

State Park Emergency Repairs**FY2002 Request: \$400,000****Reference No: 6843****AP/AL:** Appropriation**Project Type:** Deferred Maintenance**Category:** Health/Human Services**Location:** Statewide**Contact:** Jim Stratton**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)**Contact Phone:** (907)269-8700**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2001 - 06/30/2005**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

Alaska's state parks receive almost 4 million visits annually. 80% of these visits are from residents who visit state parks for outdoor recreation's many health, family, and community benefits. Many of the state parks are old and broken (\$34 million in identified deferred maintenance needs) and present potential health and safety hazards to visitors. The project will fund emergency repairs to park units to prevent further deterioration of park facilities so as to protect visitor health and safety.

Funding:	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	Total
Gen Fund	\$400,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$4,150,000
Total:	\$400,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$4,150,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

SLA 2000/CH135 - \$286,200

SLA 1999/CH2 - \$151,500

SLA 1998/CH139 - \$200,000

Project Description/Justification:

The State Park infrastructure is broken. The longer we ignore the significant deferred maintenance needs of the state park system, the more expensive it will be to ultimately fix. In the meantime, the park system will lose visitors as they are disgusted with the disrepair in many parks (outhouses and roads receive the most complaints). Also, the state runs the risk of paying for injuries or illness due to unsafe or unhealthy park facilities.

Specific Spending Detail:

Outhouse Replacement (\$140.0):

Replacing old, worn-out, unsafe outhouses is a critical goal of Alaska State Parks. Many of these facilities are 30 years old and are more than an olfactory threat to those that use them. In summer 1999, a camper actually fell through the floor of an old outhouse.

Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park
 Glenn Alps Trailhead (Chugach State Park)
 Byer's Lake Campground (Denali State Park)
 Rosehip Campground (Chena River State Recreation Area)

Search & Rescue capability (\$42.5):

Wood-Tikchik State Park - vehicle
Mat-Su Area Parks - snowmobile and outboard replacement and support

Alaskans recreate outdoors more, on a per capita basis, than any other state in the Union. The state's ruggedness and remote nature often catch people in life threatening situations. When a search and rescue operation is needed, Alaska State Park Rangers take control within state park units and are frequently called upon to assist the Alaska State Troopers in Search and Rescue operations outside state park boundaries. Their ability to respond in a timely fashion is absolutely dependent upon equipment that works. In Wood-Tikchik State Park, a new vehicle is needed to support a new full-time park ranger. That ranger will be responsible not only for the largest state park in America, but also will assist the local Troopers with general Search & Rescue in SW Alaska. In the Mat-Su Valley, winter response capability needs to be improved at Independence Mine State Historic Park with improved snowmobile rescue operations and summer response at Nancy Lake, Kepler-Bradley, and Willow Creek by replacing outboard motors that are almost 20 years old.

Vandalism Prevention & Visitor Safety (\$108.0):

Tok area parks – basic radio communications
Settler's Cove State Recreation Site (Ketchikan) – security gate
Baranof Castle State Historic Site (Sitka) – rock wall cap
Chugach State Park – trail maintenance

Families visiting Alaska State Parks expect a level of security that provides for a safe outdoor experience. In the Tok area, park employees are unable to communicate with one another because of the lack of radio communications. In case of emergencies, this inability to communicate jeopardizes camper safety. In Ketchikan, Settler's Cove is at the end of the road and is a popular spot for local teens to hang out. End-of-the-road partying is a threat to those in the campground. A temporary barrier has been used during the past couple seasons to reduce the frequency of partying and its impact upon those using the campground and has been quite successful. That temporary structure needs to be made permanent.

At Baranof Castle, a rock wall is deteriorating, loosening the top layer of rock. Thousands of visitors visit this premier historic site each year. A cap is needed on the rock wall to prevent further deterioration and possible injury caused by falling rock. And at Chugach State Park, its many trails require annual maintenance to reduce the risk of falls on the steeper trails and to clear brush from pathways to reduce potentially dangerous conflicts with wildlife.

Water system repair (\$51.5):

One of the quickest ways to get sick in the outdoors is to drink bad water. Several of the water systems in the state parks are in need of repair to reduce any potential of illness.

Halibut Cove (Kachemak Bay State Park) water system repair
Caines Head (Seward) water system repair
Northern Area parks water system repair

Worker and volunteer safety (\$13.0):

Alaska's state parks run on volunteer support. To ensure that these volunteer workers, as well as our full-time employees, are not injured on the job, we have embarked on a significant review and upgrading of our work areas. While much progress has been made in the past two years, there still remain unsafe work environments. Funds will be used to meet OSHA standards in the Kenai Area Headquarters shop and at the volunteer housing at Johnson Lake State Recreation Site.

Safety education, design, support (\$45.0):

To efficiently and effectively implement these projects and others that can be funded from the annual operating budget, the field staff operating Alaska's state parks needs design support and visitor education from the central office staff.

Project Benefits:

Alaska's State Parks are a source of pride for Alaskans and provide for road accessible fishing, camping, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, wildlife viewing, cultural and historic site visitation, and other outdoor recreational pursuits. Alaskans and our visitors participate in outdoor activities at a much higher level than the national average. Because most State Park facilities are on the road system, and therefore more accessible than the national park system, enormous demands are placed on the State Park facilities. State Parks receive over three times the visitation of the national park system, with most visitation coming from Alaskans. Poorly maintained park facilities not only reflect poorly on the state and its effort to increase tourism, but they can be a health and safety hazard to park users. Whether park users are from Alaska or Outside, local communities benefit greatly from the economic impact of these people buying groceries, gas, fishing tackle, souvenirs, restaurant meals, showers, guidebooks, fishing guides, and sightseeing tours. To continue attracting these visitors, facilities must be repaired and maintained and meet basic health and safety requirements. In addition, each project provides funding for local suppliers of materials needed for these repairs.

Projected Revenue to the State:

Making necessary repairs lessens the amount of duct tape, bailing wire, and staff attention needed from the operating budget to keep facilities operating. Repaired facilities are more pleasing to the public, which increases use and the amount of fees collected.

Project Support:

State Park visitors, Alaska Travel Industry Alliance, Alaska Wilderness Recreation Tourism Association, State Park Advisory Boards, local Chambers of Commerce, recreational user groups, and highway travelers.

Project Opposition: None**Does this project leverage other funding for the state?**

Some repairs are done with volunteer labor. State Parks realizes a funding savings with the use of Volunteer labor that allows project funding to repairs more facilities.

Project History:

The asset value of State Park facilities is over \$100 million. While Parks is able to do minor repairs and painting to annually maintain these facilities, major repairs require specific funding through the capital process. The last two fiscal years have only provided Parks with \$436.0 to repair health and safety problems on roads, cabins, water systems and toilets. Currently over \$34 million in repairs is needed for deferred maintenance in the park system. There is no alternative to repairing existing park facilities other than closing park units for lack of adequate facilities. Partnering with the private sector to make these repairs is done wherever possible. Many repairs, such as to cabins, volunteer housing, and picnic shelters can and will be done with volunteer labor.

Alternative Approaches/Financing Considered:

There is no alternative to repairing existing park facilities other than closing park units for lack of adequate facilities.

Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs:

The purpose of this project is to reduce annual maintenance costs by addressing the backlog of deferred maintenance needs in the park system. There is no increase to operating costs as all projects are occurring where funds are already being expended for daily operations.