

January 8, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for your time and dedication to this very complex planning process of the future of the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area.

As the president of a company operating with a special use permit at the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area, my comments today relate to the impacts of the Facility Improvement Project and future plans of the MGRA to our current operations, which are conducted at the West Glacier Unit and Mendenhall Lake Unit. We support increased capacity in all of the proposed units. We are excited about this expansion but do have a few suggestions to prevent detrimental impacts to our operation as well as others who operate in a similar capacity:

1. Build dock facilities to also accommodate small vessels. As the planning process continues, we ask the proposed dock facilities be constructed to accommodate small vessels in addition to the larger planned ferry vessels so guiding operations can continue to traverse Mendenhall Lake to the Glacier Unit with our own vessels. This is a key element to our tours as well as others who specialize in expeditionary excursions on the lake and on the ice. Guiding our guests from start to finish is essential and a “hand-off” of our guests to other transportation providers would be detrimental to the guided experience we offer and pose great logistics challenges. This would require small vessels to have dedicated access to the North Dock at the Glacier as well as either the West Glacier Dock or the Visitors Center Dock near the Lakeshore Trail as outlined in Proposed Facility Improvements Project.

2. Electric motors for vessels. The ability to utilize electric motors with speed limitations and maximum decibel rating would be beneficial to our tour offerings and would enable more customers of varying abilities to participate in our excursions. We are proponents of motor usage being limited to electric power only.

Thank you again for your dedication to the future of the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area.

Sincerely,

Jeff Fanning, President
Liquid Alaska Tours