

### DCC ANNUAL MEETING TO OFFER A VARIED PROGRAM BIRD WALK - DESSERT - SLIDE SHOW - LIVE MUSIC - MEET DON STRIKER

by Nan Eagleson

The Denali Citizens Council Annual Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 23rd, 2013 at the Charles Sheldon Center on the campus of the Denali Education Center in McKinley Village. For those of you who would like to greet the new avian arrivals, join Nan Eagleson at 6:00 pm in front of the Sheldon Center for a walk along the banks of the Nenana River. The dessert social will begin at 7:00 pm, followed by a brief slide show to share a sense of Denali, photos which depict our northern landscape, summers of life, home in the cold and seasons of change. New Denali National Park and Preserve Superintendent Don Striker will attend to introduce himself to the DCC community. Live music by local musicians will accompany the program. The values that contributed to the creation of Denali National Park and Preserve are expressed in the issues which DCC is following and will share with you. Please come join us for good food, good music and good company. Don't miss it!

### LARGE, DIVERSE GROUP OF FRIENDS REMEMBERS GINNY WOOD

by Cass Ray

Ginny Hill Wood, a trail-blazing giant in conservation and wilderness advocacy and co-founder of Camp Denali, one of Alaska's first eco-tourism lodges, was remembered for her "enormous capacity to imagine" and her "busy life and many accomplishments" at a celebration of her life on April 7. Few in the large audience doubted that Wood's response to those accolades would have been a shrug and a reminder that she simply "always wanted to see what was over the hill." Wood, 95, died at home in Fairbanks on March 8.

The nearly three-hour celebration, in the ballroom of the Wood Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, was attended by 250 people and included remarks by a dozen and a half members of the audience. A second celebration, this summer, will see some of Wood's ashes spread at Camp Denali, and will be attended by her daughter Romany and son-in-law Carl.

Featured at the April 7 celebration was the music of Susan Grace, the singer, songwriter, and guitarist; among the songs Grace performed was her "Song for Ginny Wood." Grace was one of Wood's best friends, and in turn Wood was one of Grace's fondest fans. Grace was with Wood when she died. The celebration's emcee was Anna Plager, who coordinated Wood's care in her last years.

Ginny would have been pleased to observe that in evidence at this gathering of the Alaska-and-beyond conservation tribe were more than a few silver ponytails, braids, and rubber-banded sprigs at the backs of balding heads. No one was surprised that among the bounty of delectable goodies were gluten-free cookies, and an Alaska Geographic staffer guessed the visitor parking lot outside probably boasted its fair share of Subarus. One of the speakers, who met Wood 54 years ago, while camping, noted that just as Wood, her daughter, and Celia Hunter were kindred camping spirits so many years ago, the Wood Center Ballroom was full of kindred spirits that afternoon.

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Displays exhibited Ginny's personal effects and writings. Pictured here - Ginny's emblematic fleece vest, wrist watch and a photo of her "in her element." *photo by Cass Ray*

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# THANK YOU, MEMBERS & DONORS

by Nancy Bale

Thank you to those who've contributed since our last newsletter. Your donations are needed and appreciated. Our spring membership drive mailers will be going out soon, and we invite you to renew at whatever level you'd prefer or make an additional contribution to support our activities. For names of recent contributors, see page 15.

As a late, snowy spring slowly moves toward summer, DCC has planned a number of activities and campaigns. We've already had a booth at the Community Fair at Tri-Valley Library in Healy, and inaugurated our film series focusing on energy issues with the screening of "Windfall" at Tri-Valley Library. Coming May 23rd we're holding our Annual Membership Meeting, held early to enable seasonal arrivals of the human sort to convene and enjoy snacks, slides and community, including a look at the avian arrivals!

Usually, DCC board members are the only writers with bylines in the *DCC News*. This time, however, we're fortunate to have submissions from four guest writers, Linda Franklin, Matt Iverson, Halbe Brown and Cass Ray. Linda, a long-term Denali resident and homeowner, served as a DCC director and officer in the 1990s and now lives in Wyoming. Her recounting of Adolph Murie's strong stance for wilderness protection at Denali in *Murie speaks for Denali. Do you?*, reflects careful research on this well-known conservation figure and Linda's own passion for the park. Matt Iverson, a born and bred Alaskan and a more recent arrival at the gateway to Denali, reviews *The Seventymile Kid*, a recently-released book by Denali area resident Tom Walker focusing on Denali's first Superintendent, Harry Karstens, and his part in the first ascent of Mt. McKinley in 1913. Halbe Brown, a student at Tri-Valley School who recently attended a legislative training with Alaska Youth for Environmental Action with sponsorship from DCC, describes his activities there. Finally, Cass Ray, a former DCC board member and no stranger to these pages, remembers the Fairbanks celebration of life for Ginny Hill Wood, whose influence at Denali and in the wider conservation arena in Alaska lives on.

I attended Ginny's celebration and was particularly moved by her own words, both on archived video and quoted in the lovely program authored by Pam Miller, a devoted conservationist in her own right and one of the event organizers. From the second page of the program, a poem by Ginny, entitled *Epitaph For Me*, is reproduced below. 

## DONATIONS TO DCC IN MEMORY OF GINNY WOOD

Louise Gallop  
Barbara Powell



Native Knowledge Network

## EPITAPH FOR ME

By Ginny Hill Wood

October 24, 1993 ~75th Birthday

I have been but one expression  
Of one Creation.  
A part of the magic, the hope, the yearning,  
the love,  
The disappointment, the anguish and the ecstasy  
Of life expressing life.  
Sharing the glory  
And the shame  
And the pain  
Of human-kind's brief journey  
Through a moment of time  
In this wondrous universe  
On this sacred planet  
About which we yet know so little,  
Much less ourselves.  
Thanks for the odyssey, Great Spirit!

# MURIE SPEAKS FOR DENALI - DO YOU?

by Linda Franklin

By 1950 Adolph Murie had decided Mount McKinley National Park was the place he wanted to devote his career and life. When the Park Service wanted to send him to Olympic National Park for a cougar study similar to his respected wolf study, he turned it down. It would have been a promotion and his own brother, Olaus Murie, encouraged him to take it. Adolph wanted to continue his McKinley studies instead, and his passion for this place made him unenthusiastic about other opportunities.

While based at Grand Teton National Park, Murie negotiated an arrangement with Lowell Sumner, the National Park Service's principal biologist, to return to McKinley as needed to monitor wildlife situations there. Murie believed long-term field programs became more valuable the longer they continued, so his definition of "as needed" meant making it a priority to return to Alaska as often as possible. He returned to McKinley Park at least every other summer through 1956 – the year Murie learned of the Mission 66 proposals to "improve" McKinley Park.

Mission 66 was a decade-long program to upgrade and build new visitor facilities throughout the national park system in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service. Adolph Murie was immediately alarmed at the Mission 66 proposals for McKinley. He considered the proposed improvements to be intrusions that would threaten the integrity of the park. Preservation of wilderness was his biggest concern: "Because McKinley is a wilderness within a vast northern wilderness, the ill effect of any intrusion here will be proportionately greater; and any 'dressing up' will be more incongruous, will clash more with the wilderness spirit...."

His 14-page critique of the Mission 66 development plans was not well-received by the park's new superintendent, Duane Jacobs. Jacobs sent a dismissive one-page reply to Murie and implied Murie was clinging to an outdated personal vision of the park. Soon after, Murie received notice that his services at McKinley were no longer needed.

When Adolph Murie was sent back to McKinley Park in 1959 after two years of what he considered forced exile, the road issue focused his attention on protecting McKinley's wilderness values. He saw the progression of the Mission 66 roadwork as the first fourteen miles were being reconstructed that summer. He saw the charm of the old road obliterated under many feet of gravel as the road was widened to a standard 20-foot width and sharp curves were removed through realignments. He thought the old road was in keeping with the wilderness character of the park in the way it followed the natural undulations of the terrain. "The feeling one gets is that the road passes through a wilderness that comes up to the road." Murie saw the new road as dominating the landscape and disrespectful to the park's wild character.

Murie's opposition to the roadwork and other Mission 66 projects was very much the minority view in Alaska and at the park. Most Alaskans still agreed that opening up the country was desirable and commercial interests wanted McKinley Park to have a more central role in Alaska's industry. Murie had a few local allies who shared his sentiments that the roadwork had gone too far. Murie and his allies hoped the road engineers would "come to their senses and follow more minimal construction standards beyond Savage River the next year."



Photo of sheep on Polychrome Pass taken by Adolph Murie (1939)  
NPS photo



Adolph Murie in McKinley Park

NPS photo

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## MURIE SPEAKS FOR DENALI - *continued from previous page*

His allies included Ginny Wood and Celia Hunter, Camp Denali's original owners, and park maintenance man Charlie Ott. Charlie Ott was Murie's personal friend and kindred spirit. They compared notes, shared ethics and ideals, and hiked and photographed together. After the road crew blasted rock from Cathedral Mountain to use on the approach to a bridge over Igloo Creek, Murie and Ott named the marred area "Desecration Canyon." They lamented the lack of consideration for natural features: "Old cliffs were ruthlessly blasted in three places. A lasting blemish was inflicted on this canyon." Murie called it "vandalism to the nth degree."

In 1960 the road reconstruction reached Sanctuary River. The massive cuts and fills along the side of Mount Margaret were more extreme than the previous summer's work. It was clear neither the road engineers nor the park superintendent intended to moderate the road plans. Superintendent Jacobs had ignored Murie's suggestion to seek counsel outside of the NPS on the Mission 66 proposals, so Murie started using his own connections to enlist a contingent of outside voices. The roadwork would continue for several more years as the road crew reconstructed the road a section at a time while Murie and his allies gathered forces.

Adolph's brother Olaus was co-director of the Wilderness Society at the time and was in a position to be a valuable asset in addressing Adolph's concerns on National Park Service issues. Olaus was extremely busy with his work – marshaling support for passage of the Wilderness Act and for establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Range, but he always made time to work with Adolph on his concerns. Olaus had written two earlier letters to NPS director Conrad Wirth criticizing Mission 66's overall plans and misleading publicity. Copies of his letters were widely circulated among conservation groups and primed the growing protest nationally over Mission 66 projects.

But there was much more than Adolph Murie's position as a wolf biologist or the writings of his nationally influential brother that made a difference. The new road's incompatibility with McKinley's wilderness esthetics became Murie's topic of conversation with everyone. He was not shy about pointing out the merits of keeping the park road and park facilities on the primitive end of the spectrum. As his wife put it, "he gave everyone he met the lecture." His lecture was far from a pedantic ordeal. Since he was engaging and humble, people wanted to hear what he had to say. As Murie traveled the park road during his studies, he often had conversations with park visitors at wildlife-viewing stops.

There was a constant stream of visitors to the Igloo Cabin where the Muries lived the summers of 1960 through 1964. Some visitors sought out Dr. Murie as the famous wolf biologist; they included professional colleagues and summer park employees. The park's tour bus drivers welcomed opportunities to chat with Murie. His prestige as the wolf biologist might have gotten their attention initially, but his direct and genuine style instilled respect. Murie enjoyed one-on-one conversations and he hoped some of them would result in letters protesting the park's development plans. He was adept and articulate at tying his practical concerns for McKinley to wilderness esthetics and values.

Though he was known to avoid the limelight, Murie felt his responsibility as an advocate outweighed his natural reserve. The connection Murie felt to McKinley's wilderness gave him the focus and courage to speak out. He spoke eloquently of the values of wilderness that were important to him personally. With a manner disarming in its directness, Murie's deep caring touched people. To those who knew him, he was a gentle, modest, unassuming man who moved others with his idealism, indignation and facts.

Some in Murie's audience became wilderness advocates. They supported his appeal to stop road development and to preserve core wilderness values. Critics took to calling the "improved" road a speedway and often repeated Charlie Ott's statement "you don't go tearing to beat hell through a museum." Murie's sentiments were always clear: "We are dealing here with precious wilderness qualities, and the delicacy and purity of the mood in this park requires a delicate touch. If this fact is recognized, the Park Service would dispense with the recruiting of an army of bulldozers."

There was no Park Service document that announced the end of the road upgrades, though they did stop. Many projects of the McKinley Park's Mission 66 prospectus were completed – Eielson Visitor Center, Riley Creek Campground, short hiking trails in the hotel area, interpretive signs along the road. However, many other



Murie envisioned a park road designed with minimal infrastructure, a road that would fit into the natural landscape.  
DCC photo

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## MURIE SPEAKS FOR DENALI *continued from previous page*

projects were dropped, including a gas station at Wonder Lake, a Savage River hotel and numerous backcountry trails.

But it was the park road controversy that marked a major transition in the park's history. Murie helped clarify the park's value as a recognized and valued wilderness area. Preserving the wilderness character of the park road became synonymous with preserving the wilderness character of the whole park and that ideal won out, at least for a time.

Ecological wildlife management and wilderness appreciation at Denali National Park would have developed without Adolph Murie, but not with the same degree of intensity and integrity, and a sense of direction. As a scientist he gave the park an ecological approach to wildlife, as a defender of wilderness he gave the park a revised philosophical direction.

Murie's compelling vision for Denali continues in tangible ways more than 40 years after he left the park for the last time. But when protecting something fragile, constant vigilance is essential. Access and development pressures continue, and acquiescing to them incrementally degrades park's wilderness character. Is Murie's voice still heard at Denali? And just as importantly - are other voices prepared to echo his message today and insist that there is a unique "wilderness spirit" here that is worth preserving?

While Adolph Murie talked to everyone he met, we can share in so many more ways – Facebook, blogs, emails, newsletters – but it requires that we share our opinions and trust our values. Here, Charlie Loeb speaks for the Denali Citizens' Council Board, "We will continue to do what we do best: taking principled stands on issues that are important to our mission, and providing information and inspiration about why Denali's wilderness, wildlife, and way of life are so important to us and to the world." Who are our allies now? 

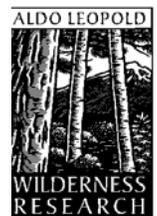
*Linda Franklin is a former president of the Denali Citizens Council who now lives in Moose, Wyoming. She does archival work for Grand Teton National Park after several years with the Murie Center and the Jackson Hole Historical Society & Museum. She holds a master's degree from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, where she published a thesis entitled "Adolph Murie: Denali's Wilderness Conscience."*

## WILDERNESS WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED AT DENALI PARK

Staff at Denali National Park and Preserve focused on wilderness management at a series of work sessions April 8-10, 2013. Park wilderness coordinator Dan Abbe and resource specialist Rob Burrows organized a day-long training on the Wilderness Act and NPS wilderness management responsibilities, attended by dozens of park staff and a handful of DCC board members. Adrienne Lindholm – former Denali Park planner and now Alaska Region wilderness coordinator for NPS – presented the portion of the workshop addressing the impact of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) on wilderness management. On succeeding days, Peter Landres of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute joined NPS staff to work on various components of wilderness character monitoring, including the development of a wilderness character narrative for Denali, identification of indicators for wilderness character (beyond those in the Backcountry Management Plan), and a wilderness character spatial model. 



The park road, to Murie, would allow visitors to become an integral part of the park's ecosystem. photo by Sue Deyoe



## FAREWELL TO GINNY HILL WOOD - PIONEER ALASKA CONSERVATIONIST - *continued from front page*

Among the many lessons taught by Wood's life were, noted an e-mail from Ken Ross, read by Plager, "never to be cowed by authority," "how to blend versatility and humility," "the measureless value of true friends," and "what a liberated woman can do." Dignity, poise, humor, independent spirit, and grace under pressure were among the lessons Ginny taught Cat Stewart, who knew Wood for four years and was one of her caregivers. Not least among Wood's legacies, noted one speaker, was "inspiring younger kids to fight for wilderness."

### 'Not Known for Being Short and Sweet'

Wood's lifelong spirit of adventure showed up early in her life: in the oral history video excerpted at the celebration, Ginny recalled running away from home when she was all of three years old--and getting all of two blocks from home. The video was produced by Karen Brewster, an oral historian at UAF and editor of a book on Wood, who first interviewed Ginny twelve years ago. Brewster drew laughs of recognition from the large audience when she noted that during interviews Ginny "was not known for being short and sweet." "Storyteller that she was," said Brewster, "pithy sound bites" would not do "to describe her life."

Among Wood's favorite early pastimes was to "read a book and go out and pretend," perhaps that she was on the Lewis and Clark expedition. She continued to "go out and pretend," she noted, even through her many hiking years. What attracted her to backpacking in the Brooks Range or Mt. McKinley National Park was that "you have it all to yourself."

Wood, a flyer for the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), flew fighter planes and bombers across the country. She, and the surplus military plane she was flying, arrived in Alaska on January 1, 1947. Flying a second plane was her great friend Celia Hunter, who, in a few years, would be one of Wood's two Camp Denali co-founders (the other was Ginny's husband, Woody). "When the temps dropped to 60 degrees below zero and there were no return flights to Seattle, Ginny and Celia stayed in Alaska," Grace has noted.

Roger Kaye, a bush pilot for nearly 30 years who was introduced by Plager as the "consummate wilderness advocate," began with the words "I owe much to Ginny." He noted that her "busy life and many accomplishments" included, among other things, bush pilot, sailor, world traveler, and preeminent adventurer. She brought him to Alaska to work at Camp Denali 39 years ago, and he was struck by "the depth" of her commitment to wilderness. Notable were her "intolerance"--of injustice, short-sightedness, greed, and materialism--and her righteous impatience: "We're not just going to sit here and take it."

### Adding her 'Stubborn Ounces' to the Cause

The site of the future Arctic National Wildlife Range



Susan Grace honored Ginny with music and words. *photo by Cass Ray*

(later Refuge), Wood's "first cause" in the early 1950s, was somewhere she had never visited, had no plans to visit, and thus she had no personal gain at stake--but "the very idea" of protecting that wilderness "captured her imagination," noted Kaye. "Somebody has to do it, so I suppose it might as well be me," Wood had shrugged, determined to add her "stubborn ounces" to the nascent cause. This Last Frontier could not be allowed to evolve into a "carbon copy of what we left behind in the states." A key question posed by Wood was, "What was the natural order before man changed it?" If immediate action was not taken, she insisted, the Alaska of everyone's dreams would be only a myth.

Many in the audience could be forgiven for thinking, "plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose"--"the more things change, the more they stay the same"--when Kaye noted that many Alaskans resented what they saw as Outsiders trying to make major changes affecting their state, conservation measures that Wood was convinced were in the best interests of them and their state. This priceless wilderness had to be spared "from the exploitations of a few for the lasting benefit of the many." By Ginny's lights, those opposing establishment of the Refuge could only be folks who hadn't seen it or who "couldn't stand fresh air." "They don't get to Camp Denali," she said, "and we don't miss them." Her hard-fought, six-year-long campaign was a foretaste of her unprecedented advocacy, making a huge contribution to a "new and sustainable definition of the Alaska frontier." Kaye's slideshow was accompanied by the lovely harp of Cathy Curby.

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## FAREWELL, GINNY WOOD - *continued from previous page*

### Camp Denali sets a conservation standard

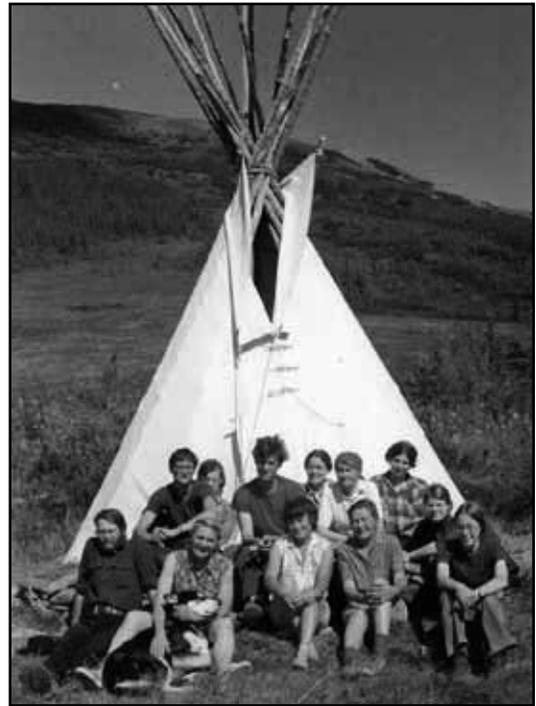
"Thank you for letting us celebrate your life, Ginny Hill Wood," Jerryne Cole began her remarks. "We know you wouldn't like it, but we're here." Cole, who, with her husband Wally, purchased Camp Denali from Wood and Hunter in 1975 with a down payment of two chairs handcrafted by Wally, recalled the original Camp Denalians' 1951 hike to Nugget Pond and the ridge above Moose Creek. Was Mt. McKinley visible from that spot? A one-word postcard confirmed: "Wow!" Wood and Hunter envisioned the homesteaded 80 acres as "a camp for hikers, not tourists," noted Cole, and Camp proved to be an "integral platform" for their conservation advocacy. Cole cited Wood's regular admonition: "Listen to the land."

Jenna Hamm, the Coles' daughter and, with her husband Simon, the "third generation" of safekeepers of Camp Denali, was introduced by Plager as being "squarely in the right place" to carry on the legacy of Ginny Wood and Celia Hunter. Hamm, who began spending summers at Camp when she was two years old, noted that with 49 beds, Camp's footprint, nearly at the end of Denali's 93-mile park road, remains much the same as in previous decades. What has changed, she noted, is that the spruce increasingly are taking over the landscape. In fact, when Ginny discovered that some trees were blocking her cabin porch's view of The Mountain, she summoned Simon to dispatch them. "Okay, Ginny, I get it," Hamm said at the celebration. "The view is sacred, not the spruce trees." When Hamm noted that Wood's and Hunter's establishment of Camp Denali had "influenced the lives of so many people" and asked how many in the audience had worked at Camp, dozens stood.

### 'I Helped Put that Trail in, and We Knew...'

Through Wood's final months, friends read to her sections of the book edited by Brewster, *Boots, Bikes and Bombers: Adventures of Alaska Conservationist Ginny Hill Wood* - and, noted Plager, "the memories would come flowing back to her." Some of the dozen and a half speakers invoking those memories at the celebration of Wood's life proved so eager to share their reminiscences that they neglected to introduce themselves to the audience.

The Ginny Wood who emerged via the nearly three hours of reminiscences was not without her surprises. One speaker remembered when a ski and hiking trail was found not to wander the boundary of a piece of private property, as it was intended, but across that private property. When Ginny discovered the trail then had been moved, to accommodate the perfectly lawful construction of a home, she telephoned and demanded, "What the hell's happened to our trail?" and "What do you know about this?" Ginny was apprised that,



Camp Denali staff in 1974 - Ginny is in the front row, second from the right. *photo from Nancy Bale*

"Well, I did it"--"and then, whoa!" Ginny "fell apart" and indulged in what was kindly termed a "diatribe." When Ginny "calmed down," she allowed as how "I helped put that trail in, and we knew it was in the wrong place."

Another speaker, who knew Wood for more than 30 years and accompanied her on her last camping trip, in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, recalled that at one point, while a meal was being prepared, Ginny disappeared. A quick search found her in her sleeping bag in her tent, warming up from a chill. "I always wondered what it would be like to be hypothermic!" Ginny declared, offering a lengthy "scientific analysis" of just what she was feeling. By that point in her life, Wood was growing frail and was "this little bird of a thing"--"there wasn't much to her"--and, battling a stiff wind, Wood caught her friend putting her arm out to keep Wood from blowing over. Protested Ginny, "You're going to make me look like an old lady!"

Many of Wood's lasting passions were not among those usually associated with "old ladies." Stewart, one of Ginny's caregivers, recalled a gathering at Ginny's home--and a "handsome man" perched on a stool beside Ginny's chair. Ginny was in her mid-90s and was the "belle of the ball." When the gentleman momentarily vacated the stool, Cat seated herself there to check on Ginny. The belle's response was to glare at her and, eventually, to demand, "Wasn't there a man sitting there? What did you do with him?" Cat made herself scarce, dutifully if sheepishly, said handsome man returned to his stool, and once again all was right with Ginny's world.

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## FAREWELL, GINNY HILL WOOD - *continued from previous page*

### 'How Fast Can You Climb a Tree?'

Another camping trip, this one near the Teklanika River, was recalled by Barbara Powell, who had known Wood since she was 19 years old and began working at Camp Denali in the 1970s, and who, in recent years, spent every Saturday evening with Wood. Spying a grizzly and her two cubs, Ginny wondered what might be motivating their approach and pondered, "I wonder if they're chasing us." And then this: "How fast can you climb a tree?" Wood counseled her young friend to stay in her tree "because she didn't want to have to write my parents because something had happened." Wood's longtime friend recalled her as "such a great companion on a hike."

Pam Miller, of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, recalled that back in the day, another term for "greenie" was "secular humanist," and Ginny once received a telephone call, asking if Celia was one of those "secular humanists." To which Ginny replied, "Is she a sexy what?" For her part, Wood felt "I always was trying to decide what I was."

One speaker recalled that Ginny once commented that "the Northern Lights don't come out nearly as much since we got indoor plumbing." Ginny was famous for not enjoying working with numbers—even when it came time to decide which organizations she wanted to support financially. Another speaker, who assisted Ginny with her finances, recalled luring Ginny to settle in and make those decisions by sketching a sliced pizza, providing Ginny with a pile of beans, assigning a dollar value to each bean, and having her decide how many beans went to each organization's slice of pizza. And yes, the beans then were washed and returned to service.

Andy Keller, who spends summers as a National Park Service interpreter on the west end of Denali's park road (and who, yes, arrived at the celebration of Wood's life in a Subaru), noted he enjoys sharing "the story of Ginny Hill Wood" and "the adventures of Ginny and Celia." It all makes for "a great conservation story," he added, and Wood was "a real pioneer swimming upstream against a prevailing idea." The "values that sustained" Wood, concluded Keller, will live on. The spider plant shoots in the vases on each of the twenty tables were from Ginny's plants, noted Stewart, and thus were a "piece of Ginny" and "how we keep Ginny alive."

### 'Alaska is Where I Belong'

Plager noted that one of Ginny's favorite songs was Pete Seeger's "My Get Up and Go Has Got Up and Went," including the lines: "How do I know my youth is all spent?/ My get up and go has got up and went/ In spite of it all, I'm able to grin/ When I think of the places my get up has

been... Now I am old, my slippers are black/ I huff to the store and I puff my way back/ But never you laugh, I don't mind at all/ I'd rather be huffing than not puff at all/ I get up each morning and dust off my wits/ Open the paper and read the obits/ If I'm not there, I know I'm not dead/ So I eat a good breakfast and go back to bed."

Shared by Brewster was "High Flight," a poem written in 1941 by 19-year-old John Gillespie Magee, an American pilot with the Royal Canadian Air Force in World War II, and said to be another favorite of Wood's: "Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth/ And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings/ Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth/ Of sun-split clouds and done a hundred things/ You have not dreamed of... And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod/ The high untrespassed sanctity of space/ Put out my hand and touched the face of God."

Appearing in the printed program for the celebration of Wood's life was "Epitaph for Me," written by Wood for her 75th birthday, including the words, "I have been but one expression/ Of one Creation./ A part of the magic, the hope, the yearning, the love,/ The disappointment, the anguish and the ecstasy/ Of life expressing life." Near the end of the celebration, Grace led the audience in singing her song, "Sweet Alaska," with its chorus of "Oh, sweet Alaska/ Your hills are calling me home/ With the sweet smell of springtime/ I long to be there/ Alaska is where I belong." Surely Grace, and her audience, had never been in better voice. One speaker summed up all the remembrances when, looking at Ginny's photo on the large screen, she said with a sigh, "It sure is hard to let go, but we have to."

As an older person, Wood decided that what she could do for the environment was to "make as small a footprint as possible." But it was no small influence that Wood had on the lives of many in the audience at the celebration of her life. Wood said her goal was "to die young--as old as possible," recalled Miller, and the 250 nodding heads in the audience were testament to Wood's achieving her goal. Another speaker noted Wood observed that her old friend Celia Hunter "was on to something" when she determined not to "look back with regret." Hamm recalled that when Hunter died, Wood wrote a letter to her old friend, asking her to save a campsite. Why had Wood trailed so far behind Hunter? "Ginny would have taken the long trail," noted Hamm. "It was more adventurous."

"At least," Wood once said, "I can look back on some wonderful adventures." Among the title cards on Brewster's oral history video was one reading, "A life well lived," and surely all those who attended the celebration of Ginny Wood's life would agree that they all had benefited mightily from the wonderful adventure that was Wood's life, a life very well lived. 

# HALBE BROWN RECOUNTS HIS AYEA TRIP TO JUNEAU

by Halbe Brown, Denali-area resident and Tri-Valley School student

I had the opportunity to attend the Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) Civics and Conservation Summit that was held in Juneau, March 10th through March 15th. I was one out of nineteen student delegates attending the summit. The student delegates were from all over the state. We got together to research and learn more about AYEА-selected focus bills. We split into small groups to focus on different bills. On Tuesday we went on our first trip to the capitol, where each group met with the sponsor of its bill. My bill was Senate Bill 6 or SB6, the school meals bill. This bill would provide money to the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. It would provide 35 cents for breakfast and 15 cents for lunch to every child qualified for the program. The sponsor for this bill was Senator Wielechowski.

Before the House and Senate can vote on the bill, it needs to pass a set of committees, and we learned that our bill was stalled in the process. It needs to pass the Education Committee and Finance Committee, but is currently stuck at the Education Committee because the chair isn't holding a hearing for it.

Throughout the next several days, we continued to extend our knowledge of the legislature, talked to Representative Kreiss-Tompkins, toured and learned about the capitol building, and went to a Senate floor meeting. This was all very cool and interesting.

On the final day (March 15th), we went to talk about our bills with the people who represented us. Our bill didn't get much attention, but others did. One that dealt with toxins in children's products gained several new sponsors. AYEА also hosted a barbecue on March 15th, outside the capitol building. It was a good chance to appreciate some of the people in the legislature who really helped us, and to promote the new AYEА organic cookbook.

Overall it was a lot of fun. I am grateful to Denali Citizens Council (DCC) for sponsoring me. I learned a lot and loved the great experience. I hope to attend next year as a youth trainer. ☞



AYEA students pose together in front of the Alaska Capitol building. Halbe is standing at the right end of the middle row.  
*photo courtesy of Claire Pywell*

# EVIDENCE GROWS OF CONTAMINATION FROM FRACKING

## STUDIES BUTTRESS OUR CONCERNS ABOUT GAS DEVELOPMENT NEAR HOMES AND HABITATS

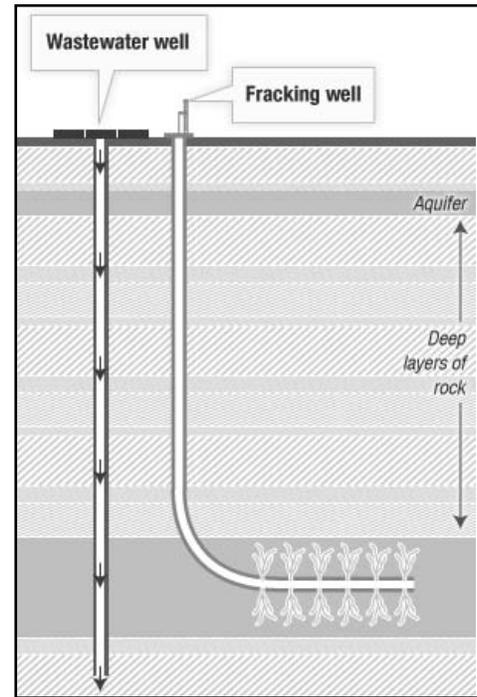
by Charlie Loeb

The Denali Citizens Council was one of several conservation organizations to testify at Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC) public hearings on new hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) regulations on April 4, 2013. DCC board president Charlie Loeb and board member Barbara Brease both gave short presentations that highlighted points made in letters submitted by DCC and The Wilderness Society, the latter being a group letter which DCC joined. DCC has been following the issues closely because of concern that hydraulic fracturing technology could be used within the approved Healy Basin Gas Exploration license area.

The hearing was dominated by industry testimony, much of which seemed directed at reassuring the 3-member Commission that hydraulic fracturing could be done safely, and that technical improvements are constantly underway. Kara Moriarty, the Executive Director of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, led the presentation of the industry case for weakening the proposed regulations. The industry is particularly opposed to the pre- and post-testing of private water wells near fracturing sites, full disclosure of the exact composition of fracturing fluids, and the need for pre-approval of fracturing plans. Requirements for the identification of aquifers were also challenged, because the industry feels adequate information is often unavailable. The industry does seem to have recognized that disclosure of chemical ingredients in fracturing fluids is necessary to restore the public trust in the industry and the process, but industry supporters still want to retain the actual formulas as trade secrets.

In our public testimony, DCC strongly supported full disclosure of the chemicals used in fracturing and emphasized the importance to residents and landowners in the Healy area of having well water tested before and after fracturing occurs. We also lobbied for best practices to be required in well construction, chemical storage, and waste handling to minimize the chance of spills and leaks, which is where much of the demonstrable contamination from gas development arises. In addition, our letter to AOGCC emphasized the need to disclose chemicals used in fracturing before the process is used, rather than as after-the-fact reporting. It also called for increased notification requirements, as we are concerned that the proposed requirement to notify landowners ¼ mile from the well-bore trajectory leaves out a lot of residents and landowners who are possibly affected. DCC asked AOGCC to require direct notification of all landowners and other affected parties within a 10-mile radius of a well and/or anyone whose property uses or overlies the aquifers to be potentially impacted.

While many conservation organizations signed onto the comment prepared by The Wilderness Society (and found on the DCC website along with DCC’s own comments), two groups took a harder stance. The Center for Biological Diversity in its oral testimony and the Sierra Club in its written comments both asked for an outright prohibition on the use of hydraulic fracturing in Alaska.



### New research buttresses testimony

The gas drilling industry has, for a long time, been able to dismiss citizen reports of environmental contamination from hydraulic fracturing as being scientifically unsubstantiated. However, research on the environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing largely did not begin until the complaints started, and now studies are beginning to suggest the anecdotal evidence has some basis. Notable new research includes the following:

✎ Industry has long claimed that methane contamination in water wells could not possibly come from deeper formations holding natural gas. A study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science in 2011 looking at the wells above the Marcellus and Utica shale formations refutes that assertion, documenting that wells close to drilling and fracturing operations had significantly more methane contamination than those farther away, and that the gas came from deep, thermogenic sources. The same study did not, however, find any water well contamination related to chemicals used in fracturing.

<http://www.nicholas.duke.edu/cgc/pnas2011.pdf>

The same authors also used geochemical evidence to show that pathways between the deep gas formations and shallow aquifers likely exist in the Marcellus shale.

<http://www.pnas.org/content/109/30/11961>

[full?sid=e28552b0-972b-4232-9531-317459576895](http://www.pnas.org/content/109/30/11961.full?sid=e28552b0-972b-4232-9531-317459576895)

*continued on next page*

## GROWING EVIDENCE OF DAMAGE FROM GAS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

☞ Evidence is more compelling for chemical contamination in two investigations by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). First, in Dimock, PA (one of the communities featured in the documentary *Gasland*), the EPA has found a concentration of toxic chemicals in well water sufficient to make it dangerous to drink, and contamination in other wells that is deemed to be within safe levels. The agency assigned no source of the chemicals, but suggested they might be related to spills and releases associated with “historic drilling operations.”

<http://www.epaosc.org/sites/7555/files/Dimock%20Action%20Memo%2001-19-12.pdf>

☞ Second, in December 2011, EPA released a report attributing groundwater contamination in Pavillion, WY to hydraulic fracturing chemicals while taking care to emphasize the unique geology in this particular gas field. Nonetheless, industry supporters have pilloried the agency for the finding, and the agency has extended the public comment period on the report three times to a total of almost 2 years (comments now due by September 30, 2013)!

<http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/wy/pavillion/#>

☞ Finally, recent reports have suggested that hydraulic fracturing operations are triggering earthquakes even in seismically dormant areas such as Ohio. The earthquakes appear to be most linked with waste injection wells, where companies dispose of used hydraulic fracturing fluid.

<http://www.ideo.columbia.edu/news-events/seismologists-link-ohio-earthquakes-waste-disposal-wells>

While not a comprehensive survey of current research, these selected studies do begin to substantiate the citizen complaints made about hydraulic fracturing across the country. Industry and its supporters challenge many of these findings, while at the same time noting that even these documents pertain to only a tiny fraction of the thousands of wells that have been drilled and fracked in the U.S. Industry supporters also emphasize that the most common cause of contamination is poorly constructed well casings rather than anything inherent to drilling or fracturing. Echoes of this argument could be heard from industry representatives at the AOGCC hearings.

### It's not just about fracking....

While DCC is very concerned about the potential use of hydraulic fracturing if Healy Basin gas development moves forward, we are cognizant that “fracking” is only one of a myriad of threats associated with gas production, and possibly not even the worst. As research around the country catches up with the natural gas boom, evidence is accumulating that gas development leads to air pollution, surface and groundwater pollution, methane leaks, habitat loss, and com-

munity disruption, even without hydraulic fracturing. DCC board members have particularly noted the following studies that have been published since we filed suit against the State of Alaska over its Best Interest Finding for the Healy Basin Gas Only Exploration License.

- **A particular concern for DCC is the possibility of habitat fragmentation and loss** within the wintering range of the Denali caribou herd. Unfortunately, there is some real evidence of this possibility. On the Pinedale Anticline gas field in Wyoming, a long-term monitoring project begun in 2001 – before the start of gas drilling – has shown a 43% decline by 2012 in the wintering mule deer population on traditional winter range that overlaps the field. Nearby populations outside of the gas field have meanwhile been stable or slightly increasing. The issue was widely reported in late 2010, and the response of BLM has been to fertilize the sagebrush.

<http://www.wy.blm.gov/jio-papo/papo/wildlife/reports/muledeer/2012md-ar.pdf>

- **DCC has also been concerned about air quality impacts from gas drilling**, and a plethora of reports in the past two years has indicted natural gas development for unhealthy amounts of pollution. From the same gas field in Wyoming as the mule deer study, headlines in 2011 announced that smog in this rural valley reached levels worse than those of Los Angeles, while a more recent study documents increased visits to physicians because of respiratory complaints.

[http://trib.com/business/energy/study-sublette-county-ozone-spikes-drove-more-people-to-doctors/article\\_07a1531f-9dfb-5b00-8348-6ac12b97d0ab.html](http://trib.com/business/energy/study-sublette-county-ozone-spikes-drove-more-people-to-doctors/article_07a1531f-9dfb-5b00-8348-6ac12b97d0ab.html)

The Uintah Basin in Utah also has had ozone concentrations that exceed EPA thresholds for which oil and gas production is a major source of pollutants.

[http://rd.usu.edu/files/uploads/ubos\\_2011-12\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://rd.usu.edu/files/uploads/ubos_2011-12_final_report.pdf)

Meanwhile, a 2012 study by the Colorado School of Public Health found toxic petroleum compounds such as benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene and xylene in the air near gas wells in Garfield County, CO, and concluded that those living close to wells have greater health risks from the exposure.

<http://attheforefront.ucdenver.edu/?p=2546>

In August of 2012 the EPA issued new rules to address air pollution from the oil and gas industry at <http://www.epa.gov/airquality/oilandgas/actions.html>.

Scientific research is slow and cautious in its claims, and as in the case of groundwater contamination in Pavillion, WY, industry slows the process even further with aggressive attacks on unfavorable results. Regulators should rein in the breakneck gas rush until research can give a clear picture of the costs and benefits of gas development and hydraulic fracturing, but that sensible approach seems unlikely. ☞

# DENALI AUTHOR TOM WALKER REVISITS HISTORIC CLIMB

by Matt Iverson

As many readers may be aware, 100 years ago the Hudson Stuck expedition successfully summited Mount McKinley (on June 7, 1913, after three months of overland travel). Hudson Stuck received accolades for the accomplishment, and went on to write a popular account of the climb, *The Ascent of Denali*. Less well-known is the integral role played by one of the expedition's members, Harry Karstens, who was arguably the most experienced of the group and who would later become Mt. McKinley National Park's first superintendent.

However, Denali area author Tom Walker has a new biography of Karstens poised to set the record straight. His book, *The Seventymile Kid: The Lost Legacy of Harry Karstens and the First Ascent of Mount McKinley*, is replete with fascinating details of the famous climb as well as insights into the life of this remarkable Alaskan pioneer.

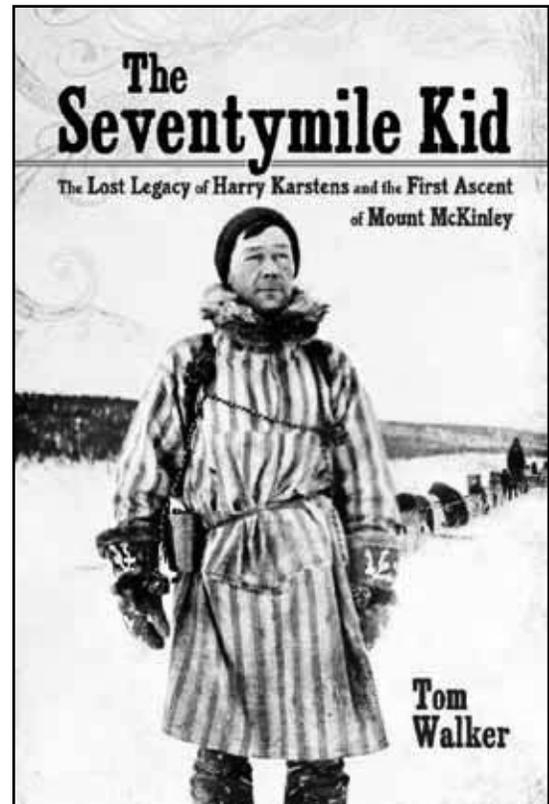
Walker is a remarkable fellow in his own right: writer, photographer, contrarian. He moved to Alaska in 1966 and has lived here ever since, working as a game warden, horsepacker, and log cabin builder, along the way writing books on natural history and the Denali region.

But this book, he says, "is the book I always wanted to write." His interest in Karstens lies in his childhood love of Jack London. Researching the park archives in the 1980s, he came across documents suggesting that a character in London's novel *Burning Daylight* was based upon Karstens. Further research showed that Karstens and London had once held adjacent mining claims in the Klondike. With that discovery, Walker was hooked. And as he saw it, writing a biography of the park's first superintendent was a way of giving back to a place that had given him so much beauty and inspiration through the years.

Karstens' story is practically the archetype of a Western pioneer: born a working-class kid from Chicago; at seventeen working as a cowboy out on the Northern Plains; in the Yukon two years later, trying in vain to strike it rich on a gold claim. From there, a few close calls with starvation, frostbite, and drowning as he runs mail by dog team over the Richardson Trail. By the time he turns 25 he has a name for himself as one of the toughest and most capable sourdoughs in the territory; people twice his age call him an 'old-timer.' In telling Karstens' tale, Walker includes a wealth of details from the era, painting a full picture of hardscrabble pioneer towns and the even harder men and women who built them.



Native Knowledge Network



But the ascent of Mount McKinley comes to take center stage, and this is where Walker aims to correct conventional wisdom. This is the first book based upon the journals kept by all four climbers, instead of merely Stuck's version of events. In this new view, Stuck comes across as self-centered and arrogant, though with good intentions; and Karstens comes out as the central figure. It is Karstens who organizes the climbing party, prepares their gear, picks routes over glacial crevasses and along treacherous ridges, and harangues Stuck into shouldering his share of the work along the trail.

Walker's play-by-play of each day of the climb allows the reader to experience it from each climber's perspective. In earlier chapters, his overview of previous attempts at the mountain provides crucial context for understanding their achievement.

While Walker clearly has great admiration for Karstens, he doesn't shy away from showing the man's shortcomings: a coarse personality, sensitive to criticism, quick to judge. He even remarks that Karstens is not entirely unique in his trail-hardened ways: "I do see him as a sort of Jack London character come to life, a total frontiersman, a total pioneer. At the same time, so many other pioneers were working just as hard as him, in the same conditions, every day, and that is what amazes me." ❧

# DCC BOARD HOLDS MEETING & POTLUCK ON APRIL 27TH

## SUPERINTENDENT DON STRIKER JOINS US FOR FOOD AND CONVERSATION

by Nancy Bale

On a crisp April afternoon, the DCC board held a short meeting at the home of Dave and Dawn Schirokauer, followed by a potluck with our invited guest, Denali's new Superintendent, Don Striker. This was our second conversation with Striker and touched on a number of park-related topics.

The atmosphere was relaxed and convivial. Board members, who attended from both near and far, were happy to meet and socialize in person as we planned for our upcoming annual meeting, our board election and the spring membership drive. Our film series on energy issues kicked off recently with the showing of "Windfall" at the Tri-Valley Community Library and another film is planned for mid-summer. There was not much time to discuss our core issues and campaigns at the board meeting, however we managed to discuss a number of them during our conversation with Striker.

We had determined ahead of time that our discussion with the Superintendent could not touch upon all of DCC's many issues and campaigns, so we focused upon three particular areas of concern for DCC - the park road, Denali wilderness and backcountry, and the Stampede Road and Wolf Townships. Much of the discussion, moderated by DCC President Charlie Loeb, focused on the history of our involvement with these issues and why we considered them to be so important.

### **Park road issues sparked active discussion**

Discussion of the park road took up most of our conversation with Don Striker. We reiterated DCC's concerns about the recently-adopted Vehicle Management Plan, especially the sacrifice of a fixed limit to the flexible constraints of social science and adaptive management. Striker listened thoughtfully and replied that we should not worry that the road would suddenly be opened to dramatic increases in traffic under the VMP. Regarding the opening of the park road to Mountain Vista during winter, Striker advocated a careful approach, with an earlier opening similar to the NPS Preferred Alternative followed by a lengthy period of study to explore many of the potential impacts and problems brought up by DCC in our comments. Striker commented that he felt that experiencing the park in winter was important, but that how to offer that experience appropriately was not yet clear. Much discussion back and forth ensued, during which several board members weighed in on how best to balance tourism with ecosystem protection.

### **Denali wilderness and backcountry**

We discussed the history of backcountry planning for Denali and how the controversy over use of snowmachines had developed through the years. Charlie, who had been a Denali planner during development of the Backcountry Management Plan (2006), urged the Superintendent to be sure the indicators and standards set in that plan would be monitored to protect the ongoing health of Denali's backcountry. Striker agreed that this would be a priority during his tenure.

### **Importance of the Stampede and Wolf Townships to Denali National Park**

Charlie introduced this topic by saying that the Stampede state lands outside Denali had not been a particular focus for DCC until more recently in our almost-40-year existence, but that we turned our attention to protecting this area when we realized its importance for local recreation and regional ecosystem protection. Much of what we shared with Striker regarding our efforts on North Access, Healy Gas, state/borough land use planning, the proposed Stampede Recreation Area and Wildlife/Habitat proposals was meant to clarify how important these issue areas are for the park, and how we would welcome support from NPS where possible. We all agreed that incorporation of the Wolf Townships into the national park, envisioned in ANILCA (Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act), was probably no longer possible, but that creative planning and cooperative management could be used to keep these state lands special.



**DCC Board, April 27, 2013** - Top row, from left, Nan Eagleson, Charlie Loeb, Hannah Ragland, Brian Napier. Bottom row, from left, Barbara Brease, Nancy Bale, J. J. Neville, Erica Watson. *DCC photo*

*continued on next page*

## DCC BOARD ENJOYS POTLUCK AND CONVERSATION WITH DON STRIKER

*continued from page 13*

### NPS faces challenges and opportunities

Striker spoke to his goal of making sure that funding for Denali is sustainable, a top priority for his superintendency. He gave strong support to the South Denali Visitor Center and stated he would work toward advancing that project. Being a hunter himself, Striker expressed an affinity for the subsistence lifestyle, while at the same time adamantly defending strong wildlife regulations within federal preserves, regulations such as were recently published in the Superintendent's Compendium.

We were so engrossed in our conversation that the time slipped by quickly. In no time it was after 9 PM, and we reluctantly disbanded. We are looking forward to continued communication with our new Superintendent. Don't forget - Don Striker will be speaking at our Annual Meeting, May 23rd, 7 PM at the Sheldon Center.

As we moved out to our vehicles, Striker employed his jeep to pull a board member's truck from a persistent spring snowbank. The group planning and execution of this effort were successful on the first try, and should signal the start of a productive working relationship with our new Superintendent. Thanks, Don! ☞



Molly McKinley, Hannah Ragland, J. J. Neville and Don Striker relax after extracting J.J.'s truck from soft snow. *DCC photo*

## ALASKA RAILROAD RELEASES PLANS TO SPRAY HERBICIDE

### NEW "PERMIT BY RULE" SYSTEM REDUCES PUBLIC PROCESS REGARDING SPRAYING ON STATE LANDS

In 2006, when the Alaska Railroad approached Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation for a permit to spray herbicide on its more than 500 miles of track, a full public process occurred and the permit as written was denied because of inadequate protections for the abundance of waterways traversed by the tracks.

After the initial failure to obtain a permit for the entire track, the railroad began to approach this process piecemeal and concentrated at first on an area considered most problematic, the track between Seward and Indian. The next set of permits sought to spray railroad yards and some sections of track in Fairbanks, Talkeetna, Anchorage and Healy. We appreciated the opportunity that full permitting offered for detailed, site-specific comments on each proposal. The railroad slowly and deliberately, through the permitting process, began to spray herbicide in targeted locations along the track.

Although it was never explained why the state of Alaska needed to change pesticide permitting on state lands, the "Permit by Rule" system was proposed in 2012 and adopted in early 2013. Now, if an agency or entity wishes to apply herbicides on state lands, all it has to do is prepare an "Integrated Vegetation Management" plan that details all non-chemical efforts being used, lays out a monitoring plan and explains why certain chemical herbicides may be needed. The plan may pick an herbicide, if needed, as long as it is registered with EPA (the Environmental Protection Agency). The selection of chemicals for inclusion occurs without public involvement. The agency must **notify** the public of its intention to apply herbicides/pesticides on state lands, but no detailed permitting process is required.

It did not take long for the Alaska Railroad to "notify" the public of its intention to apply herbicides **along its entire track**. Within weeks of adopting the "Permit by Rule," the Alaska Railroad produced an "Integrated Vegetation Management" plan and in late March published a notification that it intended to spray the entire 500 miles of track this summer.

Questions remain. Why were the specific herbicides chosen? Why the entire track? What vegetation problems along the section of track through Denali National Park between Cantwell and Healy make it necessary to apply herbicides there? Was any weight at all given to resolutions by the Denali Borough Assembly opposing herbicide spraying in the borough? Will further notification be made during the summer as spraying proceeds? How can the public be involved in the selection of chemicals and the areas where they are to be used? Look for more information from DCC in member updates and newsletters. Meanwhile, if you have questions, contact the railroad at [public\\_comments@akrr.com](mailto:public_comments@akrr.com), or (907)265-2671. ☞

## BRIEF NEWS AND VIEWS

### LEGISLATURE SUPPORTS IN-STATE GAS PIPELINE BY PASSING HB 4

The Alaska Legislature recently passed HB 4, which gives a giant infusion of cash to a proposed in-state gas pipeline from the North Slope to Cook Inlet. The project, which began several years ago as the Enstar bullet line, then morphed into the ASAP (Alaska Stand-Alone Pipeline), is now being administered by the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation (AGDC), which received the go-ahead both to plan and build the line, with no further legislative decision point.

The bill itself says little about where the line will be built, how large it will be, its economic feasibility and what communities it will serve. There are five fiscal notes, budgeting \$400 million to AGDC between 2014 and 2019, and an additional \$27 million for various state agencies, including the Departments of Natural Resources, Transportation and Public Facilities, Environmental Conservation and Law. The Alaska Gasline Development Corporation had already received funding under prior legislation, but concerns expressed in the 2012 legislature blocked a similar proposal last year. This year, the bill moved slowly, finally passing late in the session.

The passage of HB 4 should get the attention of citizens at the gateway to Denali National Park. If this pipeline is actually built down the Parks Highway, the corridor and associated infrastructure could create sizeable visual impacts and safety concerns. There are several sections where there just is not much room, including Nenana Canyon and residential areas already close to the Parks Highway. A possible pipeline diversion out into the Yanert Valley is even more troubling. We at DCC have commented during this process, indicating that we oppose a diversion out into the Yanert, but even more than that, we have deep concerns about the environmental wisdom and economic feasibility of this project as a whole. We accept the concept that a gas pipeline may be necessary, but we strongly question this pipeline and this route.

It is time for locals to research this issue seriously, attend meetings, and ask detailed questions. Get educated. Check the ASAP Project website if you want to look at the current shape of this project: <http://www.agdc.us/>.

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