

Environmental Innovation & Leadership

At Denali National Park & Preserve



A Newsletter for Denali Staff & Community

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What is Environmental Leadership in the National Park Service?

In the past few years, the National Park Service has made a strong commitment to become a leader in environmentally friendly management of park facilities and operations. This commitment is particularly important for NPS because of its role as steward of many of the nation's and world's most precious natural resources. The agency should be – and increasingly is – leading the charge to find new ways for people to live lightly on the Earth using the best practices and best technology available, and most importantly, making everyday decisions in a conscientious and thoughtful way that preserves limited resources and natural landscapes for future generations.

The NPS program is guided by several Executive Orders and the forthcoming Strategic Plan for Greening the National Park Service and Directors Order #13 on Environmental Leadership.

Principles

Environmental leadership is about conserving resources. This program seeks to:

- **Reduce energy use, particularly non-renewable energy use, both in transportation and facilities**
- **Reduce materials use and waste through reuse, recycling, and conscientious purchasing.**
- **Reduce pollution and the amount of hazardous substances used or discarded.**
- **Minimize disturbance of the natural landscape for buildings, parking, or construction activity.**
- **Educate the public and park staff**

Denali: Already an Environmental Leader

Motivated staff at Denali have already done a lot to make our operations more environmentally friendly. A sample:

Reducing toxics: The auto shop has switched to water-based solvents for cleaning parts, while B&U has adopted environmentally friendly cleaning products.

Cutting energy use: Thermocords have been installed in many park vehicles to reduce winter energy use for block heaters.

Alternative energy: The new Riley Creek Campground comfort station will be PV-powered. The park has completed feasibility and economic assessments for converting buses to alternative fuels.

Buying green: All photocopy paper purchased for the park has 30% post-consumer recycled content.

Recycling: The park generally recycles paper, cardboard, and aluminum; the Auto Shop recycles tires, car batteries, and antifreeze and burns waste oil for heat.

Alternative Transportation Denali

Centers for Environmental Innovation

One of Denali's newest initiatives in environmental leadership is its nomination as one of 20 NPS Centers for Environmental Innovation nationwide. Each Center is

intended to become a national model for research, development, and demonstration of the best environmental practices. The Centers will increase knowledge within the National Park Service and spread the word to all those who visit and care about parks.

Wonder Lake Ranger Station – A Leadership Success Story!

Over the last several years the park has been rehabilitating the Wonder Lake Ranger Station.

The ranger station rehab is a great example of the kind of projects that Denali will undertake as a Center for Environmental Innovation.

This project has involved the installation of a new frost-resistant foundation, insulating the building envelope, rewiring the building to meet current codes and the installation of new roofing materials. Some of the environmental benefits include:

Preservation of a historic structure – The ranger station was built in 1939 by the CCC. Rehabilitating the ranger station rather than building a new building allowed for the **reuse** of over 95% of the building materials already on site.

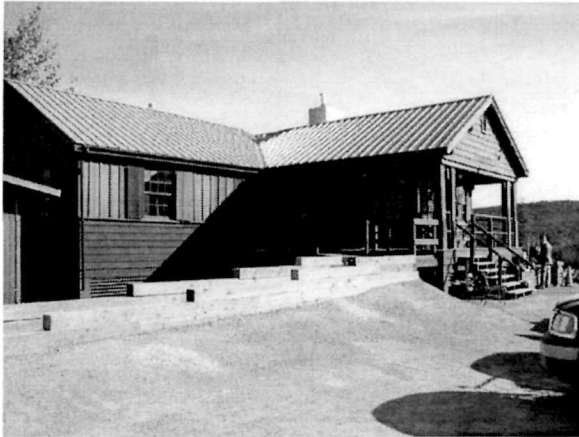
Reduction of fossil fuel use – Insulating the building envelope will reduce the amount of energy required to keep the building heated. Light fixtures were converted to compact fluorescents and old refrigerators in the ranger station and residences were replaced with Energy Star rated refrigerators, significantly reducing the electric demand. The water system was converted to photovoltaic power, reducing the electric demand on the generator. The new shower house facility was constructed with state of the art skylights, fixtures and appliances, reducing the overall demand for water and electricity.

Reduction of noise pollution – A hybrid power generation system which includes a battery bank and photovoltaic panels will allow the park to reduce generator run time

from 24 hours to approximately 6 hours per day.

Reduction of air and soil pollution – The fuel and heat infrastructure for the ranger station complex and generator was converted from fuel oil to propane. Eliminating the threat of soil and ground water contamination from fuel spills and reducing the overall exhaust emissions in the area.

“Environmental leadership is everyone’s job.”



Wonder Lake Ranger Station after the rehab

Environmental Leadership & You

At the time NPS embraced its role as an environmental leader among federal agencies and in the United States generally, then-Director Robert Stanton recognized that all NPS employees would have to become involved in the program for it to succeed. As he noted in a July 13, 1999, memo,

“...environmental leadership is everyone’s job. Whether you are recycling, buying environmentally friendly ‘green’ products, properly disposing of used oil, or teaching about the environment, we all have a part to play in assuring that the NPS is compliant with environmental laws and regulations, and exceeds compliance by becoming a positive example for others in the areas of pollution prevention and sustainability.”

At Denali, we want all the members of the staff to become environmental leaders, both by taking initiative to suggest positive change, and by incorporating care for the environment into our day-to-day work at the park.

Planning for Innovation and Leadership

Over the next three months, the park's Environmental Innovation and Leadership Committee will be planning Denali's future forays into environmental leadership. We hope at the end of the 3 months to have a 3-Year Action Plan. The Plan will cover some or all of the components listed in the green box below.

An important part of the plan will be to develop methods for measuring progress. How many gallons of fuel did we avoid burning? How much waste was diverted from the landfill? How many trees did we save by buying recycled paper? We can watch those numbers over time and be able to see how much we've accomplished.

Components Of The Environmental Innovation & Leadership Plan

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Environmental Leadership Training
Environmental Auditing

PROCUREMENT, CONTRACTS AND LEASING ADMINISTRATION

Procurement
Contracting
Leasing

PLANNING

Park Planning
Community Outreach, Assistance
and
Planning

INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Facility Planning, Design &
Construction
Construction and Removal of
Structures
Facility Maintenance
Energy Management
Landscape(s) Management
Water Conservation and Wastewater
Management
Solid and Hazardous Waste

REWARD!

for Good Ideas

The EI&L Committee would very much like to have your input about how the park can best demonstrate environmental leadership. We are even offering rewards for your thoughts. Submit specific suggestions about how the park can demonstrate environmental leadership by November 1, 2001, and the EI&L Committee will select three to receive awards. Awards will be based upon the following criteria:

- 1) Magnitude of environmental benefit to the park
- 2) Realistic ability of the park to implement the suggestion.
- 3) Degree to which suggestion advances the environmental leadership program as outlined in this newsletter.
- 4) Cost efficiency to the park.*

All ideas must relate to park operations, park facilities, or visitor services in the park. Please include as much detail as possible about benefits and implementation (no more than 2 pages).

Submit suggestions to Charlie Loeb by e-mail or in person at the Barn.

** As it turns out, many environmentally-friendly practices actually reduce costs even in the short-term.*



Fall Eco-Tip

Turning your computer off after work can save 2/3 of the electricity it would otherwise use, and setting it to "sleep" rather than using a screensaver when inactive during the day can save another 2/3.

Put your computer to sleep! Don't know how? Call Charlie at ext. 351 and ask.

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paper.*

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