

# Wrangell

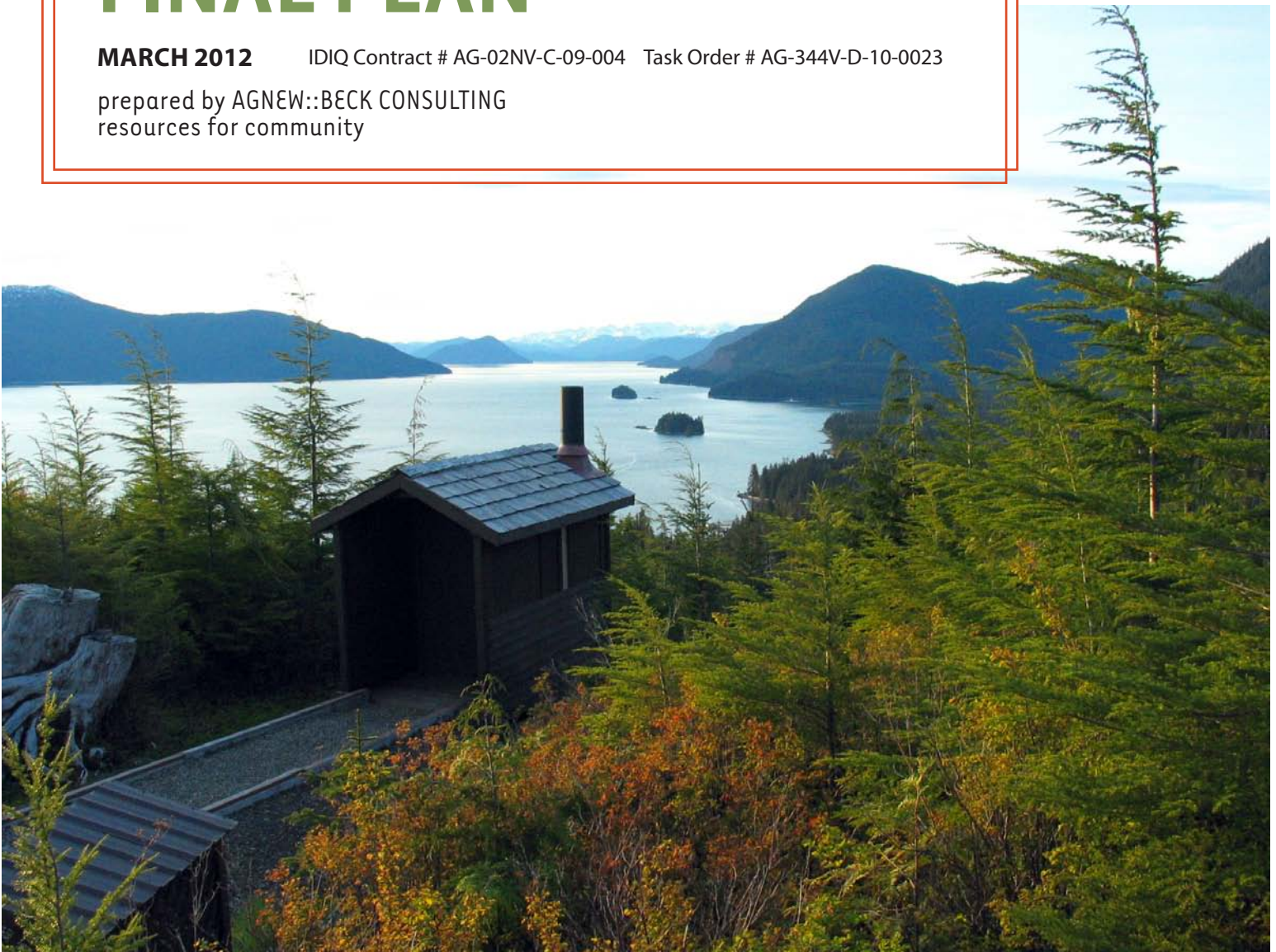
## sustainable outdoor recreation action plan



### FINAL PLAN

**MARCH 2012** IDIQ Contract # AG-02NV-C-09-004 Task Order # AG-344V-D-10-0023

prepared by AGNEW::BECK CONSULTING  
resources for community



# Wrangell Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Plan

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- Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
- The Wrangell Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Core Team:
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  - Victoria Martin
- The residents of the City and Borough of Wrangell



## Memorandum of Understanding

The Wrangell Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Plan is the product of more than a year of active, community-wide planning. The plan builds from a spectrum of community perspectives, including:

- interviews with individuals, businesses and organizations
- focus groups with community leaders, youth and elders
- views expressed in resident and visitor surveys
- a series of well-attended community workshops
- Core Team meetings

The plan presents two main products: a comprehensive set of potential outdoor recreation projects, and a subset of this full list identifying twelve priority projects to enhance recreation's contribution to sustainability in Wrangell and on surrounding national forest lands. While the process was sponsored by the US Forest Service, the final implementation of the plan rests with the plan partners and the public. Support for this plan does not establish a rigid obligation to carry out these projects, but the signatures indicate support for the plan and the intent to work in good faith to implement the priority projects. By formally endorsing the plan, partners and the community are agreeing to work together to expand the community's capability to implement projects, and helping Wrangell to be a better place to live, visit, work and play.

Entity/Community Partner

Signature of Partner Representative

USDA-Forest Service

\_\_\_\_\_

City and Borough of Wrangell

\_\_\_\_\_

Wrangell Cooperative Association

\_\_\_\_\_

Wrangell Chamber of Commerce

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Alaska Island Community Services – Alaska Crossings

\_\_\_\_\_

Stikine River Jet Boat Association

\_\_\_\_\_

Wrangell Public School District

\_\_\_\_\_

Wrangell Medical Center

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# I. INTRODUCTION

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## Introduction + Background

Wrangell is a community in transition. Located in Southeast Alaska, this small island town of 2,369 (2010 Census) residents was once a thriving logging town. For over 100 years, most jobs and local businesses existed to support the then thriving timber industry. In the mid-1990s, with the termination of 50-year contracts with the United States Forest Service (USFS) in several Southeast communities, life changed for Wrangell residents. In 2010, the six-mile mill that was once the center of Wrangell's busy timber activities was dismantled. There are still two small mill operators on Wrangell, but timber no longer plays a large role in the local economy.



Today, Wrangell's economy is driven by service industry – including fishing, fish processing, tourism, marine vessel service – and local government employment. Community leaders understand this is not a sustainable model for economic development. The community recognizes the need to expand economic activities, focused on Wrangell's current strengths and areas for potential growth, leading to new jobs for Wrangell residents. The community's existing plans and current conversations regarding future economic development opportunities point to tourism as the economic sector with the most growth and community support. Residents also

recognize that efforts to improve Wrangell's outdoor recreation offerings for tourists, including facilities, programs, activities and events, can bring new visitors and create jobs. These same projects, however, can improve quality of life for locals, by providing places for children, families and seniors to recreate throughout the year.

The community of Wrangell is energized and poised to make a change. In early 2011, Wrangell residents learned about an opportunity through the Forest Service to develop a sustainable outdoor recreation plan through the USFS Framework for Sustainable Recreation. The Framework is part of a national USFS guidance aimed at redirecting Forest Service resources, traditionally slated for timber-related activities in communities like Wrangell, to a new focus on sustainable outdoor recreation. The Framework includes three broad principles:

- Maintain and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- Emphasize the three segments of sustainability: environmental integrity, economic vitality and social stability.
- Forge strong partnerships with local communities including both public and private entities.

Over the past year, the community of Wrangell, led by a Core Team of local residents, businesses, nonprofit groups and city government, have worked within the Framework for Sustainable Recreation to:

- Confirm their long-term vision for economic development growth and quality of life for Wrangell residents;
- Set clear and achievable outdoor recreation goals;
- Develop sustainability criteria to help prioritize and rationalize a core group of projects that will benefit visitors and residents alike;



- Identify one-year action items that will move priority projects forward, including lead partners and needed resources;
- And, identify a preliminary set of evaluation measures for assessing project impact and success.

This is not the end but beginning of the hard work. To be successful, the Core Team and Wrangell community must work together to implement twelve identified priority projects and maintain focus on the goals of improving the local outdoor recreation resources for residents and visitors alike.

## **Purpose, Process and Structure of the Plan**

### **Plan Purpose**

As identified by the community and planning participants, the purpose of Wrangell’s outdoor recreation plan is to improve the quality of life for Wrangell residents by:

1. Identifying priority projects that improve residents’ health and happiness;
2. Strengthening their connection to the land and natural environment;
3. Helping to create a strong, durable local economy;
4. And, by expanding community capacity for resident and visitor outdoor activities.

In this plan, “projects” are defined as any outdoor recreation facility, program or community event that increases resident and visitor physical activity and connection to the great outdoors.

### **Planning Process**

Wrangell started the planning process at a kickoff meeting in April 2011. Below is a timeline of the planning process including dates and descriptions of significant events:

- **April 2011:** The kickoff meeting included Wrangell residents, the City of Wrangell, and Forest Service. Wrangell residents learned about the USFS Framework for Sustainable Recreation and had the opportunity to share their definition of “sustainable”. Resident also reported back on existing outdoor recreation facilities, activities, programs and events and had the opportunity to share challenges and potential opportunities. The goal of the meeting was to share information, to assess community interest, and for the community to define the purpose, need and commitment to the planning process. Community consensus was the process and timing would be a good match for the community’s needs.
- **April – May 2011:** The Core Team convened and chose Mayor Jeremy Maxand and Carol Rushmore as co-chairs. The Core Team met via phone to scope the plan and agree to a set list of project deliverables and timelines.
- **May – October 2011:** The Core Team, assisted by Agnew::Beck Consulting, conducted background research including a review of prior plans, primary and secondary data collection (including launching, aggregating and analyzing three separate surveys), and detailed mapping of existing and potential outdoor recreation facilities.
- **November 2011:** The community held their first work session to review the main themes and key findings from the background research. The community also participated in a mapping exercise to clarify existing and potential facilities and to prioritize their top five projects. Additionally, community members took part in a series of interviews and focus groups aimed at assessing existing resources and potential projects.
- **December 2011:** The Core Team reviewed a comprehensive list of potential community projects, reaffirmed the sustainable outdoor recreation goals and criteria, and generated a list of priority projects with one-year action items.

- **January – February 2012:** With assistance from Agnew::Beck, the draft plan was developed and sent to the Core Team and a wider group of community stakeholders.
- **February – March 2012:** The community will hold a second community work session to share back the main messages from the plan and to discuss next steps for approving the final plan, including securing signatures on the Memorandum of Understanding.

### Plan Structure

This plan is organized into four chapters so the community and their partners can easily access the information they need. This chapter, (Chapter 1: Introduction and Background), introduces how the Wrangell plan started. In the remaining chapters you will find:

- Chapter 2: Community Context. This includes summaries of a variety of existing Wrangell plans and information on Wrangell resident and visitor trends.
- Chapter 3: Sustainability Goals and Criteria. This includes the community outdoor recreation goals and sustainability criteria developed by the Core Team for evaluating specific recreation projects.
- Chapter 4: Priority Projects and Action Plan. The last chapter includes the list of priority projects, tables explaining why the projects were chosen and a preliminary implementation plan.

## 2. COMMUNITY CONTEXT

### Community Snapshot

Today, Wrangell is facing several challenges. Resident population, age and employment trends show a community that is aging and trying to find a more stable economic footing. Government jobs make up a major slice of local employment, while outdoor recreation, as shown by leisure and hospitality employment, currently is a small sector of the local economy. Recognizing the limitations of local government as a sustainable economic base, and seeing the need for new options, this chapter explores trends in Wrangell’s social and economic character and in visitor travel to Wrangell and Alaska. Information about visitor characteristics can tell us about the kinds of visitors who come to Wrangell today and set the stage for strategies that can help Wrangell grow the leisure and hospitality sector of the local economy.

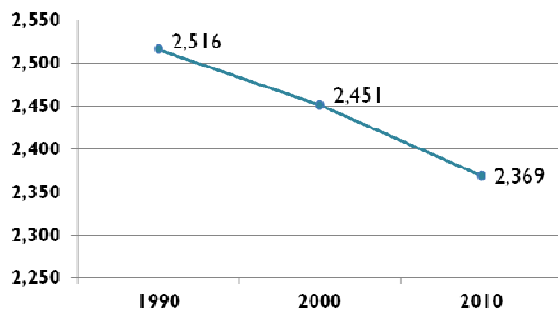
This chapter is organized into the following five sections:

1. Profile of Wrangell’s resident and employment characteristics;
2. Summary of existing community plans highlighting common outdoor recreation proposals;
3. Tourism data establishing Wrangell’s place in Alaska tourism and recreation;
4. Results from three outdoor recreation/tourism-related surveys to: local kids/youth, local adults, and visitors.
5. Maps showing existing Wrangell outdoor recreation facilities.

### Wrangell Resident and Employment Characteristics

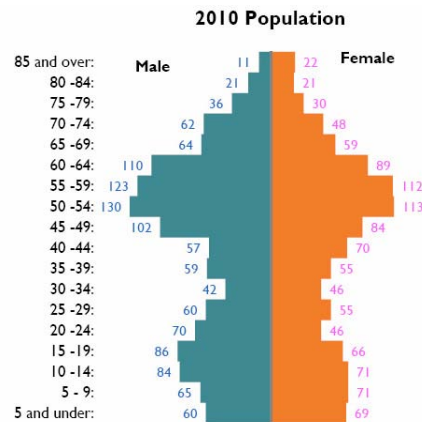
Wrangell’s population is older and there are fewer residents today than in the past two decades. As of 2010, the population stands at 2,369 people, down from 2,516 in 1990 (see Figure 2.1). This is a relatively mild five percent decline. Meanwhile, the age mix is weighted towards middle age with a large number of 50 to 65 year olds, shown in Figure 2.2. Over the next decade, this older population cohort will retire and age – possibly having more free time but also needing more age-appropriate outdoor recreation opportunities.

Figure 2.1: Wrangell Population, 1990 – 2010



Source: 1990, 2000, 2010 US Census

Figure 2.2: Wrangell Population Structure, 2010



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Research and Analysis Section. 2010 Census: Demographic Profile for Wrangell city and borough.

Proposed recreation projects should take into account the trend towards an overall smaller community population, and the trend towards an older mostly, retired population, likely with less disposable income to help maintain recreation facilities. While in the near future, Wrangell will need projects that serve older adults and retirees, this should not overshadow the need to serve youth and attract visitors.

## Summary of Relevant Existing Plans

Wrangell has several elements of an outdoor recreation and tourism strategy in seven existing plans (see Appendix C for detailed plan summaries). The purpose and scope of these plans ranges from local community development to regional economic strategies. The seven plans recognize Wrangell's unique recreational and natural resources, barriers and opportunities. However, none focus exclusively on sustainable outdoor recreation. The common goals and shared project ideas captured by past and current plans have provided a foundation and starting point for the goals, criteria and projects presented in this plan.

## Community Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Data

This section provides an overview of the outdoor recreation activities visitors and residents like to do. Two sources of information are used: pre-published statewide recreation surveys and three Wrangell outdoor recreation surveys commissioned by the Core Team. The pre-published surveys capture information about the recreation habits of out-of-state visitors and the local surveys focus on resident youth and adult outdoor recreation needs. Included at the end is a short summary of successful outdoor recreation examples from other locations to show what can be accomplished in Wrangell.

### Statewide Recreation Information Sources

The State of Alaska conducts two important surveys of visitor trends and resident outdoor recreation interests. The Alaska Visitor Statistics Program (AVSP) surveys out-of-state visitors on their destinations, activities and mode of travel. The full AVSP is conducted approximately every five to seven years. A shorter survey measuring visitor arrivals is carried out annually. AVSP information is divided into a summer and fall/winter edition. The large majority of Southeast visitors come to Alaska in the summer, so the summer AVSP is the basis for information presented throughout this section. Detailed information on Southeast Alaska and Wrangell is only available from 2006, the most recent year the full survey was conducted.



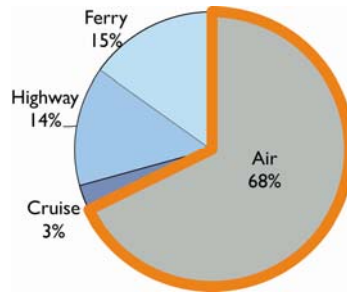
The State of Alaska also surveys state residents on their outdoor recreation activities and interests through the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The Outdoor Recreation Plan is updated every five years to reflect changes in state priorities and resident activities. The latest SCORP is the 2009-2014 plan.

### *In-State and Out-of-State Visitor Highlights*

Several highlights about Alaska and Wrangell visitors were gleaned from the 2006 AVSP and 2009-2014 SCORP reports, as well as interviews with people in Wrangell familiar with tourism and recreation:

- Most out-of-state visitors to Wrangell enter Alaska by air as shown in Table 2.1. A portion of the air travelers who indicated they travelled to Wrangell did not actually visit Wrangell proper but only had a layover at the airport.
- As is shown in Figure 2.3, the Alaska Marine Highway is an important source of visitors to Wrangell. The chart can be confusing as it identifies the transportation mode used to *enter Alaska* by people who eventually came to Wrangell. As the figure shows, about three in ten out-of-state Wrangell visitors arrived in Alaska by highway or ferry. There is not a highway to Wrangell, so these figures capture northbound ferry travelers who started from points south, and also the southbound ferry riders who drove into Alaska on the Alcan Highway and who may have started their trip in Haines or Skagway.

Figure 2.3: Alaska Visitors by Entry Mode, Wrangell Visitors



Source: Alaska Office of Tourism Development. *Alaska Visitor Statistics Program V: Summer 2006*. Juneau, AK: 2006.

- Alaska visitors are split into “package” travelers, who are coming as part of an organized tour such as a cruiseship, and independent travelers, who put together their own trips. In recent years, larger cruise ships have bypassed Wrangell, and concentrated their visits on a handful of southeast ports, notably Ketchikan Juneau, and Skagway. In general, independent travelers seek “off-the-beaten-track” locations, spend more than package travelers and tend to travel in smaller groups. Independent travelers are more likely to return to the Southeast. Eighty-five percent of independents but only 19 percent of cruise ship visitors make a second trip to Southeast Alaska.
- Wrangell’s out-of-state visitors are markedly different from elsewhere in Southeast Alaska. They are a bit older and stay longer in Alaska, spend less on average per day, and their average income is lower than visitors to other Southeast communities. See Table 2.1. As is the case with Petersburg, Wrangell is a popular destination for retired travelers, who often travel by recreation vehicle, and who have more time than money and enjoy extended but economical visits.

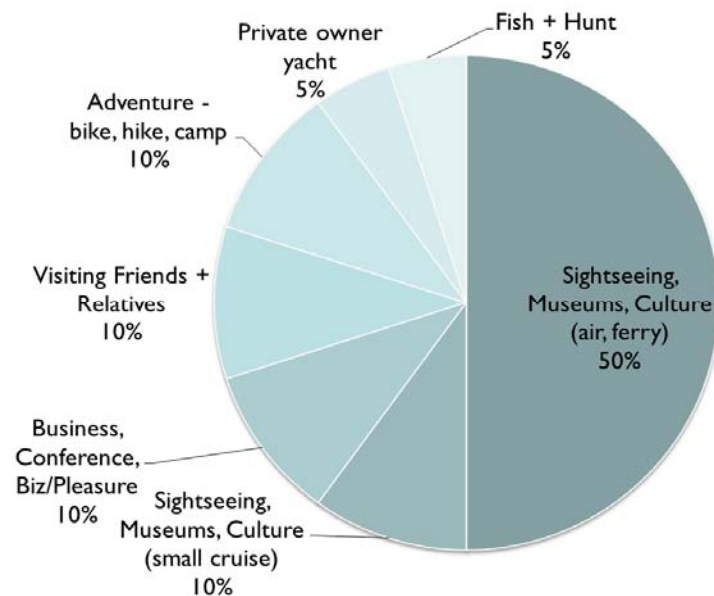
Table 2.1: Visitor Characteristics – Wrangell, Southeast Communities, and Alaska

Characteristics	Average age	Average length of stay in AK (nights)	Average Household income	Average in-state expenditure	Average per day expenditure
Wrangell	54.2	16.6	\$92,000	\$1,184	\$71
Southeast	53	8.5	\$105,000	\$754	\$89
All Alaska Visitors	51.6	9.1	\$103,000	\$934	\$103
Petersburg	55	13.8	\$98,000	\$1,418	\$103
Juneau	53.1	8.3	\$105,000	\$690	\$83
Ketchikan	52.8	8.6	\$104,000	\$684	\$80

Source: Alaska Office of Tourism Development. *Alaska Visitor Statistics Program V: Summer 2006*. Juneau, AK: 2006

- Pulling together information from the AVSP and interviews with people in those familiar with tourism in Wrangell, the figure below gives a general picture of the current mix of visitors to the community, considering both entry mode and reasons for visiting. This information, while based on estimates from rather than hard data, nonetheless gives a helpful reference point for thinking about options to increase visitation. Important implications include:
  - The adventure travel market – biking, hiking, camping and viewing wildlife – is large and growing worldwide and in Alaska, but developed to only a limited degree in Wrangell. Outdoor recreation activities that could please residents such as cabins to support multi-night kayaking or hiking trips, accessible trails, and better information about camping and hiking on nearby islands could increase visitation by this group.
  - Small cruise and private yachts are an excellent market for Wrangell. The best strategy for these markets is direct contact to better understand their specific needs, which commonly focus on improvements to waterfront services and activities.
  - Business travelers and those visiting friends and relatives are important in the community. This group can create more economic impact with local programs and marketing materials that encourage such travelers to sample a wider range of local activities, and best of all, to spend more time than originally planned in the community.
  - The largest group of travelers – the group interested in activities like sightseeing and museums – is typically interested in outdoor activities that are rewarding, but also convenient, safe, accessible and not too physically demanding. Wrangell has a good array of offerings meeting these criteria, but providing more ways to experience “wild Alaska” can draw more of these visitors, and get those who visit already to stay longer

Figure 2.4: Summary Overview of Current Visitors to Wrangell



## Wrangell Recreation Surveys

This section of the plan provides a summary of results for three outdoor recreation and tourism-related surveys conducted between June and November 2011. The three surveys include:

- A kids and youth outdoor recreation survey;
- A local resident/adult outdoor recreation survey;
- And, a visitor survey distributed via local bed and breakfast owners.

### *Kids + Youth Outdoor Recreation Survey*

The kids and youth survey provides insight into the outdoor recreation needs and wants of Wrangell youth. Forty-two youth (twenty-four girls and eighteen boys) between the ages of four and 15 completed the survey. The survey was short, intended to be easy for children to complete.

As Figures 2.4 and 2.5 illustrate, most Wrangell youth want more opportunities for low cost, readily accessible outdoor fun, such as wheeled activities, playing “in the woods” or hiking and biking trails. There is also a clear interest for improved facilities for skateboarding and a water park. Other activities that require more skill and specialized equipment are not as popular. The lower rankings for specialized activities like fishing, boating, horse riding and hunting may reflect less interest, but more likely indicate a lack of facilities, gear and programs.

Figure 2.4: Youth and Kids Survey question: What do you like to do outside?

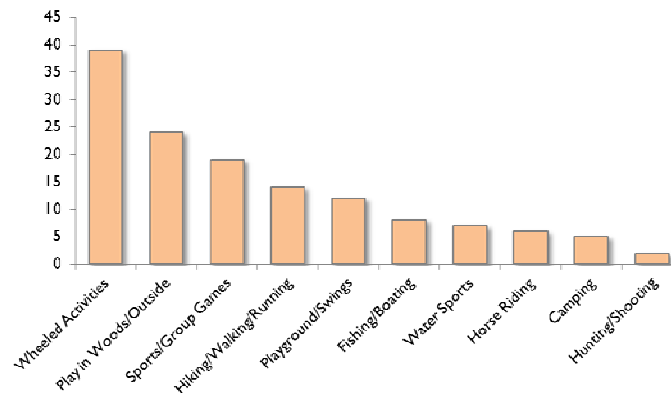
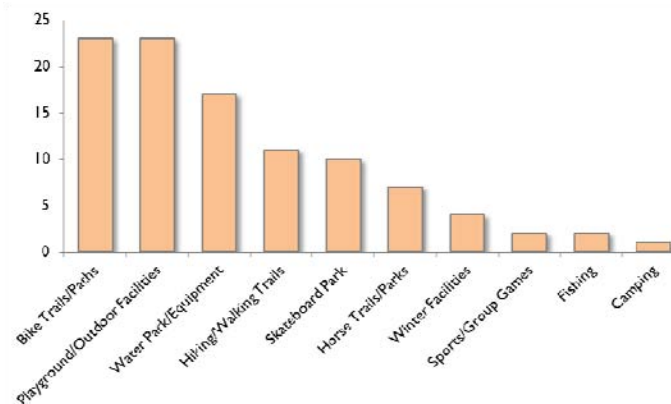


Figure 2.5: Youth and Kids Survey question: What would you like more of?



### *Wrangell Outdoor Recreation Plan Online Adult Survey*

The Wrangell Outdoor Recreation Adult Survey captured the outdoor recreation activities Wrangell adults enjoy the most and what they want more of. Seventy-seven adults, averaging 43 years of age, completed the online survey. Adult activities are different from youth activities, however facility and program needs overlap. Over 80 percent said they exercise three or more times per week and get outdoors at least once a week.

The surveyed adults selected their most enjoyable activities. The most popular are:

- Hiking, Beach walking: 82%
- Camping: 77%
- Forest Service cabin use: 69%
- Fishing in salt water: 66%

The same adults said their preferred locations for recreation are:

- Remote locations: 33%
- Out on the road: 26%
- On local trails: 21%

The majority of adult survey participants enjoy hiking and beach walking. Likewise, three-quarters of surveyed participants enjoy camping. Both these activities may be done on Wrangell Island or further out in the borough. Recreation in remote locations ranked higher than recreation on local trails. The results above indicate survey participants like to do a variety of outdoor recreation activities in a wide range of settings.



The facilities Wrangell residents say they use the most are:

- Cabins – Virginia Lake, Shakes Lake and Steamer Bay (accessed via water or float plane); Middle Ridge (accessed by road).
- Trails – Volunteer Trail, Mt. Dewey Trail and Rainbow Falls.
- Beach Sites – 8 Mile, Pat’s Landing and Petroglyph Beaches.
- Parks – City, Shoemaker and Library Parks.

Adults also ranked facility and program needs. The facilities residents said most need improvements closely match the facilities they most use and identify as their most enjoyable outdoor activities:

- Improved trails/paths - Specifically: Volunteer Trail, Pat’s Lake, and Etolin
- Water sports - Specifically: boat dock, Banana Point access, accessible fishing platforms
- Campgrounds and RV Sites
- Improvements at existing shelters and parks - Specifically: City Park and Shoemaker Park

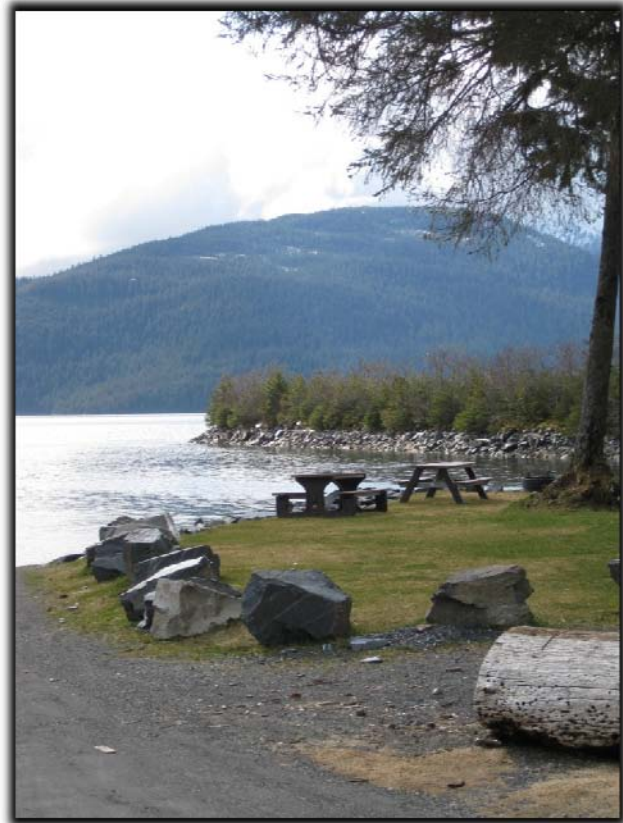
These survey findings echo results from previous plans which show adults strongly support improvements to trails, campgrounds and RV sites, parks, shelters, and water recreation facilities. Two additional questions provide insight into the unique needs of the elderly or physically challenged and how adults get outdoor recreation information.



Adults overwhelmingly said that elderly and physically challenged adults need more access to recreation improvements and opportunities to socialize with others. Two areas they say need improvement are:

- Better trail accessibility, such as more benches, inclines and easier access to trailheads.
- More opportunities to socialize and exercise with others, such as more elder-focused exercise programs and more elder involvement in attending youth sports games.

Finally, Wrangell residents said they get most of their outdoor recreation improvements from two sources: Friends (38 percent) and Radio/KSTK (27 percent). Residents said they would like to get more outdoor recreation information from Facebook or the City website. For the Core Team this led directly to considering adding more outdoor recreation information to the newly launched city website.



Overall, Wrangell adult residents' outdoor recreation needs and current activities align closely. Desired improvements are centered on trails, campgrounds, parks and water facilities including better accessibility for people with special needs and elders, and more online information.

#### *Wrangell Bed and Breakfast Survey*

The Wrangell Bed and Breakfast survey was small, recording views of twenty bed and breakfast visitors to Wrangell in August of 2011. The survey tells us a bit about where they are from, how long they stay, how they arrive and what they like to do. Highlights are presented below.

- They come from all over the United States and countries such as England and Australia.
- Sixteen arrived by ferry, 3 by airline and 1 by float plane.
- Favorite activities are the Anan Wildlife Observatory, picnicking and hiking.
- The top five most frequent activities are visiting the Anan Wildlife Observatory, petroglyphs, the museum or Nolan Center, walking around town, and shopping.

### **Successful Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Examples**

The world is a laboratory of tourism experiments. Some are planned, others are more accidental, but all these places and programs provide helpful reference points for considering strategies in Wrangell. The particular value these models offer is the chance to see how other places, particularly small towns, have worked to bring real local benefits from tourism, while at the same time avoiding damaging the qualities that make a good place to live and visit. Several relevant examples are described below:

#### **Community “Branding”**

Communities, like people, are complex places, with multiple identities. But when it comes to attracting visitors, it is clearly advantageous for a destination to have a distinct, memorable image. In some instances this objective leads to a contrived character that is not convincing or ultimately satisfying for visitors. The

most successful community brands are those that resonate with resident values and community life. Three examples are described below:

*Santa Barbara California* – Inspired by the 1915 San Diego Panama-California Exposition, which featured Spanish colonial revival style architecture, the Chamber of Commerce of Santa Barbara shortly thereafter launched a program urging local builders to use red tile roofs, plaster walls, outdoor patios, cast iron railings and other revival features. The initiative flourished. Residents liked the look and found it worked well with the local climate and setting. A hundred years later this style is now codified as a requirement for most public and commercial structures, but is readily followed without mandates by most builders. The result is a town with a distinctive, unified character that draws visitors from around the world.

*Cordova and Sitka* – Both these communities have attractive, identifiable reputations, which evolved through a combination of organic growth and conscious effort. In Cordova this image is based around fish, science, art and the lack of road access. In Sitka, the character is tied to Russian and Native history, music and theater, and an enthusiasm for conversation and debate. Neither of these Alaska towns set out to create a brand in the way that happened in Santa Barbara. But both have invested significant effort and public resources in celebrating and strengthening their brands, for example, with interpretive material, festivals, public facilities and marketing materials

*Wrangell* – While Wrangell has a distinctive and attractive character, this character has not quite coalesced to the point where the town has a known “brand”, an identity that can be honed, strengthened and used to draw visitors. A proposed brand that came across as cute or precious would likely wither in Wrangell. An unsolicited idea worth considering: brand Wrangell as a typical, friendly, hard- working American town, but a town that just happens to sit in the middle of a vast wilderness. In a town with many well-kept yards, porches and American flags, this image might resonate with residents and also provide the basis for forming a clear image in the minds of visitors. The popularity of the Wrangell with older visitors traveling by RV adds support to this hypothesis.



### Niche Markets – Wrangell Options

Some destinations succeed by serving relatively narrow visitor appetites. These range as broadly as human tastes and range from draws like surf or diving in coastal towns, to destinations famous for mountain biking like Moab Utah, or windsurfing like the Columbia Gorge in Oregon. Some destinations capitalize on natural features, but others develop their draw based on particular histories or activities.

For Wrangell, two particular options in this category are worth investigating further. One would be to do a stronger job of catering to custom small boat charters and private cruisers. Another would be to focus on special needs populations, perhaps including both the disabled, including injured veterans who will or are currently searching for recreation opportunities, and older travelers who are simply less able to get around. Around the world, but particularly in countries like Australia and New Zealand where there is strong governmental support for tourism, this type of tourism is getting more attention. Some facts and figures about this market are presented below:

### *Special Needs Market Economic Potential*

A number of the seminal studies first drew attention to the market potential of the accessible tourism in the US, UK and Canada through using national secondary data sources and extrapolating the market potential of the group. This work was then extended by Australian, US, German and European researchers to estimate the value of accessible tourism:

- Australia: \$A1.3 billion (Darcy, 1998);
- United States: \$US13 billion (Harris Interactive Market Research, Van Horn, 2007);
- Germany: €2.5 billion (Neumann & Reuber, 2004);
- Europe: €80 billion (Buhalis, Michopoulou, Eichhorn, & Miller, 2005).

*Source:* <http://accessibletourismresearch.blogspot.com/2010/01/economic-contribution-of-accessible.html>

### *Characteristics of the Special Needs Market – Information from Australia*

- Some 88% of people with disability take a holiday each year that accounted for some 8.2 million overnight trips.
- The average travel group size for people with a disability is 2.8 people for a domestic overnight trip and 3.4 for a day trip.
- There is a myth that the accessible tourism market does not spend because of economic circumstance and are a significant proportion of each travel market segment. In fact, they travel on a level comparable with the general population for domestic overnight and day trips.

*Source:* National Visitor Survey 2003 as analyzed by Darcy and Dwyer (2008)

### *Meeting the Needs of the Special Needs Market*

When evaluating whether or not to visit a destination, the following factors are assessed:

- accessible accommodation as a foundation of any visit
- the overall accessibility of the destination— including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions
- presence of continuous pathways
- accessibility of public transport (low floor buses, accessible train platforms and trains)
- things to do and see—accessible destination experiences
- accessibility of dining and shopping outlets

“Countries are now committed to promoting participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport for people with disabilities. This is a truly global concern which must be tackled by raising the quality standards of the tourism industry as a whole.”

*Source:* Ivor Ambrose, Managing Director of European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)

### **Creative Packaging – Texas Bird Trails**

One very successful approach to creating tourism demand is illustrated by the “Texas Bird Trail” system. The southern coast of Texas can experience the sudden arrival of massive collections of migrating birds, who show up exhausted after flying non-stop across the Caribbean. This phenomenon has always attracted handfuls of birders, but it took a creative partnership among the state and a group of communities and businesses to create a genuine tourism market. The key to success was a marketing campaign, featuring a set of maps, guidebooks and websites coupled with the resolve of tourism businesses, to stitch together a set of previously disparate destinations into a multi-day experience.

## Cooperative Marketing

The cliché about real estate is location, location, location; the comparable reality in tourism is marketing, marketing, marketing. Particularly in a destination like Alaska, where visitors do not arrive by accident, getting out the word about a specific destination or a specific business is often the crux of success. Tourism is unusual in that marketing is frequently carried out by groups of competing businesses, who recognize that if they work together to sell a community or region they will all ultimately benefit. Three specific examples:

*AK Destination Marketing Organizations* – Virtually all the most visited destinations in Alaska are involved in some form of cooperative marketing. Most commonly these entities correspond to a local government boundary, such as a borough or municipality. Funding sources commonly, but not universally, come from local government tourism-related taxes (e.g. a bed tax) and from tourism businesses. These “DMO’s” have a very good track record in Alaska, producing products and programs like familiarization trips, cooperatively operated websites, shared expenses for trade shows, and shared expenses for hardcopy promotional materials. The “AK Rainforest Islands” effort several years back, which aimed to bring together Wrangell, Petersburg and several Prince of Wales (POW) communities, was modeled on this approach, but to date has not come together in a sustainable manner. Today, the Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau is the local DMO – utilizing local bed tax dollars and additional funds approved annually by the Wrangell Assembly. The Wrangell CVB currently participates in the State’s cooperative marketing efforts (e.g. tradeshow, advertising, website, etc.). The community also participates in a regional marketing organization, the Southeast Alaska Tourism Council, to do additional website advertising, regional branding, attending trade shows and hosting travel writers. There is an opportunity to build on these joint efforts so that each community has the opportunity to jointly market with other communities and simultaneously work together to identify each community’s uniqueness, making each place attractive to visitors and a desired destination. For example, Wrangell could become the “most authentic Southeast town” or “your small hometown nestled in the unique wilderness of Alaska.”

*Montverde Cloud Forest Reserve, Costa Rica* – This is an exotic, but interesting and relevant example of a tourism success, blending the strategy of cooperative marketing, niche tourism and branding. The cloud forests of central Costa Rica support some of the richest and most diverse plant, animal and bird populations of the western hemisphere. But these areas are out of the way, hard to reach and until relatively recently, little known. A group of private landowners, most of whom were expatriate Quaker dairy farmers, created this now internationally known destination. The unique feature of this area is that while the “Reserve” experience is comparable to a national park, in reality all the land is private. The owners saw the potential value of preserving odd parcels of primary forest, combined with marginal grazing land back returned to natural vegetation, to create what is in effect a private national park. Coupled with some good marketing, an article in National Geographic, and two decades of patience, this area is now a tourism hot spot, with many dozens of small, locally owned lodges, inns, restaurants, shops, zip lines and guide services.

## Inventory of Existing Facilities, Programs and Events

The following table and accompanying maps provide a preliminary inventory of existing outdoor recreation facilities, programs and events. Combined, this information is a first step toward the community’s desire to develop and make available a comprehensive list of “Things to Do + Places to Go” in Wrangell. To that end, the City and Borough have launched a new website and hope to incorporate all existing outdoor recreation opportunities.

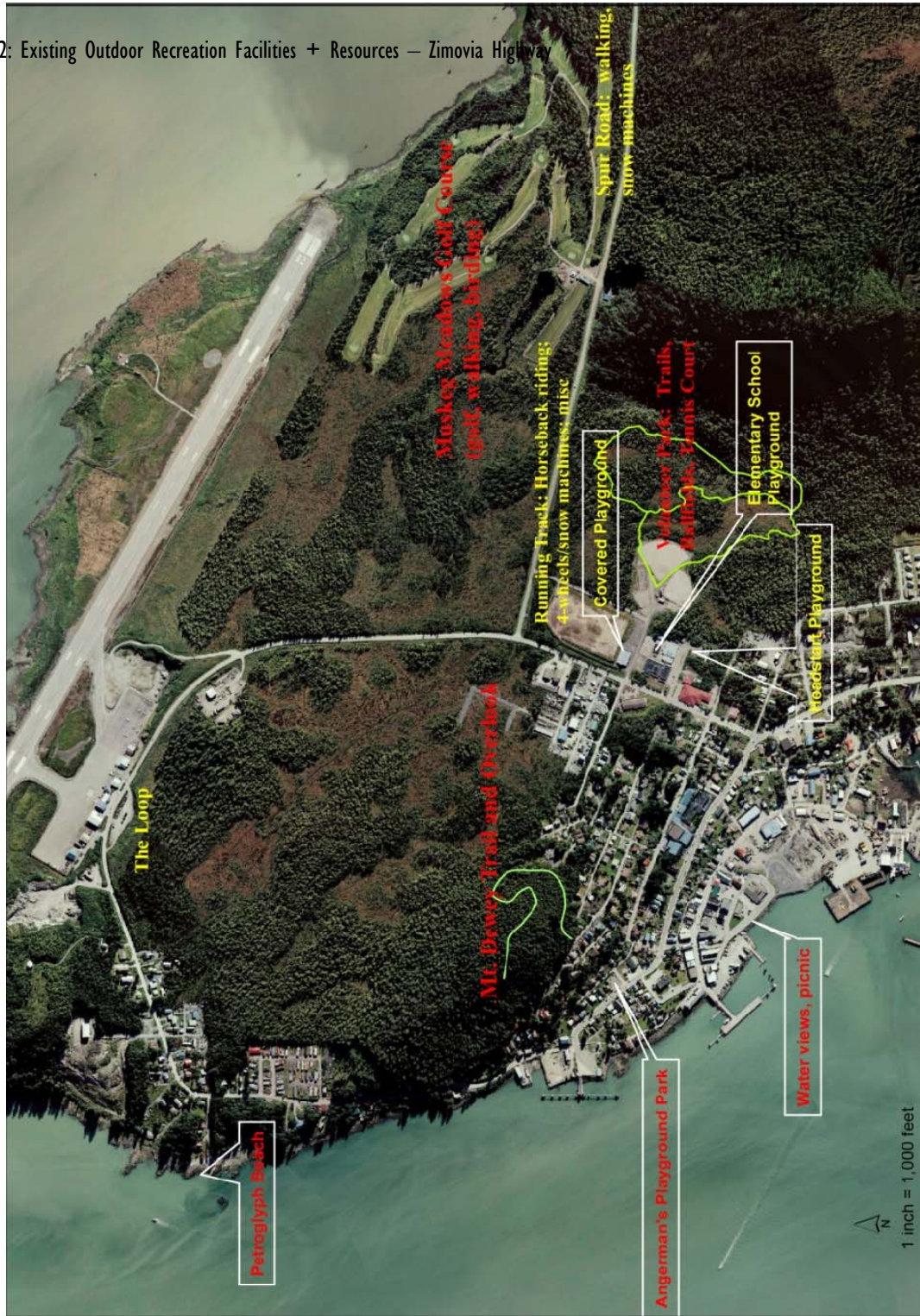
Table 2.2: Existing Wrangell Events and Information Resources

Events and Information Sources	Dates or Web link
Stikine Birding Festival	March 26 – 29
Annual Salmon Derby	May 12 – June 10
Annual Smoked Salmon Contest	Cancelled 2011
Fourth of July Festivities	July 1 – 4
Bear Fest + Marathon	July 25 – 29
Harvest Festival	October 14 – 15
Festival of Lights	December 1st Friday
Polar Bear Dip	January 1
Tent City Days	February 11 – 12
Float School Program - Experiential Ed. and Science	
Cub Scouts/Boy Scouts	
Sea Day	
Weekend golf tournaments	
hiking club	
SEARHC Hike + Harvest/Traditional Foods Programs	
Hooligan Run	
Jom tribal youth program	
Little League	
City of Wrangell website	<a href="http://www.wrangell.com">www.wrangell.com</a>
Wrangell Chamber of Commerce website	<a href="http://www.wrangellchamber.org/index.php">www.wrangellchamber.org/index.php</a>

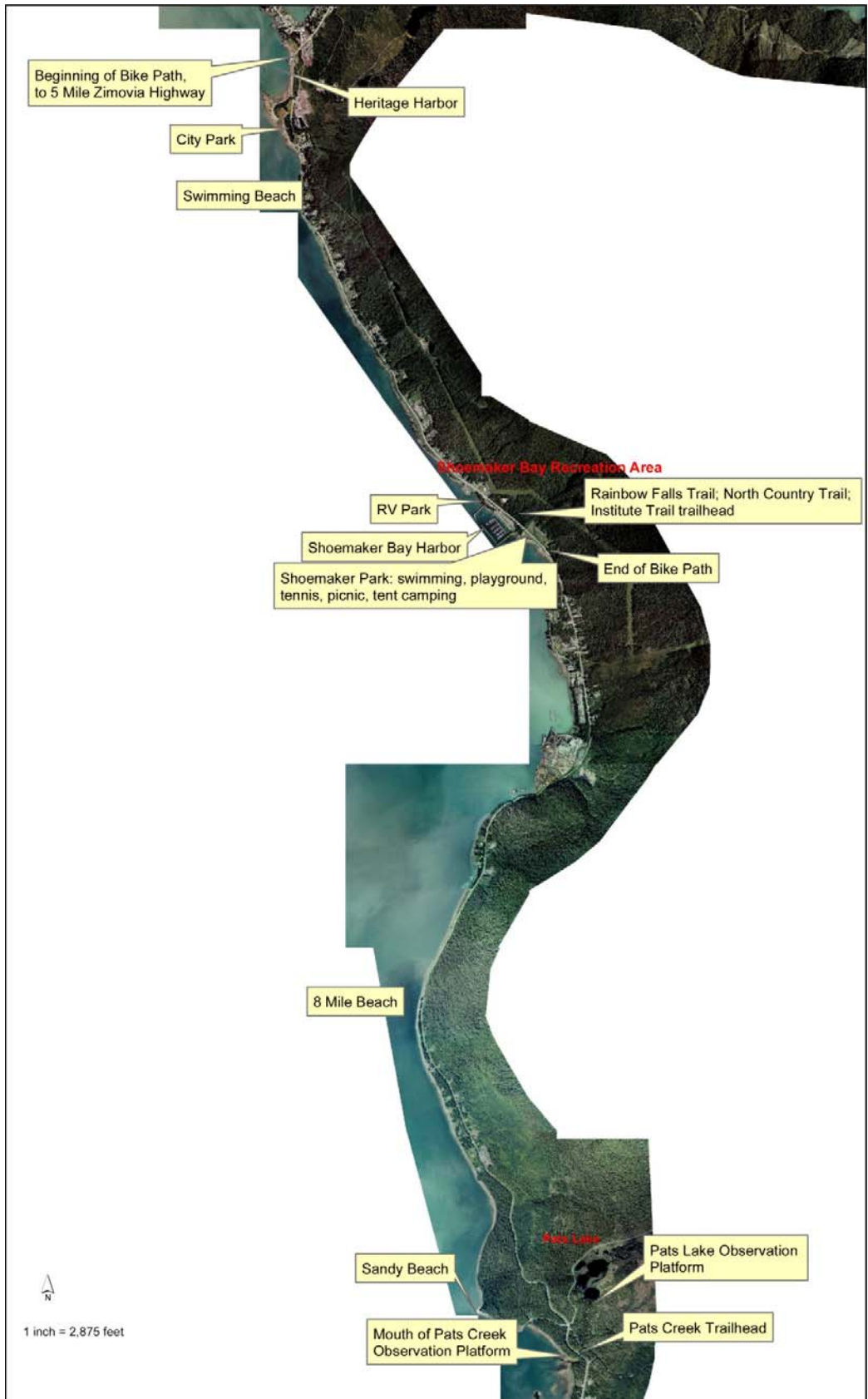
## Facility Maps

These maps on the following pages present existing facilities in the City of Wrangell and on Wrangell Island, particularly along the Zimovia Highway. Facilities shown include trails, parks, harbors, cabins, campsites and public or private recreational sites.

Map 2.1: Existing Outdoor Recreation Facilities + Resources — City of Wrangell



Map 2.2: Existing Outdoor Recreation Facilities + Resources — Zimovia Highway



## 3. SUSTAINABILITY GOALS + CRITERIA

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### Developing the Goals + Criteria

The sustainable outdoor recreation goals and criteria are key elements of this plan, providing both overarching and specific guidance for project selection. The goals, outlined below, developed through a combination of existing plans and insight from resident and survey data, outline long-term outdoor recreation aspirations and targets for Wrangell. The sustainability criteria provide a specific set of measures for assessing a project's "sustainability".

Early on in the planning process, Wrangell residents defined "sustainability" in terms of a project's ability to strengthen the local economy and garner public support, as well as the practicality of building, running and maintaining a project and its compatibility with the local environment. The nexus of these four main elements constitute a "sustainable" project (see Figure 3.1). The criteria, also outlined below, are therefore a set of clarifying questions by major theme (Economy, Practicality, Public Support + Environment) that help the community assess project sustainability. For example, a key question in measuring a project's sustainability under the "Economy" theme is: Does this project create jobs? Together, the criteria questions are tools for project prioritization and selection.

#### *Common Outdoor Recreation Goals*

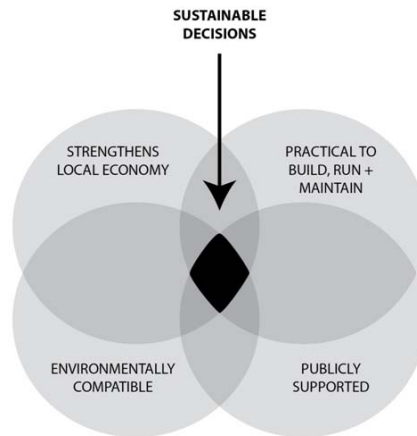
- Protect and plan for use of highly valued local and USFS outdoor recreation land.
- Partner with neighboring communities to promote sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Develop, improve and interconnect trail system for diverse users.
- Develop reliable transportation infrastructure – including regular ferry schedules.<sup>1</sup>
- Seek sources of capital investment funds from diverse sources and larger institutions.
- Study opportunities for developing outdoor recreation facilities elsewhere in Wrangell Borough.
- Strengthen the relationship between Wrangell, the Forest Service and outdoor recreation businesses.
- Build or improve local recreation facilities for diverse users.
- Upgrade harbor facilities and develop areas outside of Wrangell for boat access.
- Work together rather than against each other on outdoor recreation economic development.
- Develop sustainable outdoor recreation based on Wrangell's unique assets.
- Encourage Wrangell residents to get outdoors more often.
- Improve the overall health and fitness of Wrangell residents.
- Increase youth outdoor recreation opportunities and physical activity.
- Prioritize improving accessibility for people of different ages and abilities.

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<sup>1</sup> In March 2012, as this planning document was being finalized, Wrangell, Petersburg and the community of Coffman Cove on Prince of Wales Island, announced a new ferry service that would begin July 2012. The Rainforest Islands Ferry's new public passenger/vehicle service will connect Wrangell, Petersburg – via South Mitkof – and Prince of Wales Island – via Coffman Cove – four days a week, with additional service to Ketchikan three days a week.



Figure 3.1: Wrangell Sustainability Model



## *Wrangell Community Sustainability Criteria*

### **Public Support**

#### *Interest*

- Does the project generate a lot of interest? Do or will people use it?

#### *Partnerships + Leadership*

- Is one group leading or championing the project?
- Is someone coordinating current or potential partners?

#### *Health + Future Generations*

- Does it help us stay healthier?
- Does it expose local kids and youth to what is here? Teach them something?
- Is the project accessible to residents and visitors?

### **Economic Development + Practicality**

#### *Sustains the life of our community*

- Does the project create jobs? Does the project build on our strengths and take advantage of existing funding?

#### *Maximizes Existing Resources*

- Does the project improve what we have?
- Does this project expand the number of facilities beyond our means or needs?
- Does this project duplicate efforts?
- Are we moving on from projects that no longer work?

#### *Long-lasting + Affordable*

- Is the project easy to maintain?
- Is the project realistic and manageable?
- Can maintenance fees be secured for the project over the long haul?

### **Environment**

- Does the project help us celebrate our connection to the land?
- Is the project compatible with the natural environment and mitigate potential impacts from recreation use?

## **4. PRIORITY PROJECTS + ACTION PLAN**

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### **Introduction to the Priority Projects + Action Plan**

This section describes the process the Core Team undertook to reach a concise set of twelve priority projects and related action plan. The priority projects are the culmination of a year of work by Wrangell residents to plan for better outdoor recreation resources for residents and visitors. However, the work does not end with developing the priority projects list. The list includes a column for first-year action and lead organization, spelling out the next steps in turning the priority list into real results.

### **Description of the Process**

In December 2011 the Core Team met to select a list of twelve priority projects from the comprehensive project list generated at a November public workshop. First the Core Team refined the comprehensive list to combine similar or duplicate items. This condensed list is of 56 projects show in Appendix B.

Each Core Team member then personally ranked their top ten projects. The results were combined and found to be remarkably similar, resulting in a list of only twelve priority projects. The group came together to discuss their justifications for their choices. The twelve priority projects and justifications are shown in Table 4.1 on the next page.

Finally, the Core Team reviewed the list of twelve priority projects and identified first-year actions that will move the project forward. They also discussed potential partners to lead these actions. These initial actions and lead organizations are also shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Wrangell Priority Projects and Justification**

Wrangell Priority Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Project	Project Description	Justification	Lead Organization	First Year Action
Develop Trail Linking Volunteer Park - Mt. Dewey Trail - Stough's Trailer Park	Connects the north end of the island near Stough's trailer court and Petroglyph Beach to John Muir Mountain (Mt Dewey), across the muskeg and to the spur road, volunteer park, and the trail system.	Overwhelming public support, Community will get the biggest bang for the buck, Impacts every user group, Links current and future residential areas, Challenging to build due to cost, Links key recreational/cultural sites and provides a way for the children of the residential district on Evergreen to link with the elementary school, playground and park.	City of Wrangell	Add project to capital project list (DONE) Identify potential routes and get Army Corps permits
Create Master Plan for Volunteer Park/Track Area	Helps define the recreation area and identify needed infrastructure to complete the development of this recreation zone.	Overwhelming public support, Community will get the biggest bang for the buck, Impacts every user group, Appeals to users of all ages, Immediate opportunity to use dirt fill	City of Wrangell Parks + Recreation	Add project to capital project list (DONE) Haul excess excavated material to cap field
Extend Volunteer Park Trail to Golf Course Pond		Easy project, Connects existing trails and creates a continuous trail hike , Interpretive signs add an educational component, Improves an existing resource and connects facilities	City of Wrangell Parks + Recreation Golf Course	Identify potential routes and get Army Corps permits
South Mitkoff Boat Dock Improvements	Provides a safe and accessible year-round boat dock for transportation, first year should be a joint.	Implements a major transportation connection, A lot of public support and fills a local transportation need , Supports outdoor-based businesses	State of Alaska US Forest Service	Convene stakeholder meeting and identify needs
Repair + Improve Shoemaker Park	Builds new restrooms and covered shelter with second-growth timber as a demonstration project through the Forest Service and USDA.	The park is heavily used, Heavy wear and tear on facilities requires attention, The park is a liability to the city	Parks + Recreation	Put forth proposal to USDA Cluster Initiative for new shelter

Wrangell Priority Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Project	Project Description	Justification	Lead Organization	First Year Action
Develop Kayak Routes + Support Facilities	Identification/mapping of established kayaking routes around Wrangell Island and adjacent areas of interest, such as the Stikine River, mainland and Bradfield, and part of Etolin Island, including potential shelters and kayak/gear storage areas in Wrangell.	Routes, shelters and facilities will attract visitors, Wrangell has the resources to do this, Route maps already exist on USFS website, Improvements will help connect regional Seatrails effort contribute to the overall SEAtails sea and land regional trail system.	Alaska Crossings US Forest Service City + Borough of Wrangell	Members of the core team will collaborate to put a map together for the new city website
Improve Pat's Lake area	Develop a recreation plan for area and restoration projects to restore stream habitat for fishing, and wildlife habitat for better hunting.	Lake gets a lot of use already, The area is drivable and accessible and gets year round use, Upcoming road improvements this summer, Challenge to improve/land owned by Mental Health Trust	Wrangell Resource Council SEACC	Investigate applying to recently released capacity building proposal
Improve City Park Facilities		Second most popular facility, Close to town A good place to land and beach kayaks, Appeals to residents and visitors	Parks + Recreation Department	Identify what needs improvement
Improve Parks + Recreation Programs for Youth	Develop an outdoor wilderness program for Wrangell youth who might not otherwise have the resources to experience this type of trip.	Gap in elementary-age Parks + Rec programs, Few non-ball sports, Few Wrangell youth experience remote outdoor recreation, Good time to collaborate with school's strategic planning, Not reinventing the wheel, Easily modified to fit Wrangell youth population, Leave no trace/environmental stewardship component, Potential business opportunity, Alaska Crossings already has equipment	Alaska Crossings Parks + Recreation Department Wrangell School District	Identify needs and gaps in current programming  Collaborate with Alaska Crossings to Adapt Program for Wrangell Youth (SEACC, Sitka Conservation Society, and Alaska Crossings are collaborating on two pilot project trips right now scheduled for this summer) Need to identify lead to hand off from Alaska Crossings

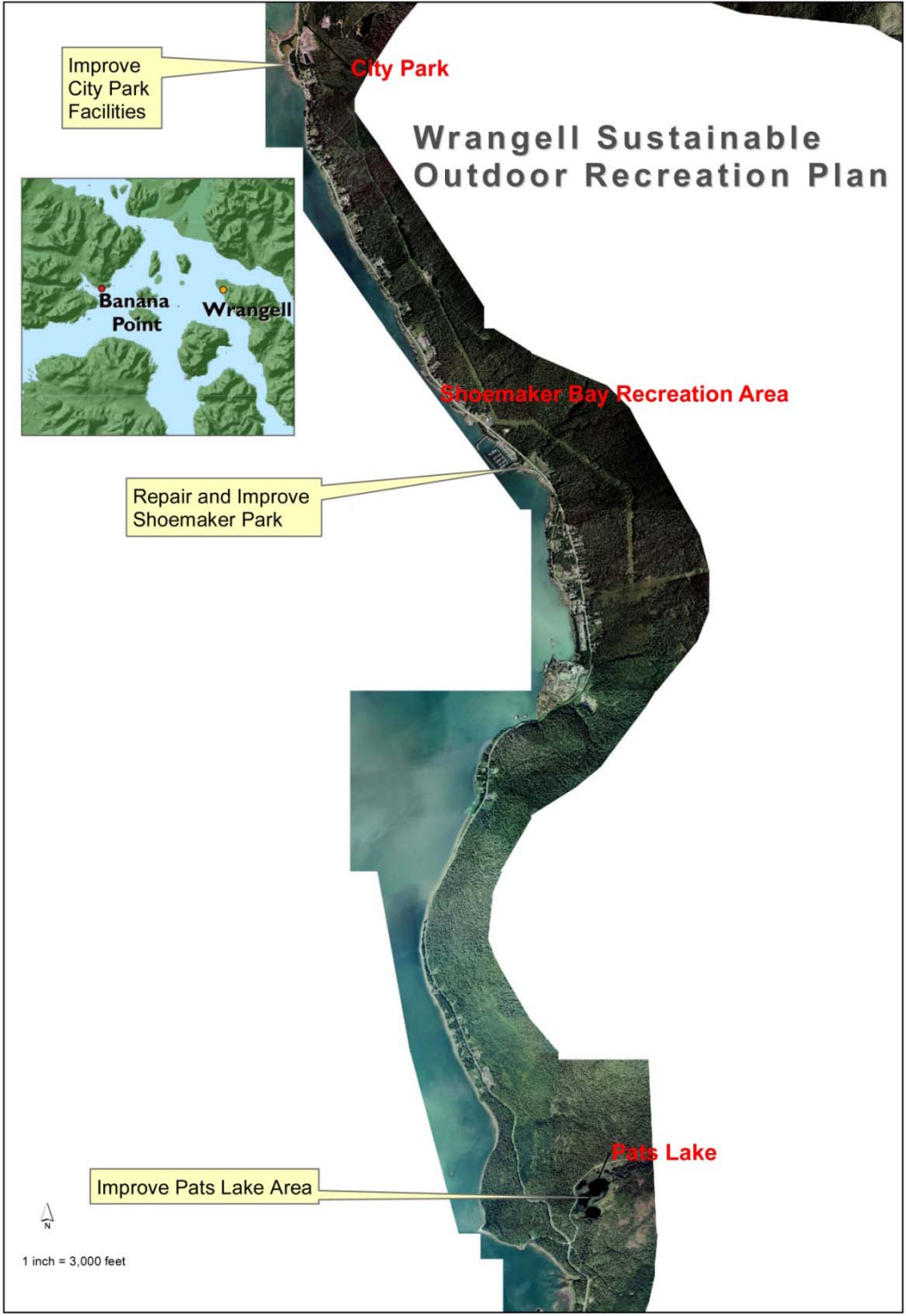
Wrangell Priority Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Project	Project Description	Justification	Lead Organization	First Year Action
Improve Rifle Range	Improve access, trim vegetation and repair the protective berms, and repair the covered shooting areas.	Existing facility needs a lot of repair, Could be easy and inexpensive to upgrade, Another option for visitors, (e.g. a place to sight deer rifle), Ducks Unlimited, Stikine Sports Association and NRA potential partners	Parks + Recreation Department	Member of core team will follow up with potential partners
Develop High Ropes Course + Zipline	Create a ropes course for use by local residents but also to attract members of other communities.	A unique offering, Annual high school program could take ownership, Activity for sports teams that come to town, Many communities have these, can learn from them	Alaska Crossings AICS	Alaska Crossings and AICS will collect successful examples, such as the following: <a href="http://www.icystraitpoint.com/General/Zipline#r3PTFhpfp1E">http://www.icystraitpoint.com/General/Zipline#r3PTFhpfp1E</a> (Hoonah, AK) <a href="http://www.kohalazipline.com/">http://www.kohalazipline.com/</a> (Kapaau, HI)
Develop Premier ATV trail system	Identify, map and promote an ATV trail system on the existing Forest Service road system to promote an ATV visitor industry.	The community has expressed a desire to see FS roads used for subsistence hunting, gathering, and sightseeing. ATVs are often the only way aging community members can access these areas with a car or truck, particularly for hunting. The FS has expressed an interest in working with the community to develop such a system.	City + Borough of Wrangell	Develop an initial set of maps/routes through interviews and a community work session

## Maps of Priority Projects

Map 4.1: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Priority Projects — City of Wrangell



Map 4.2: Priority Projects — Zimovia Highway and Wrangell Vicinity Inset



## 5. EVALUATION METRICS – MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

This plan identifies a set of priority projects, intended to help Wrangell move ahead in all four of the sustainability goals outlined in this plan. These projects are designed to:

- Strengthen the local economy;
- Benefit the environment, or at least be environmentally compatible;
- Be publically supported, and help improve quality of life;
- Be practical and affordable to build and maintain.

While not always easy, the community should strive to measure the impacts on these goals of the plan and the projects it identifies. Measurement is a way to refine and test strategies, and to demonstrate to funders, agencies and the general public that investments are producing tangible results.

Below is an initial start at identifying a set of metrics that can be used to help in this evaluation process. Metrics are shown in two broad categories. First is measurement of “output”. To use the goal of learning as an example, an output measure might be the number of schools built, or numbers of children attending class. The second category is “outcome”. Staying with this example, an outcome measure would aim to evaluate actual learning, for example, through test scores, or even success in later life. Outputs can typically be measured relatively easily; outcomes require more time and investment, to allow measurement over a longer time frame.

Outputs	Outcomes
<b>Strengthen the local economy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New facilities developed (dock, cabins, campsites)</li> <li>- Number of travelers visiting town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes in local government bed tax, sales tax</li> <li>- Net increase in number of new businesses in town</li> <li>- Changes in number of local residents receiving government support (e.g., number of kids classified as coming from low income families in local schools)</li> </ul>
<b>Benefit the environment, or at least be environmentally compatible</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Characteristics of facilities developed (e.g., use of recycled materials, LEED certified buildings, energy use, locations chosen)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measures of environmental health: this is a difficult category, as many factors impact this topic. Options for measurement focus on the before and after characteristics of conditions in the affected vicinity of a project, e.g., soil erosion, change in fish and wildlife population, changes in visual character</li> </ul>
<b>Publically supported</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New facilities developed</li> <li>- Funding raised for construction</li> <li>- Level of volunteer activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- indications of the overall health of civic life in a community, e.g. voter turnout</li> <li>- maybe this doesn't have outcomes distinct from outputs?</li> </ul>
<b>Help improve quality of life</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of programs offered</li> <li>- New facilities developed</li> <li>- New outdoor recreation opportunities developed (without requiring facilities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change in population; change in school enrollment (with growth suggesting that quality of life may be a factor driving increases)</li> <li>- Changes in number of retirees moving into community</li> </ul>



Outputs	Outcomes
Strengthen the local economy	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indications of health and fitness; this is hard to measure. Options include percentage of kids who participate in team sports, or who pass the standardized fitness tests offered at some schools; another option is to do engage in a longitudinal study of a small group of kids who participated and who did not participate in programs, and compare their life paths, and health</li> </ul>
Be practical and affordable to build and maintain.	
<p><i>On the cost side</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes in per unit operations costs of different types of facilities, e.g., cost per 100 feet of trails, or per acre of park</li> <li>- Changes construction</li> </ul> <p><i>On the revenue side</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- changes in the availability of funding to maintain facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overall operating budgets of agencies, local government</li> <li>- Expansion/changes in support for programs and facilities by new partners, non-profits, volunteers</li> <li>- Net fiscal health of agencies, local government</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX: A

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## Sample Surveys

Wrangell Kids + Youth Recreation Survey, 2011

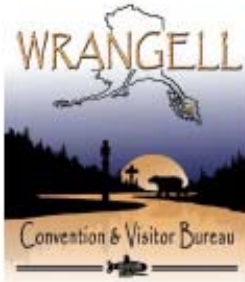
### Wrangell Kids + Youth Recreation Survey 2011



1. How old are you?
2. Boy \_\_\_ or Girl \_\_\_ ?
3. What are your three favorite things to do outside? For example, do you like to skateboard, play in the woods, ride your bike? Tell us what you like to do outside.
  - I like to: \_\_\_\_\_
  - I like to: \_\_\_\_\_
  - I like to: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Would like to have more things to do outside? What kinds of things would you like? For example, would you like to have a skate park? More hiking trails? Tell us what you would like.
  - I would like: \_\_\_\_\_
  - I would like: \_\_\_\_\_
  - I would like: \_\_\_\_\_
5. On the back of this paper, draw us a picture of the outside activities you like to do or want to do in Wrangell. If you know where you would like your idea to be put in Wrangell, mark it on the map on the wall!

Thank you!

# Bed and Breakfast Survey, 2011



## Welcome to Wrangell!!

On behalf of the community, we extend a warm welcome and hope you will enjoy your stay!

We are working to improve outdoor opportunities and access for visitors and residents. If you could please help by answering a few questions for us.

1. Where are you from? \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State, Country)
2. How did you travel to Wrangell? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What activities have you participated in while visiting Wrangell? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. If outdoor recreation, what types of activities? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How long did you stay in Wrangell? \_\_\_\_\_  
(nights/days)

Please make sure to visit the Wrangell Visitor Center and Wrangell Museum located downtown in the Nolan Center. Staff can help answer questions about all the things to see and do and explore while in Wrangell.



# Wrangell Adult Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2011

## Wrangell Outdoor Recreation Survey

### Introduction

Our community is developing the *Wrangell Outdoor Recreation Plan* for Wrangell. If you work or play outdoors, we need YOUR ideas. Tell us what outdoor programs and projects you would like to see in Wrangell. All you have to do is take a short 10 -15 minutes to complete this quick survey! Why is it important that you fill out this survey?

- A few minutes of your time now will help determine what projects and programs are developed for the next 5 years.
- Ideas, old and new, are most welcome. If you don't see a question that addresses your area of interest, use the "More Comments, Questions, Concerns" section to share your thoughts.
- If you think something is being done well, we'd like to hear about that, too.
- Your comments will be used to write the *Draft Wrangell Outdoor Recreation Plan*. A first workshop to discuss your ideas is planned for Thursday, November 17, 2011.
- **Monday, October 24, 2011 is the deadline for completing the survey.**

Thank you for taking the time and making Wrangell a great place to live and visit!

### All About You

1. How long have you lived in Wrangell? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What outdoor recreation activities do you enjoy most and why? Please check all that apply from the list below or write in your activity in the space labeled "other".
  - a. Sightseeing
  - b. Boat Cruising
  - c. Resting/Relaxing
  - d. Fishing in salt water
  - e. Fishing in fresh water
  - f. Crabbing/Shrimping
  - g. Camping
  - h. Picnicking
  - i. Kayaking/Canoeing
  - j. Hiking
  - k. Beach walking
  - l. Hot springs visiting
  - m. Wildlife viewing
  - n. Subsistence gathering
  - o. Hunting
  - p. Swimming
  - q. USDA Forest Service Cabin stay
  - r. Lodge stay
  - s. Private Cabin stay
  - t. Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_



4. Where do like to do your most outdoor recreation activities? Please check where you spend most of your time outdoors.
  - a. In my backyard
  - b. Close to downtown
  - c. At local parks
  - d. On local trails
  - e. Out the road
  - f. In remote locations
  - g. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. How often do you exercise (e.g. walking, hiking, running, biking, kayaking, playing basketball, volleyball, etc.)?
  - a. I don't exercise
  - b. 1-2 times a week
  - c. 3-4 times a week
  - d. 4-5 times a week
  - e. More than 5 times a week
  
6. How often do you exercise or recreate outdoors?
  - a. I don't exercise or recreate outdoors
  - b. 1-2 times a week
  - c. 3-4 times a week
  - d. 4-5 times a week
  - e. More than 5 times a week
  
7. What would you guess is your fitness level?
  - a. Not fit or out of shape (don't exercise)
  - b. Somewhat fit (exercise once or twice a week)
  - c. Fit (exercise 3-4 times a week)
  - d. Very Fit (exercise more than 5 times a week)

Education + Information

8. Please check the most common way you receive information about local outdoor recreation activities and programs.
  - a. Websites (please enter specific websites below)
  - b. Facebook or other social networking tools
  - c. Local newspaper
  - d. Radio (please enter specific radio station below)
  - e. Friends
  - f. Family members

g. From participating or observing other outdoor recreation events  
Specific websites and/or radio stations:

---

9. How can we make information about local outdoor recreation activities and programs more useful and accessible? Please write your answer in the space below.

---

10. Would you or your family participate in outdoor skills classes (e.g. ice skating, mountaineering, rock climbing, kayaking, etc.)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Maybe, if I can afford them
- d. Maybe, if I have enough time

11. Would you or your family participate in outdoor safety skills class (e.g. avalanche safety, marine safety, bear behavior, etc.).

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Maybe, if I can afford them
- d. Maybe, if I have enough time

### Overall Outdoor Recreation

12. Tell us your favorite outdoor recreation project (e.g. trail, facility, program):

---

13. What new outdoor recreation project would you like to see completed?

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
  - b. Facilities
  - c. Areas
  - d. Programs
  - e. Activities
  - f. Tell us what facilities, areas, programs and activities are needed:
- 

14. What existing outdoor recreation facilities, areas, programs or activities for adults do you use?

---

15. What additional outdoor recreation activities could be provided for elderly or physically challenged individuals?

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
  - b. We need...(please write your answer in the space below).
- 

### Playgrounds + Sport Fields

16. What new outdoor recreation facilities, areas, programs or activities could be provided for Wrangell youth (ages 2-17)?

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
- b. Facilities
- c. Areas
- d. Programs
- e. Activities

Please tell us what facilities, areas, programs or activities are needed:

---

17. What existing outdoor recreation facilities, areas, programs or activities for Wrangell youth do you use (ages 2-17)?

---

### Campgrounds, Parks + Green Space

18. What new campgrounds, parks and greenspace are needed in Wrangell?

- a. None are needed.
  - b. We need the following (please be specific and include where you think new campgrounds, parks and greenspace should be located):
- 

19. What existing campgrounds, parks and greenspaces in and around Wrangell do you use?

---

20. How can existing facilities be improved to meet your outdoor recreation needs?

- a. None are needed.
  - b. We need the following improvements (please be specific):
- 

### Cabins + Shelters

21. Do you use recreation cabins?

- a. No. I'm not interested.
- b. No, but I would like to.
- c. Yes.

22. If you answered "Yes" to question 21, what cabins do you use most often?

---



23. What transportation modes do you use to access cabins (you may choose more than one)?

- a. I don't use cabins
- b. Water.
- c. Float plane.
- d. Trails.
- e. Roads.

24. Would you like to see new cabins or shelters?

- a. Don't know.
  - b. No. I don't use cabins or shelters.
  - c. Yes. (Where would you like to see them built - please be specific)?
- 

#### Trails + Pathways

25. Are there new trails, bike, mountain bike, or pedestrian paths you would like to see developed? Please check one.

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
  - b. Yes. (Please tell us what types and where you would like to see trails/pathways built below.)
- 

26. How would you rate the ease of getting access TO existing trails and pathways? Please check one.

- a. Don't know
  - b. More than adequate
  - c. Somewhat adequate
  - d. Adequate
  - e. Inadequate – at what locations could access be improved?
- 

#### Kayaking + Skiff Routes

27. Are improved kayaking + skiff facilities and information needed (e.g. mooring buoys, launch and haul out areas, maps, shelters/cabins, etc.)?

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
  - b. We need more kayaking + skiff improvements (please specify below):
- 

28. What are your favorite existing kayaking + skiff facilities or routes?

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Hunting, Fishing, Gathering

29. Are new facilities needed to support hunting, fishing or gathering activities?

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
- b. We need the following improvements (please be specific):

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30. Are new winter outdoor recreation facilities, areas, programs, activities needed?

- a. None are needed. What we have is great!
- b. We need more winter outdoor recreation improvements (please specify below):

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- c. What you're your favorite existing winter outdoor recreation facilities, areas, programs and activities?

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For more information on this project including information on the planning process, expected outcomes and the project schedule, check out the *Wrangell Outdoor Recreation Plan* project webpage, [www.wrangell.com/projects/](http://www.wrangell.com/projects/). Or, get in touch with a Core Team Co-Chair, Jeremy Maxand, [jmaxand@hotmail.com](mailto:jmaxand@hotmail.com) or Carol Rushmore, [ecodev@wrangell.com](mailto:ecodev@wrangell.com).

More comments? Have some questions? Please provide them in the space below.

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## APPENDIX: B

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# Proposed Project Inventory

## Complete Proposed Projects List

12/19/11

Create a trail linking Mt. Dewey with Volunteer Park Trail  
Repairs/upgrades to existing facilities at Shoemaker Park (including kayak storage, shelter, showers, bathrooms, picnic area, playground, floats/piers)  
Cap and create real multi-purpose site at Running Track.  
Develop canoe-kayak routes: around the island, add a few cabins, hardened sites, shelters  
Extend or create longer trails (greater than 30 minute hikes)  
Extend bike path south along Zimovia highway to end of pavement  
Build Banana Point doc  
Expand Mt. Dewey Trail to a Stikine River Overlook  
Create a trail to top of mountain  
Develop master plan for running track area  
Golf Course Pond Trail  
Expand bike path to continue on Loop Road to Elementary School  
Develop Stikine River Float map: topographic, cabins, campgrounds, hazards  
Winter X-C and snow machine trails  
Develop better info on informal backcountry routes as well as trails  
Create sidewalk/bike path from ferry terminal to Petroglyph Beach  
Rename Mt. Dewey trail to the John Muir Trail  
Market Wrangell and trail to John Muir visitors  
Better moorings for cabins  
Improve facilities at City Park and build kayak storage/haul out; restrooms.  
Expand Petroglyph Beach State Park  
Modify covered playground to include covered tennis court  
Create premier ATV trail system  
Link Volunteer Park Trail to new Medical complex  
Create Beach Swimming and Picnic area on point near breakwater at Heritage Harbor  
Improve access to swimming beach near Zimovia highway  
Create additional beach access points at remaining Zimovia highway pull outs  
Create more RV Parks at Heritage Harbor/City Park  
Make 8 Mile Beach and Sandy Beach recreation facilities more accessible  
(2) Improve Pat's Lake day facilities, picnic area, walk/ski trails, fishing dock  
Improve campsites (along Zimovia highway, south of Pat's Lake)  
Develop mountain bike trails and youth BMX facility  
Develop high ropes course  
Develop picnic area at float plane pullout  
Repair Chief Shakes Hot Springs trail and site  
(2011 RAC project, approved 10-21)  
Increase inter-island ferry service by resuming Rainforest Ferry  
Develop Steamer Bay floating dock to improve access to cabin during all tides  
Nemo road improvements and completion of Wrangell loop road  
Increase guided access to land  
Re-establish part of historic Stikine Trail  
Add Chief Shakes Hot Springs site interpretive sign

Construct hiking trail network from Volunteer Park trails to Golf Course  
Improve easy-access wildlife and bird watching trails and areas  
Develop trail around Thoms Lake with bridges  
Convert Zarembo Forest Service Roads to outdoor rec use  
Anan trail bridge and boardwalk replacements  
Anan trail bear safety and viewing enhancements  
Highbush trail improvement and extension  
Improve trail access to Garnet Ledge cabin from quarry  
Cabin upgrades to Etolin and Zarembo Islands  
Pat's Lake management/ownership plan, camping + trail access  
Pat's Lake recreation site and riparian area improvements  
Develop rope exercise course stations in Volunteer Park  
Collaborate with Alaska Crossings to develop more Wrangell youth programs  
Build on/expand Parks and Rec programs  
Trail from Volunteer Park to Mt. Dewey and linking to Stough's trailer park

# APPENDIX: C

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## Existing Plan Summaries + Common Outdoor Recreation Proposal List

Existing Tourism and Recreation Plans for Wrangell and Southeast Alaska

- I. **Wrangell Comprehensive Plan 2010**
- II. **Rainforest Islands Ferry Business Plan**
- III. **Southeast Alaska Economic Asset Map**
- IV. **Southeast Alaska Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**
- V. **United States Forest Service Recreation Plan 1997-2001**
- VI. **Wrangell 20/20: Envisioning Our Future 2007**
- VII. **Wrangell ACHIEVE plan 2008**

Wrangell is a community poised for change with a multitude of existing plan resources. Since 2007, the Wrangell community participated in the 20/20 community forum, was selected to craft an ACHIEVE (Action Communities for Health, Innovation and Environmental Change) plan from the Centers for Disease Control and the YMCA, and completed the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. These plans emphasize community land management goals and local and visitor recreation priorities. Two regional economic plans crafted by the Juneau Economic Development Council and the Southeast Conference support Wrangell's emphasis on producing a stable, year-round outdoor recreation economy. There are many common goals between all the plans even if the specific projects and actions differ. However, the overriding emphasis is on working collaboratively across organizations and jurisdictions. The United States Forest Service, State Parks, institutional landowners, neighboring communities, transportation and outdoor recreation businesses all share in the responsibility and success of the Wrangell's sustainable recreation future.

The following two sections explain these plans in more detail. The Summary of Plans section summarizes these plans explaining their purpose, scope and relation to sustainable outdoor recreation. The Plan Outdoor Recreation Element Synergies section presents the common broad themes (as goals and opportunities) and specific projects (as actions and projects). This section also provides a list of unique outdoor recreation ideas that although only found in one plan are worthy of investigation.

### Summary of Plans

#### I. **Wrangell Comprehensive Plan, 2010**

The City and Borough of Wrangell Comprehensive Plan was finished in June 2010 and was coordinated by the Planning and Zoning Commission with the help of municipal staff and the input of over 150 residents at town meetings and work sessions. The purpose of the plan is to provide a comprehensive vision and set of goals covering future land use, transportation, economic development and public resource changes over the next 10-20 years. The Visitor Industry section highlights trends in independent visitors, small cruise ship market, yacht and pleasure craft visits and conference and meeting visitors. Local recreation and parks, recreation and open space goals focus on preserving land for recreational use, protecting watershed lands,

aligning land use designations with large landowner plans (such as the US Forest Service land designations), and developing and maintaining outdoor recreation facilities.

## **II. Rainforest Islands Ferry Business Plan, 2011**

The Rainforest Islands Ferry Business Plan was prepared by the City of Coffman Cove and North End Ferry Authority to restore passenger ferry service between Coffman Cove, Wrangell and South Mitkof Island. The purpose of the business plan was to outline routes, service schedules and specific ferry details. It does not cover projected ridership or impact on local residents, visitors or tourists. However, it does provide some information on funds sources for rehabilitation of the ferry vessel and start-up operating costs.

## **III. Southeast Alaska Economic Asset Map, 2010**

The Southeast Alaska Economic Asset Map was developed for the U.S. Forest Service by a partnership of entities led by the Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC). Completed in December 2010, the document is based on a database (or “map”) of different attributes and indicators of the Southeast Alaska economic environment. The purpose is to provide information on Southeast regional assets relevant to economic growth such as employment and demographics, education and workforce readiness, natural resources, quality of life and private industry among others. “Tourism and Recreation” is identified as one of fourteen indicators highlighted as a factor in regional economic health.

## **IV. Southeast Alaska Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2010**

The Southeast Alaska Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2010 Update was prepared for the United States Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration by the Southeast Conference and the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. It is an update to the 2006-2011 Strategy report. The 2010 Strategy report update is intended to evaluate, coordinate and implement economic activities in the region. The document covers transportation and tourism opportunities related to outdoor recreation. Most of the document is devoted to individual community profiles including one on Wrangell. Outdoor recreation opportunities identified for Wrangell are limited to a list of proposed projects consisting of city recreation areas, general trail upgrades and harbor improvements.

## **V. United States Forest Service Wrangell Recreation Plan, 1997-2001**

The US Forest Service Wrangell Recreation Plan was prepared by the Wrangell District as an update to the recreation program goals published in 1992. The 1997-2001 plans listed a series of goals and 64 projects with status for the Wrangell Forest Service lands. The list provides an overview of Wrangell District Forest Service capital improvement projects as of 1997 and includes projects such as trail building, cabin and shelter construction, improve roads on Wrangell Island and build new campgrounds and RV sites. Projects are located on Wrangell, Etolin and Zarembo Islands and in the Anan Bear Viewing and Stikine-LeConte Wilderness Areas.

## **VI. Wrangell 20/20: Envisioning Our Future, 2007**

The Wrangell 20/20: Envisioning Our Future event was held over two days at the Nolan Center in January 2007. The function of the event was to update and expand on the outcomes of the

2001 Economic Development Forums. The 2007 forum brought together more than 50 individuals, including the input of community organizations and school age children, to engage in a community-wide discussion on what participants think make Wrangell a great place to live, what they value most, what keeps Wrangell healthy, vital and resilient and what Wrangell can share with the rest of the outside world. The most valuable section provides tallies of all the goals (each given a general category) and details the top seven goals. It also includes appendix sections with comments from school age children and community organizations.

## **VII. Wrangell ACHIEVE Plan, 2010**

The Wrangell ACHIEVE plan (Action Communities for Health, Innovation and Environmental Change), was a unique opportunity for the Wrangell community to work with national organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control, the YMCA, and National Association of Chronic Disease Directors. As one of 200 communities selected around the nation, Wrangell participated in the ACHIEVE planning process. The result is a Community Action Plan with three goals: 1) By 2015-2020, 50% of all commercially sold produce in Wrangell will be locally grown; By 2012, we will see an increase in the percentage of Wrangell residents participating in daily physical activity; and by 2012, data will show that Wrangell has a 15% increase of employees that participate in regular physical activity. As of June 2011, many of the action steps are completed or underway. They focus on understanding resident exercise behavior, providing facilities and creating a network of active residents by working through existing organizations.

## **Plan Outdoor Recreation Element Synergies**

Upon reviewing the variety and scope of plans relating to Wrangell's outdoor recreation, it is clear that Wrangell already has momentum towards creating and implementing a comprehensive sustainable outdoor recreation plan. Existing plans have common goals and support similar conclusions from the regional to local level. The plans all agree that Wrangell sustainable outdoor recreation activities need to emphasize Wrangell's unique historical and natural assets while working with regional communities to bolster transportation resources and regional promotion. Of particular value are emphasizing existing outdoor recreation strengths such as the Stikine River and delta, Anan wildlife observatory, backcountry trail system and the city's authentic small-town feel and native historical resources while developing new, complementary offerings. The following lists of common goals and actions provide a good starting point for planning sustainable recreation in Wrangell while avoiding duplication of effort.

## **Common Outdoor Recreation Goals and Opportunities**

- Protect and plan for use of highly valued local and USFS outdoor recreation land.
- Partner with neighboring communities to promote sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Develop, improve and interconnect trail system for diverse users.
- Develop reliable transportation infrastructure – including regular ferry schedules.
- Seek sources of capital investment funds from diverse sources and larger institutions.
- Study opportunities for developing outdoor recreation facilities elsewhere in Wrangell Borough.
- Strengthen the relationship between Wrangell, the Forest Service and outdoor recreation businesses.



- Build or improve local recreation facilities for diverse users.
- Upgrade harbor facilities and develop areas outside of Wrangell for boat access.
- Work together rather than against each other on outdoor recreation economic development.
- Develop sustainable outdoor recreation based on Wrangell's unique assets.

## **Common Outdoor Recreation Actions and Projects**

### **Common Trail Actions and Projects**

- Develop multi-purpose, multi-community land trails with wayfinding and interpretive signage
- Convert Zarembo Forest Service Roads to outdoor rec use. (2011 RAC project 11-10 on hold)
- Anan trail bridge and boardwalk replacements (2011 RAC project 10-13 on hold)
- Anan trail bear safety and viewing enhancements (2011 RAC project 10-13 on hold)
- Highbush trail improvement and extension (2011 RAC project 10-19 moving forward)
- Improve trail access to Garnet Ledge cabin from quarry. (2011 RAC project 10-80 on hold)

### **Common Cabin/Shelter Actions and Projects**

- Cabin upgrades to Etolin and Zarembo Islands.
- Wrangell District cabin refurbishments and upgrades (2011 RAC project 11-12 on hold)
- Wrangell Island campsite maintenance (2011 RAC project 10-33 approved)

### **Common Recreation Area Actions and Projects**

- Pat's Lake management and ownership plan with restored camping and trail access.
- Pat's Lake recreation site and riparian area improvements (2011 RAC project 10-73 moving forward)
- Maintain and increase use of community pool and other recreational facilities
- Recreation facility improvement and equipment replacement
- Develop track and exercise stations in Volunteer Park
- Track area capping and resurfacing
- Identify and enable youth physical activities with local organizations
- Explore developing mountain bike trails and youth BMX facility

### **Common Park and Cultural Site Actions and Projects**

- Develop a picnic area at the floatplane pullout
- Expand Petroglyph Beach State Park
- Repair Chief Shakes Hot Springs trail and site (2011 RAC project 10-21 approved)

### **Common Transportation Actions and Projects**

- Increase inter-island ferry service through resumption of ferry service with Rainforest Ferry Service
- Heritage Harbor phase III construction
- Shoemaker Harbor improvements: floats, piers, uplands
- Steamer Bay float and high tide access to cabin (2011 RAC project 10-77 approved)

- Nemo road improvements and completion of Wrangell loop road
- Increase guided access to land

### **Unduplicated Complimentary Actions and Projects**

- Re-establish part of the historic “Stikine Trail.”
- Add Chief Shakes Hot Springs site interpretive signage.
- Rename Mt. Dewey trail to the John Muir Trail
- Market Wrangell and trail to John Muir visitors
- Develop partnership with Alaska Marine Highway to provide access/promotion
- Develop volunteer-tourism opportunities
- Construct hiking trail network from Senior Ball field to the spur road. Low-elevation, easy to access hiking trails close to town.
- Improve easy-access wildlife and bird watching trails and areas.