

Chapter 3—The Planning Process

The NCS loosely adopted a planning framework known as Experience Based Management (EBM) (Manfredo 2002). EBM follows a general planning framework, but modifies it to focus on the needs of the users. The EBM planning framework emphasizes understanding the needs of the users, in this case people involved in research, education, and recreation activities. After these needs are understood, a system is developed to best allocate available resources to meet the needs of the users. A critical component of the EBM process is the development

conditions on the North Campus.

Research-related Interviews

In May 2002, Dr. Patricia Holloway, Associate Professor of Plant, Animal and Soil Sciences, conducted a survey of individuals with UAF email addresses. A request for information on past and present uses of the North Campus was sent to all current student, staff, faculty and administrative email accounts (@uaf.edu). Units with special addresses (i.e. @gi.alaska.edu, @ddc.uaf.edu) were not directly accessed because address lists were not available. This effort provided a wealth of information on the diversity of uses that occur on the NC and its importance to research, education, and recreation. The May 2002 email survey provided an initial list of research, and efforts were made to contact individuals not included in the initial survey that were known to be conducting research in the NC. Additions to this list of uses continue to be made based on public meetings, additional historic research and personal interviews. The goal is to develop the most comprehensive list as possible of all research, education, and recreation activities. This work resulted in a preliminary list of 33 individuals or entities, across several institutes/departments, conducting research on North Campus (see Table 3.1).

The information obtained for research sites varied in detail. Personal contact was made with those researchers for which more detail was needed. Some were contacted in person, while fourteen individuals were sent a letter and map soliciting information on their research in the North Campus. A template of the letter and an accompanying map are found in Appendix D.

Identification of Issues

From June 2002 through early spring 2003, the NCS met with groups representing different activities and uses (e.g., research, running, skiing,) and administrative areas (e.g., safety, campus maintenance, road construction) to assess their interests and responsibilities on the NC and to identify potential conflicts. The meetings provided valuable information from which to assess current uses and determine how the NC may meet the needs of the users. Key issues relating to research, education, and recreation identified through these meetings are presented below:

x Number and size of structures for research (e.g., satellite dishes, towers)

x Access to utilities

x Environmental and visual impacts from research (e.g., clearings, roads, flagging, fencing, structures, vehicles in the area)

x Removal of equipment and site restoration after completion of research project

x Liability to UAF resulting from user injured by research equipment

Education:

x Access to the NC from main campus, including safe access by bus

x Impact of large groups on ski trail grooming and ground cover/vegetation

x Expansion of the West Ridge infrastructure as it drives the necessary circulation and parking.

x Disturbance of class laboratory research areas by other users (e.g., protecting areas used for classes)

x Environmental disturbance by large groups

x Removal of instructional equipment, materials, and site restoration following class use

Recreation:

x Trampling of groomed ski trails by walkers and dogs Trud078>Tj /TT0 1 Tf 0.002 Tw 0.457 0 Td ()Tj -0.001 Tc 0.003 Tw

Special Management Areas

Importantly, the North Campus incorporates six specific parcels of land that are currently subject to special management restrictions or guidelines. Each has its own history and special management characteristics (Appendix E). The areas are:

- 1) UAF Arboretum
- 2) UAF Biological Reserve
- 3) Smith Lake
- 4) College International Geophysical Observatory (CIGO)
- 5) UAF Rifle Range
- 6) Ballaine Lake

Issues of concern include:

- x Conflicts with Arboretum policies and management (Wood, 1967)
- x Biological Reserve concerns over security and trespass, as well as Tanana Loop extension impact on research
- x The Fairbanks Experimental Farm and Georgeson Botanical Garden are not located on North Campus but are adjacent to the area; use within the North Campus area that impacts these areas should be taken into account. Management plans are being developed for both entities; the NCS and MPC should have input into the plans.
- x The College International Geophysical Observatory (CIGO) has specific management requirements that could impact uses on NC (Townsend, 1985).
- x

x North Campus accessibility, ADA compliance

Spring 2003 Public Meetings

Because the issues listed above reflected the views of specific organizations and individuals, the NCS also sought input from a broader cross section of stakeholders through a series of public meetings held in spring 2003. Three meetings were held on April 5-7, 2003 at the UAF Wood Center, the Noel Wien Library of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and the UAF Geophysical Institute to gather information relating to the issues identified by the NCS. Seven 4' x 6' posters displaying this information were developed for the public meetings. Four of the posters related to value statements that were developed for the NC, and three related to specific issues of concern in the NC (see Appendix F).

Attendees were encouraged to write comments on the posters with Post-itT notes or give verbal comments to subcommittee members present. In addition, surveys with questions regarding the issues were passed out to those in attendance. The surveys could be returned by campus mail for those not able to complete it during the meeting. In addition, printouts of the posters were available to take with the survey. Surveys, and the printouts of the posters, were also distributed to those not able to attend the public meetings but who were known to have a strong interest in the North Campus.

Results of Public Involvement Meetings

An eight-page, self-administered survey and printouts of the posters were distributed to those attending the meetings. The survey consisted of 40 questions with a Likert Scale response format; i.e., a response scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree or highly acceptable to highly unacceptable. The Likert Scale response format allows for systematic tabulation of results and comparisons across questions (see Appendix G).

The survey had several subcomponents. The first section of the survey presented hypothetical scenarios with a series of questions regarding each hypothetical scenario. The next sections included a series of specific questions about walking on ski trails, issues revolving around permafrost, maintenance acceptability of different ski trail allocations, the T-Field Road and lighting ski trails.

It is important to note that those who completed the survey were self-selected. The sampling frame consisted of only those who attended the meeting or obtained a copy of the survey outside the meetings. Therefore, while the surveys may be representative of those who attended the meetings, statements generalizing these results back to the broader population of UAF faculty, staff and students or the Fairbanks community cannot be made.

There were 338 comments written on the Post-it notes and attached to the posters at one of the meeting locations, written on the survey posters and returned to the committee, or written on the survey and returned to a committee member. The 338 written comments could be placed in 733 categories with different topic areas (i.e.,

Analyses of the survey data included:

x

of the North Campus were acceptable.

The input gathered at the meetings suggests a balanced approach to the management of the NC that preserves many of the uses of the area. The full report from the meetings is found in Appendix G.

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