

Bill paves way for Denali center

Final passage of the Federal Highways Act has cleared the way for the National Park Service to begin construction of a new visitor center at Denali National Park, according to Boyd Evison, regional director of the National Park Service.

Partial funding of the project was included in the National Park Service's construction budget that passed Congress last November. However, money from the Federal Lands Highway Program was a critical component of the funding package needed to begin the project.

"We'll go out for bids this summer to build a comfortable, modern facility, designed as a first stop for visitors in the park," Evison said. The new 8,000-square-foot building will replace an existing visitor orientation facility that is housed in a double-wide trailer at the Riley Creek Campground.

"The new building should streamline the process hundreds of thousands of people go through to get into the park each summer," he said.

If the project proceeds on schedule, the new visitor access center could be open to the public by the summer of 1989.

The site for the new visitor center is on the right hand side of the park road, about a mile west of the George Parks Highway.