

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1987-1988 8672

4889 HRES CHUGACH STATE PARK SKI AREA

3/6/

SITE #5 - HIGHLAND MOUNTAIN WEST

1. Slope aspect: West
2. Elevations and length of potential lift-served runs:

Highest Usable Elevation	3,500'
Lowest Usable Elevation	600'
Usable Vertical Descent	2,900'
Longest Possible Run	15,800'

3. Terrain balance:

<u>Ability</u>	<u>Steepness</u>	<u>Acraege</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Novice	10-25% slope or 06°-14°	800	73
Intermediate	25-40% slope or 14°-11°	228	21
Advanced	40-55% slope or 22°-29°	60	6
Expert	55-80% slope or 29°-39°	--	--
TOTAL		1,088	100

4. Fall line continuity by ability level: Continuous novice slope for 95% of the distance.
5. Terrain diversity: Little terrain diversity on upper slopes; some interesting draws on lower slopes.
6. Ground cover types: Alpine tundra for upper slopes, brush at mid-level, and second growth birch trees on lower slopes.
7. Terrain hazards (cliffs, boulders, etc.): Precipitous slope with some avalanching alongside upper part of slope.
8. Base area development potential: Extensive fiat terrain between base of slope and Glenn Highway - Highland Drive interchange.
9. Other activity potential: Luge, bobsled, ski jumping and biathalon at proposed winter olympic venues.

SITE #6 - HIGHLAND MOUNTAIN EAST

1. Slope aspect: East
2. Elevations and length of potential lift-served runs:

Highest Usable Elevation	3,500'
Lowest Usable Elevation	400'
Usable Vertical Descent	3,100'
Longest Possible Run	13,000'





3. Terrain balance:

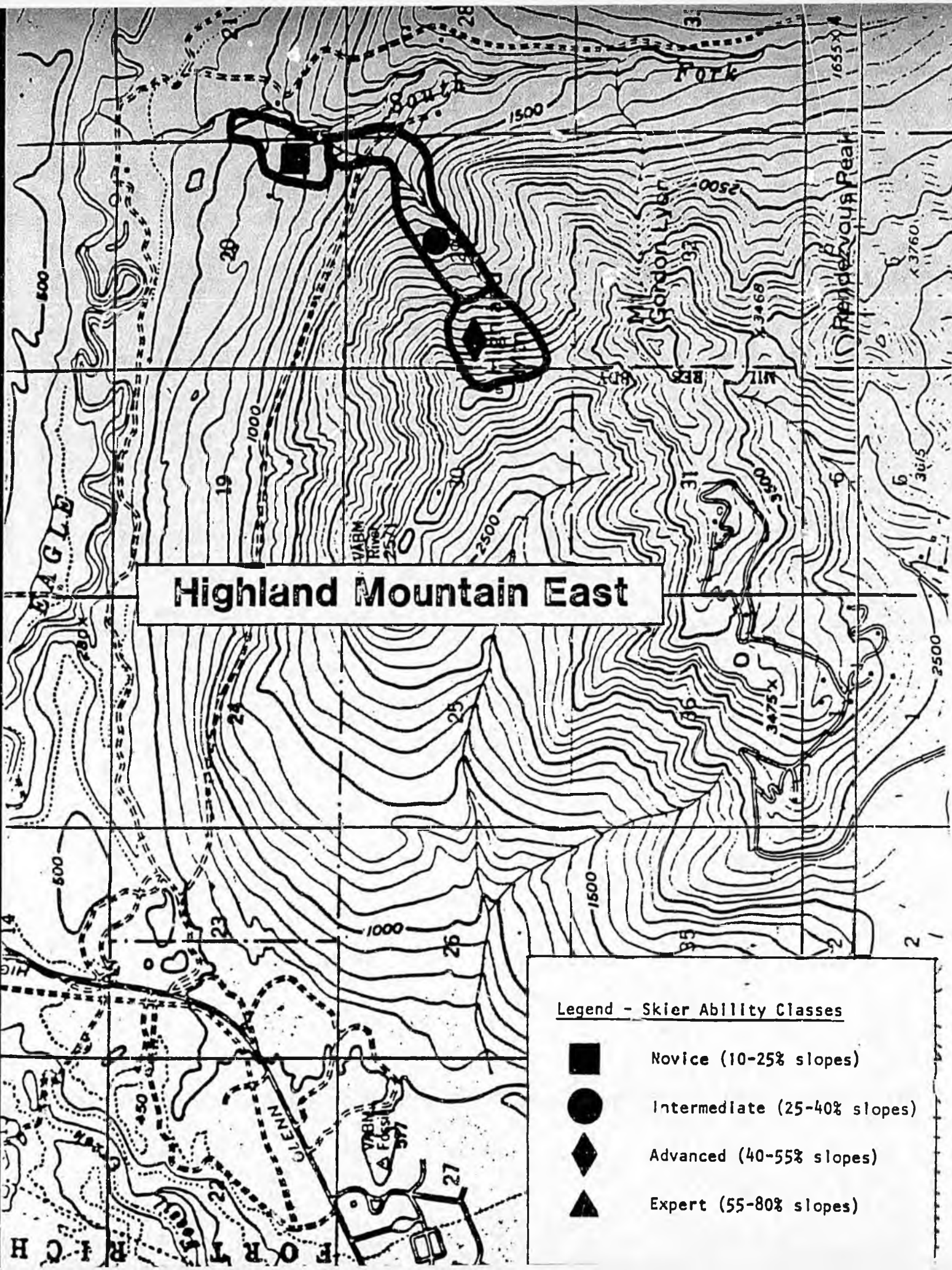
<u>Ability</u>	<u>Steepness</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Novice	10-25% slope or 06°-14°	48	20
Intermediate	25-40% slope or 14°-11°	104	43
Advanced	40-55% slope or 22°-29°	88	37
Expert	55-80% slope or 29°-39°	--	--
TOTAL		<u>240</u>	<u>100</u>

4. Fall line continuity by ability level: Discontinuous for all ability levels with no ability level run for more than 50% of descent.
5. Terrain diversity: Major variation would occur at road crossing where a bridge would be required; some variations in gullies.
6. Ground cover types: Alpine tundra on upper slopes, primarily birch forest on lower slopes.
7. Terrain hazards (cliffs, boulders, etc.): Deep, steep ravines and intersection with Highland Drive.
8. Base area development potential: Severely limited by roads and residences.
9. Other activity potential: Sightseeing at waterfall.

Highland Mountain East

Legend - Skier Ability Classes

-  Novice (10-25% slopes)
-  Intermediate (25-40% slopes)
-  Advanced (40-55% slopes)
-  Expert (55-80% slopes)



SITE #7 - EAGLE RIVER

1. Slope aspect: North

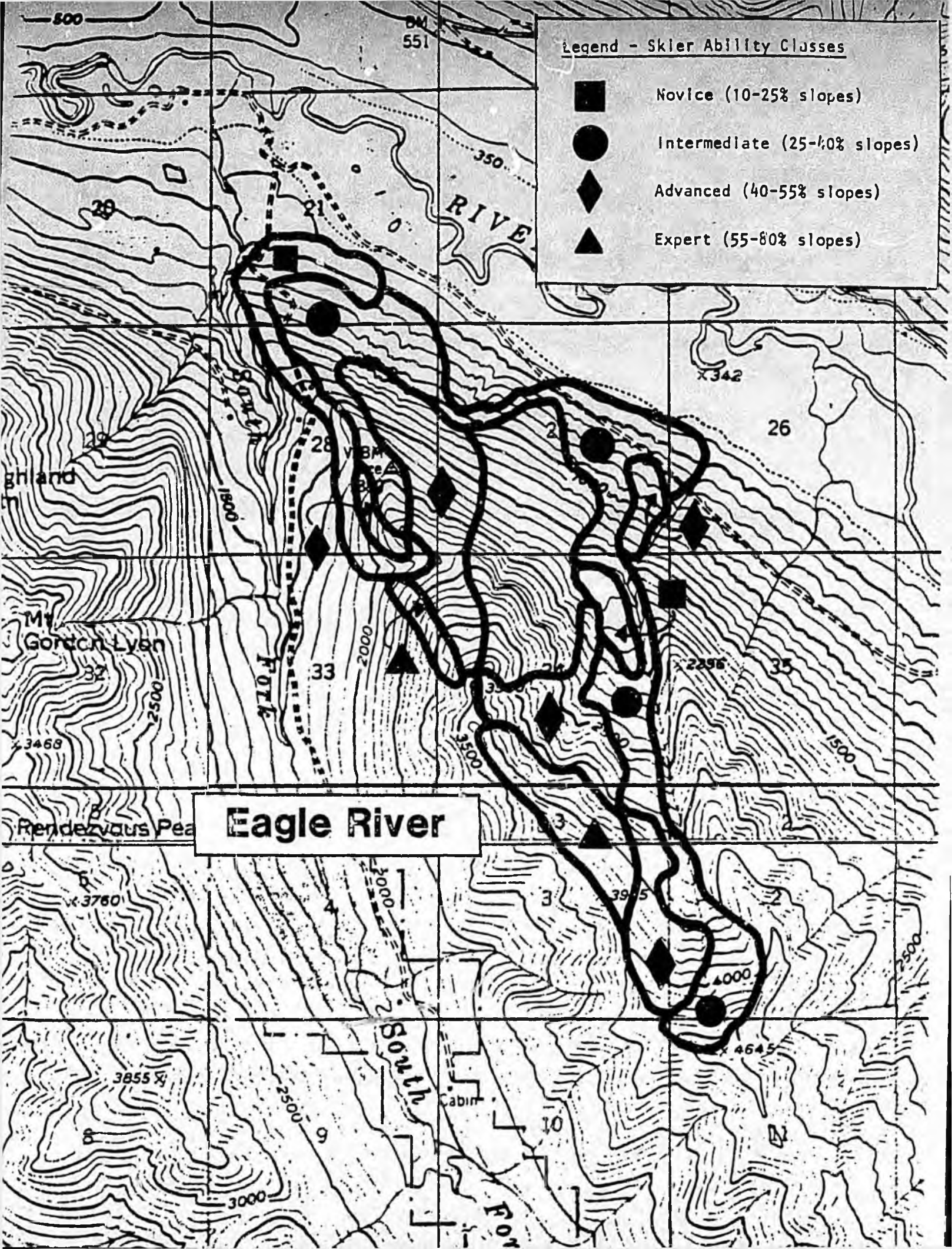
2. Elevations and length of potential lift-served runs:

Highest Usable Elevation	4,600'
Lowest Usable Elevation	350'
Usable Vertical Descent	4,250'
Longest Possible Run	15,800'

3. Terrain balance:

<u>Ability</u>	<u>Steepness</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Novice	10-25% slope or 06°-14°	228	15
Intermediate	25-40% slope or 14°-21°	628	41
Advanced	40-55% slope or 22°-29°	504	33
Expert	55-80% slope or 29°-39°	170	11
TOTAL		1,530	100

4. Fall line continuity by ability level: Continuous top to bottom slopes for novice and intermediate skiing; continuous advanced skiing for 25% of descent.
5. Terrain diversity: Little diversity on most slopes, some variety in gullies on lower slopes.
6. Ground cover types: Alpine tundra for majority of area with birch/spruce forest and homestead clearings on lower slopes.
7. Terrain hazards (cliffs, boulders, etc.): Sharp rocks near summit. East valley narrow just above midway creating a bottleneck on somewhat of a sidehill.
8. Base area development potential: Ample flat terrain on floor of main Eagle River Valley.
9. Other activity potential: Hiking into the mountains, cross-country skiing, wildlife observation.



Legend - Skier Ability Classes

- Novice (10-25% slopes)
- Intermediate (25-40% slopes)
- ◆ Advanced (40-55% slopes)
- ▲ Expert (55-80% slopes)

Eagle River

SITE #8 - SOUTH FORK EAGLE RIVER

1. Slope aspect: West
2. Elevations and length of potential lift-served runs:

Highest Usable Elevation	4,600'
Lowest Usable Elevation	2,000'
Usable Vertical Descent	2,300'
Longest Possible Run	5,000'

3. Terrain balance:

<u>Ability</u>	<u>Steepness</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Novice	10-25% slope or 06°-14°	---	--
Intermediate	25-40% slope or 14°-11°	103	32
Advanced	40-55% slope or 22°-29°	177	55
Expert	55-80% slope or 29°-39°	40	13
TOTAL		<u>320</u>	<u>100</u>

4. Fall line continuity by ability level: Advanced skiing for upper two-thirds of slope; intermediate for lower one-third.
5. Terrain diversity: Slight.
6. Ground cover: types: Alpine tundra.
7. Terrain hazards (cliffs, boulders, etc.): Precipitous near the top.
8. Base area development potential: Limited space between road and foot of slope.
9. Other activity potential: Hiking.

Legend - Skier Ability Classes



Novice (10-25% slopes)



Intermediate (25-40% slopes)

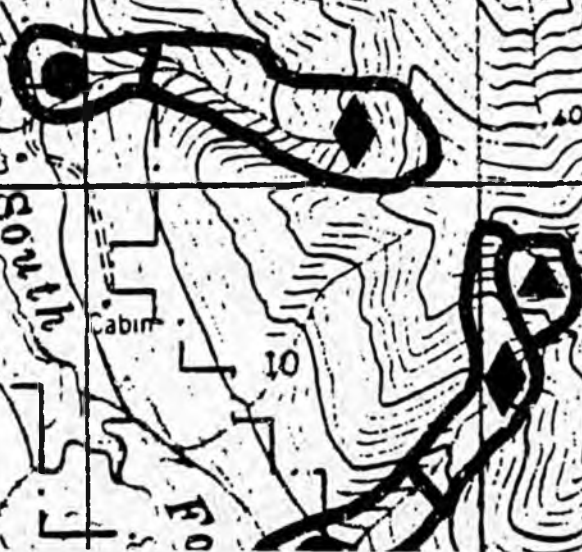


Advanced (40-55% slopes)



Expert (55-80% slopes)

South Fork Eagle River



SITE #9 - WOLVERINE BOWL

1. Slope aspect: West

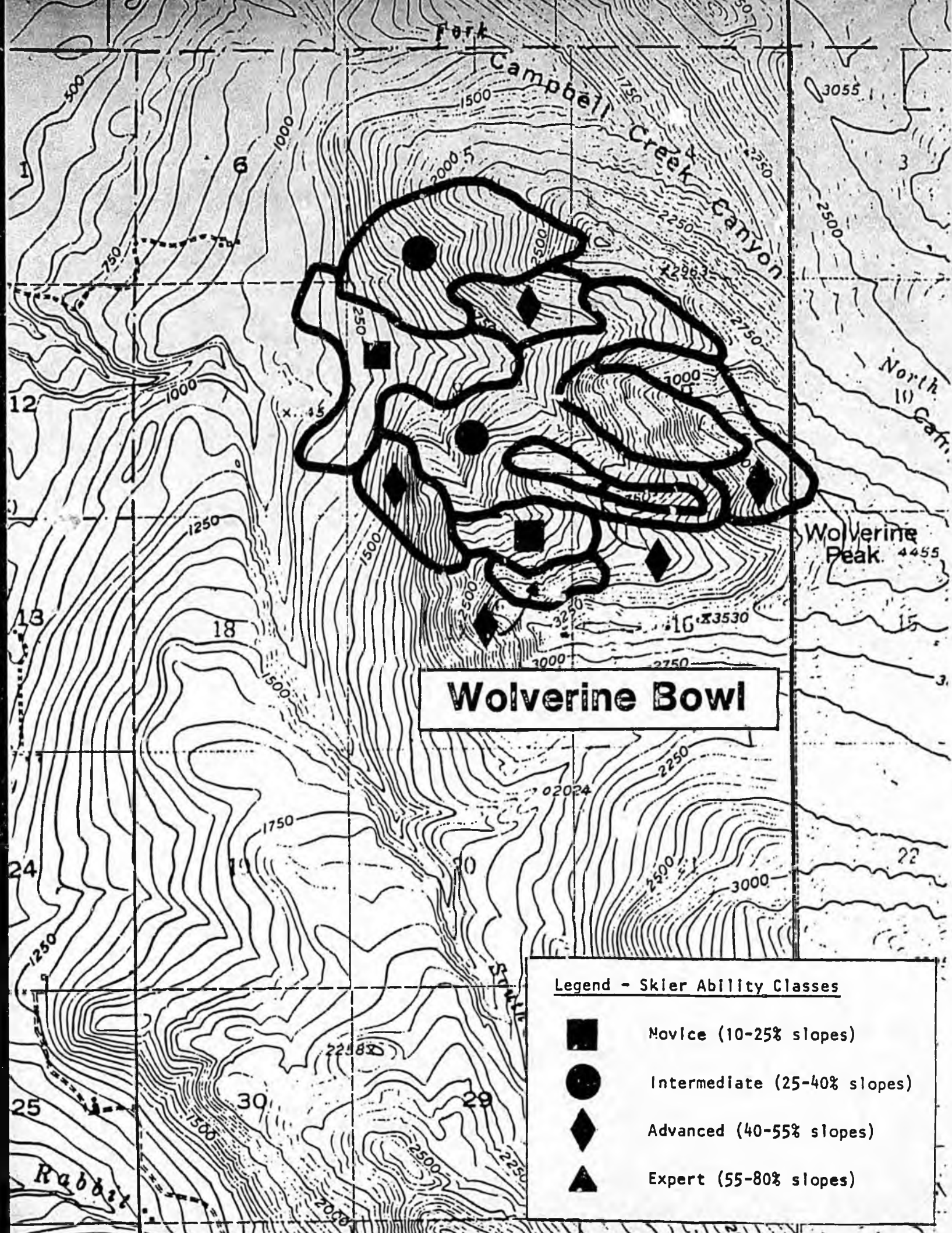
2. Elevations and length of potential lift-served runs:

Highest Usable Elevation	4,000'
Lowest Usable Elevation	1,200'
Usable Vertical Descent	2,800'
Longest Possible Run	12,000'

3. Terrain balance:

<u>Ability</u>	<u>Steepness</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Novice	10-25% slope or 06°-14°	368	25.5
Intermediate	25-40% slope or 14°-11°	660	46.0
Advanced	40-55% slope or 22°-29°	364	25.0
Expert	55-80% slope or 29°-39°	48	3.5
TOTAL		<u>1,440</u>	<u>100.0</u>

4. Fall line continuity by ability level: Intermediate skiing continuity for 75% of descent, advanced for 60%, and novice for 40%.
5. Terrain diversity: Mostly even gradient sections with the exception of some incised ravines.
6. Ground cover types: Alpine tundra for 80% of slopes; alder and birch/spruce forest for lower (novice) slopes.
7. Terrain hazards (cliffs, boulders, etc.): Some precipitous areas and boulders on upper slopes.
8. Base area development potential: Moderate terrain in birch/spruce forest at confluence of probable ski slopes.
9. Other activity potential: Cross-country skiing and hiking.



Wolverine Bowl

Legend - Skier Ability Classes

■	Novice (10-25% slopes)
●	Intermediate (25-40% slopes)
◆	Advanced (40-55% slopes)
▲	Expert (55-80% slopes)

SITE #10 - INDIAN

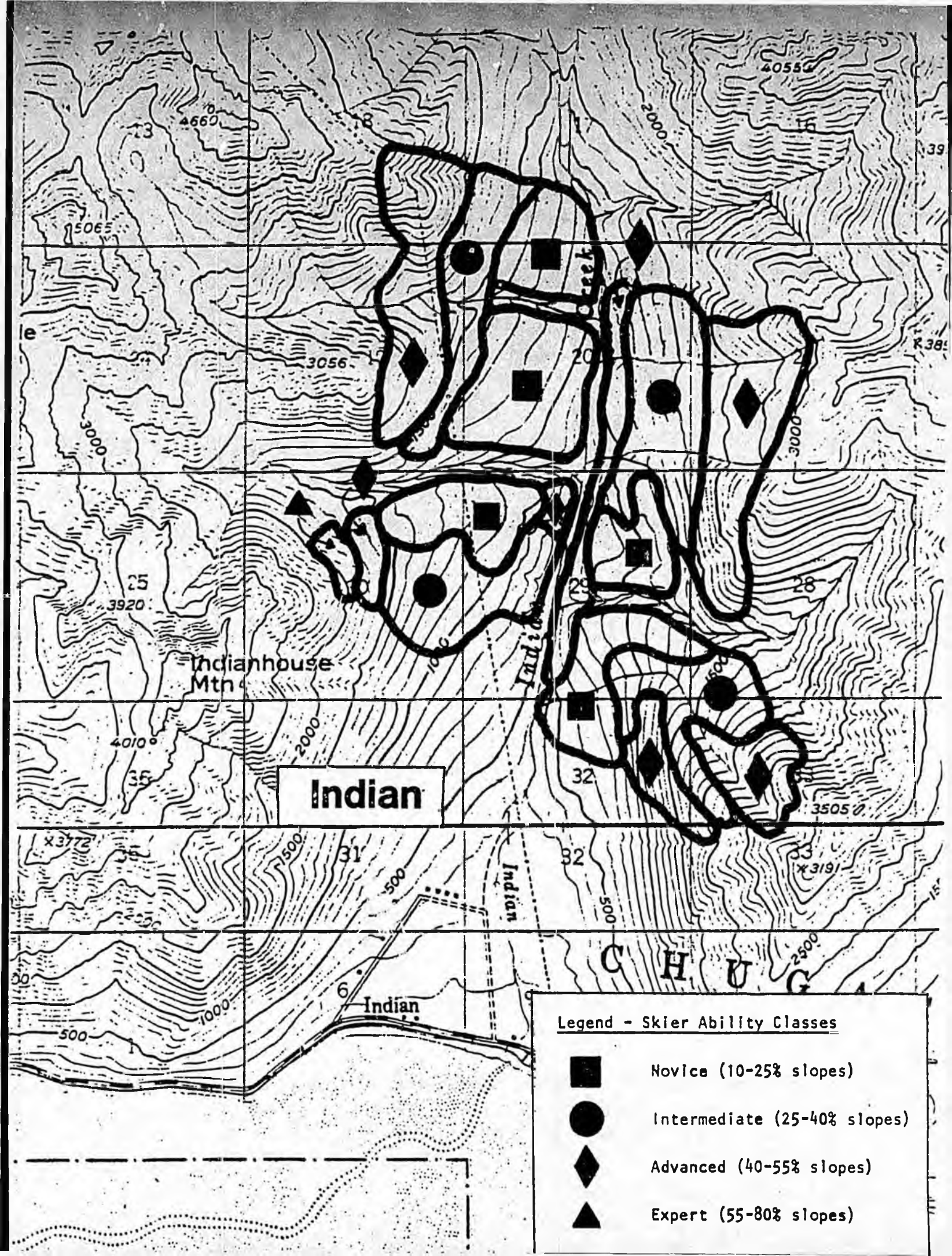
1. Slope aspect: East and West
2. Elevations and length of potential lift-served runs:

Highest Usable Elevation	2,700'
Lowest Usable Elevation	400'
Usable Vertical Descent	2,300'
Longest Possible Run	6,500'

3. Terrain balance:

<u>Ability</u>	<u>Steepness</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Novice	10-25% slope or 06°-14°	640	31
Intermediate	25-40% slope or 14°-11°	624	31
Advanced	40-55% slope or 22°-29°	736	36
Expert	55-80% slope or 29°-39°	40	2
TOTAL		2,040	100

4. Fall line continuity by ability level: Discontinuous slope angles on west side of valley, i.e., upper slopes are advanced, mid-slopes intermediate and lower slopes novice and advanced slopes on east side of valley.
5. Terrain diversity: Variety of drainages, ridges and ravines provide an adventurous setting.
6. Ground cover types: Alpine tundra, shrubs and large spruce/hemlock forest.
7. Terrain hazards (cliffs, boulders, etc.): Rock faces on upper slopes and steeply incised ravines in valleys.
8. Base area development potential: Limited at base of potential lift lines due to steeply incised ravines.
9. Other activity potential: Cross-country trail activity limited to area of moderate slopes in dense forest of lower valley.



Indian

Legend - Skier Ability Classes

■	Novice (10-25% slopes)
●	Intermediate (25-40% slopes)
◆	Advanced (40-55% slopes)
▲	Expert (55-80% slopes)

IV. CONCLUSIONS

No one potential site ranks highest in all of the terrain characteristics. Peters Creek - 4 Mile has the longest run and the most intermediate acreage. Eagle River has the most vertical descent, with top to bottom intermediate skiing. Mt. Baldy also has a continuous top to bottom intermediate ski run. More detailed on-site analysis could result in some reductions in estimates of usable vertical descent.

Mt. Baldy, Eagle River and Indian have the most interesting terrain diversity, and potential for more adventurous skiing.

Eklutna South, Mt. Baldy, Eagle River, Wolverine Bowl and Indian have the advantage of trees growing at higher elevations whereas other sites have little or no forested areas for wind protection and scenic variety.

Terrain hazards were not observed at Eklutna South and Peters Creek - 4 Mile.

Adequate level terrain for base area development is present at Eklutna South, Peters Creek - 4 Mile, Mt. Baldy, Highland Mountain West, Eagle River, and Wolverine Bowl.

Potential for other activities is present at all sites, with perhaps the most noteworthy being Highland Mountain West, where luge, bobsled, and ski jump facilities are being proposed in Anchorage's bid for the 1994 Winter Olympics.

CHUGACH STATE PARK SKI TERRAIN CAPABILITY

<u>Site</u>	<u>Slope Aspect</u>	<u>Vertical Descent</u>	<u>Longest Run</u>	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Terrain Balance Intermediate</u>	<u>Advanced</u>	<u>Intermediate Continuity*</u>
1. Eklutna South	North	2,900'	8,000'	23%	33% (720 ac.)	44%	95%
2. Peters Creek- 4 Mile	All directions	3,300'	17,000'	13%	38% (832 ac.)	49%	50%
3. Peters Creek- 6 Mile	North	3,500'	12,000'	28%	45% (506 ac.)	27%	40%
4. Mt. Baldy	Northwest	2,500'	10,500'	26%	51% (568 ac.)	23%	100%
5. Highland Mtn. West	West	2,900'	15,800'	73%	21% (228 ac.)	6%	15%
6. Highland Mtn. East	East	3,100'	13,000	20%	47% (104 ac.)	37%	50%
7. Eagle River	North	4,250'	15,800'	15%	41% (628 ac.)	44%	100%
8. South Fork Eagle River	West	2,300'	5,000'	0%	32% (103 ac.)	68%	33%
9. Wolverine Bowl	West	2,800'	12,000'	25.5%	46% (660 ac.)	28.5%	75%
10. Indian	East/West	2,300'	6,500'	31%	31% (624 ac.)	38%	75%

* The degree to which the top to bottom of hill is useable by intermediate skiers measured as a percentage of total vertical descent.

THE PRECEDING PAGES WERE TREATED AS
A UNIT IN THE ORIGINAL FILE.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES WERE TREATED AS
A UNIT IN THE ORIGINAL FILE.

EAGLE RIVER GREENBELT PLAN

April, 1985

° TONY KNOWLES, MAYOR

° Department of Community Planning
Municipality of Anchorage

° TRA/Farr

* INCLUDES EXCERPTS FROM
THE PLAN *
MARGIN NOTES & UNDERLINES BY
DPOB STAFF.

7/87

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Key actions needed to adopt and implement the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan are summarized below. Each of these is discussed in greater length in the following text. As noted in the Implementation section, the complexity and amount of land included in this plan will require the utmost sensitivity to the needs of both the landowner and land user. Moreover, a commitment by all parties will be required to bring this magnificent and unique resource into reality.

1. Upon adoption by the Anchorage Assembly of the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan, the Municipality should enter into negotiation with Eklutna, Inc. and the three other private land owners to acquire the Greenbelt land together with the six recreation sites other than the Eagle River Campground Expansion site as soon as possible.
2. A mix of acquisition techniques should be used rather than a reliance upon a single approach. All of the techniques described in the text can contribute in varying degrees and should be woven together in an acquisition strategy. A high degree of cooperation and support between the Municipality and state agencies is necessary and must be cultivated and maintained. Consideration should be given to first negotiating an "umbrella agreement" to guide negotiation on the manner and basis for incorporation of Eklutna, Inc. owned land into the Greenbelt.
3. Development should follow acquisition in the creation of the Eagle River Greenbelt. Upon Greenbelt acquisition, Municipal Department of Parks and Recreation should then begin the process of site and trail development with a development priority that includes:
 - a. the six recreation sites,
 - b. the Greenbelt lands from the South Fork Park site downstream to the Eagle River Campground and including the South Fork Greenbelt link between the Park site and Waterfalls site; and
 - c. the remaining Greenbelt lands from South Fork upstream to Chugach State Park.

A detailed plan of management and operation should be prepared with involvement of user groups to accommodate the variety of recreational needs. The

potential for effective integration of such a plan with the proposed Eagle River Greenbelt Trust (see Section V) should be seriously considered. The proposed continuous trail system should be established under the general guidance of this Plan as well as the more specific direction of the management plan.

4. The Municipality should take the lead in exploring the potential of creating an Eagle River Greenbelt Trust. Such a Trust could serve not only as a vehicle for securing corporate and foundation funds leading to acquisition and management, but could serve as a community "watchdog" to ensure the integrity of the Greenbelt is maintained.
5. The State of Alaska, through the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, should pursue acquisition of land adjacent to the Eagle River Campground site from Eklutna, Inc. as an expansion to the existing campground.
6. Chugach State Park trails should be connected with those Municipal trails/routes as indicated in this Plan.
7. The Eagle River Greenbelt Plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the Anchorage Coastal Management Plan which have identified most of the Greenbelt as Freshwater Marsh and Wetlands under the designation of Preservation Environment Coastal Resource Policy Unit.

IV. EAGLE RIVER GREENBELT PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

The proposed Eagle River Greenbelt Plan is based on two primary objectives, to provide the opportunity for continuous recreational access to Eagle River, and to conserve open space in the valley bottom for wildlife habitat and watershed values.

The study area is defined as that portion of Eagle River valley classified as wetlands and/or lying within the 100-Year floodplain, as well as bordering upland areas needed for trail location wildlife habitat or recreation sites. The study area extends from the Glenn Highway bridge-crossing to the administrative boundary of Chugach State Park (bordering Eklutna lands) in the upper portion of the valley. That portion of South Fork of the Eagle River extending upstream to the upper falls was also included. An inventory for the project was researched and compiled based on existing plans, background literature and existing maps and aerial photographs (see Inventory section). Published data was supplemented through knowledgeable individuals and field verification. (See "Sources" for a detailed list.)

Several plans have been prepared in the last five years which explicitly involve the Eagle River valley. The relationship of this plan to the Anchorage Coastal Management Plan is treated separately (see Section IV-G). The other plans are briefly described below. In all cases, the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan is both consistent and serves as a refinement of these predecessor plans. The Eagle River-Chugiak-Eklutna Comprehensive Plan (1979) has classified most of the Greenbelt area as Marginal Lands with smaller areas at the periphery as residential or alpine and slope affected land. This plan recognized the special character of Eagle River valley in its assemblage of environmentally-sensitive lands (i.e., floodplain, wetlands, areas of slope instability and critical wildlife habitat) and called for very selective development of these areas if at all. The Chugach State Park Master Plan (1980) identified the recreational use of the valley and called for the establishment of six sites along the river providing for vehicular access. The Southcentral Region Plan Recommendations (1983) of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation specify working with both Eklutna, Inc. and the U.S. Army to maintain river travel and access to Eagle River under Special Management

Considerations. Finally, the Eagle River-Chugiak-Eklutna Parks, Greenbelts and Trails Plan (1985) identified the need for an Eagle River Greenbelt and acknowledged that its recommendations regarding such a Greenbelt would be superceded by this present plan.

The plan development task was initially seen as a linear process leading from inventory to opportunities/constraints and on to plan alternatives from which a recommended plan would emerge. As part of the opportunities/constraints analysis, development conflicts, as well as environmental sensitivity and suitability were to be evaluated. As work proceeded, however, this process was modified because its "straight-line" nature was ill-suited to the problem at hand. For example, it became clear that the real value of the inventory work was largely in its reference aspects. From the wetlands and floodplain information (Map 4), graphic overlays were made which were very helpful in later plan modification work. Moreover, because of the homogeneity of much of the valley bottomland, the suitability analysis failed to differentiate much of the valley bottom. Conflicts culled from the inventory phase such as avalanche hazard zones and steep slopes were identified along with special features and opportunities. However, the Opportunities and Constraints analysis essentially stood on its own as a synthesis of most of the foregoing inventory work.

In effect, the inventory and analysis phase became somewhat uncoupled from the later plan development phase. The drafting of plan alternatives and their subsequent modifications, based on staff and public review, keyed much more on overall acreage and its quality (i.e., wetlands and if so, how classified). Equally important for plan development were trail corridor locations and the needed Greenbelt buffer surrounding the corridor, given adjacent site conditions as well as site suitability for vehicular access and recreational development.

B. GREENBELT ALTERNATIVES

Once an analysis of the opportunities and constraints for establishment of a greenbelt was completed for the entire valley, a series of three alternatives was developed during the period August-November 1984, identifying potential greenbelt boundaries requiring various levels of Municipal commitment. A final alternative, now termed the Recommended Greenbelt was developed following the Public Hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission, January 28, 1985.

1. Alternative 1

The first alternative incorporated some 2500 acres including all land located within the 100-Year floodplain, plus most of the Conservation wetlands located within Eagle River Valley bottomlands. Potential trail corridors were identified that would allow a continuous trail along either side of the river along the entire length of the Greenbelt. However, in the interest of minimizing potential development costs for trail construction, trail corridors were tentatively located along existing foot and jeep trails. This resulted in entering and leaving the greenbelt, in some cases varying outside the greenbelt boundary by several hundred feet.

Included within the first greenbelt alternative were five of the recreational sites originally identified as potential recreation sites within the North Anchorage Land Agreement. Much of the greenbelt in this alternative is inaccessible to the public due to the location of the majority of trails along the perimeter or outside the greenbelt boundary; trails were located in this manner to reduce trail development costs.

This first alternative was presented to the Eagle River Park Board at an informational public meeting on August 20, 1984. The meeting was well attended by representatives of various river and trail user groups, and Eagle River valley residents. The public comment was supportive of the area recommended to be included within the greenbelt, and there was considerable discussion regarding the need to involve users in the development of a management plan. That plan would allow users to participate in decisions about specific facilities to be developed, and portions of the trail system that would be designated for each user group.

The Eagle River Park Board felt the first alternative needed further development to reduce the greenbelt size and lower potential acquisition costs. They also asked that trail alignments be studied in greater detail with the objective of continuing as much of the trail corridor as possible within greenbelt boundaries.

2. Alternative 2

Based on Park Board and public comments, a second greenbelt alternative was developed that significantly reduced the greenbelt acreage to approximately 1,700 acres, excluding virtually all of the Conservation wetlands and sizable portions of the Preservation wetlands that were not directly needed to support the location and development of the system of trails and recreational sites. Virtually the entire trail system was realigned within the greenbelt boundary based on additional field study.

The second alternative maintained a greenbelt boundary sufficient to include the main trail corridors paralleling the river on both the north and south sides of the valley. Greenbelt boundary widths of 75', 150', and 200' from one side of the river channel were included dependent on surrounding land characteristics and classification to protect trail corridors. The primary objective of the second greenbelt alternative was to accommodate continuous recreational access adjacent to the river along the length of the valley. While it was recognized that protection of wildlife habitat is an important public objective, alternative two chose to focus the Municipal commitment to the greenbelt on maximizing recreational access to the river. Meetings were held with the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and Alaska Department of Fish and Game to ascertain the potential for State involvement in acquisition of additional lands adjacent to the greenbelt for protection of wildlife habitat values.

The second alternative was again presented to the public in a meeting sponsored by the Eagle River Park Board on October 9, 1984. At the meeting there was substantial public comment that the greenbelt boundary had been reduced too much, and should be increased to give greater consideration to wildlife habitat protection. While it was recognized that trail development costs would increase if trails were to be developed through large wetland tracts, it was felt that these additional costs would be more than offset by the significantly reduced cost of land acquisition relative to the first alternative.

3. Alternative 3

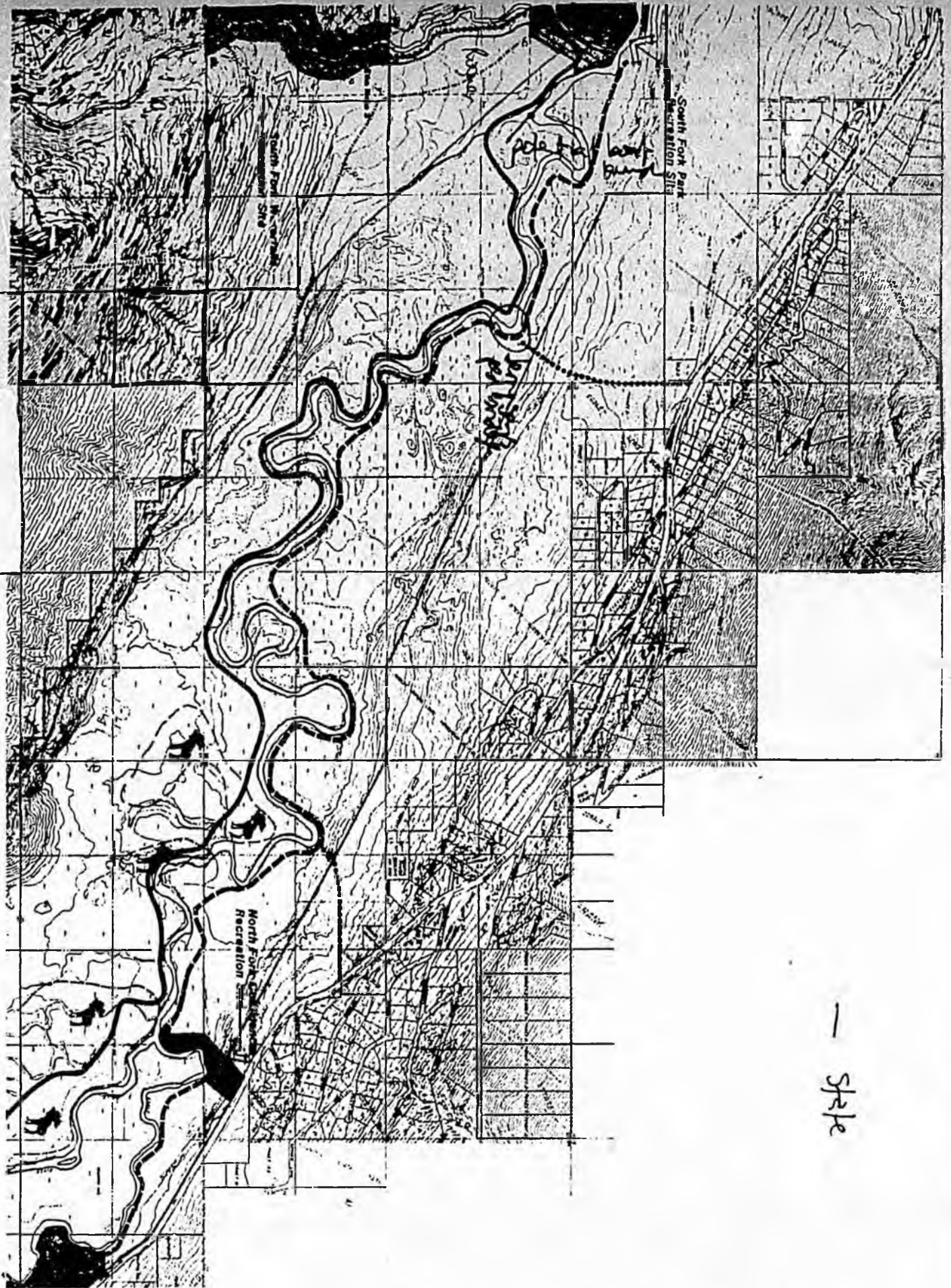
This alternative was developed in response to the public meeting of October 9, 1984. Given concerns

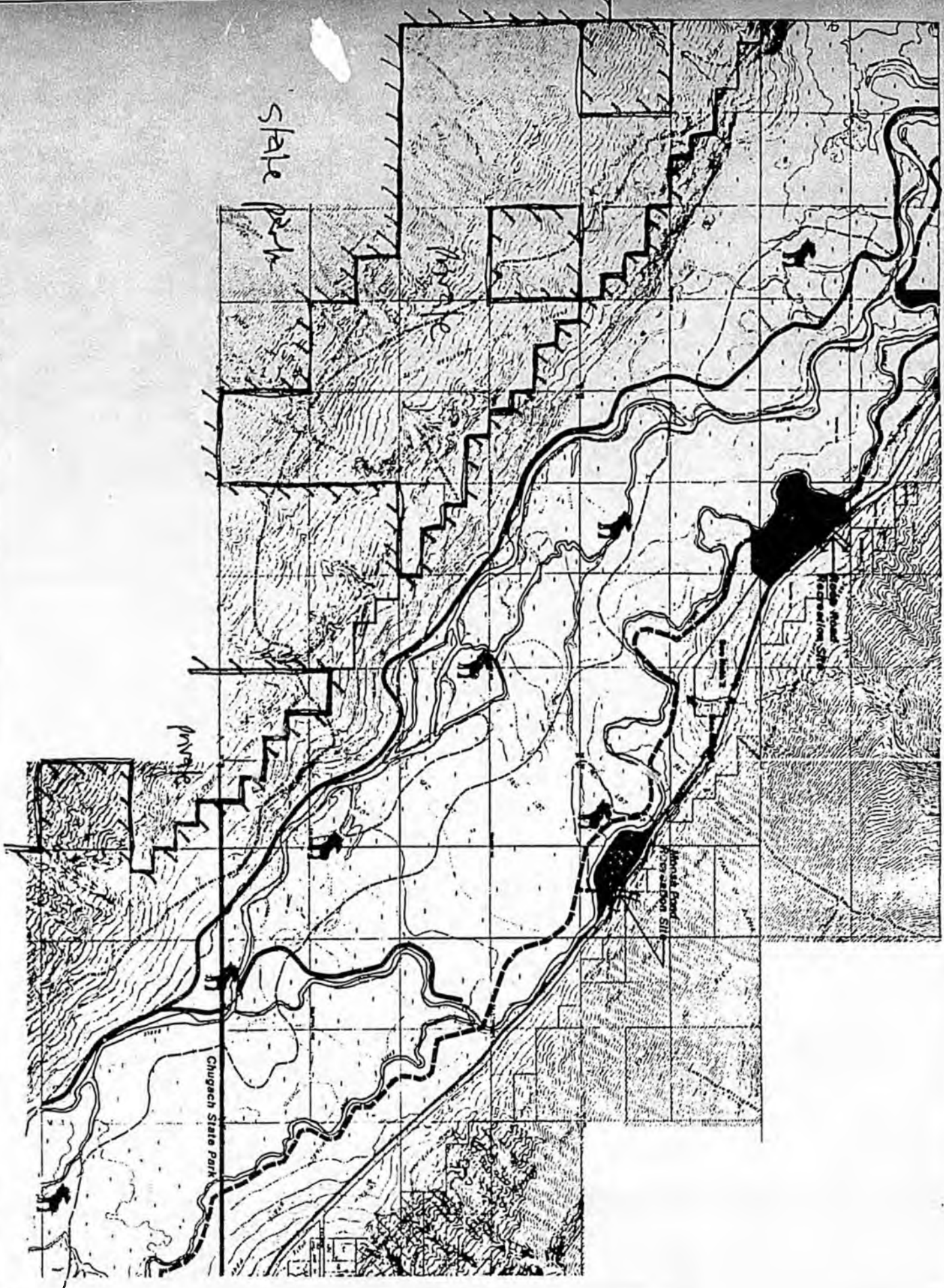
expressed at that meeting, the area designated as Greenbelt was enlarged to encompass some 3700 acres but two types of Greenbelt lands were distinguished, a Core and Fringe area. The Core area was essentially that greenbelt area proposed under Alternative 2 and would be acquired along with the six sites. The Fringe area would however, be closely regulated through existing zoning, platting and permitting authorities to assure that any development would be compatible with the Core Greenbelt. Moreover, acquisition of the Fringe was not ruled out especially those areas of preferred moose habitat in the channel islands. Upon public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission January 28, 1985, the desire for greater acquisition of Greenbelt area was again expressed along with the preference for acquisition first, development later.

C. RECOMMENDED GREENBELT (Alternative 4)

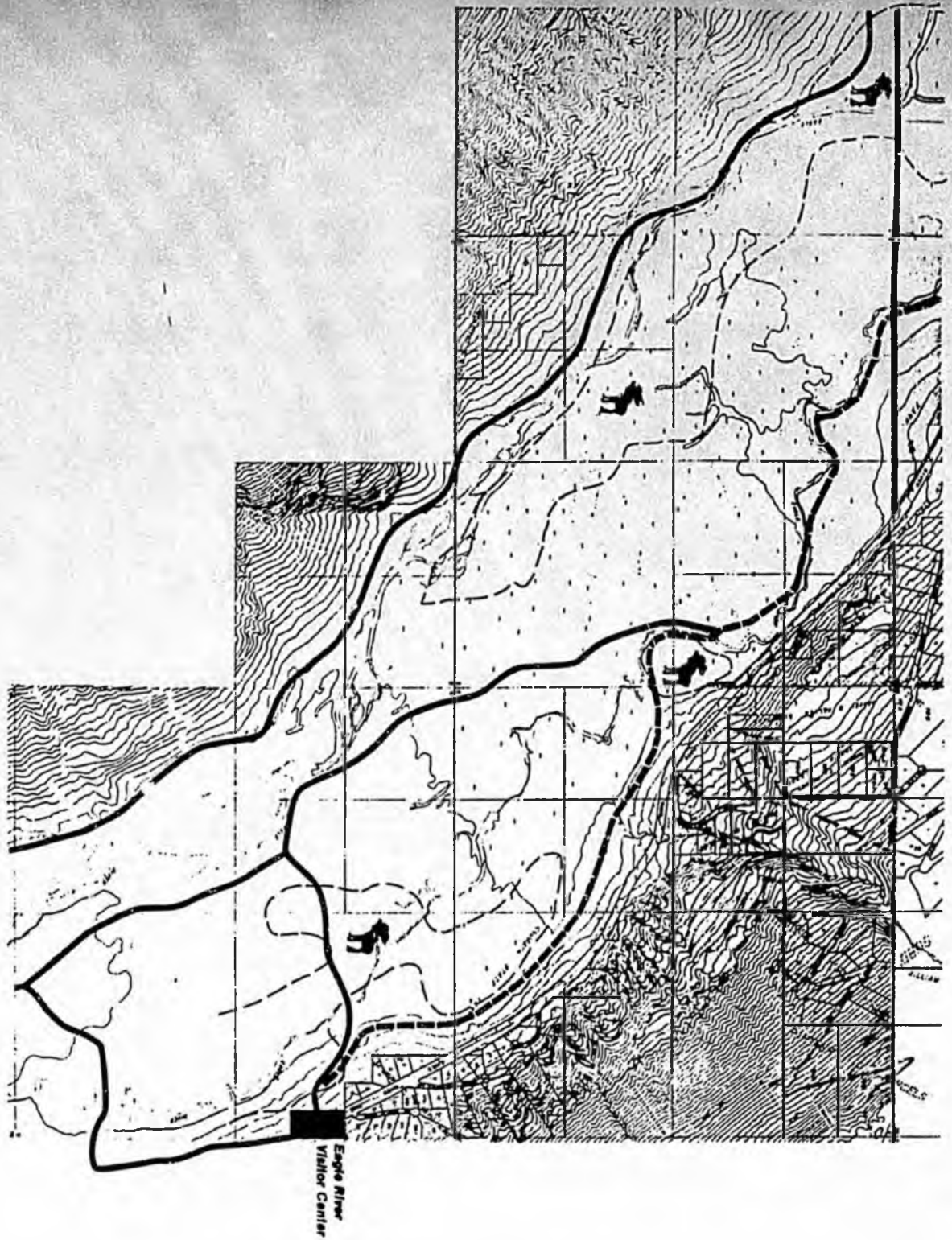
The recommended Greenbelt is identified in the accompanying map and includes the lands, sites and trails depicted therein. The approximate acreages for the Greenbelt are listed in Table 5. This recommended Greenbelt derives from the concerns expressed this past fall and at the Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing on this Plan in January. Emphatically expressed was a desire for maximum protection of the Valley's unique recreational and wildlife resources. Thus, this fourth and recommended alternative identifies the maximum Greenbelt area among the previous alternatives. All land now identified as Greenbelt is land to be acquired for that purpose. Large intact areas of wildlife habitat would thereby come under protection while recreational use is generously accommodated. Given present trends in recreational demand and residential growth, this alternative is recommended as the Eagle River Greenbelt because it will best attain these objectives.


Consequently, the Greenbelt is viewed as a 4100 acre whole. Within this large acreage, 247 acres of recreational sites would be eventually developed, allowing for vehicular access and serving as origin and destination points. Between these sites, the Greenbelt will accommodate a continuous trail system and large intact areas of wildlife habitat, particularly those areas related to critical winter range. Especially valued in this latter category are the preferred moose habitat areas in the upper valley (see Greenbelt Map and Section III D.) Of the nearly 4100 acre Greenbelt, the State currently has developed its 62 acre Eagle





SHEET NO. 3 OF 4 SHEETS IN THIS DRAWING	Eagle River Greenbelt	SOURCE: Field map and geologic information furnished by TRAFFIC Park, Boulder and Fort, 1958.	PROJECT TITLE EAGLE RIVER GREENBELT PLAN		TRA/Farr ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING PLANNING INTERIORS 1001 E. BENSON BLVD., ANCHORAGE, AK 99508 (907) 277-2841	DATE: March, 1988 SCALE: 1" = 1000'
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SHEET NO. 4	Eagle River Greenbelt	SOURCE: Field, map and measurements furnished by the State of Alaska and TRAF on 10/18/84 and Feb. 1985.	PROJECT TITLE EAGLE RIVER GREENBELT PLAN		TRA/Farr ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING PLANNING INTERIORS 1001 E BENSON BLVD., ANCHORAGE, AK 99503 (807) 277-2841	BY THE BOARD, 1985 LE REG. NO. 10007
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River Campground which is heavily used, particularly during summer. The State also owns about 15 acres of the South Fork Waterfalls site around the Upper Falls. The Municipality would add 22 acres of undeveloped land immediately to the south of the Eagle River Campground. Thus, given State and Municipal ownership of certain Greenbelt lands and sites and the recommendation for state acquisition of the Eagle River Campground Expansion site, the Municipal acquisition of Greenbelt lands and sites would total 3942 acres (96% of the total Greenbelt).

As indicated on the Greenbelt Map, several specific features are indicated in the delineation of this Greenbelt boundary. Along the ridge with the north facing slope on the south side of Eagle River in the lower valley there will be a buffer of 75' from the slope edge. The intent is to preserve a natural wooded edge at the bluff margin and avoid ridgeline intrusions similar to the Eagleridge and Parkview Terrace subdivisions on the north side. The development of elementary school sites is not precluded at the two areas indicated, though both are included within the Greenbelt boundary. The Greenbelt boundary in the lower valley on the north side in Section 17 and 18 follows the 150' trail corridor setback as per special limitation 10 on the R-3 SL² Zone (AO 84-101) and the rear lot lines of the individual lots identified along the southern portion of Parkview Terrace East Subdivision (S-7181A). As noted in the Greenbelt Map, stream buffers have been established specifying a 200' buffer along South Fork and a 50' buffer along the unnamed tributary creek between the Roop Road and Moose Pond sites. Finally, it was intended that the Eagle River Greenbelt have readily understandable boundaries. Thus, straight lines, property lines, existing roadways and natural features are used extensively to make the Eagle River Greenbelt a recognizable entity. For example, as one drives to the Eagle River Visitor Center, after coming down the last long downhill stretch to the beginning of the upper valley at the North Fork site, all of the land on the south side of Eagle River Loop Road up to the State Park is within the Greenbelt.

During the planning process the possibility of extending the Greenbelt along Eagle River to Kuik Arm was raised. While the U.S. Army now permits recreational boaters to proceed downstream from the Glenn Highway to a point on the Fort Richardson Military Reservation, the extension of Greenbelt lands including trails and recreational facilities onto Army land will not be allowed under pre-

sent circumstances. Much of the lower portion of Eagle River is used as a training area and is essential to the Army's mission. However, under terms of the North Anchorage Land Agreement, if in the future the Ft. Richardson Military reservation is declared excess to Department of Defense needs, a greenbelt corridor would be transferred to the state extending two hundred feet from each bank from the Glenn Highway to Knik Arm.

TABLE 5
Greenbelt Lands and Sites

Greenbelt Category	Approximate Acreage
Lands	3848
Sites	
Eagle River Campground	62
Eagle River Campground Expansion	54
Bridge Site	13
South Fork Park	41
South Fork Waterfalls	34
North Fork	9
Roop Road	25
Moose Pond	9
TOTAL SITES	247
TOTAL Greenbelt	4095

D. RECOMMENDED RECREATIONAL SITES

It is recommended that the Municipality of Anchorage acquire six sites for development of public parks and recreational areas, and that the State of Alaska acquire lands adjacent to the Eagle River Campground for campground expansion and development of an intensive day use park area. Each of these sites would be linked by the main trail system and are described below. A preliminary estimate of recreation site development costs is detailed in Appendix A.

1. Eagle River Campground Expansion

This 54-acre site is the tract of land east of and adjoining the existing Eagle River Campground that is operated by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. It is recommended that the State of Alaska acquire this land, currently owned by Eklutna, Inc., and develop it for public day use activities and campground expansion. The site provides the best opportunity for public viewing of the lower segment of the Eagle River, where the majority of whitewater river use occurs. While no plans now exist for state acquisition of this area, the state has recently obtained an agreement with Eklutna, Inc., for management authority on these expansion lands.

2. Eagle River Bridge Site

This 13-acres site is on the south side of the Eagle River, just upstream to the east of the point where the proposed Eagle River Loop Road/Hiland Road Bridge crossing is to be built. Referred to as the "Eagle River Bridge Site", this site is primarily intended to provide river access to canoers, kayakers, rafters and other river users. The site would be accessible to both north and south bound traffic and connect to the site via a short access road.

3. South Fork Park

This 41-acres site is located on either side of the confluence of the South Fork of the Eagle River, with the main channel. Referred to as "South Fork Park", this site is intended to be developed as the primary community park along the south shore of the Eagle River. It would be accessible by automobiles via a new access road that would have to be developed connecting to Hiland Road. South Fork Park is intended to serve both as a major river access recreation site, and as a community park for the expanding residential area along Hiland Drive and in the South Fork area.

4. South Fork Waterfalls

This approximately 34-acre site is located on either side of the South Fork of Eagle River stretching from the Lower to the Upper Waterfalls. The Lower Waterfalls, also sometimes known as Barbara Falls, are close to 60 feet in height, and are among the

most spectacular natural features within the Municipality. The site would be developed for day use activity with viewing of the waterfalls the primary attraction. The Greenbelt would extend up the South Fork of the Eagle River and a pedestrian trail would link the South Fork Waterfalls with the South Fork Park to be developed at the Eagle river confluence. The Lower Waterfalls are currently privately owned by Barbara Gross while the Upper Waterfalls lies within a remnant of Chugach State Park land. The development of this site would continue the trail link from the Lower Falls a quarter mile upstream to an overlook for viewing the unusual rock gorge and the cascading power of a confined stream as it cuts through the ridge. That portion of state land identified for inclusion with this site should be reserved for that purpose.

5. North Fork Confluence

This approximately 9-acre site is located on the north river bank at the confluence of the North Fork of the Eagle River with the main channel. The site borders the river and Eagle River Road, and provides an ideal access point for winter and summer users of the river. The site would be developed for day use, including an auto parking lot, trail for canoe, kayak and raft portage to the river, small picnic area and valley overlooks.

6. Roop Road

existing access site

This approximately 25-acre site is currently one of the most popular sites for access to the river by rafters and canoers. It borders the North Fork of the Eagle River approximately half way between the Chugach State Park Visitor Center and the North Fork Confluence Recreation Site. It offers an excellent opportunity to improve facilities for public access and convenience to serve as a year-round river access and trailhead staging area.

7. Moose Pond

The final site recommended to be acquired by the Municipality is an approximately 9-acre site immediately adjacent to the Eagle River Road just before entering Chugach State Park. Generally referred to as Moose Pond, the site includes a pond adjacent to the North Fork of the Eagle River and attracts moose during both winter and summer providing one of the best opportunities for public viewing of moose in

their natural habitat of any location in the Municipality. The site is primarily intended to be developed for viewing of moose from an overlook and parking lot to be developed adjacent to the Eagle River Road on the north edge of the site. Due to the presence of a moderate avalanche hazard zone at the eastern end of this site where parking now occurs, the preferred developmetn of this site should include a relocation for the parking area or at a minimum signage both interpreting avalanche occurence and advising of the hazard on-site.

E. RECOMMENDED TRAIL SYSTEM

The concept for the Greenbelt trail system is to intio-
duce a network of trails developed to different stan-
dards, and intended for use by a variety of user groups.
Two continuous trail corridors are planned, one on each
side of the river for its entire length. Several points
for crossing the river via footbridge, or perhaps a safe
fording location, are planned.. In this way, the trail
system can provide the opportunity for a series of loop
trails, allowing considerable variation in the sequence
of movement through the Greenbelt, and opportunities for
proper management to separate potentially incompatible
trail uses. Connecting trails to existing and future
schools as well as subdivisions area also recommended.
In all, some 40 miles of trails are recommended for
development. Moreover, because development patterns,
particularly in the mid to upper valley areas cannot be
foreseen, it is intended that trail connections at 1/4 to
1/2 mile intervals be made to the Greenbelt main trail.

The continuous trail loop system extends the entire
length of the Greenbelt from the existing Eagle River
Campground upstream, connecting to the Chugach State
Park trail system and providing access to the Visitor
Center (see Eagle River Greenbelt Map). A main (trail,
approximately 18.3 miles in length, would be developed
on both the north and south sides to the South Fork Park
site continuing up-valley on the north side only to
Chugach State Park. A (route) of some 14 miles would con-
tinue on the south side only. This latter trail
designation would not be developed to the level of the
main trail and would be subject to relocation by user
groups and others who wanted a simple, "primitive" path-
way. The Eagle River Campground and the Chugach State
Park Visitor Center are intended to serve as the two
main destination points at either end of the trail
system, with the six Municipal recreation sites all con-
nected by the trail system and serving as intermediate
access and destination points. A preliminary cost esti-
mate for total system cost is detailed in Appendix B.

Throughout the planning for the Greenbelt, it has been recognized that user groups should be directly involved in development, operation and management of the greenbelt. Planning to date has concentrated on determining which lands should be included in the Greenbelt boundaries, and where recreational sites and trails should be located. However, there was considerable input by specific user groups at the public meetings and it has been considered in locating trails and other facilities.

The general concept for recreational use of the greenbelt is that the three Greenbelt segments will accommodate different levels and intensity of recreational use. The lower valley segment is intended to be the most intensively used and highly developed Greenbelt segment. Farther up the valley, the intensity of recreation use decreases and the facilities will be developed to a lower standard. The mid-valley segment will be developed initially with unpaved trails, but may be upgraded in future years as development pressure increases in adjacent uplands. The upper valley segment is intended to remain a somewhat primitive environment, with trails developed only to the level necessary to assure good year-round access.

1. Lower Valley

The first segment is intended to be the most intensively used and is the westernmost portion of the trail system between the Eagle River Campground and the South Fork Park Recreation Site upstream. This segment is adjacent to the most rapidly developing area of the Eagle River valley. It will provide a continuous main trail loop on both sides of the river, with three pedestrian bridge crossings of the river. The first crossing would be developed at the Eagle River Campground. It is recommended that the bridge be constructed on existing foundations of the old Palmer Highway Bridge.

The second crossing point is the site of the proposed Eagle River Bridge that would connect Hiland Road with Eagle River Loop Road. The automobile bridge is currently in the design and right-of-way acquisition stage of planning by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. The Municipality has worked closely with the DOT/PF to resolve the need for a safe, separated pedestrian crossing to be designed as part of the bridge structure. Bridge design will allow for a pedestrian walkway and bicycle trail to be constructed under-

neath the roadway, connecting to the Greenbelt on both the north and south sides of the river. In addition, an access road to the Eagle River Bridge recreation site would be built in conjunction with this roadway project.

The third pedestrian bridge crossing will occur at the South Fork Park recreational site. The South Fork Park will serve as the main anchor at the east end of the lower valley segment of the greenbelt.

The main trail within this segment is to be developed to Municipal hard surface standards. A series of connecting trails are also planned to provide pedestrian access to the proposed day use area adjacent to the existing Eagle River Campground and along the north riverbank in this area.

From the South Fork Park, the Greenbelt will extend up the South Fork of Eagle River along both riverbanks with a pedestrian trail along the east bank to the South Fork Waterfalls recreation site.

2. Mid-Valley

miles?
The second major trail segment is the area between the South Fork Park and the North Fork Confluence recreation site. Between these two recreation sites the trail closely follows the riverbank on each side, providing excellent opportunities for viewing the river, and for long views up and down the valley. No river crossing points are planned within this segment. The trail along the north riverbank would become the main trail and the trail along the south riverbank would be a route developed to a lower standard.

3. Upper Valley

where?
Upstream from the North Fork Confluence the Eagle River divides into two channels. The main channel flows along the south edge of the valley, broadening out and becoming a wide, slow river with numerous gravel bars and channel islands. The trail route on the south side of the river would continue along the south riverbank of the main channel until it enters Chugach State Park. Within the park, a safe river fording site is identified to allow crossing the river and to provide a connection with a proposed trail across the valley to the Visitor Center.

From its confluence with the main channel, the North Fork of the Eagle River flows along the northern

edge of the valley, in some cases bordering the Eagle River Road. The trail would continue along the north riverbank away from the North Fork Confluence recreation site to the Roop Road Site, then cross the river whence the river abuts the Eagle River Road embankment. These crossings could be initially primitive in construction such as rope or cable bridges built by volunteer organizations or perhaps could be left simply as fords. The trail would continue along the south riverbank beyond the Moose Pond, then cross the river again to the north riverbank and continue on to the Chugach State Park Visitor Center.

F. USER GROUP PARTICIPATION

Within the three Greenbelt segments is a desire to separate potential incompatible user groups from each other, while still allowing access throughout the Greenbelt length for all users. For example, snow machine use currently occurs both on existing trails and Eagle River when frozen in the winter. Such loud, fast-moving motorized use is, however, incompatible with the quiet non-motorized experience of the cross country skier, winter hiker, dog musher or horserider. Thus, motorized uses such as snow machines should be well separated from other uses and confined to portions of the river. The several recreation sites provide the needed access and allow for this separation. Motorized boat use should be prohibited, however. It is anticipated that the principal users of the main trail system north of the river will be pedestrian and bicyclists in summer, and cross-country skiers in winter. These users will also use the loop trail system south of the river in the lower valley segment throughout the year.

? In general, trail routes on the south side of the river upstream from the South Fork Park site are intended to be used principally by hikers and for equestrian use in summer and by dog mushers in winter. During winter months it is also anticipated that dog mushers will lay out winter snow trails within the river channel itself, and across the valley bottom. To a limited extent, horse and dog mushing use can coincide on a seasonal basis for the same trail. Given an expected low frequency of use (as anticipated on the south side), horse and hiker use can also co-exist on the same trails throughout the year. Thus, careful trails development and management could potentially provide for the special needs of all user groups with minimum conflict. An alternative route for horse, dog mushing and pedestrian travel, as well as motorized use, is the public use

easement known as "109" by the Bureau of Land Management and sometimes referred to as "Homesteaders Road". This 60 foot (easement) runs the entire length of the valley on the south side and at different locations provides both close proximity to the Greenbelt and more distant broad valley vistas from the higher side slopes of the valley. Since 109 parallels the Greenbelt, mention of this route is made since it could provide an alternative course for recreational travel. *large sleds*

During construction of the trail system and recreational sites, there will be opportunities for user groups and other volunteer groups to participate in development activities, under the supervision of the Municipality. Such opportunities could include trail clearing and grading, site clearing and construction of picnic areas, parking lots, and primitive bridges upstream among other facilities.

It is recommended that following adoption of the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan, the Municipality should coordinate and work with all user groups, Eklutna, Inc., and the State of Alaska to develop a long-term land use and recreational management plan for the Greenbelt. That planning effort should concentrate on opportunities for user groups and other volunteer groups to take on responsibility for development, maintenance and management of specific trail segments, in return for preferential use of those trail segments for their formal events and activities at selected times. Specifications on Trail location and specific policies regarding site land use and recreational activities are perhaps best addressed in this management plan. Design and construction of Greenbelt facilities including the trails, and recreational sites would then follow this Plan. However, the issue of recreational bow hunting was raised repeatedly during the planning process and should be addressed in this Plan. Bow-hunting by qualified archers for moose is currently allowed upon all drainages of Eagle River outside of Chugach State Park in September. This past year, up to 30 moose was the harvest limit. However, continued hunting is incompatible with the Greenbelt purpose of protecting wildlife for viewing and enjoyment. Moreover, such hunting poses a safety hazard because of the mix of hunting and other recreational use. Therefore, as with motorized boats, bow-hunting use should be prohibited. Nevertheless, as with other policies, these two issues could be re-examined in the Management Plan.

G. RELATIONSHIP TO THE ANCHORAGE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Anchorage Coastal Management Plan (ACMP) identifies most of the Greenbelt area as a Freshwater Marsh and Wetlands under the designation of Preservation Environment Coastal Resource Policy Unit. Moreover, under the ACMP, and as required by the Alaska Coastal Management Act, certain areas with unique values or special characteristics have been identified as Areas Meriting Special Attention (an AMSA). Eagle River Valley is among 10 such areas throughout the Municipality identified as an AMSA. This identification was made on the basis of the valley's richness in habitat value, its substantial recreational use and potential, impending land development, and the presence of significant natural hazards such as flooding and debris sliding. Both in terms of the Eagle River Valley Preservation Resource Unit goals and policies as well as those recommendations for this AMSA, the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan advances environmental protection while preventing public liabilities associated with development in these unsuitable areas.

The Anchorage Coastal Management Plan, in recommending a management strategy for the Eagle River Valley AMSA, called for a "site plan to identify proper uses which also give recognition to the physical constraints." The Municipality is required to prepare this plan in cooperation with the State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Eklutna, Inc., with priority attention given to mapping the floodplain and those areas needed for open space. This Greenbelt Plan and the process that produced it conform precisely to these requirements.

The principal objective of the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan is to protect the river corridor between the Eagle River Campground to Chugach State Park for recreational use and wildlife habitat. No development other than that required for necessary recreational facilities (e.g., trails, vehicular parking at the seven recreational sites, picnic tables, etc.) would be permitted in the Greenbelt with the possible exception of elementary school construction as indicated in the Recommended Greenbelt Map. Finally, as a result of the Greenbelt Plan, mapping of the 100-Year floodplain has also been completed. Thus, many of the concerns raised regarding the Eagle River Valley AMSA have been addressed in the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan.

The proper uses for the Eagle River Greenbelt are those uses consistent with the recommendations of the

Greenbelt Plan. Recreational development, including site development and trail construction as recommended in the Plan, leading to recreational use as indicated in the plan is proper use. With the qualification of possible future use refinements from the recommended management plan, uses such as walking, skiing, biking, rafting the river, dog-mushing, and snowmobiling on the frozen river in such a way as not to impair the experience of non-motorized users is proper. Development of a stock car race track or a gravel extraction area is an improper use. The policies for this Plan are subsumed in the narrative sections related to the Recommended Greenbelt, sites and trail system. Essentially, the management policy is to secure a protected river corridor for recreational development and wildlife habitat preservation.

Thus, it is recommended that the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan is the fulfillment of that ACMP recommendation regarding a "site plan" for the Eagle River Valley AMSA. Moreover, the Municipality of Anchorage finds and acknowledges that the Eagle River Greenbelt Plan is consistent with the adopted Anchorage Coastal Management Plan specifically in the former's fulfillment of the latter's goals and policies regarding the Preservation Environment Coastal Resource Policy Unit.

APPENDIX A

RECREATION SITES
PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT COST ESTIMATES

Eagle River Bridge Site

Access Road (1500 LF)	300,000
Parking (30 cars)	75,000
Day Use Picnic Area	45,000
Boat Put-in	25,000
Restrooms (1)	75,000
Construction Contingency	50,000
Sub-total	<u>570,000</u>

South Fork Park

Internal Park Road (3600 LF)	500,000
Parking (160 cars)	400,000
Caretaker's Residence	125,000
Restrooms (3)	225,000
Camping Loop (15 campsites)	350,000
Picnic Area	125,000
Interpretive Display/Salmon Viewing Area	30,000
Park Trails (5700 LF)	170,000
Construction Contingency	200,000
Sub-total	<u>2,125,000</u>

South Fork Waterfall Site

Greenbelt Trails (3500 LF)	105,000
Viewing Platform	75,000
Construction Contingency	20,000
Sub-total	<u>200,000</u>

North Fork Confluence Site

Access Road (1000 LF)	150,000
Parking (12 cars)	30,000
Park Trails (1500 LF)	45,000
Picnic Area/Boat Put-in	30,000
Construction Contingency	25,000
Sub-total	<u>280,000</u>

Roop Road Site

Access Road (700 LF)	100,000
Parking (80 cars)	200,000
Restrooms (1)	75,000
Wetland Boardwalk (500 LF)	50,000
Park Trails (3400 LF)	100,000
Construction Contingency	50,000
Sub-total	<u>575,000</u>

Moose Pond Site

Parking Lot (10 cars)	25,000
Viewing Platform	75,000
Construction Contingency	20,000
Sub-total	<u>120,000</u>

Miscellaneous

Pedestrian Bridges accross Eagle River (3)	600,000
Traffic Control and Trail Signage (lump)	100,000
Sub-total	<u>700,000</u>

RECREATION SITES TOTAL \$4,570,000

APPENDIX B

GREENBELT TRAIL SYSTEM
PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT COST ESTIMATES

	<u>Mileage</u>	<u>Cost</u>
1) MAIN TRAIL		
Asphalt Paved Bicycle Trail Standard		
- Cut/Fill Slope Construction	0.7 mi.	500,000
- Dry land Construction	3.8 mi.	950,000
- Wetland Construction	1.8 mi.	900,000
Sub-total	6.3 mi.	\$2,350,000
Gravel Path (6' Wide) Standard		
- Dryland Construction	8.0 mi.	1,183,000
- Wetland Construction	4.0 mi.	803,000
Sub-total	12.0 mi.	\$1,986,000
Construction Contingency		<u>\$434,000</u>
MAIN TRAIL TOTAL		\$4,770,000
2) TRAIL ROUTES		
Clearing and Minimal Grading Standard	14.1 mi.	\$1,117,000
Sub-total		\$1,117,000
3) CONNECTING TRAILS		
Gravel Path (6' Wide) Standard	7.3 mi.	\$1,080,000
Sub-total		<u>\$1,080,000</u>
Construction Contingency		<u>\$500,000</u>
GREENBELT TRAIL SYSTEM TOTAL (39.7 mi.)		\$7,467,000

NOTE: This trail development cost could likely be significantly reduced through the participation of several user groups through volunteer development work.

THE PRECEDING PAGES WERE TREATED AS
A UNIT IN THE ORIGINAL FILE.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

CHUGACH STATE PARK MASTER PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE JUNE 1987

This paper summarizes four public meetings held by Alaska State Parks as part of the review and update of the Chugach State Park Master Plan. The meetings were held in the following dates and locations: May 20, Service High School, Anchorage; May 26, Eagle River Library; May 27, Girdwood Community Hall; May 28, Wasilla Junior High School.

All meetings followed a similar format. Project Manager David Stephens opened the meetings by introducing state park staff and reviewing the meeting agenda. He discussed the need for a plan review and introduced the three planning topics: resort development in the park; management and development of the Eagle River Greenbelt; and commercial helicopter landings in the park. He described the issues and the existing master plan policies for each. The meetings were then opened for public comment, which is summarized for each meeting in the sections below:

Anchorage, May 20, 75 people attending, 38 offering testimony

Gerry DeVries -- Alaska Wildlife Alliance.

- opposed to resort development;
- concerned about wildlife impacts: wolves, sheep;
- should use undesignated lands;
- park designation is highest protection;
- helicopters have destroyed Juneau waterfront;
- park overflights already problem;
- helicopters are a big problem in Lower 48;
- greenbelt should be managed for non-consumptive users

Edgar Smoot -- Chugiak/Eagle River Chamber of Commerce

- supports tourist related development;
- resort can be done responsibly;
- community attitude survey last year showed support for tourism development;
- 100,000 users at Eagle River Visitor Center;
- tourism creates hundreds of jobs;
- State Chamber of Commerce supporting resolution;
- resort enhances Olympics bid.

William Reedy -- Eagle River businessman, resident

- supports resort development;
- would be permanent shot in the arm;
- safe and clean industry;
- creates jobs;
- Eagle River surrounded by park.

Steve Smith -- Alaska Helicopters, Inc.

- supports helicopter landings.

Larry Williams -- American Wilderness Alliance

- Chugach State Park elsewhere would be national park;
- unique by having urban/wild edge;
- resort caters to Japanese and European tourists not locals;
- park intended for wilderness;
- greenbelt should be maintained for natural values;
- opposed to helicopters.

Sally Long

- supports previous speaker's comments.

Elizabeth Carol -- South Fork valley resident

- resort compromises Alaskan ideals;
- helicopters incompatible with park.

Don Follows -- land use consultant, NPS planner for 20 years

- Chugach SP is not NPS caliber;
- resort does not compromise park, if done responsibly.

Cliff Eames -- Alaska Center for the Environment

- park at crossroads: continue used for non-consumptive, low impact uses or intensive, high impact commercial activities;
- park designation is highest protection;
- resort development is inappropriate;
- other alternatives available: National Forest, Hatcher Pass;
- state should study economic implications;
- skeptical of public process;
- state has credibility problem;
- helicopters - serious imposition on public to speak so early after Alaska Helicopters application;
- helicopters are loud, disturb wildlife, park users;
- helicopters are problem in lower '48;
- helicopter permission would set dangerous precedent.

Rick Maron -- Friends of Chugach State Park

- resort development is inappropriate;
- objects to commercial development of park lands;
- resort talk didn't start with local people;
- issue is opening park to commercial development;
- shouldn't shortcut process in bad economic times;
- proposal deserves detailed study;
- helicopters not compatible with natural values;
- park should be refuge from noise, urban stress.

Bill Cox -- 3 year Anchorage resident

- opposed to helicopter landings;
- noise effect on other park users and wildlife;
- helicopter problems in lower '48, Juneau;
- alternative access points for old and handicapped;
- commercial resort development not appropriate on park land;
- other alternatives.

Rod Hansen -- lives inside proposed development

- area already zoned residential, development;
- 600 lots for sale already;
- resort is preferable to housing;
- South Fork valley not so peaceful;
- 200 king salmon left in South Fork.

Lynn Tate -- Hiland Road resident

- ecstatic about resort proposal;
- appropriate use of park lands.

Mary Knoff

- downhill skiing is not noisy, intrusive;
- park is for all types of recreation.

L. G. Tate

- supports resort development;
- balances cyclic economy;
- developers shouldn't have to finance feasibility studies.

Ray Gardner -- Eagle River resident

- resort project site is not wild;
- venture capitalists should be encouraged;
- tourism most benign industry: no noise, hazardous wastes, etc.
- tourism jobs are important.

Steve Livingston -- Alaska Chapter, Sierra Club

- reiterates previous comments in opposition to helicopters;
- presently opposed to any new resort development in park;
- Anchorage residents are privileged to have semi-wilderness; should be left alone.

Kirk Wickersham -- Anchorage resident - Independence Ski Resort
Co.

- Municipality study says enough demand by late 1980s for one new ski resort;
- prior approval of site could preclude other, better sites;
- DOPR has duty to conduct site selection study.

Robert Martin -- Eagle River businessman

- supports resort development;
- tourism improves economy;
- avid skier, likes more choice
- DPOR should look into impacts of similar resorts elsewhere: alpine, wildlife, birds, lighted ski-runs;
- believes proponents are sincere, quality.

Wayne Beckwith -- forester, engineer - VP Anchorage Chamber of Commerce

- city needs access to recreation;
- Anchorage population now 240,000 (excluding Indian, Bird);
- should not save land for small number of people;
- two goals: attract new industry, expand opportunities;
- winter resort balances seasonal cycle;

- resort better than houses;
- Hatcher Pass, Turnagain are not alternatives;
- should be strict limits on surface water vehicles in Eagle River;
- helicopter operations compatible with periphery of park, with proper controls.

Jim Turner -- Independence Ski Resort Company

- Hiland site no good, not viable;
- his consultants say "joke, ridiculous, criminal negligence";
- state should do site selection study;
- Eagle River site closer to Anchorage than Hatcher Pass, hence more convenient;
- two projects can't succeed.

Mike Abbott -- Resource Development Council

- park not intended to be all wild;
- quotes enabling legislation: east, central, periphery;
- resort is compatible, consistent with legislative intent;
- tourism, resort generate economic activity;
- site is not wilderness;
- foreign capital is major economic boost;
- state's responsibility is to determine whether park resources are unreasonably, threatened.

Hal Graser

- supports resort proposal.

Francine Bennis

- most important issue: is resort development appropriate;
- opposed to commercial helicopter landings.

Glenn Ray

- Parks has already made decision;
- state ought to be skeptical;
- resort not compatible with park.

Rob Wells -- 25 year resident of Southcentral Alaska

- South Fork valley has problems with snow accumulation;
- Eagle River doesn't have good site;
- resort proposal is real estate scam; resort used to attract land buyers;
- state should do site selection study;
- Southcentral skiers need beginner/intermediate trails;
- requests public meeting in Matanuska Valley;
- rivalry between DL&WM and DPOR doesn't serve public interest.

Jay Bennett

- Hatcher Pass plan comment was against more ski development;
- requests public meeting in valley.

Patti Saunders

- not job of DPOR to do economic development;
- other state land available for resorts;
- park designation is highest level of protection;
- ski resorts are noisy: music, skiers, lift motors;
- where does it stop?

Gary Tate -- Mile 5, Hiland Road

- area is not wilderness area;
- resort has least impact.

Mary Carey -- Anchorage Horsetrails and Facility

- 300 horses;
- losing trails to residential development;
- supports Municipal greenbelt plan.

Doug Dowden

- supports controlled development in park;
- Anchorage blessed to have Chugach State Park;
- park is large enough for many users;
- there is a window of opportunity that might be lost if time wasted;
- there is no danger of losing wilderness.

Jill Johnson - three year Anchorage resident

- resort should not compromise park values;
- DPOR should investigate drainage, runoff from artificial snow;
- look at impacts of runoff on salmon in South Fork;
- brown bears use South Fork;
- will resort jeopardize?

Harry Blanas -- reads from 5/19/87 Anchorage Times article

- "requests for state studies are outrageous";
- objects to conservation group opposition to resort proposal;
- supports resort development, but must protect environment at same time.

Jim Brennan -- avid skier

- proposal is very strange: real or scam?
- state should study feasibility of proposal;
- opposed to helicopter landings.

Sharon Cissna -- Chugach State Park Advisory Board, involved with park's creation in 1970

- public doesn't have adequate information;
- these meetings are premature: not enough specific information.

Dave Young -- Chugach State Park Advisory Board; President, SF Community Council, speaking as private citizen

- if resorts going to happen, then make it a good development;
- adamantly opposed to helicopter landings.

Sandra Wickes

- most public comments off the mark;
- need to focus on constructive safeguards.

Terry Smith

- park is for all users;
- Chugach State Park Advisory Board requested meetings, so they are not premature.

Eagle River, May 26, 108 people attending, 48 offering testimony

Jim Waddell -- Eagle River resident

- state is unfair in not giving details on contract process;
- supports resort proposal;
- economic benefits;
- greenbelt very valuable land;
- be cautious when developing belt;
- fence greenbelt for wildlife conflicts.

Terry Foreman -- Hiland Road resident

- supports resort;
- adequate safeguards can be made;
- impacts would be minimal;
- economic benefits;
- we shouldn't drag our feet too long and discourage Rogner;
- minimal development in greenbelt;
- as few parking areas as possible;
- helicopters should be done on a trial basis, for one year only.

William Reedy -- Eagle River businessman

- Eagle River valley is non-wilderness;
- economic benefits: 2000 jobs;
- tourism is clean industry;
- supports resort proposal.

Thomas Wood -- Eagle River Valley Community Council

- council supports resort proposal;
- tourism is basic to Eagle River economy;
- resort increases access to park;
- requests public involvement during contracting process;
- supports greenbelt acquisition;
- wants waterfalls on South Fork bought as part of greenbelt project.

Terry Kocher -- Wildlife management degree, 13 year Eagle River resident

- concerned with use of park land for commercial development;
- helicopters will scare wildlife;
- helicopters threaten wildlife viewing;
- Eagle River valley already congested with aircraft traffic;
- no motorized traffic in greenbelt.

Dave Jones -- Eagle River resident, South Fork

- resort compatible with multiple use concept;
- supports resort proposal;
- suggests adoption of Municipality of Anchorage greenbelt plan.

Ren Aksamit -- South Fork resident

- supports signed proposal;
- compatible with park purposes;
- many resorts are on public land;
- park should be opened to more users, user groups;

- access is quite limited; should be opened up more;
- environmental concerns can be satisfied;
- helicopters - opposed;
- noise is very irritating.

Dick Erickson -- Birchwood resident

- supports resort development;
- appropriate use;
- consistent with 1980 master plan.

Dave Young -- South Fork resident

- no knowledge of any legal or policy prohibition against resort development in park periphery;
- Rogner resort would provide stable economic base;
- drainage can be addressed;
- other impacts can be mitigated;
- should adopt MOA greenbelt on interim basis, to be followed with task force;
- adamantly opposed to helicopter landings;
- helicopter landings offer no benefits to the park.

John Peck -- 17 year Eagle River resident

- supports resort development;
- Rogner proposal would not impact park;
- most resorts elsewhere are on public lands;
- Rogner company is capable and competent;
- state shouldn't drag feet and discourage Rogner;
- bike trails on both sides of Eagle River, running full length;
- more numerous parking areas, with fewer spaces each;
- opposed to helicopter landings;
- would not be opposed to helicopters if away from residential areas,

with no noise impacts.

RC Johnson (Bob)

- supports resort proposal;
- resort would enhance public use and enjoyment of park.

Rosemary Johnson -- Eagle River resident

- supports resort development;
- proponent ought to have wide latitude in defining project;
- Eagle River community must grow;
- resort would improve park access;
- no local opposition to resort;
- wildlife have ample room in 490,000 acres of Chugach State Park;
- competition would be good for Hatcher Pass proponents.

Mike King

- snow conditions in South Fork are poor;
- questions whether artificial snow could support successful resort;
- opposed to helicopter landings.

Lotti McCubbin -- 25 year resident

- developer must satisfy environmental concerns;
- with mitigation, supports resort;
- supports greenbelt trails;
- wants greenbelt along Peters Creek;
- opposed to helicopter skiing because of avalanche dangers;
- supports limited helicopter landings for sightseeing, strictly limited.

Vince Vitale -- representing Eagle River - Chugiak Chamber of Commerce

- economic benefits of resort are important;
- "overwhelming local community support";
- 86% of poll respondents support resort development in Eagle River;
- resort would smooth out seasonal economic cycles;
- resort would enhance family recreational opportunities;
- resort proposal is good regardless of condition of economy.

Dick Brown -- 13 year Eagle River resident

- must protect watershed;
- resort proposal is for year round operations;
- natural values have been protected elsewhere when developing resorts: Europe, etc.;
- trashing isn't inevitable result of development;
- enforcement of facility maintenance should be part of concession contract.

Richard Rodrigues -- Eagle River resident

- proposed site is unspoiled;
- concerned about night lighting of ski slopes.

R. Mack Arrington -- resident since 1962

- proud and pleased that resort is being proposed;
- supports resort development;
- opposed to helicopter skiing;
- supports summer helicopter landings at specified sites.

Henry Warren

- park if for all types of recreation;
- sent representative to inspect Rogner resorts in Europe, and returned with good report;
- resorts haven't displaced wildlife in other areas;
- greenbelt should have been done long ago;
- greenbelt facilities should be low-maintenance;
- helicopters - should be some zones designated for landings;
- helicopter skiing is too dangerous.

Elaine Robinson -- Peters Creek resident

- supports resort development;
- growth necessary for community well-being;
- economic benefits of resort;
- greenbelt plan should be adopted, with future task force;
- opposed to helicopter landings: noise, wildlife impacts;
- special populations have alternatives.

Mark Eidem

- supports resort development
- resort has good economic benefits;
- resorts elsewhere successful while not degrading environment;
- Municipal Greenbelt Plan should be adopted;
- no motorized uses in greenbelt;
- multi-lingual visitor center at resort village site.

Ray Gardner

- resort proposal fits Governor's economic diversification objectives;
- opposed to helicopter landings;
- supports limited, nonmotorized use/development of greenbelt.

Rod Hansen -- South Fork resident

- supports resort proposal.

Lois Ricker -- 6 year Eagle River resident

- supports resort development in park;
- economic benefits of resort;
- resort should be aesthetically pleasing;
- state should stop procrastinating;
- state should go sole-source in contract.

Ann Riley

- opposed to resort development;
- dangerous precedent being set;
- downhill skiing too expensive, so resort wouldn't necessarily open area to local recreationists;
- opposed to ski runs on Mt. Gordon Lyon and Hiland Mountain;
- undecided on other slopes;
- state should approve slope-by-slope;
- should consider human impacts, as well as wildlife impacts.

L.G. Tate

- supports resort development;
- even people who will be seriously impacted are supporters;
- limited access developed in greenbelt;
- opposed to helicopter landings.

Dennis Brinkerhoff -- recreational skier

- supports resort development;
- resort would improve recreational opportunities;
- economic benefits of resort.

Wayne Marshall -- Hiland Road resident

- neighborhood values would be lost if resort proceeds;
- DNR should assess impacts on local residents;
- proposal is too widespread - should be reduced in size;
- access to area should be limited;
- no night skiing - lights ruin views, nothern lights;
- development should not impact water quality in valley;
- state should not delay project.

Dwight Neill -- Eagle River resident

- supports resort proposal;
- consistent with park purposes;
- resort improves park access, broadens recreational opportunities;
- not totally against helicopter landings;
- helicopters ought to be very limited, strictly regulated basis;
- helicopter approach path should be specified;
- do on experimental basis;
- opposed to helicopter landings in Eagle River valley.

Lynn Catlin

- opposed to resort development;
- inappropriate for public land;
- public didn't ask for resort, but we are reacting to proposal;
- South Fork land values would skyrocket;
- resort jobs are low-paying;
- skeptical of "no night skiing" statements by Rogner;
- opposed to helicopter landings.

Dave Blanchett -- representing Knik Kanoers, Kayakers

- congratulations on greenbelt trade;
- KKK takes neutral view;
- distressed with Johannsen's premature support of resort proposal;
- concerned with air, water, noise pollution of resort;
- KKK needs more information on specifics of proposal prior to taking position of support/opposition;
- what about noise of snow making;
- what about sewage disposal?

Lynn Tate -- Hiland Road resident

- supports resort proposal;
- resort is clean industry;
- skiing is appropriate in park edge.

Vern Ungerecht - Mat-Su Borough Assembly

- has mixed feelings about resort proposal;
- project suffers from lack of planning, being ram-rodged;
- Hatcher Pass resort proposal has gone through proper planning process;
- should be proper, longer term planning process employed;
- proposal seems marginal when considering lack of snow;
- doesn't want competition between Mat-Su Valley and Eagle River.

Steve Cypra -- Palmer resident

- should take regional view of competing resort proposals;
- few quality ski sites in region;
- development of marginal site might preclude development of better sites.

Ed Hower -- Hiland Road resident

- supports resort proposal;
- confident negative impacts can be mitigated;
- state, community should push project through;
- larger benefits outweigh minor inconveniences to locals;
- no motorized traffic in greenbelt;
- against helicopter landings.

Betsy Gardner - Six year Eagle River resident

- supports resort proposal;
- Eagle River resort wouldn't necessarily preclude Hatcher Pass resort;
- state shouldn't attach unnecessary restrictions, stipulations;
- state should perform hydrologic study;
- trail on north side of Eagle River greenbelt;
- should place warning signs before whitewater rapids;
- opposed to helicopter landings.

Cecilia Diedrich

- much local demand for resort and downhill skiing facilities;
- affiliations with Austrian businesses: Rogner known for quality.

Lynn Burkquist

- supports lease for downhill skiing;
- resort would bring economic benefits;
- high capital costs of developing indicate economic feasibility;
- South Fork resort wouldn't preclude competing resort proposals;
- would like night skiing;
- community needs closer access to ski areas than Alyeska.

Craig Campbell -- Municipal assemblyman

- local community supports resort;
- resort would provide jobs;
- resort would bring capital from outside local area;
- supports resort proposal.

Doug Dowden -- local resident

- supports resort development;
- doesn't believe claims of Hatcher Pass proponents that Eagle River site is unfeasible.

Todd Miner

- opposed to helicopter landings;
- supports reasonable development of greenbelt;
- not purpose of parks to be economic development agency;
- wilderness values of South Fork valley will change with resort development;
- state should give sufficient weight to non-monetary values, wilderness values.

Dave George -- Hiland Road resident

- opposed to helicopter landings: wildlife impacts;
- what about impacts of increased runoff due to snow making?

Fred Dyson -- Municipal assemblyman, former advisory board member

- park is major asset of city;
- legislation calls for three zones: wilderness, scenic, developed;
- proposal consistent with legislation;
- resort means changed lifestyle;
- population growth means that lifestyle changes are inevitable;
- resort revenues would enable improved management of park;
- aggregate benefits of resort outweigh negative impacts.

Al Romazewski -- 10 year Eagle River resident

- supports resort proposal;
- proposal site is not wilderness;
- proponent shouldn't be given carte-blanche;
- Rogner is quality developer;
- project should be approved, with appropriate safeguards.

Lee Jordan

- supports use of park land for ski slopes;
- concerns can be addressed in RFP and contracting process;
- state should realize substantial economic benefits as part of contract requirement;
- look at impacts of other type of development of resort village site;
- area not wilderness: already prisons, roads, landfills, etc.;
- resort would enhance Olympics bid;
- no private land available for ski slope development.

Don Follows -- experience with Utah and Colorado resorts

- Rogner proposal is "classy";
- tourism is now number one industry in Colorado;

Becky Hansen -- South Fork valley resident

- supports resort development;
- ski lifts would open park to handicapped people.

Scott Martinez

- South Fork valley has special values as wilderness;
- area ought to be left alone and enjoyed for its own sake.

Girdwood, May 27, 12 people attending, 9 offering testimony

Paul Todd -- Anchorage resident

- commercial uses of park land, with strict controls protecting recreational values and resources, are appropriate.

Bob Miller -- landowner adjoining park

- parks ought to be accessible to all types of people and users;
- supports helicopters because they provide alternative means of access;
- resort ought to be encouraged in periphery of park;
- resorts built elsewhere in state parks;
- resort would be recreational, economic asset to community, state;
- area needs economic benefits of resort.

JoAnn Miller

- resort would be tourism boost;
- resort would affect very small part of park;
- resort would improve park access;
- one helicopter landing site is okay, but several is no good;
- helicopters should be controlled to minimize noise, wildlife impacts;
- supports Municipality greenbelt plan;
- need to separate different user groups on greenbelt;
- accommodate as many people as possible.

Jose Vicente

- resort is compatible with area, park;
- resort should be done tastefully;
- resort would diversify state economy;
- Rogner has agreed to pay \$7 million for utility infrastructure;
- greenbelt plan should be revised;
- trail alignments should be revised;
- trail surfaces should range between asphalt, gravel, dirt;
- helicopter landing, if controlled, should be allowed.

George Brown -- Anchorage resident

- resort is appropriate use in periphery of park;
- resort would benefit economy;
- tourism is beneficial industry;
- state could do good job of regulating resort development to ensure quality;
- helicopters are okay in park periphery;
- prohibit helicopters in wilderness areas.

Steve Koslow -- kayaker familiar with Eagle River

- low development approach to greenbelt;
- paved trails would draw large numbers of people, detracting from river views;
- whole greenbelt ought to be non-motorized;
- no horses in greenbelt;
- no boat liveries on river;
- cautious approach on bridges over river;
- adamantly opposed to any helicopter landings;

- peripheral areas of park already heavily used by day users;
- other state, public lands available for helicopter tours, landings;
- helicopters unnecessary intrusion on park;
- opposed to resort proposal;
- resort site is dark, suffers lack of snow;
- resort would cater to jet setters, not locals;
- resort would affect wildlife, birds;
- South Fork valley can't handle increased population pressure.

Jane Myer -- Girdwood resident

- go slow with greenbelt development;
- had bad experience with helicopters in Hawaii - out of control in Hawaii.

Bryan Sell

- opposed to helicopter landings;
- we'll regret resort development in future;
- South Fork valley not pristine now;
- park needs active, aggressive management.

Paul Todd

- safeguard human values when governing resorts, other commercial uses of park;
- helicopters displace existing users;
- limit number of landings allowed;
- take completely new look at greenbelt plan;
- regulate commercial boat liveries on Eagle River - get control in the beginning;
- look at storm water disposal, sewage disposal as part of resort contract;
- state should be protected against resort failure.

Larry Daniels

- look at Forest Service experience and process for ski areas.

Wasilla, May 29, 15 people attending, 10 offering testimony

John Stein -- Mat-Su Borough

- valley is competing for resorts;
- questions whether resort is appropriate;
- DPOR should do site evaluation;
- site has been designated in Hatcher Pass - good site;
- Hatcher Pass shouldn't be overlooked in the regional context.

Sarah Horner -- interested in Hatcher Pass

- DPOR should thoroughly study Eagle River site and ensure its feasibility.

Jan Affinito

- large-scale resort may be inappropriate in state park;
- Eagle River is based in park, dependent on park;
- DPOR should follow sound planning practices, being even more careful because of park status;
- development of Government Peak is inevitable;
- state should be protected if South Fork fails;
- concerned that political pressures are driving the planning process;
- ski area should be examined on its technical merits;
- Eagle River resort could sustain itself without skiing.

Jim Turner -- Independence Ski Resort Company

- resorts are not necessarily incompatible with park status, provided feasibility and capability;
- cursory evaluation of Eagle River site suggests that it's marginal;
- DPOR shouldn't allow project if not feasible;
- state should take regional view of potential ski sites;
- permitting of unfeasible site could kill more feasible sites;
- look at mountain's ability to hold snow in place;
- helicopter skiing shouldn't be prohibited; should be allowed with careful controls.

Mike Downs

- consider noise impacts of ski lifts, other resort activities;
- Eagle River site is primarily north facing, with little sunshine;
- resort site is important for watershed;
- snow making equipment creates a widespread fog, coating roads and houses with ice;
- South Fork has frequent temperature inversions, causing fog from snowmaking to cover whole valley;
- light industry of resort may not be compatible with the bedroom community of Eagle River;
- South Fork resort could preclude a better site from being developed.

Robert Wells

- current economic downturn should not influence decision to open state park to commercial activities;
- supports helicopter landings in peripheral areas of park;
- helicopters can be managed to minimize impacts;
- helicopters probably ought to be excluded from wilderness areas;
- parkwide ski site suitability study should be done.

Peter Diedrich

- examine wind scouring of ski slopes;
- Government Peak is superior site to Eagle River;
- DPOR should do appropriate studies.

Karen Siry

- local need for ski resort;
- involved with youth ski program;
- school buses cannot negotiate icy, steep roads;
- Eagle River planning process is too fast;
- concerned with Eagle River site suitability;

Mike Perryham -- Alaska Frontier Trappers Association

- EIS or other environmental study ought to occur for both resort proposals;
- ski areas are not multiple use, and prevent other user groups;
- ski areas are single use areas;
- already three ski areas, and more are unnecessary;
- how many sheep would be eliminated by ski slopes?
- proponents should pay for state's expenses in planning, responding to request.

Mike Sorensen -- experienced ski coach

- supports alpine skiing;
- caution against development of marginal ski slopes, terrains;
- area ought to be evaluated for its long-term benefits.

PUBLIC MEETING TRANSCRIPTS

CHUGACH STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

May 20, 1987 Anchorage
May 26, 1987 Eagle River
May 27, 1987 Girdwood
May 28, 1987 Wasilla

Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
June, 1987

Anchorage, May 20, 75 people attending, 38 offering testimony

Dave Stephens: We'll call the meeting to order now. I apologize for the confusion. We had a scheduling conflict and we were supposed to be next door so we're a little bit late in getting set-up and organized. This is a meeting to discuss the master plan for Chugach State Park. We are doing a limited review and update of the park plan this summer. My name is David Stephens. I have lead responsibility for this project. I work in the Regional Office of Alaska State Parks. Al Meiners is here also assisting tonight. He is the Regional Manager for State Parks and has responsibility for most of the state parks in the Southcentral Region, as far north as Denali State Park and as far south as Kodiak. There are some other Parks staff here tonight and I'll introduce them as they come in. The need to do a review and update of the master plan is based on three big issues that have recently come up that aren't adequately treated in the 1980 master plan, which is the most recent master plan and is the one that guides how we manage and develop the park. The master plan is the park's policy document. When issues come up, our first act is to go to the master plan and see what it says concerning these various issues and try to follow its lead. It's the policy document for the park. In addition to the master plan there are other policy documents. In the information packet, the last page, several of those are cited and those are the things that we are constantly referring to. Everyone should have a packet that has the agenda and a lot of miscellaneous information about some of the stuff that we'll be talking about tonight. The format for tonight's meeting is a little bit changed from what we have on the agenda. We only have 3½ hours to cover a lot of ground and so rather than take each one of these various topics individually, we do our schpeel, sit down and take public comments, we are going to talk about all three of these issues and then sit down. This is the first round of public meetings. We will take the comments, do our research, and come up with some draft language that will address these three topics. We will write that up, publish it, put it out for public review and comment, probably in July. We will then have a second round of public meetings, with the intent on the second round of getting reaction and comments on these draft amendments to the plan. The purpose of tonight's meeting is really just to introduce the issues, give you the broad outlines of the kinds of decisions we are going to have to make, and then sit down. It's really an opportunity for you to tell us what you think. So we are going to try to keep our comments down to 10 or 15 minutes and then the rest of the meeting will be devoted to public comment. There are a lot of people here wanting to talk tonight so we ask you to limit your comments as much as possible. At about five minutes' time we're going to start getting antsy and ask you to try and sum up. So please limit your comments. If it turns out that we have time towards the end of the meeting, feel free to stand up again. There's a sign-up sheet on the front desk. We will read names off of the sign-up sheet for those people who would like to testify. We'll also use the sign-up sheet to add your name and address to the mailing list and you will be notified then of the next round of public meetings and receive a draft of whatever language we are working up. There are three major issues facing the park today. There are actually a lot more but because of time, lack of money, lack of staff, we have limited the scope of this update and review to three major topics. And those are: resort development in the park; commercial helicopter operations and landings in the park; and, the management and development of the Eagle River Greenbelt, which has just recently been restored to public ownership and

will be managed as a part of the park. There are information packets and papers on each of these three topics and we'll just be summing up what's already written down, so you can follow along with me if you'd like. The first topic that we'd like to take up tonight is resort development in the park. The thing that has prompted this is the proposal by an Austrian firm to build and operate a major year-round resort in the Eagle River valley, extending a short ways up the main fork of Eagle River and the South Fork of Eagle River valley. When we first got the request from the firm for permission to use a part of the state park, the village and most of the parking, building, retail and commercial space would all be occurring, according to this proposal, on private land that adjoins the park. Where they need permission from State Parks is to use state park lands to build and operate ski runs, trails, maybe some parking, maybe some mountaintop restaurants, and it is this use of public lands that they have approached us about and that is our major concern. We're not so much concerned with what they do with their private land. That is really more the purview of the Municipality through the zoning ordinances. But for the state park land we would like to know 1) is this an appropriate use of state park lands, and 2) if it is, what kinds of controls, stipulations, considerations ought to occur before we give them our permission. As far as the resort development is concerned, this is the first step: the plan update and review. The second step, which would occur assuming that this is a compatible activity and we proceed, is that there will be a contracting process. We will pre-qualify applicants, try and arrive at a list of people who are capable and willing, and then we will put out an RFP, or Request for Proposals, which details what kind of development we would like to see in the state park, and ask them to satisfy us that all of the various environmental and social concerns have been addressed. We are relying on you to tell us what those concerns are and that really is the purpose of tonight's meeting. I think that's all I'll say on the downhill skiing proposal. On the management and development of the greenbelt, much of the bottomlands of Eagle River were, until yesterday, I guess, privately-owned land, owned by the Eklutna Native Corporation. Although they were very valuable recreation lands and very valuable for wildlife as well, they were private lands and so technically all of the recreation that occurred on those bottomlands was done in trespass. Recognizing the public values of these lands, the State and Eklutna got together and negotiated a land exchange. That land exchange was just completed yesterday or the day before, approved by the State Legislature, and will soon be signed by the Governor. The effect of that is to restore about 4,000 acres of very valuable recreation lands back to the park, to be managed by the Division of Parks and developed as well. The Municipality recently did a master plan and management plan for the greenbelt and made a number of proposals about access points, about trails, and how they ought to be managed. There are display copies of the greenbelt plan there on the side table and also available from the Municipality. So the question we have for you tonight is how should we manage that land? Should it be developed for intensive recreation? Should areas that have high wildlife values be avoided and trails rerouted? Should motorized activities be separated from non-motorized activities? A number of nuts and bolts questions about what we ought to do with the greenbelt. It's a big responsibility that we've just inherited and we would like to know how to respond to the demands that we'll be getting almost instantly. The third issue that we'd like to talk about tonight is commercial helicopter operations and landings in the park. The 1980 master plan doesn't address this issue in any great detail except to say that it's conditionally compatible. We knowing the public interest and the controversy, we are now

formulating a park-wide policy that will govern whether helicopters are given permission to land in the park, and if so, under what conditions and in what areas. This was a big issue with the park just very recently, in the last two months, when a private firm requested permission to land one helicopter per day on a ridgetop that overlooks Eagle River and Anchorage. Not having any kind of overall policy that would address commercial helicopter landings, we denied the application. There was a lot of public opposition to the application. A lot of that we believe stemmed from the public's not knowing what to expect. If this one application is granted, does that mean that next week there will be five more helicopter firms asking permission? And soon we have a situation like there is in the Grand Canyon and along the coastline of Hawaii where they are a very intrusive activity and really spoil the experience of other park users: people who are on the ground. We denied the application. The Chugach State Park Advisory Board asked us to deny, but also asked us to formulate this policy for helicopters and to do it governing the entire park, rather than on a case-by-case basis. So that is a summary of the three issues that face us tonight. Are there any questions on how we're going to conduct the meeting or any of these particular issues before we get into the actual public comment? Okay, we will begin by calling names. If you'd like to testify and haven't already signed up, please do so and we will bring those lists over and read off the names. There are maps. Feel free to use those maps as part of your testimony. Please step forward to this area so that we can pick up your comments on the microphone. We're recording this as well as taking notes.

Al Meiners: If you signed in and do not wish to testify, just wave your hand at us and we'll go on to the next person. Ginny DeVries asked if she could testify early because she has to go somewhere in about two minutes, so if there's no problem with that we'd ask her to come forward and tell us what she has to say. If you'd like you can sit right here at the table.

Ginny DeVries: The following comments are the official testimony of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance on the Chugach State Park master plan regarding downhill ski area development, commercial helicopter activity, and the Eagle River greenbelt. The Alliance opposes any commercial ski development on Chugach State Park lands including the proposed ski resort in South Fork of Eagle River. Naturally, we are concerned about the inevitable impacts on state park wildlife such as a development, particularly on wolves and dall sheep in the vicinity. We are also concerned about the impacts a ski area would have on adjacent wilderness lands in South Fork and Ship Creek valleys. Why not use undesignated state lands for a ski development instead of using designated park land? Park status is the most protected designation we can provide for our state lands and at a time when irreplaceable habitat is fast disappearing for our wildlife, such land should not be unnecessarily sacrificed for development. As we have previously testified, we are against helicopter landings in Chugach State Park. The extreme noise of such landings would devastate wilderness and wildlife values that parks are supposed to preserve. We have heard from our members about the impossible noise that helicopters are causing local hikers and tourists when they take off from cruise ships and fly up the glacier in Juneau. We should not be destroying park values to cater to visitors who are unwilling to seek more than the most superficial experiences of the park. Chugach State Park has accommodated and will continue to accommodate compatible recreational development. General campgrounds, a visitor center with a handicapped-accessible natural trail,

developed trailheads, unimproved roads and a system of trails already provide opportunities for a wide variety of users. Park overflights are already a substantial problem. To exacerbate it makes no sense. Helicopters and airplane overflights are a serious problem in our parks in the Lower 48. Please keep commercial helicopter landings out of our state parks. Since the Legislature ratified the exchange that would add 3,500 acre greenbelt on both banks of Eagle River, the Alliance would like to see the area managed for maximum enjoyment of non-consumptive users such as hikers, cross-country skiers and photographers. Spectacular scenery and wildlife resources cannot be replaced and our first obligation within the park system is to protect these values. We have a chance to make the right decisions for our parks in Alaska now. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Al Meiners: Thank you.

Dave Stephens: You have a question of us?

[unintelligible]

Al Meiners: Could we hold the questions because otherwise...

[unintelligible]

Al Meiners: I think we'd like to hold questions or debating otherwise we'll be here all night.

Dave Stephens: We're not here to talk back and forth. You're here to talk to us.

_____ : I would like to have an answer to a question, however, which is a number that could be given and I didn't get a chance to go back to my office and look it up. The acreage that is being requested for the resort versus the total park acreage. If I could have those two numbers, roughly.

Dave Stephens: We don't have an acreage figure for the amount of space that would be devoted to the ski runs. There is, according to the Rogner proposal, there is a 97 acre private parcel where most of the intensive uses would occur. Chugach State Park is about 500,000 acres and if I were guessing, just off the top of my head, I'd say there were maybe 2,000 acres to be...

[unintelligible]

Al Meiners: Possibly, more than that. Less than 10.

Dave Stephens: We don't know.

Al Meiners: Edgar Smoot, please.

Edgar Smoot: My name is Edgar Smoot. I'm the Chairman of the Community and Government Affairs Committee of the Chugiak/Eagle River Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the amendment of the Chugach State Park master plan to allow for development of tourist-related industries within the park boundaries. We feel that such activities as downhill skiing, float trips and flightseeing can be conducted in an environmentally-responsible

manner. A community attitude survey was conducted by the Tourist Committee of the Chamber late last year and the results overwhelmingly supported the development of a tourist industry in Eagle River. Of the 250 people surveyed, 90% favored such development. A telephone survey is currently being conducted by the Chamber's Economic Development Committee to assess community attitudes towards economic development. To insure a statistically-correct survey, 400 households are being contacted using a randomly-generated telephone list. One of the questions asked is, "Do you favor the development of a recreation/resort facility?" With 15% of the survey completed, 53 are in favor, eight are opposed or undecided. Because of the random way the telephone numbers were selected, we feel this is a true and unbiased reflection of the community's feelings. Over 100,000 visitors a year now utilize the Eagle River Visitor Center and its trail systems with a minimum impact on the environment. The Chamber feels that this demonstrates that, with proper care, the park can support tourist activities, and at the same time, the environment can be protected. We would urge the Division of Parks to amend the Chugach State Park master plan to allow for the orderly and responsible development of the tourist industry within the borders of the park. Such development promises to create hundreds of jobs and bring millions of dollars into our state's economy. Thank you. Now I have to put on my other hat as the Director for the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce and read a resolution that was approved February 20, 1987 in Juneau, Alaska, at our quarterly board meeting. "Whereas Kanakina, Inc., the wholly-owned subsidiary of Eklutna, Inc., and Dr. Robert Rogner have entered into a joint venture partnership to develop a downhill ski resort with a 1,500-room hotel complex on 103 acres of land located 14 miles from downtown Anchorage, and Whereas this project has an estimated development cost of \$170 million, making it one of the largest investments of private capital in the history of the state, and Whereas significant numbers of new tourists will be drawn from Europe and Japan expanding and strengthening the state's tourism industry and broadening our economic base, and Whereas such a world class complex will enhance the state's bid for the 1994 Winter Olympics, therefore, Be It Resolved that the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce supports the development of the downhill ski resort along the Eagle River and, Be It Further Resolved, that the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce supports the administration's efforts to expedite the permitting process required by this development." Signed, Jim Rinerson, Chairman; George Cruise, President. Thank you.

Pete Panarese: Would it be okay for me to summarize, sir, that your concern is that support the project for its benefit to tourism?

Edgar Smoot: Yes.

Al Meiners: William Reedy.

William Reedy: My name is William Reedy. I'm a small businessman in Eagle River. I also reside in Eagle River. I just have a few brief comments I just want to say. In support of the resort development, after several conversations with many business people in the area, we feel it would be a tremendous shot in the arm, a permanent shot in the arm, for the business community to have a resort development right across the river. The figures that have been given us is approximately 2,000 jobs would be created with this development, and that would be nothing but a plus for the people who are unemployed in our area. We feel that the resort itself would be the safest and cleanest avenue

of economic development as opposed to large industry or factory, something of that nature. So, this is the only issue that I'm really going to address, is the resort development and the other item I wanted to mention is that the Eagle River area is surrounded, about two-thirds of it, is surrounded by Chugach State Park. There are limited areas of access to the park and we believe that this resort would also add extra access to the park. I thank you for your time.

Al Meiners: Thank you, William. Janet Wilson.

Janet Wilson: I'll pass.

Al Meiners: Okay. Carl Bistol. Tony Smith.

Tony Smith: I'll pass.

Al Meiners: Okay. Steven Smith.

Steven Smith: My name is Steve Smith. I'm with Alaska Helicopters, Inc. Alaska Helicopter supports the Chugach State Park in the development of a master plan which will include designated landing areas for helicopters within the park boundaries. We believe landings in the park are compatible with other land uses and hope our 37 years of experience with landing in environmentally sensitive areas can be of assistance in the design of such a plan. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Steve. Larry Williams.

Larry Williams: My name is Larry Williams and I am an Anchorage resident and I am speaking tonight in behalf of the American Wilderness Alliance, a national conservation organization with headquarters in Denver, Colorado. Now the model of the American Wilderness Alliance is working together to conserve wild America. Hopefully, we can work together tonight to continue to conserve a very special portion of wild America -- Chugach State Park. If Chugach State Park were located in any other state in the Union, it would be a national park. I daresay it would be considered one of the crown jewels of the national park system. But, it is not. It is a state park and we can all take great pride in that fact. With its rugged glaciated mountains, its fruitful and varied wildlife and its wide array of wildflowers, the park presents a stunning wilderness panorama at the very back door of Alaska's largest city. It is this wonderful, seemingly impossible dichotomy of pristine wilderness co-existing side-by-side with a teeming metropolis that gives rise to the uniqueness of Chugach State Park. I know of no other place on our planet where the boundary between wilderness and civilization is so clearly defined and so amazing to behold. It could have easily been otherwise. There could easily have been housing tracts nestled up against Eagle Glacier, Eagle Glacier View. There could have easily been strip malls right in the very heart of Ship Creek. There perhaps even could have been a major ski resort in the South Fork of Eagle River Valley. Instead, as a result of wisdom and foresight, we have a pristine wilderness, an accessible wilderness, right outside our door. The state park...appropriate development in our park. Now comes a proposal that asks for permission to change the management direction of all parks. That asks for permission to intensively develop a portion of our wilderness. A development to provide for the downhill skiing delight of

principally well-to-do Japanese and European tourists. The proposal asks that we Alaskans compromise the wilderness integrity of our park to set a new development-minded...and tone to park management. In return, Alaskans are promised jobs. Doing what, besides temporary construction projects, working perhaps at minimum wages as waiters, bedmakers, slope tenders for imported management staff. Now, Alaskans have a reputation of being a proud people, of displaying a very fierce individualism and have taken great pride in our state. Chugach State Park was established for the enjoyment and pleasure of the people of Alaska and we have done a remarkable job of maintaining the wilderness character and wilderness integrity of our Chugach State Park. Let us continue to do so by denying this inappropriate development scheme. As far as the Eagle River greenbelt goes, we wish we could maintain its wilderness character. And as for helicopter landings, we find those to be activities that are inappropriate within Chugach State Park. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Larry. John Quinley.

John Quinley: Pass.

Al Meiners: Jane Wurberth.

Jane Wurberth: Pass.

Al Meiners: Okay. Sally Long.

Sally Long: I would like to say that I concur with the gentleman that just finished speaking. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Elizabeth Carroll.

Elizabeth Carroll: I'm Elizabeth Carroll and I'm speaking for no one but myself and I would like to say that while I live in that area that is under discussion tonight and I feel very strongly that the park was established for the people of Alaska and mostly there are backpackers and trails, but the idea of.... I think it's compromising our ideals when we put the ski lifts and all that stuff...into the area they're talking about. I believe that that's true of the helicopters, too, in the park.

Al Meiners: Thank you. R. Johnson.

R. Johnson: Pass.

Al Meiners: Sharon Warbath-White.

Sharon Warbath-White: Pass.

Al Meiners: Sure. Kirk Curry.

Kirk Curry: Pass.

Al Meiners: Don Follows.

Don Follows: My name is Don Follows. I'm a land use consultant here in Anchorage. I'm formerly a park planner and interpretive...at the Eagle River

site. I have to take deference. I spent 20 years in the National Park Service helping to create some 22 new national parks in the United States, studying some 70 million acres. Chugach State Park is not of national significance and it is not, could never be, a national park. However, it is a very outstanding area and one which has values which need to be shared by publics, values which are important to Alaskans as well as to international visitors. I think the proposed location of the ski facility is one which does not detrimentally impair the entire Chugach State Park and it's one which certainly can help stimulate the economy. It can help provide for a planning venture that can be done in a compatible environmentally sensitive manner. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Don. Will Elder.

Will Elder: Pass.

Al Meiners: Pass. Cliff Eames.

Cliff Eames: My name is Cliff Eames. I am with the Alaska Center for the Environment. We would like to address this evening, regarding the ski resort development, just a single question and that is the very fundamental one of whether downhill ski resort development is appropriate in Chugach State Park. We will submit far more detailed comments on various aspects of possible ski resort development shortly. We think it's fair to say that the state park system, especially Chugach State Park, is at a crossroads and the question that we seem to be asking ourselves is whether we will continue to use our parks for traditional, relatively low impact and relatively unobtrusive uses like auto camping at developed campgrounds on the periphery of the park, visits to and natural history interpretation at a visitor center or centers, picnicking and activities like walking, berry picking, skiing and packing. Or will a major focus of park management be the permitting or concessioning of major commercial activities and development, regardless of the substantial impacts on wilderness, wildlife, scenic and other natural values that will inevitably result. Will any place be left for a retreat or a human refuge from the noise of the city and from the commercial activity in the city that most of us have to engage in in order to make a living or to satisfy our needs or our wants. Park status is the most protective designation that we can give to our state lands. Parks are very special. All of our state lands deserve the greatest amount of protection that we can reasonably give them, recognizing, of course, that complete protection is not the highest and best use of all of our public lands. But the goal for our state parks, like Chugach, Denali, Kachemak and Wood-Tikchik, should be the protection of the natural values that make Alaska special, while accommodate traditional low impact, unobtrusive uses, uses ranging, incidentally, from mountain climbing by those who seek extreme physical and mental challenges, to a walk of just 20 or 30 feet from one's car to a picnic table or the visitor center. For those who aren't physically able to participate in, or just aren't interested in, the more strenuous ways of enjoying the park. We feel very strongly, therefore, that downhill ski resort development is an entirely inappropriate use in Chugach State Park. Alternatives do exist. For example, on federal lands in the National Forest where a site analysis is on hold, however, because the Forest Service is uncertain about the magnitude of the demand for additional downhill skiing opportunities in southcentral Alaska, and on state lands that have not been specially designated by the Legislature. In the Hatcher Pass area where an extensive and very public planning process led to a decision to

make land available for a downhill ski resort, that the commercial interest is there, where an advisory board has already been established and has met at least twice, and where a number of preliminary expressions of interest have already been received. I'd like to just touch on the economic question because that seems to be the focus of a lot of peoples' concerns. I've heard a lot of arguments on both sides as to whether this project will or will not provide substantial economic developments. We think it's real important that the division attempt to seriously answer these questions with an adequate study which should be funded not by the state, which has very few funds available for studies of this sort, but by any proposed developers. Finally, we are encouraged by the public participation process that we see unfolding but we're still skeptical, I'm afraid, and we will continue to press for a completely open and public decision making process in which the final decision is based primarily on resource considerations rather than economic and political ones. The state has a serious credibility problem regarding this proposal. People who have an interest in the proposal for a wide variety of reasons, that is not just conservationists, are still concerned that the basic decision on this project might already have been made and that money might be talking much, much louder than any of the rest of us can ever hope to talk. Regarding helicopter landings, we feel it's a serious imposition on the public to ask us to come out again, just several weeks after a public hearing was held on the same issue. Of course, you hear, nevertheless, I would like to say initially we don't intend to debate whether there is or will be a substantial demand for helicopter landings inside the park. There could be a tremendous demand and that's what makes the prospect of allowing helicopter landings so frightening. But not every demand should be met regardless of the magnitude of adverse impacts on traditional park uses. There could be a substantial demand for a tramway up the Kahiltna Glacier but that doesn't mean that we would meet it. We've resubmitted a couple of letters that we prepared earlier on proposed helicopter landings in the park and we'll just highlight some of our concerns. They are exceptionally loud and can be heard for long distances. They can disturb wildlife and they clearly are tremendously disturbing to other park users and local residents. As has already been pointed out, they are a serious problem in Chugach State Park and we should be addressing overflights in the park, not permitting landings. They are very, very serious problem in parks in the Lower 48. In some areas of the Grand Canyon, for example, aircraft noise is evident up to 95% of the time. Allowing landings anywhere within the park would set a dangerous precedent. A new constituency for this activity would be created which will be difficult, if not impossible, to resist when additional access is inevitably requested. And again, reasonable alternatives do exist. Those people desiring a view can get one that is at least as good by driving a private vehicle or commercial van or bus up the Arctic Valley road. Those desiring a helicopter ride can take one without landing or can land outside of the park. Regarding the Eagle River greenbelt, we've devoted a fair amount of time to these other issues and we'd like to review the Municipality's existing plan and then submit some written comments on that proposal. We are very, very happy to see it added to the park. Thank you for this opportunity.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Rick Maron.

Rick Maron: My name is Richard Maron. I am representing the organization of Friends of Chugach State Park. We feel an additional downhill ski area development is inappropriate in a park. Particularly of the massive scale

being proposed by Rogner Touristik in the Eagle River and South Fork valleys. First; we object to the park lands being used for major commercial development regardless of whether that development is for a recreational facility or not. This particular ski resort concept didn't start out with Alaskans seeking additional ski recreation in our park, but instead started with a developer who needed mountains on which to build the ski area to attract tourists to his resort in the valley. The use of the existing downhill ski area in Chugach State Park at Arctic Valley can be used as a gauge of the local demand for downhill skiing in the park. The use of that area is not overwhelming. The issue here is not one of providing additional downhill ski opportunity in Chugach, the issue is opening a park to large scale commercial development. Second, we are alarmed to see so much local support for this project apparently coming from those hoping to see both short- and long-term economic benefit. We realize the state is experiencing serious economic problems. We feel sympathy for those individuals who are in turn suffering financial woes. But we don't feel that lands which were set aside for a state park should succumb to development because of the immediate economic situation. What if the economy doesn't improve or worsens in the upcoming years. Will this park be the target of other massive development ideas? We feel this project deserves thorough economic study to try to forecast the true extent of the impact on the economy, thorough studies of the impact on wildlife and other recreational values of the park, an objective evaluation of whether or not it is even feasible to operate a downhill ski area of this size in Chugach State Park. Whether it will offer skiing of the quality necessary to draw tourists from Europe and Asia. Is it possible that if this project were to be built it would mean short-term economic benefit stemming from the construction phase only to leave the Division of Parks in a few years with an inoperative ski area on its hands and on Alaskans' mountains. Regarding helicopter landings in the park, helicopters are extremely loud and not compatible with the values presently enjoyed in the summer in the park. They can only be an intrusion on the enjoyment of the natural values of these mountains. We advocate a clear policy in the master plan prohibiting recreational, tourism-oriented landings in the park. Anchorage residents are very fortunate to have near at hand such a beautiful state park which is largely undisturbed by mankind and offering an area to escape from the reminders of our loud mechanized society. Helicopter rides are, I'm sure, invigorating to the tourists who travel to Alaska in the summer. We all hope to see them enjoying their vacations here but doing so in such a way as not to disrupt the enjoyment of park users on the ground and park wildlife. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you. William Cox.

William Cox: My name is Bill Cox and I live and work in Anchorage. I've been an Anchorage resident for three years. I'm here tonight just representing myself, expressing my own views. The first thing I'd like to comment on is the helicopter landings and I just want to say that I'm opposed to any commercial helicopter landings in Chugach State Park and I think that should be incorporated into the next master plan. I'm especially concerned about the noise and the effects it's going to have on other users of the park and wildlife. It's already been mentioned the problems that are happening in some of the parks in the Lower 48 and there has been articles in the paper what's going on down in the Juneau area with dozens of helicopters flying up to the glacier. I think the only people that benefit from the helicopter flights are the helicopter companies themselves and the people who are willing to pay for

that experience of flying up there. I think one argument that has been used is that it enables people who are disabled or maybe the elderly to get to some of the areas where they might have a better view of things but I think there's some pretty good access points in the park system where people can drive to and get a pretty nice view of the park without having to allow helicopter flights. I just wanted to say on this ski development I'm opposed to any commercial ski development in the park and I just don't think that's a good use of park land. I think the arguments against that have been pretty well summarized by some of the other speakers. There is also some confusion now we have, I think, two or three other downhill areas in southcentral and they're still not sure if there's going to be one up in Hatcher Pass or not. I think it's kind of in a state of flux and I don't think it should be allowed at this time. Thank you.

Al Meiners. Thank you. Paul Depaulonus.

Paul Depaulonus: I'll pass.

Al Meiners: Okay. Becky Hansen.

Becky Hansen: I would like my husband to speak in my place.

Al Meiners: Sure. Your name?

Rod Hansen: My name is Rod Hansen. I live right in the heart of the resort development. I think a lot of you folks don't know that most of that land has already been zoned housing. That where the resort is going to go is already, well now it's zoned for a resort, but otherwise I think three years it goes back for housing so they can stick 90-some houses down in the area. The land right above is by the waterfalls, the bridge that you go over, that's all zoned for housing. A hundred acres just got approved for a new Rolling Hills Estate. That's in the back valley. That's right where Rogner wants to put a nice.... I'd rather see a nice ski slope than another hundred houses back there. Right now there's over 600 lots up there for sale. So, what we got is a lot of zoning that they're taking care of. What they're going to do is keep houses out. I'd rather see a resort than 600 houses. It makes sense to me. Then we got, if you go along...the river which I live there you'll see that, people, it isn't so serene anymore. People go in there with chainsaws and chop all the trees off for Christmas trees during Christmas. So along the stream has all been chopped and what we're doing is losing all of our king salmon. Last year, 33 people were ticketed for poaching king salmon there. The reason why, I called the cops. I've called you folks. The reason why they ain't got enough people to watch these people. So what do you do? I guess there's only 200 kings left there. I'd rather have a resort there with the buffer zone and to watch the king salmon and make sure they don't get wiped out. The other thing is it's a four-wheel drive area down there right now. There's junked cars, people roll down their junk cars. There's the Barbara Waterfalls that the state is trying to buy. Well, if you were around there and lived there you'll see that someone has backed up their four-wheel drive and dumped it over the edge right below the falls and John Gross has asked them to take the four-wheel drive out so what this person did is went in and sawed down a bunch of trees and made a road and went in and half dragged it up the side of the hill. Well I feel if we had a resort down there, which Rogner already said he would put in the trails, he'd put in all these trails,

there's also two waterfalls up there. One does not have a name yet. But more and more people are beginning to notice it. I'd rather have the resort people go in and put in beautiful trails in instead of people running around leaving it like it is which is left...if you want to come on down I'll show you around to the four-wheel drive trails and that's all it is down there is four-wheel drive trails. And if you look around, you go into the zoning, go over to the zoning maps and you'll see that most of that area, there's already hundreds of houses back there and it's already zoned for hundreds more and I'd rather have it zoned for a resort than a hundred more homes.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Rod. Lynn Tate.

Lynn Tate: My name is Lynn Tate. I am here representing myself. I am a resident of Hiland Road and I ditto everything that Mr. Hansen had to say. But I'd also like to add for some of you all that are not aware of this, that each day that we go to our wonderful pristine wilderness I pass a new dump, an old dump, a prison, and a halfway house. Now, I am ecstatic that they would even consider building a resort in our neighborhood. So, if it takes some park land to do that, which it will, that's part of the deal, they have to have ski runs, I will be grateful to see them and I do think it's an appropriate use for our park.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Lynn. Jerry....

Jerry: I'll pass.

Al Meiners: Okay. Mary Knoff.

Mary Knoff: I'll make this very short because I'm not very well informed on this whole subject. Listening to Linda, listening to the concern for keeping the park for recreation I really don't see that downhill skiing is a noisy recreation. The lifts are fairly well controlled, I just don't consider it to be a real wild recreation. I do feel that the helicopter entrance is a problem, even just flying over could be a problem, but to compare that with, say a ski resort, I don't think is appropriate and I think that when you say the word recreation you have to consider many types of recreation. Hiking and cross-country skiing are very enjoyable but there are other types and that's what a park is for.

Al Meiners: Thank you.

Dave Stephens: I would ask that you not applaud. It doesn't really assist us here tonight. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Belinda Plesif.

Belinda Plesif: Rather than go up I'd just like to say that I agree with the people who came before me. I think I...

Al Meiners: Fine, thank you. Otto Bockwing.

Otto Bockwing: Pass.

Al Meiners: Pass. L. G. Tate.

L. G. Tate: I live in the area of Hiland Road as well and I'd just like to say that I am for the development of the park as a resort. If you look at the...of our economy I think that anybody who's willing to...we have to give them a chance right now. And as far as asking the developers to fund the study to satisfy people who are not going to make an investment in the resort is ridiculous. These people wouldn't be willing to invest millions of dollars in this resort had they not already done an economic study and were convinced that it will be a.... That's all I have to say.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Barbara Heisler. Pass? Okay. Gary Tate.

Gary Tate: [unintelligible]

Ray Gardner: My name's Ray Gardner and I'm a resident of Eagle River and I'm speaking on my own behalf. The first thing that I'd like to say is that the comments which have been made earlier, that this is not a wilderness area that we are talking about, definitely applies. I've lived out there for a number of years now and the individuals who have testified here today that the area that's in question is a wilderness area have, in my mind, demonstrated a profound ignorance of public land and its uses and its availability for various uses. The second thing I would like to say is that in reviewing this process and determining which way the Park Service and the State of Alaska ought to go with respect to that property, it ought to be recognized that there has been a tremendous sacrifice made on the part of the Eklutna Corporation which is, in fact, in the public interest and which is, in fact, in the interest of the environment. Eklutna is willing to do two things, one is they are willing to exchange the land that goes down in the bed of the valley of Eagle River, which I think is the core and which does have possibly some wilderness values if you've ever floated that river, I assume that some of the environmental speakers have, they are willing to trade that land in exchange for some areas that are downtown, some commercial areas which they would be able to develop. At the same time, they're willing to enter into and risk private investment capital in the state of Alaska which is currently undergoing one of the biggest recessions it's had in a number of years in an effort to bring some kind of business activity and outside dollars into the state on a development project which probably has the least impact on the environment of any other development project in the state of Alaska and that is a resort of this nature. There are no smoke stacks, there are no toxic wastes, there really isn't a high degree of intensity of pressure in terms of population. Certainly the houses that already exist there in areas that are open to development in terms of residential pressures could, in fact, have a greater impact than the resort would. So I think that it's very important that when we're looking at people that are leaving now because they don't have jobs and we're looking at a state government that is in a state of paralysis because they don't have the money to keep this state running, when we have people right now that are looking at a situation that is very bleak...and take a risk, a very big risk, in the state of Alaska ought to be encouraged and ought to be encouraged very seriously and strongly. And the voices that I have heard today that are speaking against, against that kind of development are people that would speak against any kind of development under any kind of circumstances and have done that consistently in the past in the state of Alaska. And if those voices are heeded by our public officials, you will find that there will be a day that none of us will be here, there will be not enough money for the State of Alaska to maintain the integrity of the park,

there will not be sufficient revenues to make sure that the park is preserved in the areas that need to be preserved, not in the areas that we're speaking of in the terms of this development. The last comment I would like to make is although your efforts here on this board have been very admirable, I would hope that that certainly isn't going to be made a part of the official record because I don't think it's been totally accurate in terms of the number and the type of comments that we've received.

Dave Stephens: Sir, just to respond to that last comment, we are recording people's testimony tonight and the two of us are taking more detailed notes. Pete Panarese, who is Superintendent of Chugach State Park, is recording these just as a visual means of spurring people's imaginations and...

Ray Gardner: Very good, very good. I applaud your effort and I'm sure you're doing the best you can, but I just noticed some of the volume of entries that were made on behalf of some speakers and they certainly weren't matched by others and I know that was unintentional. So, thank you.

Al Meiners: Steve Livingston.

Steve Livingston: I'm Steve Livingston. I'm from Anchorage. I represent the Alaska Chapter of the Sierra Club. I just have a couple of comments to make on the helicopter landings and also on the proposed ski development. First of all, on the helicopter landings, we reiterate our former stand which is we're once again opposed to any commercial helicopter landings in Chugach State Park or in the state park system as a whole for that matter, and we ask the State Parks Department to put that into the new master plan. And secondly, commenting on the proposed downhill ski development. At present, we are opposed to any new downhill ski areas in Chugach State Park, including the one proposed for the South Fork of Eagle River and we would ask the State Parks Department to consider putting into the master plan for its state parks a proposal to prohibit further downhill ski areas in this state park, in Chugach State Park. We feel that the people of Anchorage are privileged to have access to the front range of Chugach State Park and while it's certainly not wilderness, but it's fairly close to it for a city of 250,000 and we don't feel that downhill ski development is compatible with this.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Steve. This one's got me real stumped. The last name is K A E P P E L E. You want to pass or... Okay. Kirk Wickersham.

Kirk Wickersham: My name is Kirk Wickersham. I'm a resident of Anchorage and I'm a principal in Independence Ski Resort Company which is a ski area development company that has submitted a formal expression of interest in the Eagle River site and which has also submitted a lease application to build a ski resort at the Hatcher Pass site, which has been referred to as the Hatcher Pass site. I've been pretty closely involved in planning for downhill ski resorts in southcentral Alaska for the past several years and the foundation of it was a 1981 study that was conducted by the Municipality which indicated that by the late 1980s there would be demand, there would probably be demand for, one, but only one, new downhill ski resort in southcentral. That's taking local demand who are serving the people we have here. And through all of the ups and downs of the economy, subsequent studies have pretty much borne that out, that the demand for another ski resort about the size of Alyeska, is shortly upon us. Accordingly, in 1982, and my comments here are going to be

directed toward to the issue of the planning process that we're going through. In 1982, the Chugach National Forest did a resource inventory of something like eight or nine sites in this area of the Chugach National Forest, for possible designation as possible ski area sites and they came up with three possible areas, including one close to Girdwood. One at Tin Can Mountain, one further down the road towards Seward. In 1984 and '85 and '86, the State Division of Land and Water Management, which is another division of DNR of which Parks is a part of, conducted a very comprehensive analysis of nine sites in the Hatcher Pass area and turned up one that was a potential ski area site. I believe that these planning processes are proper and appropriate because we're dealing with the stewards of public resources here and the approval of a site without any kind of prior analysis, a public interest analysis, of the viability of that site could not only end up in wasting that site, precluding its use for other areas...

[lengthy period of blank tape]

Doug Dowden: ...have a corridor of opportunity here that we may not have for a while. I don't want us to rush into anything but I do think that we should do deliberation, make a plan fairly quickly. As far as it being a question of where do we stop, anyone who has hiked into that park or who has flown over it knows the tremendous.... We're talking here about a really major development that we may not see again in our lifetime, this type of money proposed. Half a percent or whatever. I don't think there's enough money in Austria or even Alaska to put a significant development in that park but if we were going to develop the entire cotton pickin' park and eliminate places for backpackers to go or people who were looking for wilderness experiences and moose and bear and sheep, then if I saw that coming I would be concerned and want to preserve a place there for the folks in Anchorage who want the wilderness backpacking experience but right now I think that we're a long way away from what we need to make those kinds of decisions. I support the park development and I think that we can all enjoy it.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Doug. Jill Johnson.

Jill Johnson: I do actually have a couple of concerns that I'd like to address. My name is Jill Johnson and I'm an Anchorage resident and I have been for three years. I enjoy very much using the wilderness values of the park and I understand that a resort like this could bring some real economic developments to the area. I would only like to see something like this proceed if some of the other values were also kept in mind and some of our concerns mitigated. Two things that may not have been thought of in the past, I know that people are worried about where the water for snow production is going to come from and that's something I think can be controlled, but where the water for snow production goes to will also be a big problem. Because the South Fork contains a real special salmon run and because the young salmon will be hatching out the same time that the snow will be running off, I think that's a problem that needs to be looked at. In addition, I think we're real lucky back here in the valley to be able to see brown bears on a regular basis. It's amazing to me that something like that exists so close to Anchorage. And a lot of those brown bears use that drainage, the South Fork drainage, on a seasonal basis, particularly to feed on red salmon. If the stream is shared too visibly with the public, then bears will stop using that area and they will lose an important seasonal feeding resource that will

probably make the difference between their being able to continue to use that territory or not. So I'd like to see those couple of things addressed. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Jill's testimony ends our sign-up list. Is there anyone that didn't sign-up on the list and would like to make a statement? Come on up.

Harry Blanas: I'm Harry Blanas and I'm here on my own as a private citizen. I'm not expecting to benefit from the ski resort. ... The reason I am here tonight is because I read the newspaper here. This is the Anchorage Times, yesterday, Tuesday, May 19, 1987. In here it says conservation organization opposes Chugach ski resort. I went ahead and read it. Now the reason I am here is this...said club members will ask the state to make detailed studies of economic benefits, their cost of the resort. The air quality changes, the effects of park...in nearby areas and where quality affects. Then all this you have to make all these studies.... It sounds.... As I said I am a private citizen. I don't speak for nobody, only on my own behalf. I'm not going to benefit...being damaged. ... The Friends of the Earth...here tonight oppose if I...and they had proposed...so these people...this in here tonight and some future time to come with another plan in Hatcher Pass. And that future plan...come back again and say well no it wasn't here in the Hatcher Pass also. Let's have the development. It appears to me they get fanatic in defending the nature so bad. It seems to me they forget human beings are part of this nature or they wouldn't want nature along without anybody in it. The needs of human...and ski as well and a ski resort to be established. I do not know if economically it's feasible for an outsider to come and establish a ski resort here. But, it wasn't so terrible to have a ski resort slope for the people they live in Eagle River...in this area and also one in Hatcher Pass. To have those two the others they live closer by. Why is it so terrible for that? On the other hand, if a commercial use can be accomplished that this gentleman in here...pay attention to that. Any development...increasing in size and dimension. A young lady made a remark what is going to be next year or the year after. ...within 50 miles of you.... Not to see all the slopes...to be ski resorts now. And another thing it can accomplish is whether this development would be...or...developer to finance it or even the state your own people or the city of Anchorage...that you do provide for the benefit of the environment also. The contractors must not be allowed to come in and harvest everything if it is in their way for the sake to make a resort. If they have to...then smooth out the...there is nothing wrong with that. And there is nothing wrong to develop and preserve. To conclude this I think not only...should be allowed for people to.... If we preserve the nature, the surrounding. Thank you, gentlemen.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Harry. Is there anyone else that would like to make any comments.

Jim Brennan: I'm Jim Brennan. I'm here as a curious private citizen. I, like other people in Anchorage, I think my curiosity has been piqued by this proposal. I'm an avid skier, too, and one side of me says I would like to see a lot of tourism development in Alaska, in the Anchorage area, but the other side of me wants to know what kind of proposal is this? This is a very strange idea, this idea, as I understand it, 100% artificial snow ski area. I'm not aware of anything like it anywhere in the world. It gets my antennae up. I'm wondering is this for real or is it some kind of a scam? And I think

that's what some of the other speakers have been wondering about here tonight. It reminds me on one level of something like the Alpetco project four or five years ago, which some of you may have remembered, they were going to come in and build that big petrochemical project and in exchange for that get its royalty oil from the state. Well, they got the royalty oil but we never got the petrochemical project. I don't know if that's what this is, but it's strange, this idea of an artificial snow ski area that's supposed to attract skiers from all over the world. It's unique. So I would suggest that, well first of all I would disagree with the gentleman that said the state should play no role in scrutinizing whether this thing is feasible. I think it's very much the state's business to know if this is a feasible project. If it's not feasible, as the Hatcher Pass gentleman mentioned, it's going to preclude another potentially viable project. It also may preclude the...plan's for expansion at Alyeska, I don't know. I think it's very much in our interest to know whether or not these guys know what they're doing and really have it together and that we find that out as soon as possible before a lot of alternatives are shot by this looming, massive project. The other reason, I wanted to state my opposition to the helicopter landing idea. The only experience I've had with something analagous to that is on the west coast in Hawaii...which some of you may have been to. There's very beautiful hiking country out there which a lot of people enjoy, but they do allow a helicopter concession to do the type of thing that's being proposed here there. It's an absolute anomaly. You're there to enjoy, most people are there to enjoy the wilderness feeling, the beauty of the countryside and there's nothing more anomolous to that then to see a helicopter all of a sudden come out of a dead silence blazing over the ridge and chopping it's way past you, it's ordinarily quite close, and I don't think that's something we need here. I don't think that little increment is going to phase the economy of Anchorage. So I would be opposed to that.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Is there anyone else? Sharon.

Sharon Cissna: My name is Sharon Cissna and I have lived in Alaska for only 20 years and am presently a member of the Chugach State Park System Advisory Board and also was the chairman of the group that proposed and fought for the passage of Chugach State Park in the Alaska State Legislature. I think what I would like to say, many people have said many of the things that I feel, what I'd like to mention is the fact that for the last year the Advisory Board has asked over and over again for information on the Rogner proposal and up until the last few meetings we have had very, very little information presented to us. At the last meeting I asked the representative of the ski proposal when they would be doing the tests that would give us the information of what they would need, where they would be putting the lifts, where they'd be getting water, all of that certain information and that gentleman said that that information would be made available after they did the study this coming year. So the fact of the matter is no matter what I feel or no matter what you feel we don't really know what's being talked about here until we have that information and that information is not available and it will not be made available until after this next spring. I am a private business person, I have a small business, and I've been through this last year like you all have, and it's been a tough year for us. I mean, we've all taken our lift and we all have many friends who are unemployed and we all know what it feels like when somebody comes up to us and says hey I've got this deal, it's great. Here's this great opportunity. I've had this happen to me, I'm sure you have, too.

And then you start looking at it, perhaps this is something that's being proposed and there's no building yet, or there's no funding yet, or there's plenty of questions. Do you jump ahead and change your family's plans and go wholeheartedly into a situation that you know nothing about? I think this is one of those sorts of situations. I think personally, not speaking as anything but a private individual, that these hearings are premature. We don't have the information that's necessary for the public to give any kind of input. I guess I'm a conservative, I can't help it. I don't like to make plans and change public land without having some kind of knowledge and information and facts behind me and that's all I'd like to say and thank you very much.

Dave Stephens: Are there other people that would like to comment?

Dave Young: My name is Dave Young. Like my predecessor and associate Sharon Cissna, I'm also a member of the Chugach State Park Citizen's Advisory Board. I also served as the President of the South Fork Community Council. I mention that only because it might serve as an indication that I've been involved with this project almost from its inception, so I'm fairly knowledgeable of the ins and the outs of it, even some of the stuff that's gone on behind the scenes. But I also want to make it clear that I'm speaking strictly as a private citizen and a resident in South Fork and as a matter of fact as the proposed ski lift are designated on the slopes right now there's probably no one that will be impacted greater than me from a lifestyle standpoint. I'm a third generation Alaskan. I've been around, I've fought battles, I've watched the ups and the downs with the economy and I feel that, as Sharon mentioned earlier, that it's a little premature to be looking at specifics. But it's my understanding working with staff members present and other associates on the board that this first round of hearings is conceptual in nature. What they're really looking for is some bottomline answers from the public addressing the concern of should there be commercial helicopter landings in the park, should there be a concession for a ski development in the park, not just in the South Fork, of course we do need to address that particular concern. I'm rather upset right now to see a good many of my friends from the environmental community whom I've been associated with for 25 years taking a premature stance, just coming out and saying no ski resort development in the park. As Sharon mentioned, I think the staff is doing a good job in trying to draw out some of the facts. I think that in my dealings with the developing of the South Fork as it's proposed, there's a little cultural lag and they do business differently in Austria, they don't release information as we are used to having information released to us. You can look in any trade journal in the United States and know that the retail grocery stores make 1½% profit on a gross. You try and get that information out of the Austrians on the tourism development and they're not willing to provide it, so there's a bit of a cultural gap here. It's very difficult for the staff people to find out ways to deal with them, draw out this information and provide it so that people from the audience like yourself can ask the kinds of intelligent questions that you have a right to expect answers for. What I'm seeing is a little bit of divisiveness. I've heard a lot today of I'm pro development and I'm anti-development. What I feel that we need to be doing as Alaskans that are committed to holding out through the long haul while we're experiencing some economic downturns here of working together towards some constructive, positive change. Change is almost inevitable. I suppose you can take it to court and fight it but it's going to happen and to me it's incumbent on all of us to

make sure that, by god, if it's going to happen, we're going to ram it down their throats to make sure that it's done right. And from my dealings with the Austrian developers and from staff, it seems to me that everybody there seems to be willing to look at things in a positive standpoint and bring about some constructive, positive change that will benefit us in the long-term future. I would encourage everybody in the second round of hearings to focus in a little bit more, hopefully we'll have further information available to us at that time, but to focus in a little more and use our expertise on issues and address the issues and make sure it's mitigated if...come about. The last thing on the helicopter issue I want to go on record as adamantly opposing commercial helicopter landings in the park. Thank you.

Dave Stephens: Thank you. Are there other people that would like to speak tonight? Ma'am.

Sandra Wickes: My name is Sandra Wickes and I hadn't intended to speak but listening to the whole meeting, which I thought was very interesting, I'd like to echo I think Dave Young's comments that it seemed to me a lot of the testimony was off the point on the issue that State Parks presented to the people which was should recreational resort development occur with in Chugach State Park and, if so, under what conditions. I would hope that in the other two hearings on this that there will be more of the "if so, under what conditions", and I would hope that the environmental groups as well as the pro-development groups will make a point because I think Parks' purpose in this was to try to determine if there's going to be a concession contract, what should be built into that concession contract in the way of requirements on the developers so that we can protect the public interest at the same time development is permitted, if it's going to be permitted at all and I don't particularly want to take a stand one way or another but I would hope that we can have intelligent discussion on specific issues rather than just I'm for it or I'm against it, I'm for it, I'm against it, because I don't think this is meant to be a popularity contest but try to be a real job of working out a tough public policy issue. I think a couple of people hit that and the lady that talked about the fish and where's the water going and what will be the impact and some other people mentioned noise and I think some of those things are the things that need to be addressed and there are probably a lot more of them which I didn't come prepared because I was expecting to just listen but I think the people who are really working in this area can raise a lot of the things. Even if you don't want the development, if somebody else makes the determination that it's going to happen, what are the things that you want to make sure is built into that and the protection. Thank you.

Dave Stephens: Thank you.

Toni Smith: My name is Toni Smith and I would like to second what the woman just said that I think that we need to work towards some conditions and understanding how we might use the park and compatible uses, that one group should not be exclusively considered or unequally considered than other groups. I'd also like to remind the Chugach State Park Citizen's Advisory Board that they are the people that requested that these hearings be held for policy direction for how the helicopters might be used or not used in the state park. So therefore it makes it very difficult for me to understand that this is premature. I do think that, in fact, all of us do need to study the facts and I do think that we need to examine our own selves and our own goals

and our own desires of what we see that we want as individuals in the state park. They aren't staying consistent with what you're saying.

Dave Stephens: Thank you. Other people?

 : I just want to make one quick comment. I spoke before but there's one thing I want to say is...park several folks...queried the economic viability of this thing and I just want to comment that I'm just filled with spite for it everytime...comes up. I just dash out to Eagle River Visitor Center and show them...bubble over with pride and wonderment just looking at it. Certainly personally realize how lovely this part of the world is and you want to keep it that way, great, so do I. But as far as commercial viability of having people from around the world come to experience the appeal of Eagle River Valley and the area around it...for canoeing, for all types of things, I don't see how anyone who's been back there and experienced it could have any doubt of the worldwide appeal that area has. It never occurred to me to question it. I know...myself you know just...but as far as you know whether a developer who would want to try to top that...people come from around the world, hey, I've seen, I've known the...I just didn't think to question that.

Dave Stephens: Mr. Wickersham.

Mr. Wickersham: I just want to clarify that as far as my comments were concerned I was discussing the physical and technical viability of this site and the public interest in making a determination as to whether this is a viable ski area site. ... It's a year-round...come from around the world and see this lovely valley. I'm talking about physical viability of that site as a ski resort.

Dave Stephens: I'd like to repeat where we go from here. The State Parks staff, the Advisory Board, and other people, are continuing to look at the particulars of these various issues, do research, look at the journals. We will be drawing up various alternatives to try and meet some of the demands that are being placed on the park. We will write up the results of tonight's meeting. We hope to have those available in about two weeks' time. If you have signed up we will put you on the mailing list and you will get summaries of the meetings as well as updates on upcoming meetings and what the project status is over the summer. We will go out with another public meeting, a series of public meetings, later this summer with actual draft language and at that time you will have much more specific information that you can react to. The purpose of tonight's meeting was to deal in conceptual matters and that's difficult. We all have incomplete information and so we're having to use our imaginations and be creative. But at the second round we'll have much more specific information and we hope that you will turn out. We do have about 30 more minutes before we get kicked out of the building and if you'd like we can be available for questions and answers here tonight. We have the superintendent of the state park, we have me as project manager and Al Meiners who's been with State Parks for a number of years, so if there are any questions that you have of us right now about the process, about what information we have available, about sources of information, we'd be happy to answer your questions.

[The meeting was adjourned after several minutes of informal discuss among Parks staff and the public.]

Eagle River, May 26, 108 people attending, 48 offering testimony

Jim Waddell: My name is Jim Waddell. I am a resident at Eagle River, Alaska. I'd like to speak on two issues. The first is the ski area and its compatibility with the plan. The second is the greenbelt in Eagle River and my thoughts on that. First, about the ski area, it seems to me that we've had a developer who has come to us with, basically asking the state what the rules are for development. Looking at the legislation the proposal looks like it is consistent, more or less, with the plan. It seems like the state has immediately thrown open the whole process again. We've had somebody who has come to us asking us what the rules are and trying to be within the rules as much as possible and suddenly we've opened this morrass for a developer to just dive into and keep expending his funds just trying to chase a moving target. I don't think that's fair and I don't think it's the sort of message that the State of Alaska wants to send to people from the outside who are trying to bring jobs and money into our area. I'm personally in favor of the ski area. I think its consistent with recreational use in the area and I think it would be an economic shot-in-the-arm for the state. My second set of comments are on the greenbelt proposal in Eagle River. The state is proposing to spend a great deal of money and trade very valuable resources to the Eklutna Corporation to regain and recapture this Eagle River drainage into the greenbelt. I think it's extremely important that it be developed in a way so that people within Eagle River and Anchorage can use this resource. I think that we need to sit back and think very carefully before we plow a highway and a bridge right through the middle of this thing. I think that we're looking at grades that are steeper than the current highway bridge on Eagle River, on the Glenn Highway. We're looking at possibly heavy fog lights because that area is very foggy -- I live up and look over that area. We are looking at a lot of wildlife there and apparently nobody's thought about fencing to keep the moose off the highway. Trucks, noise and so forth going right along these proposed outside areas, places where people can walk along and enjoy nature and I would contend that you can't enjoy nature too much with the noise of trucks and traffic and the filth and garbage that occurs along highways. Then when you get up to the bridge you've got the garbage there. You're trying to enjoy the river and you've got a highway bridge and I think if that goes through we might as well just use the area between Hiland Road and the Glenn Highway as a landfill and we'll let it go at that because there won't be any recreational resources to be had in the area. Thank you very much for your time.

Al Meiners: The next person is Terry Foreman.

Terry Foreman: My name is Terry Foreman. I don't represent anyone but myself. I live on Hiland Road and I am in favor of the ski area because I agree with the gentleman before me, I think it is consistent with the recreational use of the area. I think there are enough safeguards, in as much as the process we are in right now with public hearings, to prevent anything horrible from taking place from that development. I think it's time for us now, more because we are forced to, than because we are wanting to, to start thinking about the economic considerations of this. Everybody is saying that tourism is going to be real important and yet I think you are going to find that our facilities that are developed now are going to be at their limits very soon and I think this is going to be a big plus for our tourism draw and I think the impact of it is going to be minimal on the area up there. As far

as I understand from the latest plan that they've proposed to the Park people, that's about it. I'm in favor of it. I think it makes economic sense. I think it makes environmental sense. It's basically, I think, a sound idea given the process that we're going through right now and I think it would be very prudent for us not to drag our feet very much more because I would think that Mr. Rogner might start looking somewhere else if he sees months and years of hearings ahead of him. As far as the Eagle River greenbelt area, I favor that idea and I feel that the amount of development that takes place in the river bottom down there should probably be very minimal. Primitive trails, as few parking lot-type things as possible because those have a tendency to turn into garbage dumps. As far as the helicopter operations, I think they've been said no to twice. I think it might not be a bad idea to try a short trial basis type of a thing and have some of your people look at the impact of it. Maybe give them a permit for one season for a very limited number of landings and see what comes of it from that. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you. William Reedy? No?

William Reedy: My name is William Reedy. I'm a local business man here in Eagle River and I am going to limit my comments to the resort development. The map on the back wall there pretty much speaks for itself. The peripheral area that surrounds Eagle River is considered to be the non-wilderness area which is the area we're talking about for resort development. Economically the business community has been told there is going to be possibly 2,000 jobs created through this resort, which I think during the current economic woes that it is something that we should be really interested in getting. Some of the opposition I've heard from the previous hearing, it would sound like you were trying to put a chemical waste dump or a nuclear reactor on Hiland Mountain or something. The ski area is about the cleanest thing you can do industry-wise. Also what we've been told, the village for the proposed ski area would be a pedestrian-only village. It would not be any vehicles allowed in there. So I think that would also limit the automobile pollution in that area. The only other thing I have to say is that I can't see where some of the Hatcher Pass people in the pass have been complaining about us having our own ski area. They say there have been experts who are coming into Eagle River saying, "No, this is not a good spot for a ski area." They have not been giving us any documentation or any kind of proof as to why Eagle River would not be a good ski area and I would like to hear anyone who is here tonight to talk about that particular subject I'd like to at least get some facts on record or something in writing to prove that our ski area is not feasible. That's all the comments I have. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Thomas Wood.

Thomas Wood: My name is Thomas Wood. I'm a 15-year resident of the valley. I am President of the Eagle River Valley Community Council and as such represent the Eagle River Valley Community Council. We are in favor of this project. We feel that the new clean industry, the tourism, is a necessary part of our economy here and as such we are 100% behind it. The facilities that will come with this and the increased access to our park, and we are 100% for it. We request one thing of the local residents, that we have the public process and input into those facilities, the capital improvements, how the facility will be operated, and all other germane issues in the development of this process. I want to reiterate, I said residents, we request that the

residents be allowed to have this input. We live here and as such the issues, it is not appropriate at this time to go through them all, they range everywhere from water, sewer, local hire, motorized access, etc., etc. Parks should not be set aside and fenced off but used in an appropriate manner. We stand 100% behind this project and there are approximately 10,000 to 12,000 who live within our area and that is the area bounded by Eagle River, Meadow Creek and the park boundary on the north side of the Eagle River Valley. We have discussed this issue three times during the last eight months in our monthly community council meetings and we are behind. The greenbelt, again, we have discussed this issue at length, we are absolutely for it. We would like to go one step further and try to pick up the South Fork Falls in that greenbelt acquisition. That was a swap almost dollar-for-dollar on that land trade so it did not include a bunch of money, someone kind of gave the impression earlier. Again, issues within this area have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. You just can't go in and make blanket statements on these issues. And on the helicopter issue, we'll pass on that. I thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Terry Kocher.

Terry Kocher: My name is Terry Kocher. I have a degree in wildlife management and I am currently studying planning. I have lived in Eagle River Valley for 13 years and have grown to appreciate the beauty, the splendor and the magnificence of it more each year. The thing which continually impresses me is that a valley so beautiful exists so close to Anchorage. One of my biggest concerns is the setting a precedent in the use of park land for developmental purposes. This also applies to helicopter operations. I don't feel it is right to allow a precedent to be set which can be harmful to the future of the parks. Commercial helicopter operations including sightseeing and helicopter skiing are incompatible with, and counterproductive to, the idea of Chugach State Park. Because of their mobility, helicopters will be tempted to get so close to wildlife that they will scare it away. Two main objectives of the master plan would be contravened by helicopter sightseeing. The objectives are: to minimize the impact of human presence, particularly in the wilderness, scenic, and fragile areas; and secondly, to preserve existing wildlife habitat and encourage the opportunities for wildlife viewing throughout the park. The presence of helicopters will almost surely cause wildlife to be forced farther and farther back into the park, away from those who would view it by foot. I do not feel that helicopter operations should have the privilege of denying to others benefits which belong to everyone. Another important aspect is that helicopter traffic would add to the already numerous aircraft traffic in Eagle River Valley. Helicopters, along with other air traffic, would become so numerous that they would be more obnoxious than they already are. It wouldn't be long before they would become as obnoxious as mosquitos. Helicopters are already so numerous that I can already tell what kind they are without looking at them. I feel a greenbelt is an excellent idea to tie Chugach State Park in with the bike trails. This development would allow people to enjoy Eagle River Valley while on their way to or from the Eagle River Visitor Center. Motorized traffic in the greenbelt area and the river bottom should be out of the question. Besides being dangerous to themselves and obnoxious to others, this type of traffic would severely detract from the enjoyment of Chugach State Park. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you very much. Dave Jones.

Dave Jones: My name is Dave Jones. I am a resident of the Hiland area, South Fork. I'm also the South Fork representative for the Eagle River/Chugach Board of Parks and Recreation. I'm not representing the board, I just mentioned that so you'll know where I'm coming from. As far as the resort goes, as an individual I feel that it's in conjunction with all the things that I've heard for multiple use of public lands and I feel that State Parks is also under that same guise as a multiple use facility. Presently, the facility of the state park is very limited as to who can use the facilities and the area in the eastern inner portions of the park and I think that a resort of this type -- well planned, which I believe it would be with a man of Mr. Rogner's calibre and reputation, and I'm sure that the park people themselves will make sure that control isn't lost through the development of the situation. As far as the greenbelt issue goes, I hope that state park people are going to take a lot of interest in municipal plan. There is a lot of time that has been put into that, never mind the money, but a lot of time and concern and interest and a lot of hearings and everything else that's gone into that plan and it will be a real shame if that wasn't taken into consideration in a great way. I'm not going to mention the helicopters. I live in Hiland on the South Fork and I won't mention that one.

Al Meiners: Thanks, Dave. Ron Aksamit.

Ron Aksamit: My name is Ron Aksamit. I'm a resident of the South Fork of Eagle River. I support the proposed lodge and ski development. This development is compatible with the recreation area as pointed out in the guidelines that were handed out to us. Also I'd like to mention that probably most of the ski areas in the world are installed in state parks, national parks, government-owned properties because of the fact that very few of the mountaintops are privately owned. Most of that type of area is owned by governments, not only here but in the lower 48, in Canada, Europe, throughout the world, so therefore most of the ski areas are put in state parks, national forests, national parks, this sort of thing. It's an accepted use throughout the world. Also, I feel that the state parks should be made available to a wider group of people. Right now it's pretty much restricted as to the number of people that can use it. The vast majority of the acreage of state parks, as you can see by looking at the map, is wilderness area. Even the area that is listed as non-wilderness area, the access is quite limited, so the activities are limited to those that are normally carried on in wilderness areas. There have been some concerns expressed about water, sewer, lights, noise, transportation, etc., I feel confident that the Rogner Touristik development will take these into consideration. I've spoken with them about it. They made good presentations. I've discussed the installation of the ski lifts with the company that's furnishing the lifts. They've installed ski lifts in areas, in...national parks in Canada, other areas where the restrictions on disturbing the environment are probably more severe than anything you people put on them. They are very experienced and they've installed lifts around the world. However, since Rogner is probably not going to be the only firm bidding on this, I think all of the considerations that have been expressed beforehand in various other meetings and presentations should be made a part of the requirements in case some other firm decides to develop this, we aren't stuck with something that we don't really want. As far as the helicopter landings in state parks go, I'm opposed to that. My opposition is purely personal. I live in the South Fork of Eagle River. We have military helicopters coming over occasionally. I find the noise very irritating with their

infrequent flights. More frequent flights I would find extremely irritating. Thank you.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Ron. Dick Erickson.

Dick Erickson: My name is Dick Erickson. I'm a resident of Birchwood. I came to this hearing to lend support to downhill ski resort development as proposed in the periphery areas of the park in Eagle River Valley. I think this is an appropriate use and it is in accordance with the 1980 master plan. That's all.

Al Meiners: Thank you. Dave Young.

Dave Young: My name is Dave Young. I am a lifelong Alaskan. I've lived on Hiland Road for 10 years. I'm currently President of the South Fork Community Council and I also serve as a member of the Chugach State Park Citizen's Advisory Board. I'm not representing either of those bodies although I would like to indicate through the course of many, many public hearings it's given me a wide exposure to different viewpoints on the various issues that are being discussed this evening. First of all, I think it's important for everybody to realize that for two-and-a-half years that I've served on the board there has been nothing indicated to me from a wide amount of public testimony, of staff input, a lot of historical background on the state park, that would preclude the types of ski development that we're speaking of in the peripheral areas of the state park. I'm not just speaking of the South Fork development but any area of the park in the periphery of the non-wilderness zones I feel that it is compatible, that we can't sell out the park because we are in dire economic straits at the present time, but that we should be able to take a look at these on an individual basis and if they are compatible, if the environmental and socio-economic hazards that we might perceive can be mitigated, then by all means it's incumbent upon us as stewards of that public land to make the highest and best use of the land for the people. As far as the Rogner proposal itself goes, it seems to me to have a lot of merit in establishing Eagle River/Chugiak as a non-bedroom community, establishing our own identity, providing us with an economic base of our own. I think that's very healthy in the long-term for the community. I think there are some serious concerns that we've all heard about and read about -- sewer, water, all of the other things, I think it's been pretty obvious that they intend, in their proposal, to have to do a lot of snowmaking. I think drainage is going to be very critical; it needs to be addressed. But I think that these types of things have been shown that if you throw enough money and study and enough thought at them and not go helter skelter and just open up the doors to the bulldozers they can be mitigated. I think that that is our charge is just to mitigate and welcome this sort of development with open arms. As far as the Eagle River greenbelt, a lot of us, I see some faces in this room that I've seen at public hearings over the last eight or nine years, the greenbelt is a dream come true. We saw it come a couple of weeks ago and the problem being there is no money to develop that greenbelt. I think that the wisest course of action for us right now would be to perhaps, on an interim basis, adopt the Municipality's Eagle River greenbelt plan and then perhaps create a task force consisting of a committee of the Chugach State Park Advisory Board, State Park personnel, representatives from both the Anchorage and the Eagle River/Chugiak Park and Rec boards and perhaps some of the local business community to flesh out that master plan. My time is up, I'll just say one more thing, helicopter

the last couple of years, commercial tourism has now taken the number one spot in terms of their leading economic industry. For at least 10 or 15 years in the state of Utah commercial tourism has been the number one industry. When I came to Alaska 12 years ago to plan outdoor recreation experiences in new parks in Alaska I came here with the understanding that someday Alaska would be in the same position whereby their tourism industry would outrank their natural resource industries just as it did in my home states of Colorado and Utah many years ago. I believe in a proposal like this. I support it and I really hope that something like this will take place.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Don. Yes.

Becky Hansen: My name is Becky Hansen and my husband has these pictures. I live in Riverview Estates which is the nearest subdivision to where the resort project itself will be. We've been really excited about this from the very beginning. I think about things, like my child is going to be able to go skiing, you know, and things like that. It's probably on the lighter side, you know, maybe on the dumb side, too. But I also have asthma and when I think about going up to the top of a mountain it stops and that's about as far as it gets. I think about riding a chairlift to the top of the mountain that I live on would be really something pretty special. It's probably on the stupid side or something but I'm excited about it.

Al Meiners: Thank you, Becky. Anybody else?

Scott Martinez: Wouldn't it be better just to use it and just leave it as it is. I mean look at in the lower 48. Look at it, it's all being chopped away slowly and slowly, you know. It's just disappearing, you know. What you've got up here, you know, I come from the East, I've only been up here for a year but hey what do I know, you know. But all I know is back in that valley there's something that's really special. More powerful than a ski resort and that's just what it is, just wilderness, just to be left alone, you know, it's just like why do people want to cut constantly, just tear it apart, just, I mean what are we going to be like in the next 100 years just a world of plastic and cement. I mean, let's just put it and just leave. It's already been considered as a park, it has wilderness areas, it has just park values. Why can't he just leave it as what it is. I mean, you know, I really don't know as of state and economic, I'm only 20 years old, I'm just getting out in this world, but I love that valley, man. I go back there and I enjoy just what it is and just as a peace of mind, that's what it gives me, you know. I've done skiing before, I've skied in the east coast where they have the worst ski resorts there could possibly be, you know, just hills, no mountains, just rolling hills, you know, and you know, like that guy just said, Colorado, Utah there you got this big resorts that people could go to do it, you know. You got Alyeska. What if the snow you'd have to get machines to go in this new resort, I mean new ski thing. Say they don't work and people don't want to go there because the conditions ain't good and they still just go to Alyeska, you know. Then you would have the thing already built up there on the hill, you know, and it just, you know. I don't know. I just think it should be left alone, is what my opinion is.

[The meeting was adjourned after several minutes of informal discussion among Parks staff and the public.]

Girdwood, May 27, 12 people attending, 9 offering testimony

Al Meiners: We didn't ask you on the list here who wanted to speak but I'll just run down and if you don't want to say anything just let us know. Bryan Sells.

Bryan Sells: I'll pass.

Al Meiners: Okay. Paul Todd.

Paul Todd: Am I the only other person who signed?

Al Meiners: No.

Paul Todd: I'll just tell you who I am. I live in Anchorage. ...helicopter sightseeing. As long as they are not excessively in conflict, don't become a public nuisance or degrade the wildlife environment, are important. The reduction in oil prices, the use, the appropriate use, careful use of public lands in a non-degrading way, provide more things for visitors to see and do, and bring in more visitors. No great economic need in the community. I think I'll just leave it at that, generally talking about helicopters sightseeing and.... Let somebody else talk.

Al Meiners: Thanks, Paul. Bob Miller or JoAnne.

Bob Miller: I am Bob Miller. I'm a landowner adjoining the park in the Potter Creek area of Anchorage. My feeling is that it's customary now in the cities and in public buildings, in fact it's provided by law, that you flatten out the curbs so even handicapped people can cross the street and provide an absolutely...so that handicapped people can have access to public buildings and most of the areas in the city. I think it should be our attitude that everybody that possibly can gets an opportunity to use the parks to the extent that they can. If they are healthy and hardy and can backpack 50 miles in, well that's great. If they're not quite so hardy, then I would support the helicopter access. The management of the parks, of course, is entirely up to the Park people. They're the experts. But I think that that should be their attitude, is to allow as many uses as they can see fit to allow and as much access as they can provide so as many people as possibly can get an opportunity to use these things 'cause that's what you call them, you call them public parks. I have a superficial understanding of the resort development and I think that's a real.... It is a typical that should be encouraged for the perimeter of the park. It is done virtually in all the western states that the Rocky Mountains pass through which is a typical way to make use of the parks. You just have to look for a developer. I've heard a little bit about Rogner. I understand that has some professional credentials so I think this type of thing should be encouraged. We certainly need the economic boost and it would be an asset to the community and an economic asset to the community. I actually feel strong enough about this that I think a day will probably come when you will probably come to me and want access to my place near your park and I would support that. So I've just...supports. See fit....

Al Meiners: Thank you, Bob. JoAnne?

JoAnne Miller: Well my husband said just about everything except I would say with the exception of just a couple of little items. I believe this resort development gives us a wonderful opportunity for additional tourism for our state and I have every confidence in our parks people to follow this master plan to where it will not be non-compatible with this large an area. We're talking about 97 acres this humongously big area of wilderness and I think it would be wonderful for us to be able to share this park and get people in it. I think access is definitely needed. Thirty years ago when I came to Alaska I could hike all over these mountains up and down and all day long and then some. But I can't do that anymore. I go out...I can't ever ski that well anymore. So these accesses into these parks are very important to me. I would also support a helicopter landing in the area in which you are talking about. If you are talking about one landing site. I disagree that we want several landing sites in there. If we are talking about one that would overlook Anchorage and Eagle River where the older people can get out of the helicopter and look around and take their pictures in one designated spot and we're not chopping, making noise completely throughout the valley, then I would support that. We've landed helicopters on our property for years and years and it doesn't disturb the wildlife. You can land up there two or three times a day and then turn around the next day and the animals are back. So we're talking about one designated area so if the animals don't like that area can still have enough wilderness to go to that they will not be disturbed by the choppers. The other thing is with the Eagle River Greenbelt area, I think this is a very visionary thing that the Municipality has done. I think in time this is a very visionary thing. That's wonderful to preserve that area for us and our children and our grandchildren this close to Anchorage and again I would like to support the Municipality's master plan for that with the present access that they are talking about now. I'd like to even see them perhaps expand that just a little bit in this master plan to address the different user groups. I think that there is a way to make different user groups compatible but you don't want the hiking trails used for horse trails or snowmachines. But I think it's a large enough area that certainly over a period of time maybe you don't have the money to do it all at one time but you should be able to share. Most hikers that come in or horseriders are going to be in the summer, the snowmachiners are going to be winter. Here again let's don't open up our entire wilderness area to the noise, but let's have some consideration. I don't think that parks are for any one group. I think we should try to reach a compromise so that all groups are accommodated to use public lands. Basically that's it.

Al Meiners: Thank you, JoAnne. Jose Vicente?

Jose Vicente: I also want to show my support for the resort development. I share the comments that were made before me. I believe that the resort is perfectly compatible with the area so long as it...the environment into consideration. Simply that I feel comfortable that supporting.... I am sure the resort is very much needed for the residents not only in Anchorage but also the entire state. I feel that the state has to open itself to economic diversity. We've too much to depend on the oil industry and tourism can be really one activity that can be really beneficial to the state. Apparently there is a developer that is willing to commit several million dollars in the infrastructure and construction resort typically in other states and other nations that infrastructure is financed and constructed by the government very willingly and I am really surprised that a developer is willing to spend

millions of dollars of his native country. As far as the Eagle River Greenbelt I know a little bit about the greenbelt and about the trails. I encourage you not to not to adopt, for the state not to adopt, the trail plan as it is. I feel that revisions should be made before the state were to adopt it. I believe the study when it was completed did not take into consideration events that are occurring now, specifically the resort. Also subdivision has received ordinary approval for Eklutna. Several things are occurring there that should be...the trail should be revised taken as it's consideration. I also do not particularly agree with the Municipality's decision on the location of those trails, mainly the areas that have development. I think location of the trails should be revised. It is also the Municipality's philosophy that all the trails should be paved. Why be paved? I do not share that view with the Municipality. Some trails should be gravel and others just ...for the parks as they are. Should not necessarily go there and chop trees and pave it. So I would say look at it carefully, revise it and have public hearings for someone who didn't talk. As far as the commercial helicopter operations I have no objections to landings in a state park. I think that you should not have them all over but I think you could have a few spots where they could occur. Particularly on the one that was mentioned that has the view of the Eagle River and Anchorage. We caution that they may be, I don't know, there may be a conflict between that particular site and the ski slopes for the resort. I would ask that that be reviewed carefully and probably common use for it. That's it.

Al Meiners: Thank you. George Brown.

George Brown: I'm not a resident of Anchorage and I don't wish to sound like Merie Candy or Sandy Crawford but I have to agree with what's been said thus far tonight. I feel that the master plan for the park provides for the particular activity that is being requested. I think that a resort is an appropriate use and in addition to that I concur with what's been said about the economy. We all recognize that it's not what it was and certainly in the valley when developing the tourism and certainly the fact that there will be a number of people employed during the construction phase is pertinent and I think there was in the first meeting a statistic of something like 2,000 permanent employees would result once the resort was operational. That struck a real note with me. Not to digress, but a short time ago we had a position open for a warehouse. I put the ad in the paper. It was almost a mistake. In two days' time I had about 80 people calling and they were in various trades, people that, it really hurt to talk to them because they were trying to feed their families and I see a value in that. I'd like to see Dr. Rogner's resort. And I too think the state will do a good job of regulating the development. And of course I believe that would be an absolute necessity. I really don't have much to say about the greenbelt.... I feel that the development of that would be a good thing as well. Helicopter landings I feel that as long that was regulated and maintained on the periphery of the park that there's particularly no harm in that. I would not want to see that activity carried into the wilderness part of the park. You'd have someone that has hiked in there and their 30 miles in and they feel that they're one with nature and all of a sudden here comes the chopper. I wouldn't want to see that happen but I can certainly see an advantage of providing the service that would be there for the tourists and for those of us that live there that may not be ambitious enough to climb the mountain but