

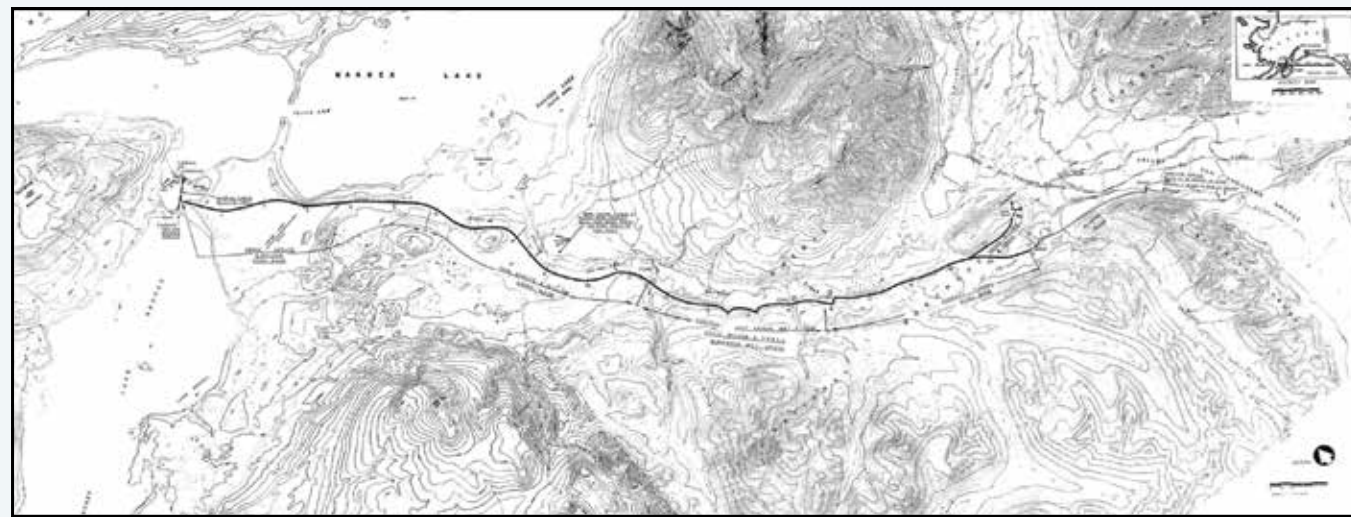
# Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Road Historic District

## A Brief History



### To the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes

The 22.3 mile long Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Road provides access for visitors from Brooks Camp to the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, a geological wonder for which the park was created. The road was planned in the summer of 1961 and constructed the following year as part of the Mission 66 National Park Service development program. Prior to Mission 66, Katmai had minimal tourist infrastructure. The Mission 66 construction of the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Road and a small Pan Abode visitor center at the road's end expanded the possibilities for interpretive programs and the opportunities for park visitors.

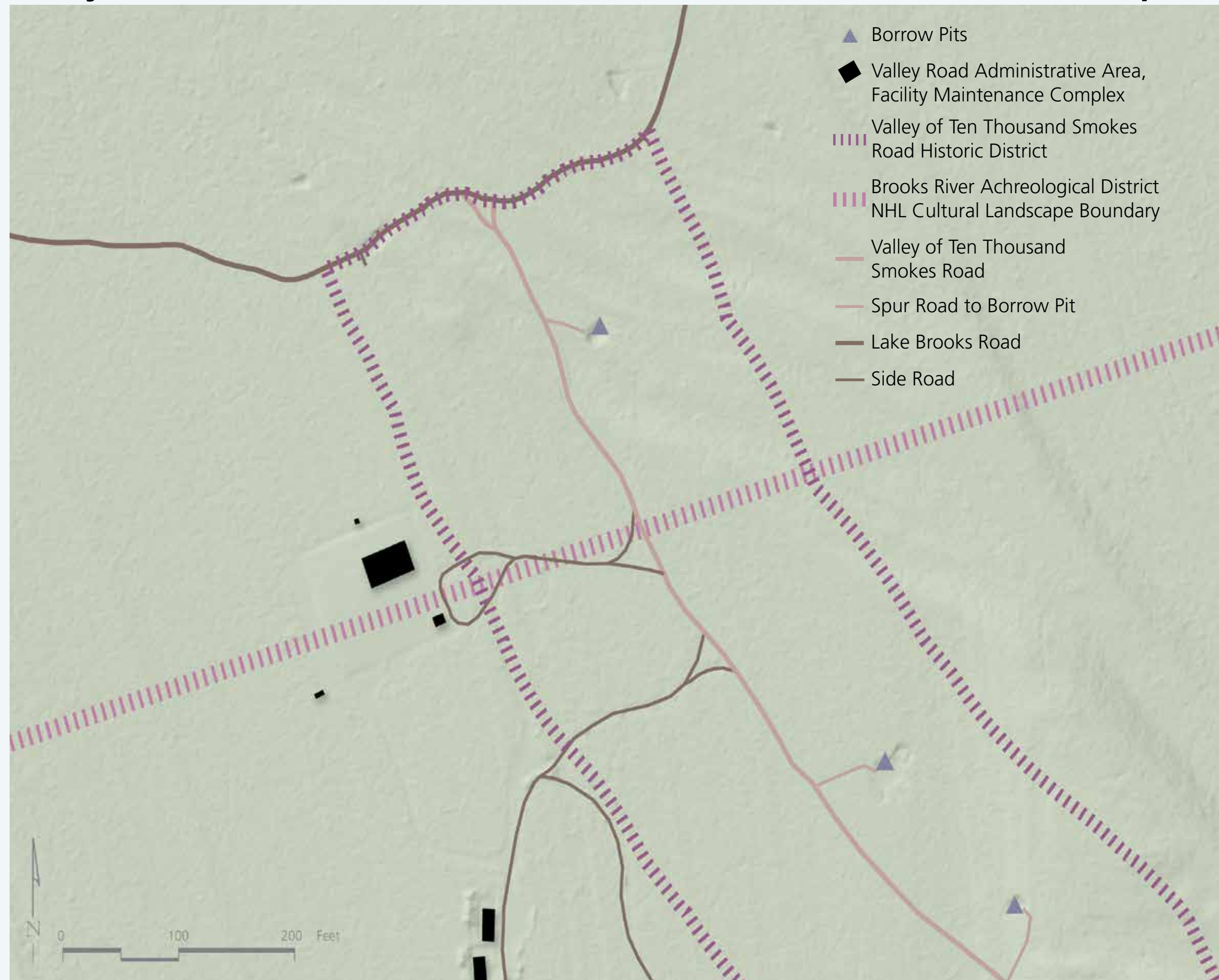


Proposed "Jeep Trail" from Brooks River to Windy Creek, Windy Creek to Valley design, 1961. NPS Archives.

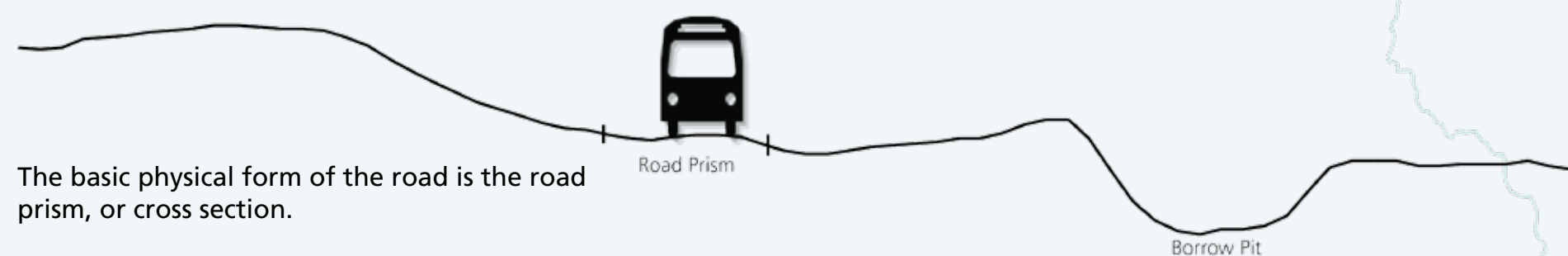
### Scenic Design Road

The Valley of Ten Thousand Smoke Road is unique as a scenic design road, one of only two scenic design National Park roads in Alaska. Key design characteristics of the road include a minimized footprint and a curvilinear layout conforming to the natural topography. The minimized width of the road both limits traffic and speed and enhances the scenic experience. The visual character of the road has not been altered and few signs exist along the road. Today, the road is maintained to a primitive road standard.

### Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Road Historic District "Y" Junction Map



Naknek 6th grader on a field trip into the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes in 1976. NPS Archives.



The basic physical form of the road is the road prism, or cross section.

### Significance and Condition

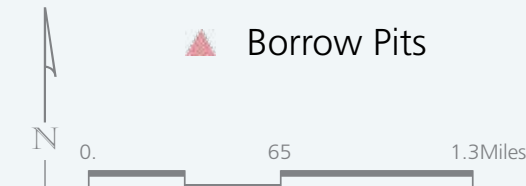
The road is eligible at a state level as an example of the development of tourist infrastructure in the State of Alaska.

**Period of Significance:** 1962 to 1964 CE

**Significance Level:** State

**Condition:** Good—The road maintains its rustic character as a one-lane scenic design road.

### Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Road Historic District Map



### Character Defining Features

#### STRUCTURE

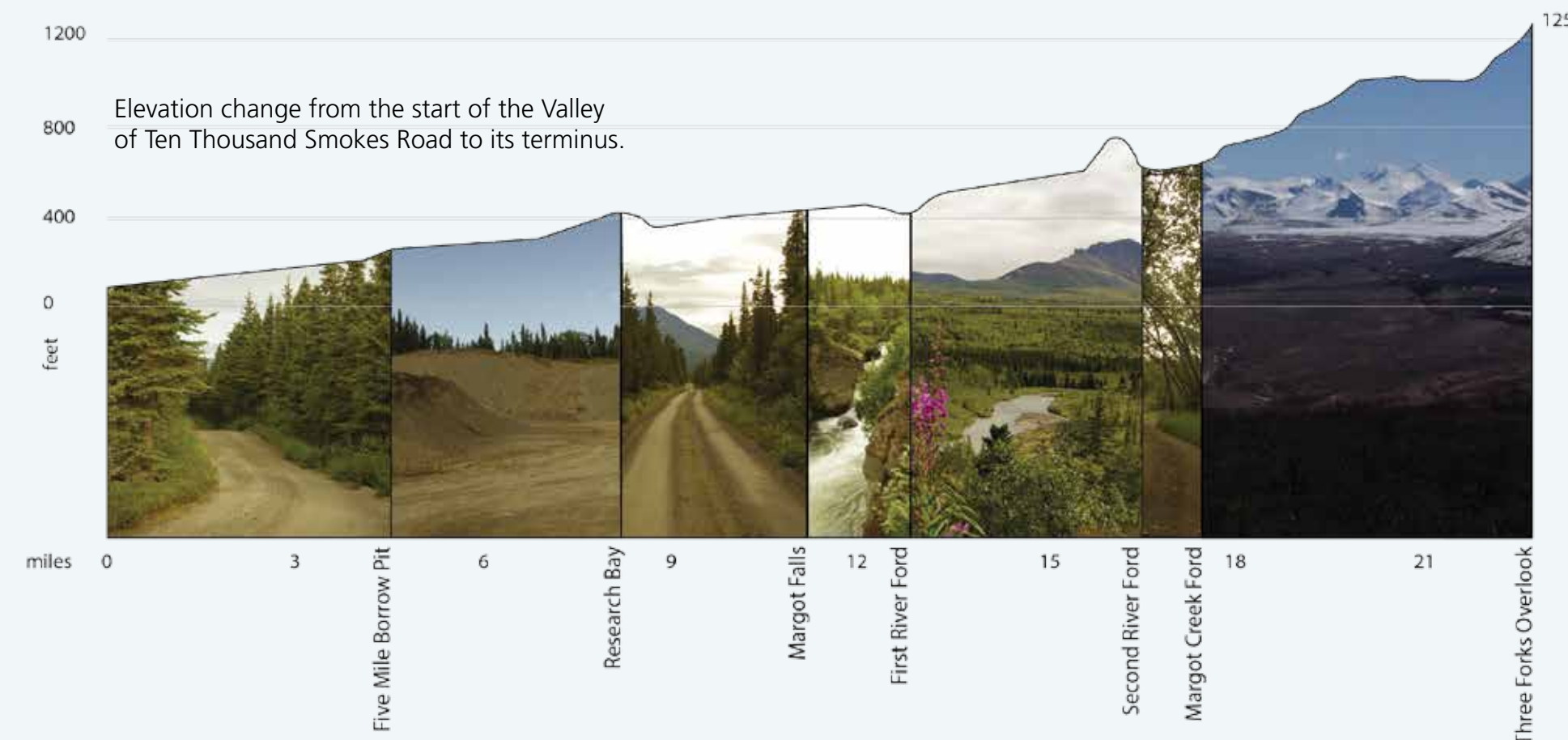
- 22.3-mile single lane gravel road with minimal traffic.
- Average road width is 10 feet, narrowest is 9.25' and the widest is 11.25'.
- The road grade is less than 1% and rises in elevation from 34' to 1,200'.
- Physical components of the road include its width, surface material, drainage ditches, shoulders, and tree line (the cleared vegetation).
- There are no bridges on the road, only three river ford crossings.



Concessionaire bus crossing river. c.1970s. Katmailand Photo.

#### CIRCULATION

- The road extends from the Lake Brooks Road at a "Y" and ends at the Three Forks Overlook.
- Side roads and turn around points are located at the Administrative Area and Five Mile Borrow Pit.
- The spur roads to historic borrow pits and open areas at river crossings also provide turn around locations.
- Trails include: Margot Falls Trail, the Ukak Trail, and the Windy Creek Trail.

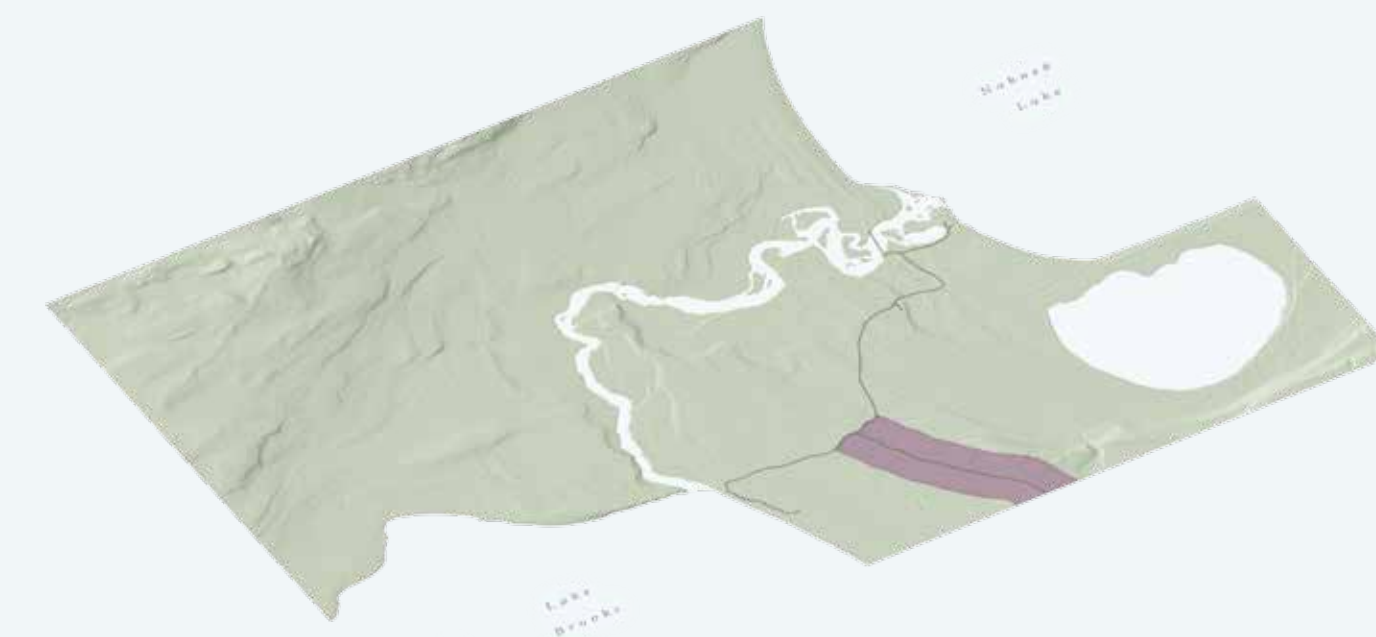


#### IEWS

- The primary objective of the road is to provide visitors views of the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.
- View of the spectacular mountainous landscape surrounding the road.

#### LAND USE

- Provide park visitors access to the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.
- Provides visitor access to the valley as a starting point for backpacking trips.
- Provide access for park staff to complete maintenance work.
- Primary use has been for day tours to the Three Forks Overlook during the summer season. The concessionaire runs both van and bus tours on the road, which is typically one, 30-passenger vehicle a day.



### VALLEY OF TEN THOUSAND SMOKES ROAD HISTORIC DISTRICT



Katmai's first jeep trail, 1962. National Geographic, June 1963.



Jeep on the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Road, late 1970s or early 1980s. eTIC Photograph.



Buses to take tourists to the overlook, June 18, 1968. Katmailand Photo.