

## DCC ANNUAL MEETING – DESSERT SOCIAL AND MORE

PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW – THE DENALI CITIZENS COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

**Monday, May 28 – Memorial Day**

**7:00pm – Dessert social, to be followed by presentation**

**Location: Charles Sheldon Center, McKinley Village, Alaska**

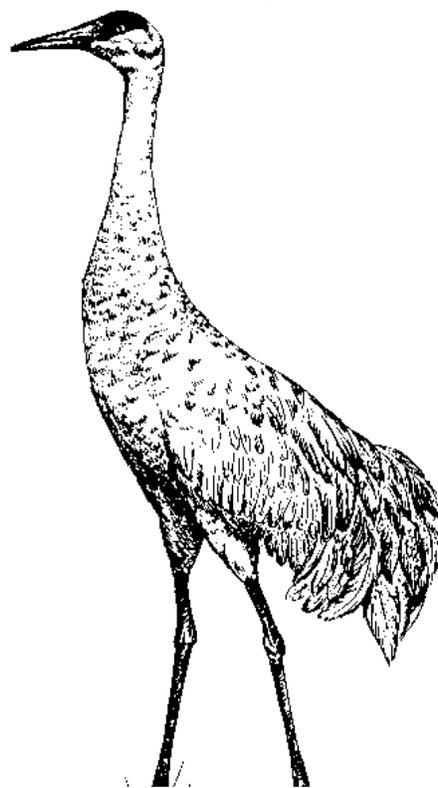
### What do you get if you come?

- Free dessert (although if you can contribute a dessert we would love to have it!)
- Opportunity to catch up on all the issues that DCC is following – do you care about Denali? Vehicles on the park road? Gas development in the Healy area? Clean air? Quiet wilderness? This meeting is for you!
- Chance to hang out with the DCC movers and shakers, plus connect with all your friends that are part of the DCC community
- Door prizes (maybe - someone will get them)
- A Really Good Time (RGT)

### What are the risks?

- Others may assume you care about the future of Denali
- You might get information about issues that matter
- Caloric overload

**Hope to see you there!**



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## FROM THE BOARD

by Nan Eagleson

From wildlife to natural sound, Denali was created to protect a rich northern ecosystem within a breathtaking landscape. It has emerged as one of the most popular summer attractions in Alaska. As the quiet of winter now morphs into the crescendo of spring there is a twinge of hesitation knowing the world of tourists, scientists, adventurers and employees will soon be arriving en masse for another summer season. The recent arrival of golden eagles and snow buntings is only the beginning of avifauna that will come from all over the world to breed and nest here. Soon those first Princess buses (and many others) will be hauling their clientele from all over the world here too. The energy, richness and international flavor birds bring to this wild landscape is natural and magnificent; however, people from all over the globe present a challenge to the original status of this place. The national park cannot exist as an island in a sea of development and land uses which threaten its integrity. The imprint of visitors in the front country, the resource development and hunting pressures on the periphery of its borders, climate change and an ever-changing world all confirm how essential it is to conserve the natural environment of Denali that still retains its storehouse of wild. Wild is a shrinking commodity and is as essential to our own future wellbeing as it is to Denali. Solitude and wild are abundant here in winter, the challenge is to retain as much of it as possible for everyone to experience in order to enrich the lives of those who seek it. National parks were not created to be the economic engine for an area and there is no lack of places for travelers seeking tourist shops, entertainment and amenities of urban life. By retaining the best part of Denali, its wildness, its value can't help but continue to increase in the future.

DCC is the primary organization that attempts to address the wilderness values of Denali and the integrity of its surrounding areas. The never-ending list of challenges can seem overwhelming but there are continued successes and each small accomplishment is vital. Thank you to everyone who helps in this attempt. Happy Spring! ☘

### FAREWELL, BILL NANCARROW

Pioneer, scientist, builder, gardener, artist, neighbor  
April 2, 1921 - April 15, 2012



*Photo courtesy of Jane Bryant*

# FROM THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZER by Julia Potter

Spring in Denali comes with mixed emotions. It is somewhat sad to see the snow rapidly disappearing under the increasing sunlight. Winter's quiet and star-filled skies will quickly be replaced by the sounds of tourist traffic and by all-day light. Yet happiness prevails as new growth and new life emerge from a deep slumber, amid all the mud and slush of spring.

As Denali prepares for summer, I am preparing for a new adventure in Homer, Alaska. More mixed emotions. Sad to be leaving the beauty of the wild places I've called home for many years. Sad to be leaving the wonderful people I've come to know and love. Sad to be leaving my position as Community Organizer at Denali Citizens Council.

However, I am excited and happy to begin another Alaska adventure. Thinking of all the parks and trails to explore, the views of glaciers and volcanos, and of course beautiful Kachemak Bay teeming with marine life to discover, is exciting. It also reminds me that change is a part of living in Alaska.

Whether it's the seasons changing, people's lives changing or the issues that DCC tackles, I am hopeful that one thing will remain constant - your support for Denali Citizens Council. The wonderful board members contribute an amazing amount of time and talent to the organization but it is the support of the members - yes you - that encourages the organization to move forward and take on the many challenges and changes in Denali. Thank you for your past and future support!

To all the DCC board members past & present that I have worked with - Nancy Bale, Jean Balay, Anne Beaulaurier, Barbara Brease, Nan Eagleson, Joan Frankevich, Jenna Hamm, Charlie Loeb, Eric Olberg, J.J. Neville, Hannah Ragland, Cass Ray, Erica Watson and Jared Zimmerman - and our past Gas Organizer Molly McKinley - thank you for a great experience! Each of you has made my Denali adventure extra special. Love you all! ☘

## THANK YOU

### NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

#### MAJOR DONORS

Nancy Bale  
Peter Daily  
Arthur Greenwalt  
Charlie Loeb  
Hannah Ragland & Jamie Milliken

#### SUMMIT

Molly McKinley & Brian Napier

#### TUNDRA

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Lenora Morford  
Cindy Muller  
Kathy & Allan Toubman

#### TAIGA

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Sheila & Jim Craig  
Joanne Groves  
Dianne Herman  
Nancy Blair Jones  
Kathy Milliken  
Barbara Ragland  
Kim & Terry Ragland  
Scott Richardson



# ALASKA BOARD OF GAME MAKES SOME GOOD DECISIONS ON DENALI LANDS

VOTES DOWN MOTORIZED HUNTING IN YANERT AND INTENSIVE MANAGEMENT IN 20C BUT – ANTLERLESS HUNT IN 20A AND BROWN BEAR BAITING IN 20C ARE AUTHORIZED

by Nancy Bale

At the recent Interior Region Alaska Board of Game meeting, in Fairbanks March 2-11, 2012, some good things happened for wildlife management on state lands next to Denali Park.

First and foremost, the two-year threat of a late-season motorized hunt in the Yanert Valley disappeared in one, unanimous vote on Wednesday, March 7th. Introduced last year under another number, Proposal 213 was widely unpopular with a great diversity of users, including hunters, recreationists, and local residents. This position was voiced in a large number of comments (second in number only to comments on bear snaring, another controversial topic at this meeting). Comments urged the Board of Game (BOG) to preserve a non-motorized hunting experience in the Yanert Valley, one of the few areas in the entire State of Alaska still free from motorized hunting. Commenters also pointed out difficulties with access, trailhead parking, environmental damage and private property conflicts. Some questioned the number of moose available for harvest in a late season antlerless hunt. Such hunts, designed to increase hunter opportunity in Game Management Unit 20A, which, according to Fish and Game, has too many moose, are already widely unpopular.

Anne Beaulaurier and I traveled to Fairbanks and testified against this proposal. John Basile, representing the Middle Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee, testified with the AC's recommendation to vote down Proposal 213. We were pleased and heartened by comments from Nenana-area BOG member Nate Turner supporting a non-motorized hunting experience in the Yanert. The example set by his and member Ted Spraker's comments carried the rest of the board into a unanimous vote opposing Proposal 213.

We are pleased that public comments and support from the AC influenced the Board of Game to preserve the non-motorized hunting experience in the Yanert Valley so treasured by the local and regional community. Once set in place, motorized uses are difficult to prohibit, difficult to regulate and uniformly damaging. These uses are the "elephant in the room" when it comes to state land use policy in Alaska, across agencies.

## Intensive Management policies on trial at Board of Game

Motorized access was not the only controversial issue before the BOG. Intensive Management on state lands north and east of Denali Park was on trial at this meeting. Intensive Management (IM) policies got their legal justification from the Intensive Management Law, passed by the Alaska Legislature in 1994. This law emphasized the importance to many Alaskan families of harvesting wild game, and required the Board of Game to identify moose and caribou populations of



Members of the Alaska Board of Game at the Interior Meeting, March 2-11, 2012. From left, Cliff Judkins, Teresa Sager Albaugh, Ted Spraker, Stosh Hoffman, Lynn Keogh, Nate Turner and Nick Yurko. Later Keogh's appointment was not confirmed by the Alaska Legislature, leaving an empty position for appointment by the governor.

*Photo from State of Alaska*

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## BOARD OF GAME DECISIONS *continued from previous page*

high value, and to ensure that these populations remained large enough to allow adequate and sustained harvest. In service to this mission, the Board of Game, over the years, has adopted more and more aggressive methods. These have included increases in moose hunt quotas, longer hunts or winter hunts and antlerless hunts (although only when biologically justified, they say). To boost prey, the Board of Game has authorized reduction in predators through various forms of wolf and more recently bear predator control, including liberalized trapping, baiting of bears, and aerial shooting of wolves. At this Board of Game meeting, they debated the controversial practice of bear snaring, but opted to “study” it further. However, other IM activities were on the docket, and for state lands right next to Denali.

### **Would Intensive Management arrive at the boundaries of Denali National Park?**

The Board of Game considered this possibility in a bundle of Proposals, 227-232, authored by members of the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee. The proposals would implement an IM plan for moose in Unit 20C, which extends north from Denali National Park all the way to the Tanana River, and includes the Wolf Townships. The proposals would authorize both wolf and bear “predator control” practices, establish a black bear trapping season along the Teklanika and Kantishna Rivers, and would allow the taking of grizzly bear at black bear bait stations.

However, the Board of Game had to face strong opposition to Intensive Management in the communities north and east of Denali National Park. Both the Middle Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee and the Denali Borough Assembly opposed this type of management policy in the Game Management Units immediately north and east of the park, Units 20A and 20C. John Basile, in his testimony for the Middle Nenana AC, told the Board of Game that the AC opposed the entire bundle. My testimony reflected distrust of the wisdom of using IM in 20C. We were heard, for the most part, when the BOG either tabled or voted down Proposals 227-231. For some reason, though, the Board of Game could not leave Unit 20C entirely alone.

### **We do not understand why the BOG authorized the taking of grizzly bear at black bear baiting stations in Unit 20C**

Unaccountably, on March 8th the BOG approved Proposal 232, the taking of brown (grizzly) bear at black bear bait stations in Unit 20C. We have profound concerns with this authorization.

For one, we argue that the baiting of black and brown bears is an Intensive Management strategy, and IM was not authorized in 20C. This is not just our opinion. Board member Ted Spraker said that he would prefer that this technique be used only where Intensive Management has been authorized. He, along with Nate Turner and Stosh Hoffman, voted against this proposal, but it carried, 4-3.

We see this as a move to take advantage of an assumed abundance of grizzly bears emanating from Denali National Park, where bear populations are protected from harvest, without data to show there is a predation problem in Unit 20C. A quick check of the regulations shows no evidence that black bear bait stations have been authorized in 20C before. Why now? We have safety concerns regarding the presence of bait stations near Healy. Bait stations are only required to be one mile away from a house, school, business or campground. In addition, although bait stations’ GPS location must be registered with Fish and Game, there is no requirement that their location be made public.



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## BOARD OF GAME DECISIONS *continued from previous page*



Specific regulations for 20C have not yet been developed. This proposal will not take effect, in any case, until 2013, and would be in effect during black bear baiting season, April 15th to June 30th. We at DCC see absolutely no justification for black bear bait stations in the Wolf Townships, and oppose the shooting of grizzlies on bait. Express your concerns to our area biologist Don Young at 907-459-7233.

### **Antlerless hunts – are they legal in 20A?**

Knowing that the Middle Nenana AC opposed reauthorization of antlerless hunts in Unit 20A (by a vote of 6 to 4), the Board of Game discussed the issue carefully. The BOG had already heard from public comments that folks distrusted the moose numbers and quotas for 20A, did not like harvesting cows, and felt the environmental and social impacts of all the hunters that arrived to participate in antlerless hunts were too great to bear. This had already led the Denali Borough Assembly to pass a strongly-worded resolution

in January asking that the Alaska Legislature repeal the IM law. Although Fish and Game representatives do not identify antlerless hunts specifically as Intensive Management, their increasing use in service to “hunter opportunity” raised local hackles.

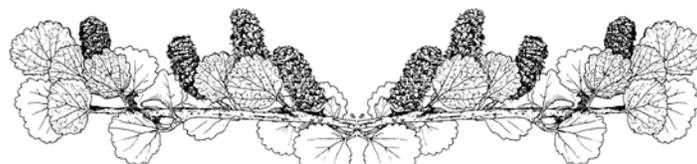
Hearing such opposition from traditional allies made it difficult for the BOG to authorize any but the smallest harvest quotas for antlerless moose in the Denali Borough, which is what it did. We have since learned that there may be a legal problem with this action (Proposal 206), since a careful read of state regulations shows that a Board of Game action not approved by the Advisory Committee of the Game Management Unit affected cannot be implemented. This problem could also affect the implementation of Proposal 205, allowing the taking of calves in an antlerless hunt, passed by the BOG but not by the AC. Whether a legal challenge will be made to these decisions is unclear at this writing.

We at DCC have not opposed antlerless hunts in the past, from a biological standpoint, if it can be shown that the moose population itself is too large for its habitat and cannot be reduced sufficiently through harvest of bulls. However, we understand the concerns expressed by some people that antlerless hunts are not “Fair Chase,” and that these hunts have caused significant social/environmental impacts. The resolution of this issue in the Denali Borough remains a work in progress.

### **Thanks to the Middle Nenana AC for its work on these issues**

Members of the Middle Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee worked hard through several grueling meetings to consider and develop recommendations on Units 20A and 20C. We appreciated and relied on their recommendations against the Yanert motorized hunt and Intensive Management in Unit 20C. Look to the DCC calendar on our website for information on upcoming AC meetings. ☘

**Members of the AC:** Robert Kohlsdorf, Myron Stokes, Leroy Sutton, Paul Van Dyke, Tyler Dynes, Pat Owen, John Basile, Brent Keith, Jacob Mattila, Jason Reppert, Nan Eagleson and Larry Haddock.



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# DCC JOINS PETITION ON HCCP AIR QUALITY PERMIT

by Charlie Loeb

Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) has been moving to restart the dormant Healy Clean Coal Project power plant (HCCP) for the past three years since completing an agreement with the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority for taking ownership of the plant. DCC has long had concerns about the plant because of its potential threat to Denali National Park's Class I airshed and the now much-documented concerns about coal-related pollutants in local communities. We are also concerned about the carbon dioxide released from coal burning and its contribution to global climate change. Despite believing it is a bad project in the wrong place, we have not objected outright to the restart of HCCP. Rather, we have made efforts to ensure that a restart would include measures to mitigate the air pollution impacts associated with the burning of coal.

There are significant environmental issues with the HCCP restart, and questions regarding how Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air quality regulations are properly applied when a plant starts up after being moth-balled for a decade. As a result, GVEA has been negotiating an agreement on its air quality permit with DCC and several state and national conservation organizations. Represented by attorneys at Trustees for Alaska, we worked in good faith for many months to create a restart plan for HCCP permitting that would be acceptable to everyone. In December 2011, we structured a deal that required sacrifices on both sides but represented an acceptable compromise to achieve long-term protection of public health and park air quality while meeting GVEA's projected energy needs. However, despite initially indicating acceptance of the terms of the agreement, GVEA abruptly quit talking and moved forward with the air quality permit without finishing the deal.

To keep our options open for getting the best overall solutions for local community and national park air quality, DCC has joined with other conservation organizations in filing a petition with the Environmental Protection Agency objecting to the air quality permit issued to GVEA by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Although GVEA has stated that conservation organizations are preventing the plant from operating, nothing we have done to date has prevented GVEA from operating this facility, and it seems worth questioning what organizations have been most responsible for keeping the plant from operating for the last 13 years. Further, we thought we had an agreement that would be mutually acceptable to conservation groups, GVEA, AIDEA, and EPA for getting the plant's air quality permit now. We do hope that GVEA decides to return to the table to resurrect the deal previously agreed upon. ☹



The Healy Clean Coal Plant, or HCCP, has been idle for more than a decade. DCC has been working to ensure that a restart would include measures to mitigate the air pollution impacts associated with the burning of coal. We do hope that GVEA decides to return to the table to resurrect the deal previously agreed upon.

*DCC photo*

# BUSY WITH PUBLIC COMMENTS

by Charlie Loeb

March was public comment month for issues of concern to DCC members. The board rallied to respond to as many of the comment calls as we could on issues big and small. Here is a quick summary of the project proposals and our responses.

## Alaska Stand-Alone Pipeline

First up was an Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Impact Statement for the Alaska Stand-Alone Pipeline Project (ASAP). ASAP is a State of Alaska-driven project to deliver North Slope natural gas to Southcentral Alaska via a small diameter pipeline, sufficient for Alaska-based consumption with some supply available for industrial uses or direct export. The pipeline would follow the Parks Highway corridor through the Denali area except for a diversion across Montana Creek and the Yanert River before rejoining the highway near Carlo Creek. This project has a lot of uncertainty given its high cost, recent increases in the estimate of natural gas available in Cook Inlet, and the growing interest in a large-diameter pipeline from the North Slope to tidewater to supply large quantities of gas for export.

DCC raised many concerns about effects on landowners and the environment, but the two major points we made were 1) this project doesn't make sense if the large-diameter pipeline project moves forward, and 2) if ASAP is constructed, then it should use the alternative route identified for the Denali area, staying with the highway corridor through the national park rather than diverting around the park boundary. We are very concerned about the scar that would be created in the viewshed of Government Hill, as well as the long-term impacts of another cleared corridor in the Montana Creek and Yanert areas. Although use of park land would require Congressional authorization, the benefits would more than justify the extra effort. Legislation to accomplish this routing has already been introduced in Congress.

## Park Road Plowing

Next up was a response to NPS scoping for an Environmental Assessment on plowing the park road to Savage Campground year round, in large part to provide winter mountain viewing opportunities from within the national park. This option was considered as part of the 2006 Backcountry Management Plan but did not make it into the final plan. DCC is concerned about displacement of existing users of the unplowed park road, which is particularly important during low-snow periods in early winter, and new infrastructure development at Savage which we fear will inevitably follow. The unusual level of interest on the part of the Alaska Travel Industry Association (major tourism operators) heightens our level of concern on this point. We suggested that the EA consider an alternative in which road plowing would not begin until some defined point in late winter (e.g., plow the road in time for use during Winterfest) once there is plenty of snow for off-trail and Headquarters-based trips, as well as an alternative in which the identified needs are addressed by better utilizing existing plowed roadways.



Opening the park road each spring requires large equipment as shown here near Stony Creek. Many winter visitors enjoy the recreational opportunities of the unplowed road, which is particularly important during low-snow periods in early winter. *Photo courtesy of Sue Deyoe*

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**BUSY WITH PUBLIC COMMENTS** *continued from previous page***Alaska Railroad Herbicide Spraying**

Back in 2006, the Alaska Railroad (AKRR) filed a permit application with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to spray its tracks with herbicides to remove unwanted vegetation. Amid a storm of opposition all along the rail corridor, DEC denied the application. Since then, AKRR has returned periodically to request permits for spraying only portions of the track, apparently trying to accomplish incrementally what was not acceptable all at once. The current permit application was for sections of the tracks that just touch the Denali Borough – from Clear to Fairbanks in the north and from Broad Pass to Gold Creek in the south. As we have on prior permit applications, DCC objects to the use of herbicides for this purpose. While we support AKRR's desire to maintain the safety of its tracks, we believe that applying toxic chemicals in areas where people live, recreate, and subsist is the wrong approach, and that there are non-toxic alternatives to herbicides which are less risky to people and the environment. We suggested that DEC establish a task force of involved parties and come up with a full range of solutions to the problem of vegetation management along the railroad tracks.

**Alaska Regional Haze State Implementation Plan**

In 1999, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a rule regarding regional haze that is intended to protect Class I airsheds around the country, which include Denali. A requirement of the rule is that all affected states prepare State Implementation Plans (SIPs), which the State of Alaska adopted on Feb. 11 and submitted to EPA for approval. EPA solicited public comments regarding the state's plan. Note that this issue is distinct but related to actions surrounding GVEA's restart of the Healy Clean Coal Plant, addressed in an article on page 7.

Unfortunately, DCC found that the regional haze plan had a lot of deficiencies. Among them:

- The SIP does not adequately address the shutdown requirements for the existing Healy coal-fired power plant (Healy 1) or the likely restart of the Healy Clean Coal Plant (Healy 2).
- The SIP does not make clear the priority given to data from the Denali Headquarters air quality monitoring site compared to the Trapper Creek monitoring site.
- The SIP seems to suggest that much of Denali's haze originates either from wildfires (in the summer) or overseas anthropogenic sources (winter) without acknowledging all of the combustion sources for power generation and home heating in communities along the railbelt.
- Finally, the SIP completely ignores likely new sources of air pollution, particularly from approved gas projects in the Nenana and Healy basins. Gas production has been responsible for severe air pollution in lower 48 national parks, and it is difficult to see how a legitimate regional haze plan could be adopted that does not address this source of pollutants.

**More coming. . .**

The flood of comment opportunities is not slowing down as we move into spring and summer. Upcoming are comment deadlines for NPS EA's on the Rock Creek Bridge Replacement at Denali (April 30) and the subsistence collection and use of discarded/shed animal parts and plants (May 3), the JPARC Modernization and Enhancement EIS which will affect the amount and structure of military overflights over the southwestern portion of Denali and the Denali Highway (June 7), and scoping on the Alaska mega-project of the moment – the Susitna-Watana hydroelectric project (May 31). Please send us your thoughts on any of these proposals. Our members and readers are always welcome to contribute ideas and insights to DCC's comments, which are generally written by volunteer members of the board of directors who have an astounding tolerance for dense bureaucratic documents. Your help is appreciated! ☘

# NPS CONSIDERS ALLOWING COLLECTION OF PLANT MATERIALS & SHED OR DISCARDED HORNS AND ANTLERS

PROPOSED REGULATION WOULD APPLY TO ALL NATIONAL PARKS, PRESERVES AND MONUMENTS IN ALASKA

by Julia Potter

On February 23, 2012 I participated in a Denali Subsistence Resource Commission teleconference to discuss an Environmental Assessment prepared by NPS for Subsistence Collections and Uses of Shed or Discarded Animal Parts and Plants from NPS Areas in Alaska.

In 1996 the Denali Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) made a request to National Park Service (NPS) to consider allowing the customary trade and/or sale of handicraft items made by subsistence users who make handicrafts from natural materials from animals and plants. Since then numerous letters have been submitted to the NPS from SRCs for various national parks and monuments in Alaska.

In 1999 subsistence SRC chairs suggested that each SRC should review NPS customary trade regulations to ensure that local customary trade practices are recognized and authorized under current NPS regulations. Currently on NPS lands "customary trade" only allows for the sale of furs for cash with the exception of Kobuk Valley National Park and Gates of the Arctic National Preserve, where the collection and sale of handicrafts made from plant material is allowed.

To allow qualified rural residents to collect plants in National Park units in Alaska where subsistence is allowed to make into handicrafts and sell, or to collect shed or discarded nonedible animal parts (horns, antlers, hooves and bones) to make into handicrafts and sell, is dependent on the promulgation of new federal regulations at 36 CFR part 13, Special Regulations for Alaska NPS areas.

Alternatives in the EA include: A - No Action, B - Broad Eligibility and No permits, C - Eligibility Restricted by Areas with Discretionary Permits, and D - Eligibility Restricted by Areas and Species with Required Permits. The preferred NPS alternative is D. This alternative would require those living in a resident zone or who have a Section 13.440 permit to also have a Federal Subsistence Board Customary and Traditional (C&T) Use Finding for each wildlife species in each GMU or subunit in the park, monument or preserve. Conditions would also be placed on collection of plant materials or horns, antlers and bones. Permits would be required.



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The members of the Denali SRC present at its February teleconference prefer alternative C. This alternative does not require a customary and traditional use finding for each species and provides for discretionary conditions and permits pending consultation with the SRC and a decision by the Superintendent.

The commission did not have a quorum at the February meeting and it took no official action to submit comments to NPS on the EA. The commission will not meet again until July.

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## COLLECTION OF PLANT MATERIALS & SHED OR DISCARDED HORNS AND ANTLERS

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Denali Citizens Council is preparing comments on the EA. Some of our concerns are:

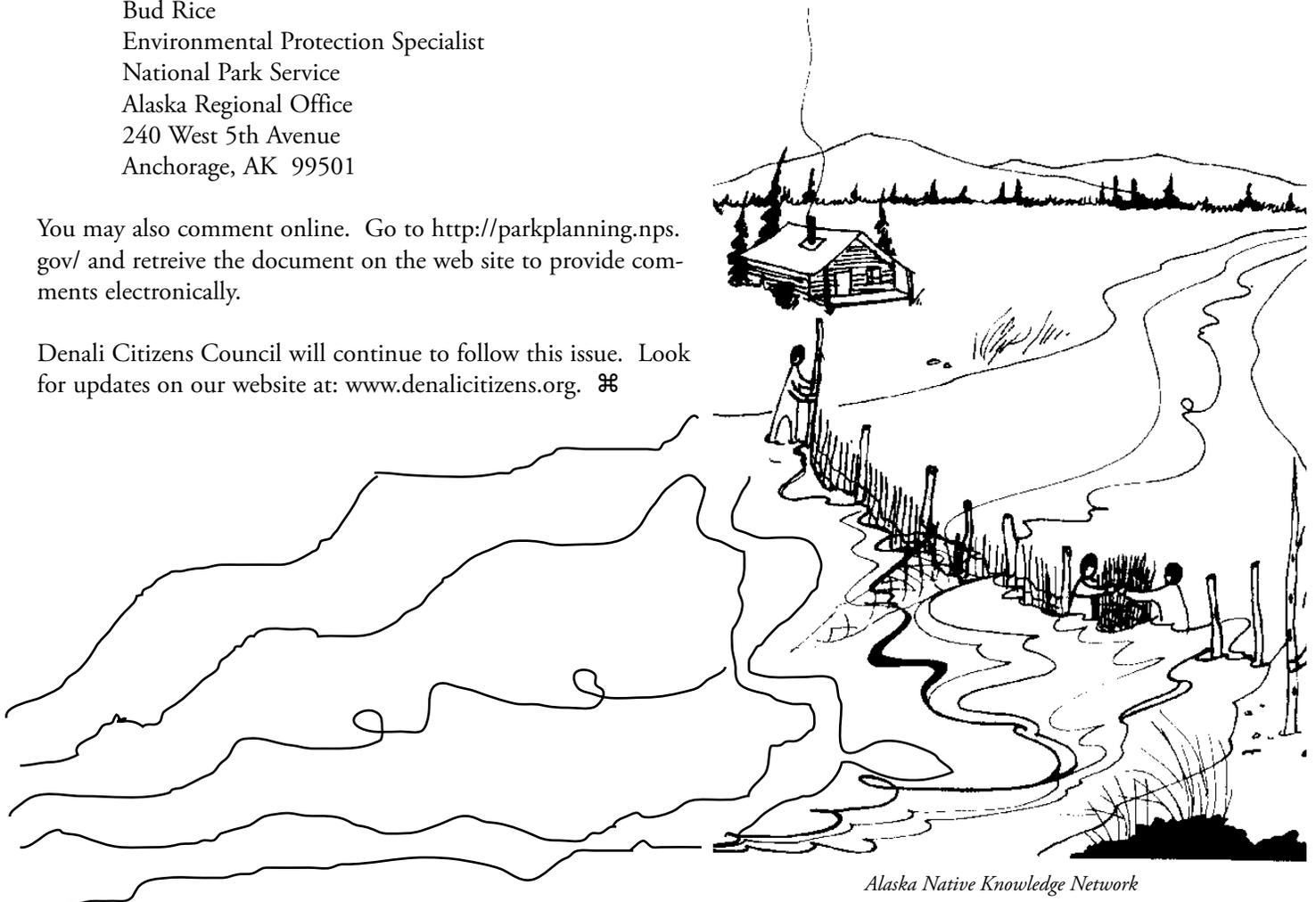
- ♦ The proposed change to regulation appears to be a desire rather than a need for subsistence purposes. The collection of plant materials and nonedible animal parts on NPS lands would have only a minor positive impact on subsistence users.
- ♦ In Denali it has not been shown that this is a traditional and customary subsistence use.
- ♦ There are other federal or state lands outside of or surrounding NPS areas where collection is possible.
- ♦ Collection of plant materials and nonedible animal parts could alter the landscape. Many backcountry users enjoy the discovery of moss- or lichen-covered antlers, or undisturbed areas of plants.
- ♦ Each NPS unit is unique and subsistence activity in each unit is unique to that area. A blanket regulation for all NPS areas in Alaska does not seem appropriate.

Comments are due on **May 3, 2012** and should be submitted to:

Bud Rice  
 Environmental Protection Specialist  
 National Park Service  
 Alaska Regional Office  
 240 West 5th Avenue  
 Anchorage, AK 99501

You may also comment online. Go to <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/> and retrieve the document on the web site to provide comments electronically.

Denali Citizens Council will continue to follow this issue. Look for updates on our website at: [www.denalicitizens.org](http://www.denalicitizens.org). ☞



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# LANGUAGE AND LANDSCAPE

by Erica Watson

The Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) EIS is now available for public comment. What strikes me, upon initial perusal of these documents, in which the military attempts to explain to the public the need to expand military airspace in Alaska, is the distance between the language of these documents and the words I might use to describe the same landscapes. “Alaska...maximizes modern battlespace realism...(and) provides a unique backdrop with an uncluttered electromagnetic environment, minimal encroachment, and a strategic location.” How many of us have been skiing or mushing on the Denali Highway and thought of the place’s potential for “battlespace realism?”

This juxtaposition of military language and wild landscapes reminded me of a series of poems a poet friend, Lauren Eggert-Crowe, wrote upon learning of a butterfly colony on military training grounds in Pennsylvania. Both these poems from the series were first published on terrain.org.

The JPARC EIS is available online at [www.jpisceis.com](http://www.jpisceis.com). The comment deadline is June 7, 2012. ☞

## Between the Oaks and the Grass

You will scoop dead butterflies into your pockets.  
Pierce their center with pins.

You will spread their violets and clovers on the kitchen table.  
Teach your children what the army protects.

Five hundred butterflies will hush this field with their applause  
for the percussion of rifle-fire.

You will instruct the soldiers to check the glass,  
inspect each bolt and tire tread for powdered wings.

You will find out later that to pick the flowers is to transgress the  
rules.  
And you should have left the fallen behind.

You will live for six months in a war zone.  
You say this with tenderness.

There are petals all around us.  
The butterflies flap the tiny colors of their country.  
We are needled through the heart.



*Alaska Native Knowledge Network*

## Symmetry

Wings make an orange hinge: speck for speck,  
all eyes and teeth,

a tube body: An origami line for red paper  
hearts

valentines delivered to the dogbanes and  
crown vetch

that surround the field full of guns:  
Has your eye ever met barrel?

The aching gaze crowning a black o.  
A nexus. A genesis. A birth canal.

You see spirals.

The way a bomb pirouettes on its radius,  
the way it blooms.

# BON VOYAGE, JULIA

It is with decidedly mixed emotions that we bid farewell to our friend Julia Potter, as she prepares to leave for Homer, Alaska - land of halibut, sea breezes, deep snow and creative people. On the one hand, we're happy she picked such a special place for the next adventure. And, she won't be the first Denali-ite to make that decision, either. On the other hand, we'll miss her presence and influence in our community, her steady friendship and her organizing talents at DCC.

After arriving in Alaska from Florida (in 2003, moving to Healy in 2005), Julia embraced the Bush lifestyle, and held a variety of jobs, including Assistant Director of the Yukon Quest, sled dog handler and mama, bookstore bookkeeper, member of the Denali Borough Assembly Advisory Board and Planning Commission, chef, baker, active participant in the Parks Highway Scenic Byway process, and Community Organizer for DCC. During her time in the Denali area she acquired her now-constant sidekick Scoobie the dog, moved from Healy to Cantwell, entertained visiting family members, made a lot of friends and got outside to enjoy the natural world whenever she could.

It truly is hard to believe that Julia has worked for us for more than five years! She began with DCC as our Community Organizer in the fall of 2006, and jumped right into organizing the office so that a person could actually find something, learning the equipment and software, editing the newsletter, banking the checks and keeping the DCC board informed on issues. We were rarely able to employ Julia full-time, but her accomplishments far exceeded the hours and she spent many hours of her own time working on related issues. Change was constant in this job, changing issues, changing board members, weather ups and downs, and new technology. We changed newsletter editing software a couple of years ago and she resolutely tackled the complex learning curve. Julia regularly produced stunning newsletters, coping with late submissions, picky editors and last-minute changes. Julia's attitude and even temper were joys for all those of us who worked with her.

I join the rest of the DCC board in wishing Julia a hearty bon voyage. We expect her to be back for a hike with us now and then, and to let us know when she is ready for a visit. As Julia put it on her Facebook page, "I'm hoping that all the people who always say they are going to visit Homer but never actually do will now car pool for the trip to enjoy a visit with Julia." ☘

~ Nancy Bale



## BRIEF NEWS & VIEWS

### DENALI BOROUGH SCIENCE FAIR - 2012 DCC BEST PROJECT: CONSERVATION

One of the favorite parts of my job as DCC's community organizer has been participating in the annual Denali Borough Science Fair as a judge. Every year I am thrilled to see the various topics chosen by students to explore the world of science. Creativity is boundless and it shows – from melting M&M's to walking on eggs – imagination brings science to life.

DCC sponsors a best project award for conservation themed projects. It is usually a difficult decision to choose one project that fits the bill but this year one project really stood out from the others.

I selected Tri-Valley 8th grader Riley Tench's project on recycled plastics. Riley also won a First Place ribbon and his project was also selected for a Grand Prize - the chance to compete in the regional Fairbanks Science Fair. Only eleven projects are selected each year for a Grand Prize from the three schools in Denali Borough.

So what prompted this great experiment? Riley wanted to know why only certain plastics are accepted for recycling. He thought that by melting various plastics he might find the answer. He conducted research on the various types of plastics, what different types of plastics are used for, and what they have in common. He questioned how their properties might change when heated. Could this be why some types are not recycled? What happens when you melt different plastics together?



Riley's science project detailing his experiment design, research, plastics before and after melting (bottom right) and plastic monomers (bottom left).

*DCC photo*

manufacturing many common household items and what they looked like after melting. Thanks to Riley, I certainly learned more about plastics and recycling. ☼

Using a Bunsen burner, Riley melted various types of plastic – a grocery bag, Styrofoam, plastic forks, shrink wrap, a soda bottle, a bottle cap, a container lid and PVC.

Riley found out that plastics labeled 3V, or poly vinyl chloride commonly known as PVC, are nasty, sticky and just plain gooey when melted. PVC type plastics are generally not accepted for recycling. Riley guesses that the melted gooey result is why. It's just too difficult to recycle. He also found that plastics labeled PETE are the most acceptable for recycling and other products are commonly made from these recycled plastics such as rain jackets or ponchos and grocery bags.

Riley intends to do this experiment again using an oven to better control the heat and hopes to develop a product using recycled plastics.

It was interesting to see the different types of plastics, learn what types of plastics are used for

## BRIEF NEWS & VIEWS

### DENALI BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION CONTINUES WORK ON CHAPTER 4.25, CLASSIFICATION OF BOROUGH OWNED LANDS

The Denali Borough planning commission has been working for several years now on revising Chapter 4.25 of borough code which deals with classifying borough owned lands. The current code states that borough-owned lands must be classified prior to any action being taken which affects the land. This basically means that the borough cannot sell or lease land until it is classified.

The process has raised many questions and concerns by both commissioners and the public. The biggest hurdle is attempting to determine what is classification and how will this process benefit the borough?

Classification of borough owned lands is a management tool which will assist the borough in land planning. It has no regulation. It is basically a label to describe the possible recommended uses for a particular parcel of land which is owned by the borough or for lands over which the borough has management authority. Classification does not apply to privately owned lands, or land owned by the federal government, the state of Alaska or native corporations.

The planning commission has held several work sessions in recent months to hammer out a final document. It is possible that the commission will finalize its work on this chapter during its next two meetings. Once the commission finishes its work on this chapter, the chapter will be sent to the assembly as a proposed ordinance. The planning commission also plans to submit supporting documents to assist the assembly in understanding the process of classification. The public is encouraged to attend the planning commission meetings and to make comments. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at the Tri-Valley Community Center in Healy. Visit the Denali Borough website for more information at <http://www.denaliborough.gov>. ☞



Alaska Native Knowledge Network

## DCC NEWS

Join Denali Citizens Council and receive a subscription to *DCC News* published six times a year. A form is provided on the back of this newsletter. Or join on the web: [www.denalicitizens.org](http://www.denalicitizens.org)

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Denali Citizens Council is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Our mission is to protect the natural integrity of Denali National Park and to promote a sustainable future for lands surrounding the Park. Please join by filling out this form and mailing it to the address below.

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