

"Re-imagining" the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center

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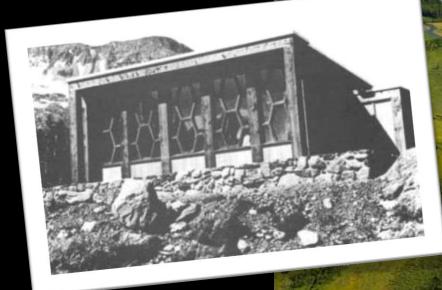
Regional Interpretation & Conservation Education Program Manager

Chugach National Forest • Portage Valley Alaska



Historically popular destination:

- Just 45 minutes from Anchorage
- Accessible by car
- Magnificent glacially carved valley
- "Touch" a glacier







Our New Reality...

A changing glacier

Our New Reality...

A changing visitor



Our New Reality...

Increase in fees charged at visitor center



Our New Reality...

Aging facility + Extreme weather conditions = Increased maintenance costs





So, what do we do...

We could just wait for our proverbial iceberg to melt and then most likely close the facility, or...

Or get a little creative...

We talked to our stakeholders and asked them what's their vision for Portage Valley and the visitor center.



Out of these conversations...

Several partners stepped forward interested in partnering with the Forest Service.



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New Challenges...

We were looking to partner in ways that hadn't really been done before.



New Challenges...

The state budget took a big hit... our two primary partners are heavily dependent upon state funding.





So, where do we go from here...

- Re-evaluate other potential partners
- Accept that things might get messy and small steps forward are OK.

Thoughts, questions, fabulous ideas to share....

Send them my way - aheckart@fs.fed.us

