

BEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

GATES OF THE ARCTIC NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

JUNE 1989

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INTRODUCTION

Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve was established in 1980. The major purposes of the park are:

"To maintain the wild and undeveloped character of the area, including opportunities for visitors to experience solitude, and the natural environmental integrity and scenic beauty of the mountains, forelands, rivers, lakes, and other natural features; to provide continued opportunities, including reasonable access, for mountain climbing, mountaineering, and other wilderness recreational activities; and to protect habitat for and the populations of, fish and wildlife, including, but not limited to, caribou, grizzly bears, Dall sheep, moose, wolves and raptorial birds."

The area encompasses the central Brooks Range in northern Alaska extending from boreal forests on the south to tundra in the north. Both black and brown (grizzly) bears inhabit the area with ranges overlapping in approximately the southern half of the park/preserve. Black bears are more common in the forested regions, while brown bears are more common in the treeless tundra areas. Wilderness recreation use includes backpacking, river running, climbing, wildlife observation, fishing, and photography. Subsistence hunting and trapping are allowed in the park and preserve, and trapping and sport hunting are allowed in the preserves. Visitor use is currently light but a few travel corridors and access points are showing signs of increasing human impacts.

Active management is required to assure the protection of bears as well as the safety of visitors. Park visitors must recognize the inherent dangers of a remote wilderness; bears are the permanent residents of the park and visitors are short term users. Visitors may be temporarily excluded from areas to provide for bear or human protection. This plan provides guidance for managing human actions through education and regulation, and emphasizes prevention of bear incidents. It also provides for responsive management when incidents occur.

GOAL

The goal of the bear management program is:

To maintain the natural abundance, behavior, diversity, and ecological integrity of bears as part of the ecosystem, and to maintain the wild and undeveloped character of the park/preserve.

OBJECTIVES

1. To avoid adverse human/bear encounters.

2. To avoid displacing bears to provide for public use and convenience.

3. To prevent the habituation or conditioning of bears to human foods or to people.

PREVENTIVE MANAGEMENT

The major thrust of the bear management program will be prevention rather than reaction. By controlling those factors which cause persistent or unnatural bear problems, most adverse bear/human interactions can be avoided, and fewer closures to the public and/or destruction of bears will occur. The types of adverse bear/human interactions which will remain are those that are largely out of our control, and which are a part of the inherent risks that people take when they choose to travel in the backcountry of Alaska. For example, an unprovoked attack by a female defending her cubs is unpredictable and, in some cases, unavoidable. However, the conditioning of bears to foods is not acceptable and will be prevented by every means possible. Although management actions are outlined for dealing with problems that may develop, if the cause of the problem is not addressed and resolved, then management actions will only be reactionary and will result in more dead bears and more public closures than are necessary or acceptable.

1. Public Information

Visitors will be provided with adequate information on the natural history of bears, and on proper behavior and camping techniques in bear country. The goal of providing information is to help the visitor understand the causes of bear/human conflicts, and how their actions in the backcountry can help prevent the conditioning and possible destruction of bears. Several methods should be employed to convey this information to the visitor.

Brochures--The NPS Alaska bear brochure will be made available to all visitors, and mailed out with all visitor inquiries. Brochures will be made available to the commercial use licensees, and they will be required to make this information available to their clients.

Personal contact--If a visitor is contacted in person, either in the field or in the offices, each briefing will include a discussion of bears and safety. The following topics will be addressed:

1. Avoidance of bear encounters.
2. The importance of proper food storage and disposal. (the relationship between conditioning a bear to human foods and the

potential destruction of that bear should be emphasized.)

3. Introduce the idea of portable food containers.
4. Identify any known current problem areas and any current closures or regulations.
5. Information on minimum impact camping techniques as they relate to preventing bear encounters.

Bulletin boards--Where display space is available (Coldfoot and Bettles), information on bears will be posted on NPS bulletin boards. When commercial operators are willing, information can also be posted in their establishments.

In addition to informing visitors about the bear management plan, commercial operators and private landowners need to understand our management objectives and the role that the landowners can play in assisting us. Commercial use licensees will be required to distribute appropriate bear safety information, and information on low impact camping and proper food storage to all clients visiting the park. Our goal of preventing the habituation of bears will be stressed in communications with the licensees. Educational efforts with private landowners will be undertaken which stress proper garbage and food storage to protect their personal property and the bear population.

Any special use permit issued will contain a stipulation requiring bear resistant containers for storage of food at any fixed base camp. All permittees will be provided information on bears and will be required to report any bear incidents as soon as possible.

Subsistence users and residents of the resident zone communities utilizing the park for subsistence should also be informed and educated about the park's bear management philosophy. The Operations Division will develop a program to communicate these issues to subsistence users.

The Operations Division is responsible for identifying additional methods, if necessary, of providing information to the public, and for implementing the information dissemination to the visitors, the CUL's, subsistence users and private landowners. Resource management is responsible for special use permittees, and permit stipulations.

2. Personnel training

Each employee is responsible for becoming informed about bears in the park, about the objectives of this plan, and about proper behavior in bear country and specifically in the Brooks Range. Training will be provided during seasonal training and will cover bear biology, bear behavior, avoidance and proper camping techniques. It will also cover possible management actions from this plan. Video tapes are available in Bettles which can be

used for supplemental training, or for volunteers or others who may not be able to attend the regular scheduled training. Supervisors will ensure that each employee has the necessary training.

Any employee who carries a weapon for bear protection will have bear training and firearms training. Firearms training will follow NPS-44, and will be conducted by the Chief Ranger or another firearms instructor. Completion of the Alaska Region bear shotgun course will also be included. Demonstration of all types of authorized ammunition, flares and bear repellent will be conducted.

3. Food Storage

Proper food storage techniques, and the control of human foods will be considered a primary means of preventing bear problems. The park owns two types of bear resistant food storage containers. One type is a metal 35/55 gallon drum with a locking lid which can be used in fixed base camps. The other is a small portable canister which is appropriate for use on patrols and river trips.

NPS camps, NPS authorized or associated research camps, and camps allowed under special use permits that are in one place and cannot be readily moved will use the 35/55 gallon drums for food storage. All backcountry patrols and river patrols will use the portable canisters. All food caches will be made in one of the two types of containers. This includes caches made by CUL's or permittees.

Commercial use licensees will be contacted about the possibility of providing bear resistant containers (drums or canisters) for visitor use/rental.

4. Research

Future bear research will investigate population distribution and densities, identify important seasonal areas for bear habitat, and development of additional methods of preventing bears from becoming habituated to man and to human foods. Any marking or radio collaring of bears will occur only within the scope of approved research and in accordance with the Resource Management Plan.

PERSONNEL POLICIES

1. Use of Firearms

A. Commissioned personnel

Unless authorized otherwise, commissioned personnel will have appropriate weapons available to them for visitor protection and

their own personal safety. This will be a .357 magnum handgun at a minimum. A larger caliber handgun is authorized by NPS-9 for commissioned employees, but neither a .357 or .44 magnum is considered to be adequate bear protection in Gates of the Arctic. A 12 gauge shotgun is the minimum authorized weapon for bear protection. Authorization not to carry a handgun on a specific patrol will be obtained in writing from the employee's immediate supervisor. This may be justified for those patrols where law enforcement is not part of the patrol or activity or where the potential for a law enforcement situation is low.

B. Non-commissioned personnel

Non-commissioned personnel will be authorized to carry a 12 gauge shotgun for bear protection only if they obtain the training and qualifications required in NPS-44. Employees will have the option of carrying a shotgun or not carrying a shotgun unless specifically instructed by their supervisor that under certain conditions or in a certain location a shotgun must be carried.

C. Ammunition

Authorized ammunition types are 12 gauge slugs and crackershells. Uses of these types of ammunition are discussed in Management Actions. A shotgun will be loaded only with live slugs. If crackershells are to be used, they will be loaded into the weapon only at the time they are to be used. No skeet shot, birdshot or buck shot will be issued or used for bear management.

D. Weapons

Only Service issued or Service approved weapons will be carried while in a duty capacity. The minimum weapon issued, used or recommended for bear protection will be a 12 gauge shotgun.

Any firearms discharge will be reported as soon as possible to the Chief Ranger and a case incident report (10-343) will be filled out.

2. Use of bear repellents

The use of the "Counter Assault" bear repellent spray by park employees is authorized, although until further field testing of the product is completed, it cannot be fully recommended or endorsed as a substitute for a firearm for bear protection. Demonstration of repellent will be conducted during training. Any employee who carries the spray will have field tested the product before carrying it in the field.

When discussing this product with the public, employees will be careful not to endorse the product as a proven option, but should supply the facts that there have been cases where it appears to work. Employees should feel free to discuss the pros and cons of visitors carrying firearms and/or bear spray. For example, some visitors are uncomfortable and unfamiliar with firearms, and for

their personal safety, the bear spray may make sense. It should be emphasized that neither a firearm nor the spray are a substitute for proper behavior and avoidance of bear situations.

Any discharge of bear repellent will be reported on the BIR and a case incident report (10-343).

3. NPS Camps

A. Backcountry or River patrols

Camps will be located to minimize problems with bears and food storage will be as secure as possible. Bear resistant food containers will be carried on all patrols. Bear problems will be dealt with by moving camp. Use of crackershells will be authorized for use in discouraging bears from camp areas. Any bear problems will be reported as soon as possible to the employee's supervisor and to the Chief Ranger.

B. Fixed base camps

When it is not practical or possible to have mobile camps (i.e. Coldfoot), food will be stored in bear resistant steel drums or portable food containers. No food, dirty dishes or other items will be left unsecured and unattended in camp. If a bear becomes a persistent problem, a 24 hour watch will be posted and all food storage double checked. The camp will not be left unattended. Attempts should be made to identify the problem bear by scars or other unique characteristics and photos should be taken if possible. Deterrence methods including making noise or using flares or crackershells should be used. Consideration will be given to moving the camp. If the camp cannot be moved, and the bear cannot be frightened away, a decision regarding aversive conditioning will be made by the Chief Ranger and the Resource Management Specialist.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The actions of any individual bear will determine the appropriate management action to be taken. A bear that is aggressive towards people as a result of a surprise encounter or natural reaction such as defending cubs, a food cache, etc. will result in a management action that moves or controls the actions of people. A bear that is acting in an aggressive manner to obtain food, or knowingly approaching people as prey, will result in the destruction of the bear. Relocation of bears in GAAR will not be considered as a management option. Relocation has not proven to be effective since bears have returned to a site after relocations in excess of 100 miles.

1. Interviews and investigation

It is critical to understand the details of bear incidents to determine which, if any, management action is warranted. Interviews with the visitors involved in a bear incident should

follow the bear incident report (BIR) form and information recorded carefully. This information should be made available prior to a decision about field action. The main objective of the interview should be to determine the circumstances and the cause of the incident.

2. Monitoring/action teams

A team of two staff will be dispatched on any bear investigation or management action. The Chief Ranger, Resource Management Specialist and/or the District Ranger will make the decision as to the composition of field teams at the time of the incident. Both persons must have bear training and be firearms qualified, and at least one member of the team must be a permanent employee.

3. Warnings and Closures

Several levels of action are authorized. The least severe action should be taken that will resolve the situation, protect the public and protect the bears.

A. Warnings

Warnings will be approved prior to issuance by the Chief Ranger in consultation with the Resource Management Specialist. If a warning is issued, it will be printed on a single 8 1/2" x 11" sheet and will include a map of the area included in the warning area. The warning will be posted in all GAAR offices, distributed to all commercial licensees, and posted in appropriate public places in Coldfoot, Bettles and Anaktuvuk Pass. The warning will clearly state the circumstances of the bear behavior, the action required of the visitor, and the date and duration of the warning.

B. Closures

The purpose of a closure is to exclude the public from a hazardous situation or to prevent further interaction with a bear that is becoming conditioned to people and/or human food. A closure will provide for public safety and may provide an opportunity for the bear to move into a more remote area and may prevent the destruction of a bear. It will also give management an opportunity to take further action, such as aversive conditioning, if the situation warrants. An emergency closure is authorized under 36 CFR 13.30 which requires notification to the public, and is limited in duration to 30 days. A temporary closure can also be implemented for one year. A closure can be a total closure, a closure just to camping and eating but allowing passage through the area, or a combination to meet the situation. Signs should be posted in the closed area if possible. The Chief Ranger is responsible for creating or removing closures and for their documentation; this should be done after consultation with the Resource Management Specialist whenever possible. The boundaries of a closure should be constructed to include common access points to the area if necessary.

4. Destruction of a bear

No bear will be destroyed solely for exhibiting natural behavior (see definitions) such as defense of young or pursuing natural food sources even if a person is injured or killed as a result. Bears will be considered for destruction if the bear has: a) inflicted personal injuries, b) been known to have harassed campers in the backcountry and to have been responsible for injuries or frequent damage to personal property.

Except in situations endangering human life, a bear will be destroyed only with the prior authorization of the Superintendent. Except in emergencies, bears should not be destroyed in sight of visitors. Whenever possible, the State Fish and Wildlife Protection Division should be notified prior to the destruction of a bear. The State of Alaska regulations will be followed including completion of the defense of life and property (DLP) form, and salvage of the hide and skull of the bear.

When a bear is destroyed, the carcass should be disposed of in an area where it will not be encountered by visitors and can be scavenged by wolves, bears and/or ravens; preferably a helicopter can transport the carcass to a remote area that is difficult to access on foot. Biological information will be gathered including sex and condition of the bear, and one tooth will be extracted for ageing in cooperation with the state.

5. Reports

A Bear Incident Report (BIR) will be filled out for all bear/human encounters except for a simple bear observation, and for all bear management actions. These forms are designed to be used by staff and by visitors; visitors may need some help in completing them, especially if we need details as to the cause of the incident. However, the forms should be passed out to visitors with whom we may not come in contact after their trip so that the form can be mailed to us if necessary. The original of the BIR should be forwarded to the Resource Management Specialist for filing in the Fairbanks office and a copy should be placed in the Bettles files. If there are more forms associated with an incident, all forms should be kept together and given to the employee's supervisor who will ensure that the Chief Ranger and the Resource Management Specialist receive copies of the reports.

A case incident report (10-343) will be completed for any weapon discharge or use of chemical repellant.

The State of Alaska form for a bear taken in defense of life and property (DLP) will be completed if a bear is destroyed. This form will be given to the Chief Ranger for transmittal to the State.

FIELD GUIDELINES

For the purposes of determining appropriate management action for a given situation, general guidance is given by expected category of situations below. It is understood that not all situations will fit neatly into a category, and that employee judgement and assessment of the situation will factor into any determination of action. Except in life threatening emergency situations, however, employees should limit themselves to actions outlined in this plan unless they can get prior approval from the Chief Ranger or the Superintendent. It is also important that each incident more serious than "B" below should be reported as soon as possible to the supervisor and the Resource Management Specialist. A bear incident report (BIR) example can be found in the Appendix.

A. Bear observation

An observation with no human interactions requires no action unless the situation is unusual. For example, if the bear observation is the first den emergence in the spring, or if a sow is seen with three cubs (the normal number being one or two), then a bear incident report should be completed. A bear on a carcass near a popular travel route should also be reported.

B. Single aggressive bear encounter--no food obtained, no injury

A charge usually results from a close-range encounter by a bear that perceives people as a threat. A surprise encounter where you come upon a bear in heavy brush or get between a sow and cubs are examples of this type of encounter. It is likely that a bear will leave the area immediately after such an incident. These types of encounters are considered natural and/or provoked and therefore no management action should be taken against the bear. People should leave the area. If the affected person(s) are staff, a BIR should be completed as soon as possible, and the Chief Ranger notified. If the affected person(s) are visitors, an interview with the affected person(s) should be documented on a BIR if possible.

C. Bear near temporary camp area--no food obtained or equipment damaged

The camp will be moved if the bear can not be frightened away immediately using noise or flares. Visitors will be instructed to do the same. A BIR will be filed.

D. Bear near permanent camp or cabin--no food obtained

All food storage should be double checked for security. Unless all food is in secure storage, a 24 hour watch should be posted at the camp to deter the bear from coming closer or obtaining any food. Attempts should be made to scare the bear off with noise, throwing rocks, and firing crackershells. If the camp is a tent camp, it should not be left unattended at any time. If the cabin can be completely secured and there is absolutely no food left

outside except in bear resistant containers, a cabin may be left for short periods, but this is not recommended. If the camp cannot be moved, and the bear cannot be frightened away, a decision regarding aversive conditioning will be made by the Chief Ranger and the Resource Management Specialist.

E. Bear obtains human food

Visitors should be instructed to move camp and report such an incident if it occurs. If possible, they should be interviewed to get the circumstances of the incident; a BIR should be filled out in any case. Photos or a description of the bear should be obtained. If several reports of bears obtaining food are received from one area, a warning will be issued to the public. A decision may be made to send in rangers to attempt to identify the bear. If a bear can be positively identified as the bear which has been a persistent problem, the bear will be destroyed. If no specific bear can be identified and the problem persists in that area, the area will be closed to the public under a temporary closure for a minimum of 4 weeks, and possibly for the rest of the season.

F. Bear exhibits (unnatural) aggressive behavior towards humans

All persons except those involved in control action should leave the area. The area will be closed to all public use. Rangers will remain or be sent in to attempt a positive identification of the bear. The bear will be destroyed if it can be identified. If the bear can not be located, the closure will remain in effect for the remainder of the season or until it can be determined that the bear is no longer a threat. The appropriate reports will be filed.

G. Serious bear injury by humans (injured bear)

All persons except those involved in the control action should leave the area. Attempts will be made to locate and destroy the bear. If the bear can not be located, a closure in the area will remain in effect for the remainder of the season or until it can be determined that the bear is no longer a threat. The appropriate interviews will be conducted and reports filed.

H. Human injury or fatality

Close the area to the public. All persons except those involved in the control action will leave the area. Interviews and documentation should begin immediately to determine the circumstances and causes of the incident. If the bear leaves the scene, and the human injury is the result of a natural defensive action on the part of the bear, the bear will not be destroyed. If the attack is a result of provocation on the part of humans, such as harassing the bear for photographs, the bear will not be destroyed. The area will remain closed, and will be patrolled and monitored for the return of the bear. After the threat has passed, but no sooner than 5 days after the incident, the area may be reopened with a warning issued for the area.

If the bear is positively identified and remains at the scene, destroy the bear unless it is remaining to defend a moose or animal carcass that it was defending when the attack occurred (natural defensive action). If the bear is defending a human carcass as a cache, the bear will be destroyed. File all appropriate reports.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Operations

1. Distribute bear brochures to commercial operators
2. Distribute bear information to subsistence users and private landowners
3. Ensure that bear information is posted on all NPS or interagency bulletin boards
4. Provide staff training in bear biology and safety, including firearms training (with assistance from RES MGT)
5. Make decision on use of aversive conditioning with RMS (CR)

Resource Management

1. Prepare SUP and other permit stipulations regarding bear safety and food storage
2. Review and update bear management plan as needed
3. Research additional methods of bear resistant food storage and of marking bears for identification
4. Provide staff training in bear biology and safety (with assistance from OPS)
5. Make decision on use of aversive conditioning with CR)

All Staff

1. Provide information to all visitors about bears, food storage and proper etiquette for travel in bear country

DEFINITIONS

Unnatural, aggressive bear: A bear that is seeking human food and is acting aggressively towards humans to obtain food is acting in an undesirable and unnatural manner. A bear that is preying upon humans, although it may be seeking just another "natural" source of food, cannot be tolerated. Bears that are acting aggressively towards humans in order to obtain human food or to prey upon humans will be aversively conditioned or destroyed. A bear that is defending a food cache that consists of a human body will also be considered as unnatural and will be destroyed.

Natural bear actions: A bear that is pursuing normal activities such as hunting, grazing, or traveling. A bear will naturally kill other wildlife and, if the carcass can not be consumed at

one time, the bear will cover the carcass or cache with dead grass, dirt or branches and will defend the cache from all intruders, including wolves, ravens and people. An aggressive action towards people during defense of such a cache is considered a natural activity. A sow bear will tolerate no threat to the perceived safety of her cubs. Defense of young is also considered a natural activity. A bear has a normal space of personal defense, just as humans do. If a bear is harassed or pushed beyond its normal tolerance due to human interference, such as a photographer trying to get close up photos, then a defensive action on the part of the bear is considered a natural defensive action. If a bear attack or aggressive encounter can be attributed to a natural action such as those described above, then the bear should not be destroyed even if a human injury has resulted. The actions of people should be controlled and reprimanded rather than those of the bear.

APPENDIX A

Aversive conditioning

The decision to initiate a serious effort at aversive conditioning using Cart-a-Buck or rubber slugs in a bear situation will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Chief Ranger in consultation with the Resource Management Specialist. The decision will be based on available knowledge about the incident and the predicted success of the conditioning. If a decision is made to proceed with conditioning, the guidelines below will guide the action.

Aversive conditioning includes all attempts to frighten or scare a bear away from an area or any action meant to associate humans or human food with an undesirable outcome. All aversive conditioning should be undertaken with caution, and should be fully documented, including especially detailed reports of the bear's response. All aversive conditioning should begin with the least intrusive methods, and graduate to the use of Cart-a-Buck or rubber slugs for peppering only in the most extreme cases. The use of Cart-a-Buck or rubber slugs will usually only be authorized in fixed base camp situations, or in a management action when a management team has been sent to an area to resolve a specific situation. Peppering of a bear will not normally be used in temporary river or backcountry camps where the camp can be moved. Only employees having bear training and qualified for firearms use may use crackershells, Cart-a-Buck, or rubber slugs.

Black bears usually will not be candidates for major attempts at aversive conditioning using peppering since these techniques have not proven effective in permanently changing the behavior of this species. Once a black bear has obtained human food, it will very likely continue to search out that food source. However, if a black bear has not obtained food, peppering may be effective in deterring it from learning, and in this situation, peppering may be authorized. If a decision is made to attempt conditioning of a black bear, a commitment of up to two weeks may be necessary for the action. Brown bears will be considered for the full range of aversive conditioning, depending on the severity of their actions in attempting to obtain food.

Aversive conditioning with Cart-a-Buck will only be attempted with two trained staff. Before taking any action, have as much information available as possible, and be clear in your objective for undertaking the action. Make certain the bear has an escape route. Communicate your intentions to and discuss alternatives with your partner, and be clear about actions each of you will take if certain things happen as a result of your behavior (play "what if" before you provoke a confrontation). Use the minimum tool that will accomplish the objective. Keep good data on your

actions and the results. Explain your actions to any visitors who may view the actions.

It is necessary to positively identify a bear prior to conditioning or destruction. If the bear can not be identified from natural scars or coloration, a marking pistol is available for placing a colored mark on an animal. Only those employees who have been qualified with this weapon on the firing range are authorized to use it.

Techniques that may be employed include yelling, throwing rocks, or banging pans. Flares or crackershells may be employed to drive a bear from the site. Care must be taken to ensure the explosion occurs between you and the bear and not on the far side of the bear which may drive it towards you instead of away. Cart-a-Buck is a rubberized shot contained in a 12 gauge shotgun cartridge. When properly used, it delivers a stinging load to a bear which frightens the bear but does not penetrate the skin which may cause infection or damage to the bear. A rubber slug has similar effects. The objective of peppering a bear with these ammunition types is to teach it to associate a negative experience with (1) its presence in a camp area, (2) the process of eating people's food, or (3) the process of behaving aggressively toward people. Peppering may be carried out only when the bear is involved in one of these activities.

The objective of peppering is not to instill wariness of people. Any aggressive act toward a bear may escalate into a need to destroy the bear, for example if the bear responds in a manner that endangers human life. Use of rubber shot or slugs will therefore be carried out only when this possible outcome is recognized. A rubber slug should be aimed at the rear or hindquarters of the bear. When using Cart-a-Buck, a bear will be peppered only from the side or diagonally from the rear, with the rubber shot aimed at the rear of the bear or slightly behind the bears' hindquarters to minimize the chance of injury. Because bears frequently turn their heads to the side when moving directly away, a bear that is facing directly away will not be peppered because of the possibility of hitting its eyes. The effectiveness of the ammunition will determine the distance from which a bear will be shot.

An escape route that will not endanger people must be readily available to the bear. The shotgun used for peppering will also be loaded with live slugs as back-up for the rubber shot. A second employee will be present to act as an armed backup. They will have a shotgun loaded with live slugs. Any discharge of a weapon will be reported as soon as possible to the employee's supervisor and to the Chief Ranger. Any aversive action taken during a bear incident will be reported as soon as possible to the Resource Management Specialist. A BIR and a Case Incident Report 10-343 will be filled out. The 10-343 will include

actions taken, and alternative actions considered and rejected.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve

P.O. Box 74680

Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

17 JUN 1987

PUBLIC NOTICE

All food cached or left unattended at or within three miles of Circle Lake in the Alatna River drainage within the boundaries of Gates of the Arctic National Park must be stored in the bear-resistant 55-gallon steel drum provided by the National Park Service at the site. Campers may leave food stored in the drum no longer than 10 days and at no other nearby locations or in any other container unless approved by the Park Superintendent.

Due to bear/human conflicts at Circle Lake in recent years, the Superintendent deems this restriction necessary for public safety and resource protection under the authority of the Code of Federal Regulations 36 CFR 13.22(c):

"The Superintendent may (1) designate areas where personal property may not be left unattended for any time period, (2) establish limits on the amount, and type of personal property that may be left unattended, (3) prescribe the manner in which personal property may be left unattended, or (4) establish limits on the length of time personal property may be left unattended. Such designations and restrictions shall be (i) published in at least one newspaper of general circulation within the State, posted at community post offices within the vicinity affected, made available for broadcast on the local radio stations in a manner reasonably calculated to inform residents in the affected community, and designated on a map which shall be available for public inspection at the office of the Superintendent, or (ii) designated by the posting of appropriate signs, or (iii) both."

These restrictions on food storage at Circle Lake are effective immediately and remain in effect until further notice.

Comments or questions may be directed to:

Superintendent
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
P. O. Box 74680
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707
(907) 456-0281