

DENALI BOROUGH, ALASKA
RESOLUTION NO. 07-06

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF DENALI NATIONAL
PARK
AND PRESERVE TO THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE LIST

WHEREAS, Denali National Park and Preserve contains natural resources that are of international significance that make it suitable for nomination for a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation which would be considered during the 2009-2019 evaluation period. The park's six million acre area encompasses the largest protected sub-arctic ecosystem in the world, which provides world-class wildlife viewing opportunities for park visitors and unparalleled opportunities to study these ecosystems for researchers and scientists.

These world-class resources include a major portion of the Alaska Range, and the highest mountain in North America, Mount McKinley, a principal icon of Alaska and one of the world's premier mountaineering destinations. It rises a full 18,000 feet above the northern plateau, making the north face (Wickersham Wall) the world's highest vertical relief in the shortest horizontal distance. Additionally, Mt. McKinley is the highest granitic pluton in North America, and may be the second highest pluton in the world. It may only be exceeded in height by the granitic Kumbhakarna (Mt Jannu) at 25,295 ft in northeastern Nepal. The park is also home to the deepest gorge in North America, the Great Gorge of the Ruth Glacier near Mount McKinley. The ice thickness of the Ruth Glacier near the almost vertical wall of Mt. Dickey (9,545 feet) is 3770 feet, and that depth, when added to the height of the east wall of Mt. Dickey, is 8,970 feet. The Great Gorge of the Ruth Glacier is deeper than the Grand Canyon.

The park contains recently-discovered paleontological sites of great significance, as they are the first evidence of dinosaurs found in Interior Alaska. Over twenty sites, containing numerous tracks, have been discovered. The majority of the finds have been of theropods, meat-eating dinosaurs, but footprints of duck-billed dinosaurs, or hadrosaurs, have also been discovered. Theropods are believed to have preyed upon hadrosaurs, and this new evidence provides a beginning for understanding the ecosystem of Denali seventy million years ago; and

WHEREAS, designation as a World Heritage Site would increase international awareness of Denali's global significance, and increase understanding to help protect and preserve its significant resources for the future; and

WHEREAS, the designation would not change ownership or management status of any lands or change legislative authority of any lands, it would only serve to highlight the global significance of Denali's natural resources, including its geology, flora and fauna; and

WHEREAS, the Denali Borough openly supports preservation of Denali's natural resources and supports increased recognition of Denali National Park and Preserve, in part for the potential of increased awareness of the significance of the park, which would increase visitation to the borough and participation in the numerous recreational opportunities provided outside the park, thereby enhancing the area's visibility and economy; and

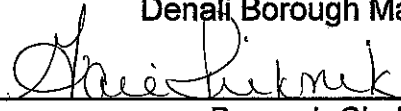
WHEREAS, current uses of Denali National Park and Preserve would not change and would still be determined by normal management actions, including management plans, environmental impact statements and environmental assessments, which are subject to a requisite public process.

THEREFORE, ~~BE~~ IT RESOLVED that the Denali Borough Assembly strongly encourages the National Park Service to pursue designation for Denali National Park and Preserve as a World Heritage Site.

PASSED and APPROVED by the DENALI BOROUGH ASSEMBLY this 14th day of February, 2007.



Denali Borough Mayor

ATTEST: 

Borough Clerk

