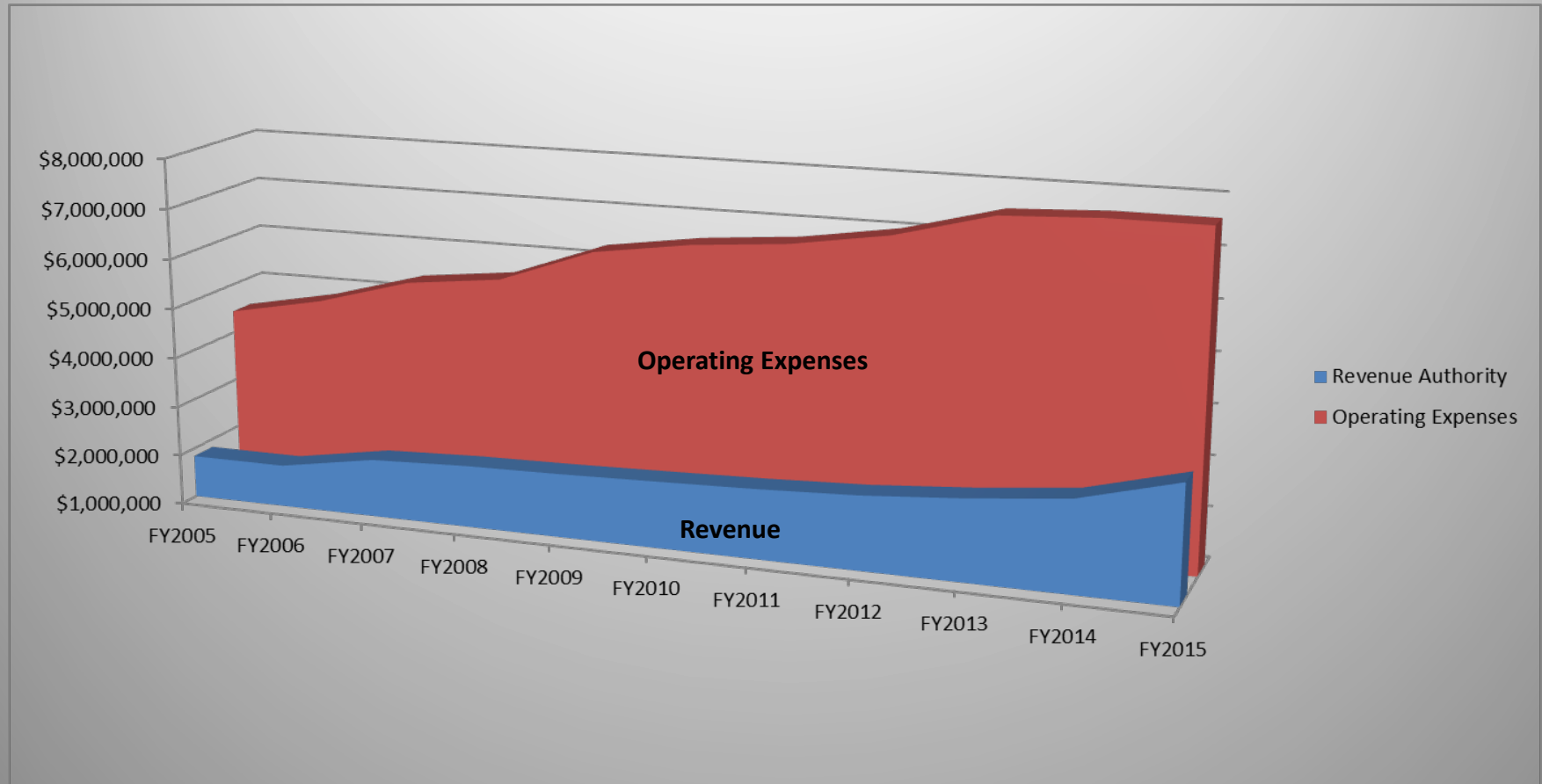
FY2014 \$3,082.8

FY2015 Projected \$3,577.2



*Actual carry forward from FY2014

Field Operational Expenses vs. Revenue Collected



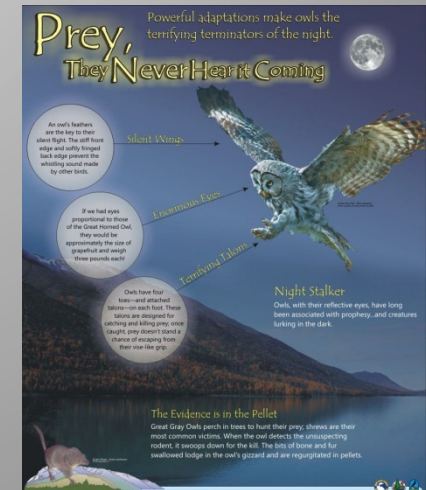
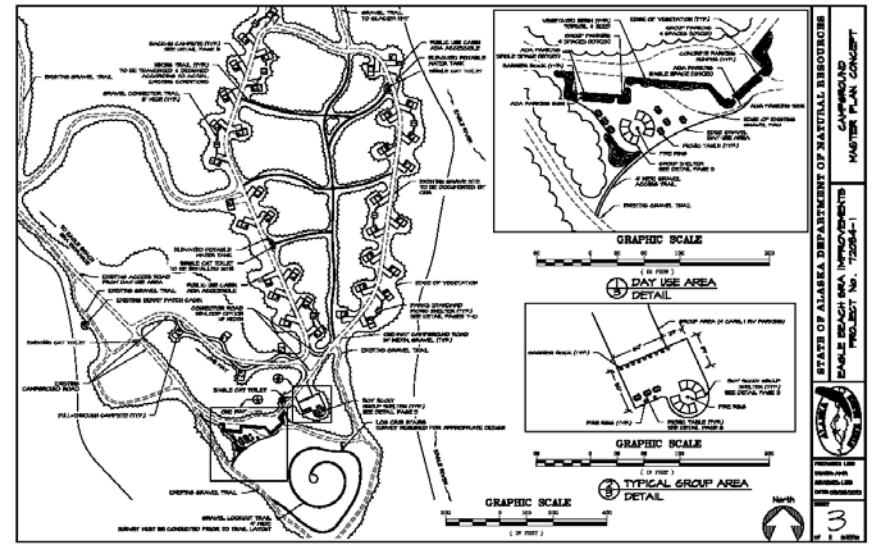
In FY2005, 41% of operating expenses were covered by program receipts. By FY 2013, that percentage had dropped to 35% as fees remained flat and expenses continued to climb. By combining the new fee structure and stringently managing our expenses, we project a record 44% of program receipts will cover operational costs in FY2015.

Design & Construction (D&C)

- Four Licensed Professional Engineers
- Five Engineers In-training
- Two Landscape Architects
- One Environmental Impact Analyst
- Four Interpretation/Education staff
- In FY14, 25 contracts worth \$2.48 million of awarded projects to private sector

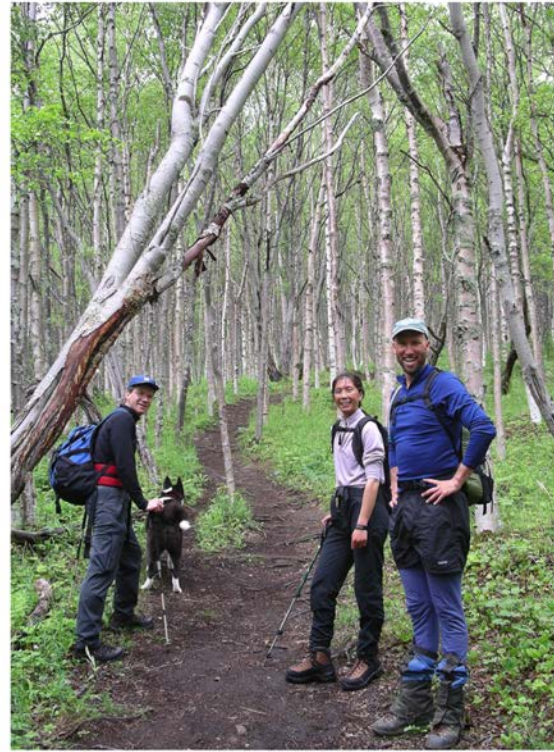
• Agencies who contract D&C services:

- Trust Land Office
- Abandon Mine Lands
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Federal Highway Administration
- Division of Mining, Land, and Water
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- Department of Fish and Game
- Division of Forestry
- Matanuska/Susitna, Kenai Peninsula, Fairbanks North Star boroughs
- City of Soldotna, City of Kenai



Alaska Trails Office

- 2 full time, 2 part time staff
- Two Grant programs:
 - Recreational Trails Program
 - FY13/ FY14/FY15 ~\$1.5 million
 - SnowTRAC – funding removed in FY2016 budget
 - ~\$230,000 – Reg fee
- First Day Hikes begun in 2011
- Trails Day Celebrations
- Healthy Alaskans 2020 Advisory Team lead for obesity prevention/ physical activity



Office of Boating Safety

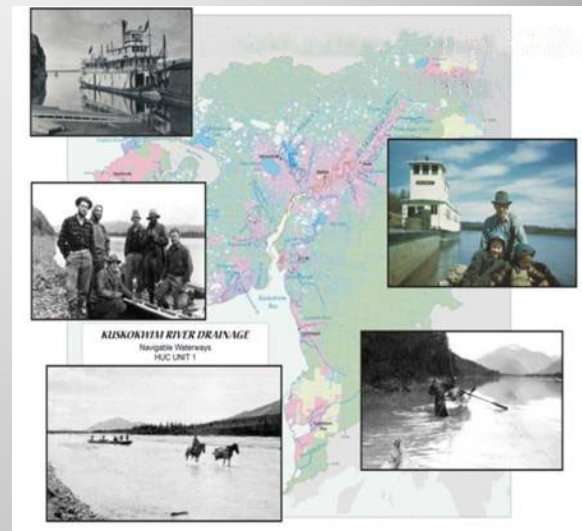
- Four permanent staff, one LTNP, three ACC, one student intern, 988 trained peer educators, 157 state registered *Alaska Water Wise* instructors
- Primarily federally funded
- 49,676 life jackets provided for *Kids Don't Float* loaner boards.
- *Kids Don't Float* education program:
 - 118,941 students / 3,275 classes
- At least 24 Alaskan children survived a water emergency wearing a *Kids Don't Float* loaner life jacket
- Life jacket wear rate studies show Alaska is above the national average for all age groups.
- Alaska's boating fatalities dropped from an average of 30 per year before the program began to 16 per year now.



Office of History & Archaeology

The state's historic preservation program oversees the preservation and protection of the historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources of Alaska (AS 41.35)

- 12 archaeologists, 7 historians, 1 administrative assistant
- ~\$2.5 million budget, most federal
- ~2,600 projects reviewed annually for impacts to cultural properties
- Alaska Historical Commission
- Research services to state agencies
- Grants to communities
- Alaska Heritage Resource Survey – statewide inventory of historic, archaeological and paleontological sites
- Program to assist local preservation programs around Alaska



Arts in the Parks Initiative

- Initiative began in 2011, at Byers Lake in Denali State Park with a goal of bringing Alaska artists and the public together for a weekend in one of our spectacular park locations
- ~60 Alaska artists/~250 members of the public have participated
- FY2015 funding for pilot Artist-in-Residence program at Earnest Gruening State Historical Park outside of Juneau to begin this summer
- Poems in Place project has placed seven poems written by Alaskans in five parks since 2012



South Denali Visitor Center Complex Initiative*

Phase One:

- Energizing Parks corridor
- 2.3 mile gravel access road
- 35 RV campsites/campground
- .6 mile of trails
- 15 walk-in campsites
- Group campsite
- Public Use Cabins
- 5 miles of additional trails
- Ranger/Maintenance structure

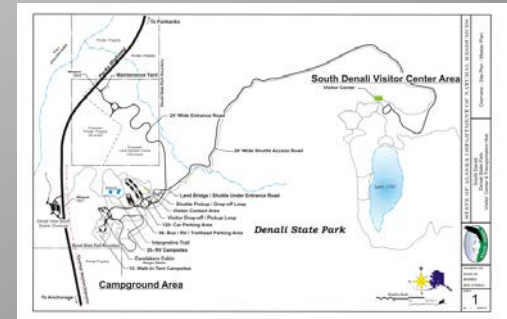
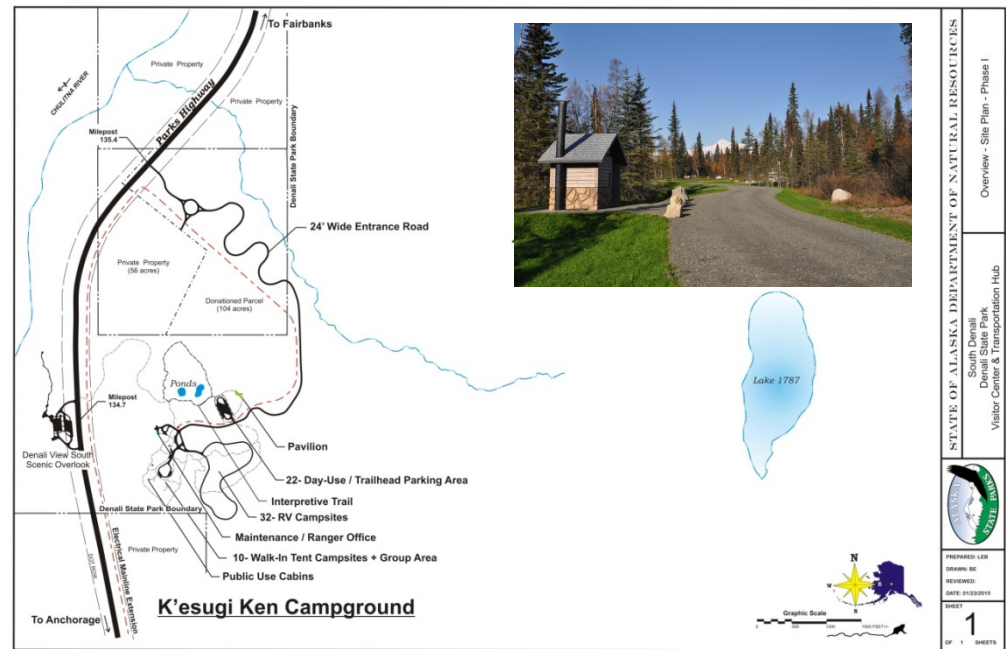
Phase Two (on hold):

- Expand lower parking
- Access road to top
- Visitor Center
- Additional trails

Funding

Phase One (secured): \$22.3M

Phase Two (unsecured) ~\$24.2 M



* See separate brief on project

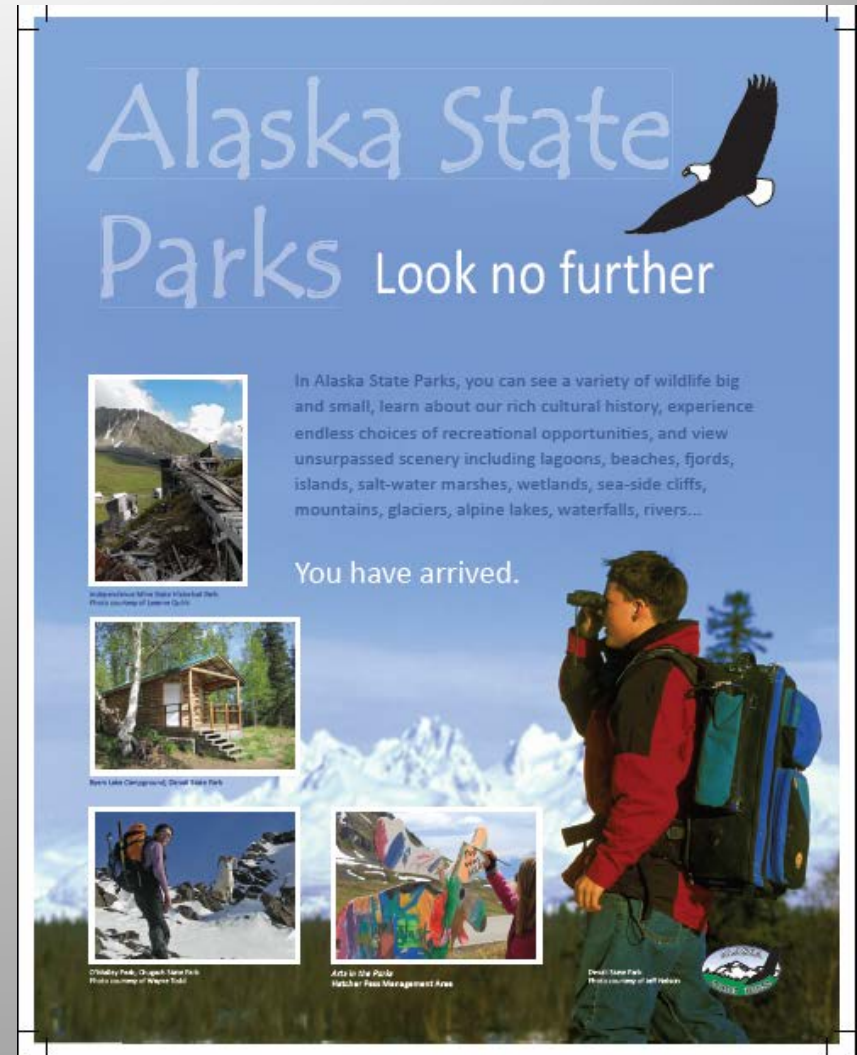
Challenges facing the Division

- Increased public demand for expanded or new services
- ~\$62 million in deferred maintenance needs, increases ~\$3 million a year
- Elimination of funding source for grooming snowmachine trails and promoting safety and education grants



Areas of Excellence

- Design & Construction completes an average of \$7 million to \$10 million worth of projects per year, while completing most of their projects within three years
- Recruited/hired/trained more than 800 volunteers who donate over 76,000 hours with a cash value of ~\$1.2 million
- Alaska State Parks Facebook page with 1,998 likes and growing
- Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development marketing partnership with Alaska State Parks in the 2013 and 2014 Alaska Vacation Planners





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