

Chapter 5—A Vision for North Campus

The North Campus Subcommittee met throughout fall 2002 and spring 2003 to develop a vision for the North Campus. The first step in this process was to define the mission for the North Campus. It also identified opportunities and strategies to gather public input.

Defining the Mission of the North Campus

UAF’s Master Planning Committee directed the North Campus Subcommittee to develop a plan to:

“Protect the integrity of the North Campus for education, research and recreation, including maintaining and promoting the UAF trail system as a significant campus and community asset.”

The subcommittee subsequently defined their mission, developed value statements for the North Campus, and outlined steps for implementation.

Value statements

The Subcommittee established three value statements for the North Campus to reflect their interpretation of the Master plan’s directive for the North Campus Subcommittee and their vision of North Campus. The value statements formed the foundation of the North Campus plan.

- **Value Statement 1:** Preserve the biological and physical integrity, as well as the natural assets, of North Campus.
- **Value Statement 2:** Ensure year round, compatible access for research, education, and recreation.
- **Value Statement 3:** Promote the North Campus as a multi-use resource for the UAF and greater Fairbanks community.



Associate Professor Doug Schamel inspects a sample from Ballaine Lake during a field trip with his Natural History of Alaska class: from left to right, elementary education majors Mariah Sakeagak, Germaine Bartman, Phillip Wyman and Traci Beckham.

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With respect to value statement 1, the NCS recognizes the North Campus has been subject to a variety of manipulations throughout its history and many structures and trails exist in the area that do not constitute a “natural state.” However, the value statement is intended to guide future management of the area in a manner that maintains existing conditions and prevents soil erosion.

Planning Goals

Following the interviews with users, and based on the directive from the MPC and mission of UAF, the NCS developed a list of goals that would guide the development of the North Campus Master Plan:

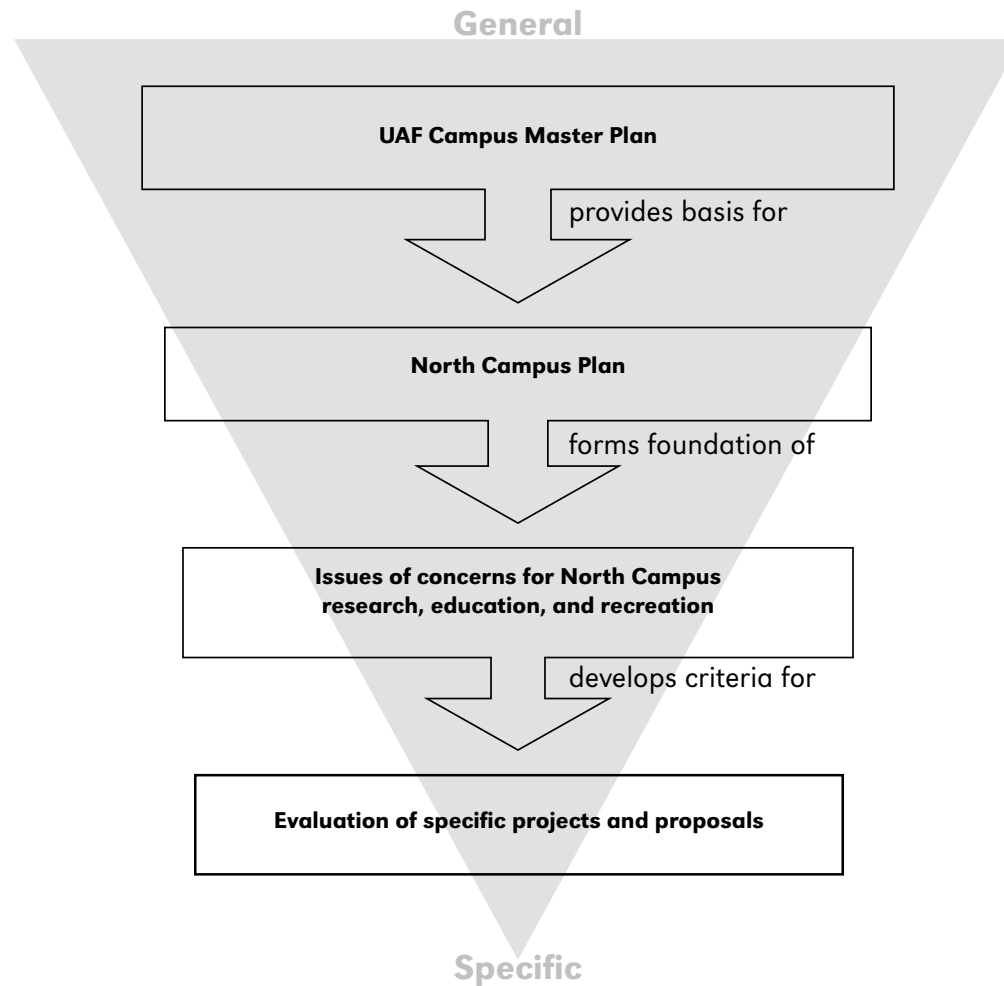
1. The NCS will take a balanced approach in which all uses—research, education, and recreation—are equally important.
2. All current, allowed uses will be permitted in the future, with expansions in use subject to examination.
3. All current, allowed uses fulfill the mission of UAF.
4. The management plan will emphasize current and potential future issues identified by stakeholders and the planning committee.
5. The management plan will provide guidelines for current uses. The management plan will also provide recommendations for future expansions in use with a ten-to-twenty year timeframe.
6. Certain areas of the North Campus may be more appropriate for specific uses, and the designation of areas for a particular use will be considered.

Recommendation for the North Campus

Currently the North Campus functions as a multiple use area for research, education, and recreation.

Based on the mandate from the MPC, the mission and value statements of the NCS, previous North Campus studies, feedback from different stakeholders, and the March 2003 public involvement meetings, the NCS recommends that the NC continue to be managed for multiple use. The action items in Figure 5.1 focus on balancing needs of different users within the constraints of the mission and values of the NC.

FIGURE 5.1—Relationship between NC Value Statements and Evaluation of Specific Projects and Proposals



The recommendations listed below are not intended to form a specific work plan, because such an approach would render the plan obsolete once the tasks have been completed. Rather, the recommendations listed below provide guidelines that can be used by the NCS to evaluate proposals for projects and use as they are received by giving meaning and specific definition to the value statements of the NC. The meaning and definition of the values statements can be thought of as issues of concern. In other words, a value statement such as “preserve the biological and physical integrity of the North Campus,” could be defined in terms of removal of vegetative cover, ruts on trails, melting of permafrost, trail width, trail surface (see Table 5.1, pp. 43-44). Thus as a project is proposed, whether it be research, education, or recreation, it can be evaluated against the issues of concern as developed by the plan to ensure the management decision is consistent with the mission and values of the North Campus.

TABLE 3—Issues of Concern for Activities Taking Place on the North Campus

Value statement 1: Preserve the biological and physical integrity, as well as the natural assets, of North Campus

Erosion, defined by:

- Removal of vegetation
- Water on trail
- Ruts in trails
- Ground void of cover/soil exposed
- Disturbance of permafrost
- Persistently muddy areas

Trail Width, defined by:

- Instances of trail braiding
- Average width of trail, trunk to trunk
- Tree removal

Visual Impact, defined by:

- Vegetative screening along trails
- Proximity to roads

Infrastructure, defined by:

- Buildings
- Power lines
- Towers, satellite dishes

Impacts to Environment, defined by:

- Removal of trees / plants, etc
- Introduction of non-indigenous items to environment
- Collection of specimens

Value statement 2: Ensure year round, compatible access and use for research, education, and recreation

Adequate Parking, defined by:

- Direct access to trailheads
- Areas where no UAF parking permit required
- Minimize crossing of roads

Exclosures, defined by:

- Fences
- Buffer zones

Opportunity for research, defined by:

- Protection of projects from disturbance by other users
- Information available on physical features of North Campus
- Means available to access research projects in winter months

Permitting process for activities in North Campus, defined by:

- % of projects in database
- Ease of permit process/number of North Campus users applying for permits
- Accessibility of information available to those conducting research

Access by School Groups, defined by:

- Bus parking
- Minimal road crossings
- Areas remain open

Viable trail system remain, defined by:

- Continuous loop around perimeter
- Lights for night use (winter)
- Walkers accommodated in winter

Signage along trails, defined by:

- Signs w/ map of trail system at all trailheads
- Signs w/ map of trail system at junctions
- Contact information for North Campus manager

Value Statement 3: Promote the North Campus as a multi-use resource for the UAF and greater Fairbanks community

Provide access for community members, defined by:

- Trails remain open to community use
- Compatible events continue to be allowed
- Proactive involvement of community

Allow community to provide input into management, defined by:

- Process for public comment
- Information available on who to contact for special use permission
- Responsiveness to public input