

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

4/13/2020

Answers to questions asked by the City of Gustavus regarding safety and health and access to the park

Q1. Will the park be following social distancing and quarantine procedures established by City resolution?

Park employees will abide by all applicable City of Gustavus Resolutions and State of Alaska Mandates including:

- Gustavus Resolution CY20-12 (Social Distancing)
- Gustavus Resolution CY 20-13 (Safe Travel Into and Out of Gustavus)
- State Mandate 10 (International and Interstate Travel)
- State Mandate 11 (Social Distancing)
- State Mandate 12 (Intrastate Travel)

While the Supremacy clause of the Constitution as well as exemptions within State rules for essential services and Government activities do not require that the park to abide by these rules within NPS boundaries we fully intend to do so unless there is an emergency need to do otherwise. At that time we would be informing the State of our intent or the emergency action.

Q2: How many seasonal employees does the park expect to employ this summer?

A: The park delayed or cancelled the arrival of all out-of-town seasonal employees prior to the announcement of the State Mandates and City Resolutions. At least until April 30th, the NPS will be restricting start dates of out-of-town seasonal employees to only those considered essential for law enforcement and emergency medical response. This action is more restrictive than the current interstate and intrastate travel requirements set by State of Alaska COVID-19 Mandates and City of Gustavus Resolutions. The park is requiring all incoming employees will be quarantined for 14 days, regardless of meeting the criteria for “essential.”

These employees were prioritized to arrive because they can supplement the park and City’s local emergency medical response. Considering the potential need for out of park deployment and the risk of a local outbreak of COVID-19, additional emergency response/ law enforcement (LE) staff are warranted. Examples of out-of-park deployment are LE staff called to respond to the national firefighter response or southern border protection activities, potentially leaving us with further limitations for local response.

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The park will only bring on additional seasonal workers if there is a general lessening of restrictions within the state or nation. In any case, employees will only be onboarded if social distancing standards can be met at their work site.

Q3: Will non-essential employees be arriving in Gustavus?

A: After the arrival of seasonal LE staff noted above, there will be at least a month before the park will consider bringing other out-of-town seasonals on. The total number of seasonals under even the most optimistic scenario is half of what we had planned and have hired in previous years.

Bringing on seasonal staff to respond to a cruise ship season on July 1 will only occur if there are large reductions in COVID-19 cases in the state and nation. This will be evaluated June 1 to see if those conditions are likely to happen. These seasonals would also be placed under 14-day quarantine.

Some already-hired local seasonal workers, who do not need to travel to get here, will be able to continue their work as long as social distancing and other safety measures are met.

It has been determined that the Glacier Bay Lodge will not open under any scenario this year; thus, there are no lodge seasonal employees expected.

Q4: How will park employees arriving from out of town be transported to the park?

A: When feasible, the park will transport employees by boat from Juneau directly to the Bartlett Cove dock. The park has contracted a vessel that is arranged so the captain does not come into contact with the employees. The captain will not be permitted to leave the Bartlett Cove dock unless he meets City of Gustavus quarantine requirements.

If arriving by other means, such as by aircraft or ferry, the park will submit the City Travel Declaration form to the City Fire Chief at least one week prior to arrival in Gustavus.

To limit pre-quarantine contact with other people, incoming employees and their belongings will be transported directly to their NPS housing in Bartlett Cove by vehicle in a way that keeps them isolated from current staff.

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Q5: What is the plan to quarantine and care for these employees? During quarantine, how will the employee needs be met?

A: All new and returning employee's entering on duty and arriving from out of town will be subject to a 14-day quarantine upon arrival, enforceable as a condition of their employment. All are required to comply with State mandates for their particular type of travel (intra-state, interstate, international). Employees subject to quarantine will be required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Employees arriving at the Gustavus airport or ferry terminal will be provided transportation to their residence. Supervisors will coordinate with their employees and advise Operations Staff when employees will arrive. Operations staff will be notified a minimum of 48 hours in advance to ensure arrangements can be made.
- Supervisor of incoming staff will contact employees prior to their arrival at GLBA and inform them to bring or send two weeks' worth of food to the park in anticipation of their arrival. In circumstances where this is not possible (park) staff will deliver or assist in coordinating food deliveries. Cost of food remains the responsibility of the incoming employee.
- A list of shopping and delivery resources will be provided to incoming employee should the employee need to order additional food or supplies after their arrival.
- Employees will complete a health interview and monitor their temperature.
- Employees will not enter government work facilities unless permitted to do so with mitigations in place as determined by the Park Safety Officer and approved by the Park Superintendent.
- Employees will not enter any government quarters or residences other than their own.
- Employees will not enter any Gustavus business or town residence until quarantine is complete.
- Employees will maintain social distancing at all times and follow CDC guidance on face coverings
- Employees housed in the park will not leave the park until quarantine is complete.
- Supervisors will check in daily on the health and supply status quarantined employees. Issues will be addressed in a timely manner.

Q6. Do any arriving seasonal employees plan to live in Gustavus any place other than Bartlett Cove?

Out-of-town seasonal employees will not be permitted to live in NPS Gustavus Housing until completion of their 14-day quarantine in Bartlett Cove. After quarantine, employees may be moved into NPS Gustavus housing or the

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Gustavus Inn, which is being leased to allow the space for employees to quarantine alone in Bartlett Cove.

NPS Bartlett Cove seasonal housing is an arrangement of multiplexes, where two to four bedrooms share a kitchen and bathroom. Because employees will be required to quarantine alone (unless living with a spouse/partner), there might be a need to move employees after quarantine. If that is the case, the rooms will be sanitized and the employee moved to a group housing unit.

Q7: Where does the NPS get their information regarding COVID-19?

A: Park management decisions associated with COVID-19 are based upon information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and United States Public Health Service (USPHS), as well as through the World Health Organization (WHO). Additionally, we're directed by policies and regulations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Department of Interior, National Park Service, State of Alaska, and the City of Gustavus.

The park Incident Management Team and park Leadership Team build upon all of these sources to inform park-specific measures that are equal to or stricter than those required.

Q8: How will the employees receive NPS/city/state info?

A. The park has been providing regular email updates to employees regarding changing policies, mandates, and resolutions. These updates are shared with the City Mayor, Administrator, and Fire Chief. Like the City of Gustavus, the park has created a webpage to consolidate COVID-19 related information for employees.

Q9: How will park employees still at work be protected from COVID-19?

A: At this time, the park is employing the following measures to minimize the risk of exposure for employees:

- Providing maximum flexibility for jobs that can be performed through telework.
- Rotating schedules to minimize the number of people present in the workplace at any given time.
- Social distancing at all times.

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- Performing risk analysis for jobs that cannot readily be accomplished using the above actions and not continuing that work if risk cannot be mitigated.
- Performing enhanced custodial procedures, especially in high risk areas.
- Reducing use of common spaces in the workplace
- Providing cleaning supplies to all employees to frequently clean their work areas.
- Providing PPE as advised by the CDC and state.
- Employees are strongly encouraged to talk with their supervisors about questions and concerns, or as new activities pose new challenges.

Actions to protect staff and by extension their families and local communities will be adjusted as advised per sources noted in the previous question.

Q10. What is the plan should a park employee be diagnosed with COVID-19?

A. Like the City of Gustavus, the park has an Incident Management Team in place to plan for and respond to COVID-19. The park Team includes medical responders that can work with the city Team for care and transport of an employee diagnosed with COVID-19. Similarly, the city and the park can co-respond to emergencies throughout Gustavus, including for people who potentially have COVID-19. All cases requiring advanced care will be transported to a suitable hospital.

Q11: Is the park expected to shut down entirely?

A: A complete shutdown of the park at any point is very unlikely. However park services that place employees in contact with the public will be greatly reduced or eliminated. Visitation is likely to be low with little or no large passenger vessel traffic. Outside of a few locations visitation to Glacier Bay can occur maintaining social distancing. National parks are a function of the U. S. government and serve purposes beyond frontline visitor services. Activities mandated in law and regulations for access, safety and resource protection must be performed. Research by scientists who meet quarantine requirements may go forward. Infrastructure and systems need to be kept functioning.

The President, Secretary of the Interior, and the Director of the NPS have stated that parks remain a necessary government function and the ability to perform essential emergency and law enforcement functions will be maintained above all.

The Secretary of the Interior has advised employees of the need for the Federal government to remain operational and continue to fulfill our important mission to the American people, to contribute to helping resolve our national health crisis,

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and to ensure the safety of our employees. Unnecessary closures would be disruptive to our Department's important mission and increase burdens on colleagues. All of us have committed to accomplishing our assigned tasks even under these challenging circumstances. Doing so is not only our duty, it is a requirement of Federal service, fulfilling the trust that has been placed in us by the American people.

Though several park facilities have been closed, the park remains open to outdoor recreation. At this point, closures include the Glacier Bay Lodge and Visitor Center and the Bartlett Cove Campground while the Bartlett Cove dock is limited to arrivals only for those who meet City of Gustavus travel quarantine requirements. When at some point in the future the virus impacts will be lessened and some semblance of normal activities will resume, including travel to the park we will need to be prepared to assume expanded operations.

Q12: Will the park restrict people from arriving into Gustavus via the NPS Bartlett Cove dock?

A: As the Bartlett Cove public use dock is within the city and provides access to the city, the park will continue to support the City of Gustavus Resolution CY20-13 while it is in effect. To support this resolution, the park has posted signs at the dock that confirm the resolution. During the June 1 to August 31 permit season, the park will notify all vessels upon entry of the limitations to access Gustavus through the dock.

Q13: Will Gustavus residents be permitted to use the NPS Bartlett Cove dock and boat launch ramp?

A: All individuals who meet the quarantine requirements of the City of Gustavus will be free to use the Bartlett Cove dock and launch ramp.

Q14: Will fuel sales for vessels be available?

A: Fuel sales to the public are a function of the Lodge concessioner and must be done utilizing the separate fuel facilities. The park is currently working with this concessioner to determine if fuel sales at the fuel dock in Bartlett Cove are feasible this summer.

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Q15: Will motorized boat permits and backcountry camping permits be required this summer? If so, how will orientations be conducted?

A: Yes. The park is required by law and regulation to manage motorized boater traffic in the bay from June 1 to August 31. Permits for private motorized boats will be processed per usual through the Visitor Information Station (VIS) near the Bartlett Cove Dock. For information about permits and how to apply, please go to our website: www.nps.gov/glba/planyourvisit/boat.htm

While the Bartlett Cove campground is closed, backcountry camping is not. Camping permits are required from May 1 through September 30. Information about camping in the park can be found online at: www.nps.gov/glba/planyourvisit/camp.htm

In-person portions of the permit and orientation process are being modified to ensure proper social distancing. The result will be a combination of these processes being conducted online or outside of the NPS Visitor Information Station.

Q16: Would the park abide by city closures to all but permanent year-round residents such as individuals who have lived in Gustavus for 10 of the last 12 months similar to Kake?

A: No, communication with Department of Interior Solicitors and State of Alaska contacts indicate that such a rule would not be legal without larger legal authorities such as the instigation of Martial Law. In addition, the Supremacy clause of the US Constitution does not permit those restrictions of a federal agency within Park boundaries nor in the pursuit outside the park of their lawful functions as federal employees. The park would seek guidance from the U.S. Attorney's office on how to respond if such a local mandate were passed.

Q17: In what ways is the park willing to work with the city during this crisis?

A: The park and City continue to work together in many ways that are mutually beneficial. Specific to this crisis, the park Incident Management Team and the City Incident Management Team have been co-planning and sharing resources. Primarily, the park and City rely on each other for emergency medical services through mutual aid. Both entities look for ways to share training opportunities, communication channels, and protective equipment. The park stands by to consider any request the city has that is allowed under Federal law and DOI policy that may assist the city.

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The park will continue to share operational updates and closure information directly with the City, as well as through Press Releases.

Q18: Who should residents contact if they have additional questions?

A: If you need clarification or have additional questions, please contact GLBA_Superintendent@nps.gov.