

National Park Service, Interior

§51.3

amends, supersedes, or otherwise affects any provision of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3101 *et seq.*) relating to revenue-producing visitor services.

§51.2 What is the policy underlying concessions contracts?

It is the policy of the Congress and the Secretary that visitor services in park areas may be provided only under carefully controlled safeguards against unregulated and indiscriminate use so that visitation will not unduly impair park values and resources. Development of visitor services in park areas will be limited to locations that are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the resources and values of the park area. It is also the policy of the Congress and the Secretary of the Interior that development of visitor services in park areas must be limited to those as are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment of the park area in which they are located.

Subpart B—General Definitions

§51.3 How are terms defined in this part?

To understand this part, you must refer to these definitions, applicable in the singular or the plural, whenever these terms are used in this part:

The *1965 Act* means Public Law 89-249, commonly known as the National Park Service Concession Policies Act of 1965.

A *1965 Act concession contract* is a concession contract or permit entered into under the authority of the 1965 Act.

The *1998 Act* means Title IV of Public Law 105-391.

The *award* of a concession contract is the establishment of a legally binding concession contract. It occurs only when the Director and a selected offeror both fully execute a concession contract.

A *concession contract (or contract)* means a binding written agreement between the Director and a concessioner entered under the authority of this part or the 1965 Act that authorizes the concessioner to provide certain visitor services within a park area under specified terms and conditions. Concession

contracts are not contracts within the meaning of 41 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.* (the Contract Disputes Act) and are not service or procurement contracts within the meaning of statutes, regulations or policies that apply only to federal service contracts or other types of federal procurement actions. Concession contracts will contain such terms and conditions as are required by this part or law and as are otherwise appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of this part and the 1998 Act.

A *concessioner* is an individual, corporation, or other legally recognized entity that duly holds a concession contract.

Director means the Director of the National Park Service (acting on behalf of the Secretary), or an authorized representative of the Director, except where a particular official is specifically identified in this part. In circumstances where this part calls for an appeal to the Director, the appeal shall be considered by an official of higher authority than the official that made the disputed decision.

A *franchise fee* is the consideration paid to the Director by a concessioner for the privileges granted by a concession contract.

Offeror means an individual, corporation, or other legally recognized entity, including an existing concessioner, that submits a proposal for a concession contract. If the entity that is to be the concessioner is not formally in existence as of the time of submission of a proposal, a proposal must demonstrate that the individuals or organizations that intend to establish the entity that will become the concessioner have the ability and are legally obliged to cause the entity to be a qualified person as defined in this part. In addition, if the entity that will be the concessioner is not established at the time of submission of a proposal, the proposal must contain assurances satisfactory to the Director that the entity that will be the concessioner will be a qualified person as of the date of the award of the contract and otherwise have the ability to carry out the commitments made in the proposal.

Possessory interest means an interest in real property improvements as defined by the 1965 Act obtained by a concessioner under a possessory interest concession contract. Possessory interest, for the purposes of this part, does not include any interest in property in which no possessory interest, as defined by the 1965 Act, exists.

A *possessory interest concession contract* means a 1965 Act concession contract that provides the concessioner a possessory interest.

A *preferred offeror* is a concessioner that the Director determines is eligible to exercise a right of preference to the award of a qualified concession contract in accordance with this part.

A *qualified concession contract* is a new concession contract that the Director determines to be a qualified concession contract for right of preference purposes.

A *qualified person* is an individual, corporation or other legally recognized entity that the Director determines has the experience and financial ability to satisfactorily carry out the terms of a concession contract. This experience and financial ability includes, but is not limited to, the ability to protect and preserve the resources of the park area and the ability to provide satisfactory visitor services at reasonable rates to the public.

A *responsive proposal* means a timely submitted proposal that is determined by the Director as agreeing to all of the minimum requirements of the proposed concession contract and prospectus and as having provided the information required by the prospectus.

A *right of preference* is the preferential right of renewal set forth in Section 403(7)(C) of the 1998 Act which requires the Director to allow a preferred offeror the opportunity to match the terms and conditions of a competing responsive proposal that the Director has determined to be the best proposal for a qualified concession contract. A right of preference does not provide any rights of any nature to establish or negotiate the terms and conditions of a concession contract to which a right of preference may apply.

Visitor services means accommodations, facilities and services determined by the Director as necessary and

appropriate for public use and enjoyment of a park area provided to park area visitors for a fee or charge by a person other than the Director. The fee or charge paid by the visitor may be direct or indirect as part of the provision of comprehensive visitor services (*e.g.*, when a lodging concessioner may provide free transportation services to guests). Visitor services may include, but are not limited to, lodging, campgrounds, food service, merchandising, tours, recreational activities, guiding, transportation, and equipment rental. Visitor services also include the sale of interpretive materials or the conduct of interpretive programs for a fee or charge to visitors.

Subpart C—Solicitation, Selection and Award Procedures

§ 51.4 How will the Director invite the general public to apply for the award of a concession contract?

(a) The Director must award all concession contracts, except as otherwise expressly provided in this part, through a public solicitation process. The public solicitation process begins with the issuance of a prospectus. The prospectus will invite the general public to submit proposals for the contract. The prospectus will describe the terms and conditions of the concession contract to be awarded and the procedures to be followed in the selection of the best proposal.

(b) Except as provided under § 51.47 (which calls for a final administrative decision on preferred offeror appeals prior to the selection of the best proposal) the terms, conditions and determinations of the prospectus and the terms and conditions of the proposed concession contract as described in the prospectus, including, without limitation, its minimum franchise fee, are not final until the concession contract is awarded. The Director will not issue a prospectus for a concession contract earlier than eighteen months prior to the expiration of a related existing concession contract.

§ 51.5 What information will the prospectus include?

The prospectus must include the following information: