

## PLAN TO ATTEND DCC'S SECOND FORUM ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AT DENALI'S BOUNDARIES

by Nancy Bale

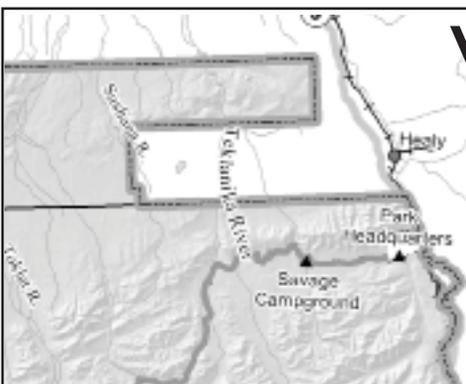
Central to the mission of the Denali Citizens Council is to promote the integrity of the greater Denali ecosystem, an area that spans two major land jurisdictions, the National Park Service and the State of Alaska. Nowhere is this ecosystem more vulnerable than along the northeastern borderlands of the national park, in the Stampede or Wolf Townships, a small cutout of state land surrounded by the national park. Long ago, when the Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission worked to identify the additions to McKinley Park under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), advocates argued that the Wolf Townships area was part of the greater Denali ecosystem and should be in the park. The eventual compromise was to work toward a land trade, after ANILCA, which would include this land in the park.

That this land trade never occurred demonstrates the great difficulty federal and state entities have in resolving big land management conflicts in Alaska. Meanwhile, uses have developed in the Wolf Townships that make them difficult to manage as national park lands. Nevertheless, most of these lands remain undeveloped and could be given enhanced protection under state management. This is the goal toward which DCC has been working, steadily, over many years, through advocacy, forums and summits. We were successful in convincing the state Division of Mining, Land and Water that the lands west of Otto Lake and Panguingue subdivisions should be managed for wildlife habitat and dispersed recreation. However, our efforts to influence the state Department of Fish and Game, and particularly the Alaska Board of Game, to enhance protection for wildlife in this area have been rebuffed.

We held our first *Wildlife at the Boundaries Forum* in 2010, shortly after the Board of Game (BoG) had removed the existing Stampede and Nenana Canyon closed areas and had refused to consider additional "buffer zones," areas of "no-take" for wolves along the border of Denali Park. Despite evidence of declines in wolf numbers and potential effects on wolf viewability along the park road, the BoG was unmoved. Claiming that there was no population problem for wolves and that the influence of human take on viewability was scientifically unproven, the BoG refused to reconsider buffers until 2016.

In the interim, the National Park Service has undertaken studies to investigate the influence of hunting and trapping activities in the borderlands on wolf viewability and to study the possible influence of human take upon wolf pack dynamics. Citizen efforts have been made to establish "no-take" areas through emergency closures or through administrative designation of easements. Still, we find no movement from the state on this important issue, despite evidence of actionable lows in wolf populations both in Denali National Park (see chart on page 4) and on state lands in Game Management Unit 20C, which includes the Wolf Townships.

Within this context, DCC hopes to spark new, creative discussion in a second forum. We have a great panel - Board of Game Vice-Chair Nate Turner and Denali Superintendent Don Striker will represent their agencies, and John Toppenberg, of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance, will represent the citizen conservation position. If you have an interest in this timely issue, plan to attend. Bring your questions. The forum will be moderated. For more information or to volunteer to help, please write to us at [mail@denalicitizens.org](mailto:mail@denalicitizens.org).



### WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AT DENALI'S BOUNDARIES: A PANEL

Tuesday, August 5, 2014 at 7 PM

Murie Science & Learning Center, Denali National Park

Join this event on Denali Citizens Council Facebook page

# FROM THE PRESIDENTS

by Hannah Ragland, Issues President

With Charlie Loeb moving on to the next chapter in his life, the Denali region and DCC board are left with a pretty big set of shoes to fill. Lots of thought has gone into developing a plan to transition as smoothly as possible, and several members of the board have stepped up to take on additional responsibilities. Michael Raffaelli has taken on the position of Treasurer. Brian Napier, as our new Vice President, has taken the lead in running our Membership Committee. Erica Watson has taken on the role of newsletter editor. All are roles that Nancy Bale has filled, and she will continue to work with these awesome individuals as they assume their duties. Nancy, our new Secretary, will also be working closely with Sarah Bartholow and me to transition into our co-president roles. I am so very grateful that Sarah has stepped up to guide the board meetings and members, and thankful for her professional and capable leadership!

I will be working to keep DCC's priority issues at the forefront. Several large energy projects continue to roll forward, including two natural gas pipeline proposals. We recently received news that a Plan of Operations has been submitted to the state for gas exploration in the Healy Basin, but expect that it will be several months before the state completes its review and submits the plan for public comment. We will closely monitor the implementation of Denali's new Vehicle Management Plan and persist in our efforts to maintain the integrity of the transit system. Wildlife management in and around Denali continues to be a high priority, and we will be highlighting our concerns related to wolf management through a forum August 5th, with the goal of promoting wolf conservation along the boundaries of the park. We hope to see you there!

We are sad to see Barb Brease and Charlie leave the board, but are excited to welcome Dave Arnold, and grateful to add his experience and expertise to our team. We have a great group of dedicated individuals serving on the board, and every board member's contributions will enable us to accomplish an amazing amount of work. Working as a team, we will strive to maintain the level of action you have seen from us over the years, and to be as effective and efficient as possible. 🐾

by Sarah Bartholow, Board Chair

I am humbled to be part of such a dynamic team to lead the Denali Citizens Council in the coming year. My goal is to support Hannah through clear and effective leadership. The board has a full plate of activities and as a team we can really get the work done. My role in the leadership will be to keep meetings organized and board members on task, follow-up on issues over time, and chair the Board Development Committee, which plans our yearly retreat and annual meeting, recruits new board members, and provides board member training. If you are interested in getting involved with the DCC board, I'd love to speak with you.

At each meeting and in every email exchange I am always so amazed at the depth of knowledge each board member has for issues concerning our community. Their enthusiasm and passion mirror that depth. My background is in project management and teaching, and I plan to use these skills to lead the board under the wing of Hannah's comprehensive knowledge, strong motivation for action, and graceful leadership. 🐾



Hannah Ragland

DCC photo



Sarah Bartholow

DCC photo

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# THANK YOU, MEMBERS & DONORS

The DCC board would like to extend our gratitude to Barbara Brease, who retired from the board as of the 2014 Annual Meeting. Barb has been involved with the board for many years and recently decided to focus her advocacy work elsewhere. She holds an immense amount of local history and institutional knowledge regarding conservation interests in the Denali area. Acting most recently as secretary and serving on various committees, Barb's hard work and tenacity will be missed. She is positive thinking, encouraging and motivated to tackle challenges. Barb continues to give 110% of her energy to Denali conservation efforts.

Barb's passion for the wolves of Denali brought a heightened level of concern in the organization for wildlife management issues at the park boundary. That extra attention is likely to persist as awareness of the impacts of hunting and trapping on park wildlife continues to develop. 



Barbara Brease *DCC photo*

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# DENALI CELEBRATES WILDERNESS AT 50

by Erica Watson

I recently had the chance to participate in a reading and panel discussion with three other writers, celebrating and discussing the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The event, hosted by Denali Education Center, was organized by local writer Christine Byl, and in addition to the two of us included Marybeth Holleman from Anchorage, and Seth Kantner, who visited us from Northwest Alaska. It was an honor to join these writers in conversation, and the questions and comments from audience members as well left us all contemplating the complications, contradictions, and challenges evoked by the word and designation “wilderness.” We heard “wilderness” described as the ultimate place of solace, as a set of labor conditions, as a bureaucratic threat to human survival, and talked about race, the legacy of Ed Abbey, and the future of food in the Arctic. I hope everyone is enjoying the conversations here at home and in the media about wilderness in 2014 as much as I am.

Marybeth Holleman spoke again the following evening at the Murie Science and Learning Center, this time on her most recent book, *Among Wolves*, co-authored with the late Dr. Gordon Haber.

Holleman read excerpts from her book, and showed photos that Haber took over the years he spent studying wolves as an independent researcher in Denali, until his death in 2009. She joked that she had inadvertently “written a banned book,” as *Among Wolves* was not at that time being sold at the bookstore near the Denali Visitor Center. Holleman believed that this is due to Haber’s views on NPS wildlife management (the bookstore is now carrying *Among Wolves*). Holleman shared that one of her reasons for writing *Among Wolves* was to encourage young biologists to embark on the kind of career that Haber did, and to do the kind of research that allows for the intimacy and advocacy that defined his work.

The anniversary of the Wilderness Act serves as an opportunity to examine these questions, and look for perhaps unexpected ways that wilderness values are interpreted and put into practice in Denali. Many of the questions and comments related to possible routes for advocacy and change, in Denali and elsewhere, and speculation about the future of Denali’s wilderness. In the next few DCC newsletters, we hope to bring you more discussion on how researchers currently working in the park understand wilderness values, and how those values inform their work. We’re excited to continue the conversation. ☞

## WOLVES, SYMBOL OF DENALI WILDERNESS, AT HISTORIC LOWS

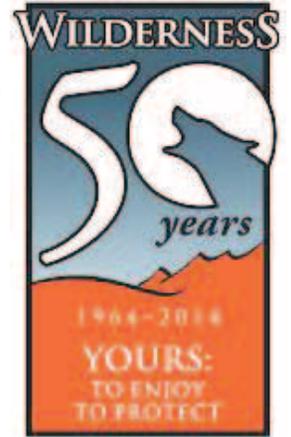
by Nancy Bale

Recent data published by the National Park Service show continued declines in Denali’s wolf population, an ongoing trend over the past 5 years. A number of factors have been offered as contributory, including the death of key pack members, trapping and hunting pressure at the boundaries, and problems with prey availability.

We’ll have the opportunity to discuss this issue at DCC’s upcoming forum, *Wildlife Management at Denali’s Boundaries*, August 5th, 7 PM, Murie Science and Learning Center.

Our goal for this event is to develop a cooperative dialogue between the state and federal managers, and to identify specific actions that could be taken to promote healthy wildlife populations across the boundary.

To see more about this event, go to our Facebook page and click on the event link. You can even sign up to attend at that link. Write to us at [mail@denalicitizens.org](mailto:mail@denalicitizens.org) with your ideas or for more information. ☞



Wolf Survey Data, Spring (approx. 15 March)  
Denali National Park and Preserve, 1986-2014

YEAR	NUMBER OF PACKS MONITORED	TOTAL WOLVES IN PACKS MONITORED	MEAN PACK SIZE	COMBINED AREA OF MONITORED PACKS (KM <sup>2</sup> )	ESTIMATED DENSITY: WOLVES / 1000 KM <sup>2</sup>	POPULATION ESTIMATE INSIDE THE PARK*
1986	4	26	6.5	7,380	3.523	61
1987	8	37	4.6	12,125	3.052	53
1988	14	69	4.9	15,355	4.494	78
1989	13	98	7.5	16,810	5.830	101
1990	10	106	10.6	13,930	7.609	131
1991	13	111	8.5	14,275	7.776	134
1992	15	103	6.9	13,620	7.562	131
1993	12	68	5.7	9,900	6.869	119
1994	10	61	6.1	11,145	5.473	95
1995	12	59	4.9	12,120	4.868	84
1996	11	69	6.3	12,640	5.459	94
1997	11	78	7.1	13,080	5.963	103
1998	12	61	5.1	13,121	4.649	80
1999	13	69	5.3	12,699	5.433	94
2000	17	71	4.2	14,378	4.938	85
2001	16	87	5.4	13,802	6.303	109
2002	15	73	4.9	13,026	5.604	97
2003	18	75	4.2	11,682	6.420	111
2004	14	78	5.6	16,061	4.856	84
2005	15	66	4.4	14,630	4.511	78
2006	15	103	6.9	15,367	6.703	116
2007	16	93	5.8	17,439	5.333	92
2008	20	99	5.0	17,757	5.575	96
2009	16	65	4.1	16,607	3.914	68
2010	12	59	4.9	17,061	3.458	60
2011	10	71	7.1	17,994	3.946	68
2012	10	70	7.0	18,340	3.817	66
2013	11	49	4.5	15,473	3.187	55
2014	13	51	3.9	17,640	2.891	50

NPS calculated wolf density across an estimated 17,270 sq. km. of potential habitat within the park, north of the Alaska Range.

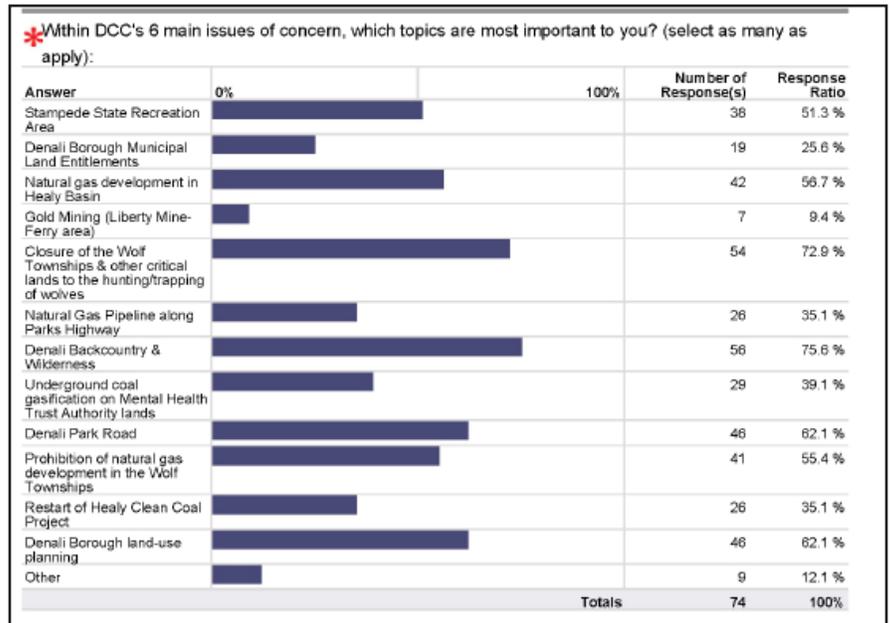
# SURVEY RESULTS: WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO DCC MEMBERS?

by Brian Napier

In May of this year, DCC's board asked the membership to tell us what issues matter the most to them. Seventy-four of our nearly three hundred members weighed in. Responses were thoughtful and much appreciated.

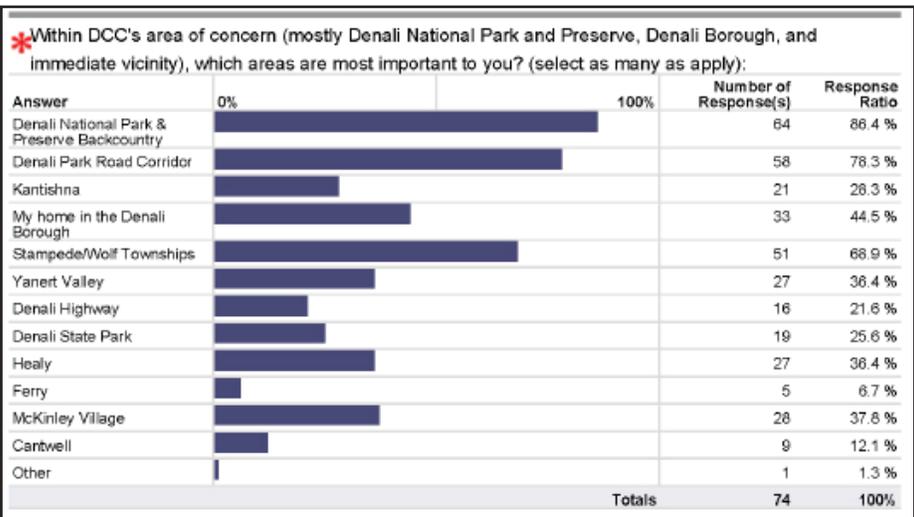
## What issues motivate our members?

Of the many varied topics that DCC tracks, members feel most strongly about issues related to Denali's Backcountry & Wilderness (Snowmachine Use & Aircraft Noise, to name a few), followed closely by closure of the Stampede/Wolf Townships to trapping and hunting of wolves. A close third for members was a tie between the Denali Park Road and Denali Borough land-use planning.



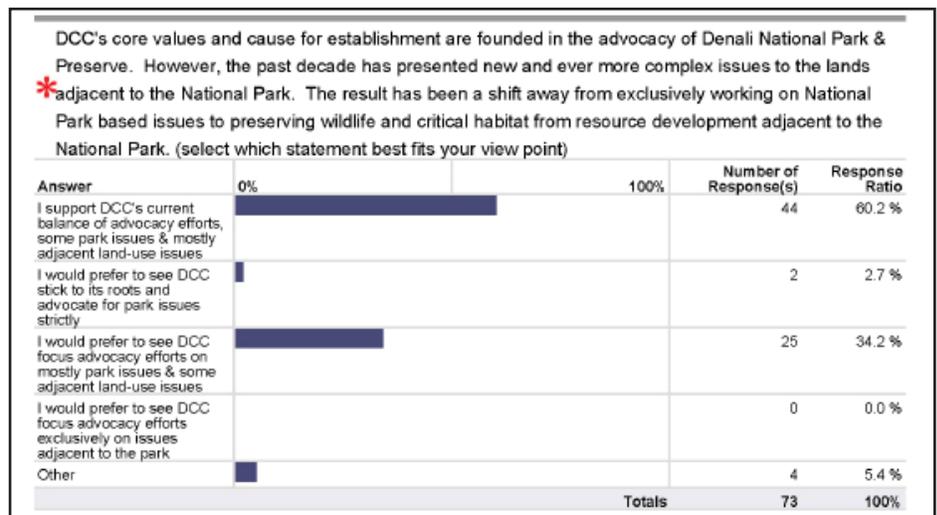
## What places do our members want to protect?

Of the places that DCC keeps an eye on, members feel most strongly about Denali National Park's backcountry, followed closely by the Park's road corridor, then the Stampede/Wolf Townships.



## What balance of advocacy do our members want?

Sixty percent of survey respondents support our current balance of primarily focusing our advocacy efforts on park-adjacent land use issues, with some focus on park issues.



The issues the conservation community faces in the Denali area reflect this dynamic and complex place. There is no meter or formula by which the board operates. However, we promise to tackle the issues that are most pressing to our members, regardless of where they are.

Your comments are always appreciated and not to be confined to a survey. Please do not hesitate to contact the DCC Board with your thoughts and passions.

Write to: [mail@denalicitizens.org](mailto:mail@denalicitizens.org)

# DCC MEETS WITH NPS TO DISCUSS CAPACITY OF THE DENALI PARK ROAD

by Hannah Ragland

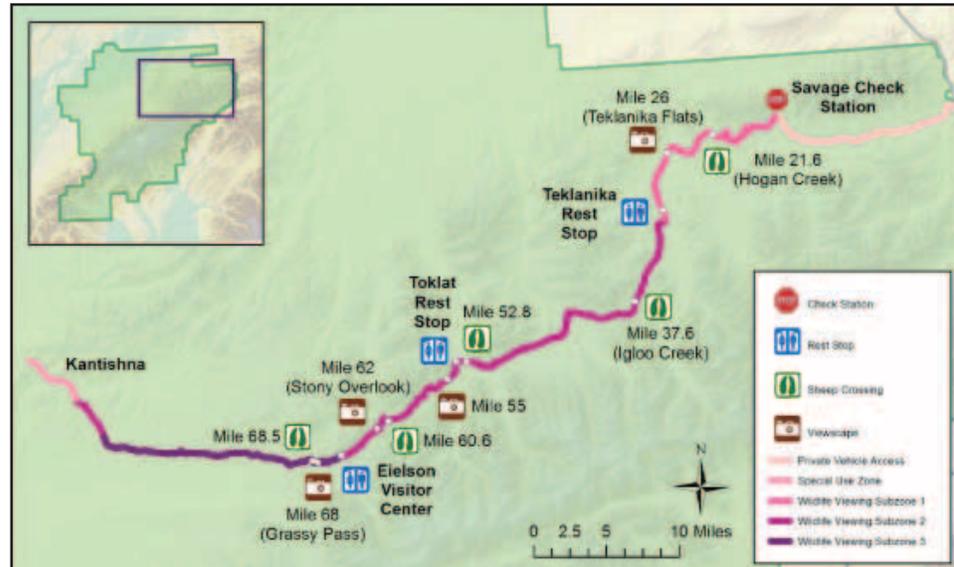
DCC met once again with Superintendent Don Striker, Assistant Superintendent Philip Hooge and Road Ecologist Heather McKenny in May to discuss our concerns about road capacity numbers established in the Vehicle Management Plan (VMP). This followed our meeting with the National Park Service (NPS) in February, where we voiced our suggestions for preserving the integrity of the transit system. NPS has implemented the use of adaptive management to define road capacity in terms of indicators and standards, such as how many buses are at a wildlife stop and hiker wait time.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the VMP created a daily limit of up to 160 vehicles per day beyond the Savage River Check Station. NPS maintains that its use of a daily limit, instead of the existing seasonal limit (of 10,512 vehicles), will be adequate to ensure that Park resources are not impacted. Although we are impressed at the amount of research on vehicle traffic and indicators, we remain to be convinced that this change will adequately protect Denali's wildlife and wilderness, and the visitor experience that is dependent on these two very critical Park resources.

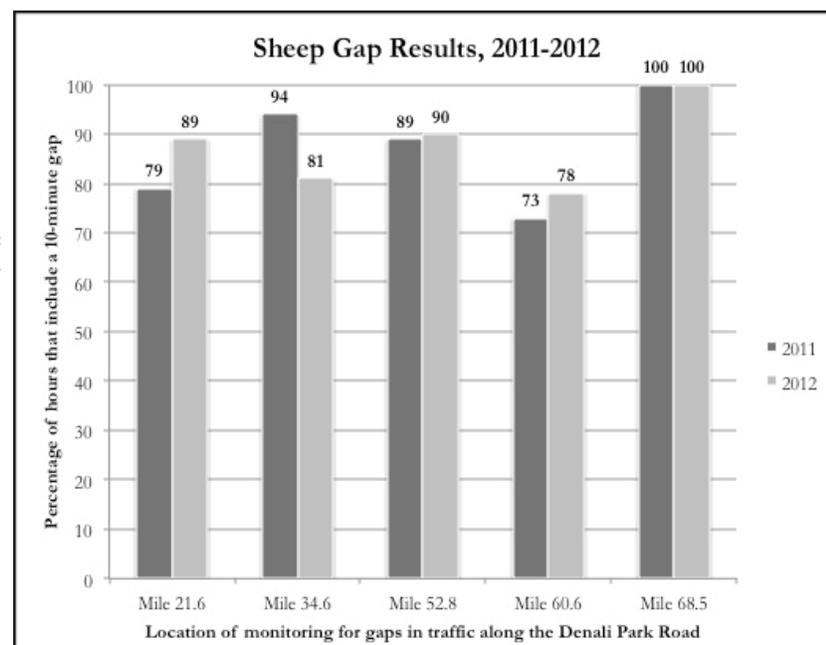
## NPS will not consider major plan changes, promises conservative implementation

It was very clear at this latest meeting that NPS is not interested in reconsidering a hard annual limit, although we were somewhat encouraged by the revelation that the daily limit of 160 vehicles is looked at by NPS as a "ceiling." We have voiced numerous concerns with this daily limit, largely rooted in the acknowledgement by NPS that when vehicle numbers have reached around this daily number, impacts to wildlife sightings were observed. If wildlife steers clear of the Park Road in response to higher daily numbers, we maintain that NPS must quickly act to reduce traffic numbers. We are concerned that the plan is not flexible enough to respond quickly to changes in wildlife behavior, or if other indicators and standards such as hiker wait time, are not being met.

According to the Vehicle Management Plan, NPS has a "toolbox" of options to reduce traffic on the road, which includes adjusting the schedule or limiting vehicles that are not part of the transportation system or related to Kantishna inholdings (such as professional photographers). Yet there is a required 2-year notice before any "significant change" is made to the schedule or daily limits. What is still unclear is what constitutes a "significant change," and what the impacts will be to Park resources in the meantime.



Indicators established by the Vehicle Management Plan will be monitored, with standards set for each of three Wildlife Viewing Subzones, pictured above. Map from NPS 2011-2012 Road Study Summary Report



The NPS standard is a ten minute gap in traffic to allow for sheep crossing 90% of the time. NPS acknowledges this is the "most challenging standard to meet." Data and quote from NPS 2011-2012 Road Study Summary Report

*continued on next page*

## DCC EXPRESSES CONCERNS ON VMP *continued from previous page*

### Changes start this summer, but full implementation delayed

We also followed up on changes that will be seen on the Park Road this summer. Full implementation will likely occur in the next few years, after a new concession contract has been established. Although initially anticipated last year, the concessions prospectus - a public notice for bids and the first step in getting a new contract in place - has yet to be released. It is now expected by December 2014, and will take at least a year to finalize. In the meantime, the Vehicle Management Plan is the active plan in place, and NPS has moved forward in implementing parts of the plan. In addition to the monitoring that has occurred, changes this summer, and in the next few years include:

- Installation of GPS units on Kantishna inholder buses and vehicles to assist with monitoring and to ensure that all regular traffic on the Park Road was included in data collection.
- Testing of "charters" by Alaska Geographic, a park partner, providing specialized tours along the Park Road for small groups. The park's concessionaire, currently Doyon/Aramark Joint Venture, will continue to explore tour options ending at the Teklanika Rest Stop.
- Combination of daily permit allowances for professional photography and filming, with a total of 5 daily permits. This number could be reduced as part of NPS's "toolbox" to reduce numbers of vehicles if violations of a standard occur, and a number of restrictions may be included in the permits this year to address the new standards.
- Research on feasible alternatives to the Camper Bus, which was deleted as part of this plan but will remain in place until alternatives for gear storage are found.

### Change in vehicle limit will require a regulatory process

The annual limit of 10,512 will remain in place until changes to the Code of Federal Regulations are promulgated, which will be a separate public process anticipated sometime next year. DCC suggested that NPS consider writing the regulation to begin with a daily limit of 145 vehicles, designed to taper up to the 160 only if monitoring showed it would not impair resources. Our understanding is that tour and transit allocations will not be changed this year from those defined in the previous plan for the road corridor.

### Work remains to protect character of Park Road

It is clear to us that there are a number of actions we'll need to follow to ensure that increased commercial pressure and increased traffic do not damage the character of the Denali Park Road. DCC supports the Murie vision of a primitive road with a rustic character that matches the landscape it travels through. To protect the character of the Park Road we will:

- Persist in efforts to ensure that reporting on indicators and standards is regularly released for public review, as with the long overdue (but recently released) reporting on the Backcountry Management Plan.
- Advocate for a public transportation system that is accessible: follow tour and transit numbers to ensure that transit buses are not reduced as a result of the elimination of tour and transit allocations, and commercial pressure.
- Advocate for a public transportation system that is affordable: monitor the concessions process, and pressure NPS to maintain a standard of low-cost, public transportation.
- Work to establish a means of monitoring violations to indicators and standards, and ensure that NPS efficiently uses its "toolbox" to remedy violations in a timely manner.
- Track the pacing of construction projects in the Park to ensure that pressure from heavy equipment and night-time traffic does not impact Park resources.
- Closely monitor allocations in the Kantishna area, and future commercial agreements, to ensure that traffic and commercial day-use does not increase as a result of this plan's implementation.

In our comments on the Vehicle Management Plan we had insisted that NPS not promulgate changes to the seasonal limits on traffic until two to three years of real-life data showed these indicators and standards were attainable. NPS did not respond to that portion of our comments, but the delayed transportation concession prospectus has allowed this to occur anyway. Monitoring data has been published for 2011-2012, and a report on the status of indicators and standards covering the 2013 season is expected sometime this summer. We are pleased to see such a high level of monitoring before the seasonal limit is replaced with a daily limit, and that this data will be available for review prior to the regulatory change. 

*DCC looks forward to continued conversations with Don Striker and others involved with implementation of the Vehicle Management Plan, and hopes this translates into sound management decisions. In the meantime, please contact us (through the contact form on our website or by emailing [hannab@denalicitizens.org](mailto:hannab@denalicitizens.org)) if you have an experience on the Denali Park Road that you feel relates to our areas of concern.*

# TWO GAS PIPELINES ON THE PARKS HIGHWAY?

by Hannah Ragland

There are a number of misunderstandings and some confusion about the two gas pipeline projects proposed for the Parks Highway corridor. The Alaska Stand Alone Pipeline (ASAP) project representatives have visited the Denali Borough several times over the last several years, proposing a relatively small diameter pipeline for in-state use. The ASAP project has received numerous permits to conduct studies on Denali Borough land, a right-of-way permit from the state, and has completed an Environmental Impact Statement. The Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project is relatively new to the scene, but is the product of many years of discussion about a larger diameter pipeline to export gas to international markets. Both the ASAP and LNG projects propose using a similar right-of-way along or near the Parks Highway. Unlike the ASAP project, the gas traveling through the proposed LNG pipeline would require expensive facilities along the corridor in order to process the gas and make it ready-to-use.

DCC provided extensive comments throughout the ASAP project's permitting history, related to concerns about safety and the location of the right-of-way and infrastructure. Representatives of the LNG project have assured us that these comments will be considered as the project design moves forward. However, corporate secrets prevail, and the LNG project backers (the "big three" oil companies, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, and BP) have been secretive about the right-of-way they are exploring and the permitting process they anticipate.

LNG project representatives have, however, submitted maps of the proposed corridor through Borough-owned land, as part of permit applications. The right-of-way appears to deviate from the Parks Highway in a number of areas, and travels west of Healy, crossing Stampede Road approximately one mile from the highway (see photo to the R), and also runs west of Otto Lake. The route then travels east of the Nenana River canyon and east of the Denali National Park boundary.

No maps have been presented to the public showing plans for the right-of-way south of Denali Park's boundary. The ASAP project right-of-way follows the highway more closely through Healy, but also would use a route east of the Park boundary, before returning to the highway corridor south of Carlo Creek.

There have been conflicting statements about which project is the state's priority, and it is unclear how the projects' overlapping efforts will be coordinated, if at all. Around \$350 million has already been funded by the state for the development of plans for a larger diameter pipeline (under the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act, AGIA), with future funding to be determined. Funding so far on the ASAP project is around \$420 million. Both projects are working simultaneously on overlapping studies and surveys in the Denali Borough, with little apparent communication or cooperation. 

*DCC will be providing more information on these complex projects as it becomes available. Our Gas Resource Development Contractor, Ian Will, is developing resources for DCC to use in further investigation of the projects. Meanwhile, there are websites for each project, listed below.*

**ASAP:** <http://asapgas.agdc.us/>

This site shows a series of fairly detailed route maps under the tab *Project Documents*.

**LNG:** <http://www.ak-lng.com>

This site just became "live" and has only very general information at this point. Another site, <http://gasline.alaska.gov/aklng.html>, provides some additional detail.



The LNG right-of-way is west of the highway between Stampede Road (pictured here as a faint white line) and Otto Lake Road. The LNG project has only shared maps in permit applications for use of Borough-owned land.  
Map by Paragon Partners, LTD.

# DCC'S ANNUAL MEETING OPENS A BUSY SUMMER

## RETIRING PRESIDENT CHARLIE LOEB LEADS A CROWD OF MOTIVATED DCC SUPPORTERS

by Sarah Bartholow

This year's meeting was held at the McKinley Community Center and more than 40 members were in attendance. Though it was held just a week earlier than last year, you could have guessed it was still late winter. As folks began to gather for an early bird walk with board member Nan Eagleson, the rain turned to snow, but the intrepid crowd pushed on and saw various early season species.

DCC's popular spring meeting has taken various forms over the years to convey the myriad of activities and initiatives that the Citizen's Council works on throughout the year. From power points to dialogue, videos and photos, the board encourages new membership and more engagement from those currently invested. This year we switched it up once again.

Retiring President Charlie Loeb led the audience in a game based loosely *Jeopardy*, addressing the current issues in our community. The audience was divided into teams and given a list of short "answers" (4%, 6 years, *Valentine's Day*, for example) that related to an issue of concern to DCC. Each team had a chance to connect the clue to an important DCC issue. Most of the clues led, eventually, to correct answers, and the teams who'd kept up with the DCC newsletters had no problem earning points. Throughout the game, teams were sharing their insights into DCC topics, laughing at quips made by friends, working together, and then hanging on Charlie's every word as he summarized the content and topics. All in all, you could say that everyone was a winner and gained more knowledge on more than a dozen topics addressed.

Regular business of the annual meeting followed, with financial reports and announcement of new officers. A poignant moment was the presentation of a parting gift for Charlie as he heads south to Oregon and relinquishes presidential leadership to Hannah Ragland and Sarah Bartholow. Charlie was presented with a Donna Gates print, *Denali Web*, representing the wildlife and wilderness that the board works so hard to protect.

The official meeting closed with time for enjoying buffet dessert and refreshments, socializing with community members, recruitment of new board members, and catching up after long winter months. The spring brings the awakening of the landscape for Denali and perhaps new horizons for DCC initiatives. Although it was snowing and raining outside, the positive energy of meeting attendees forecasted hope and excitement for the coming months of DCC action. ☞



Members of a Jeopardy team engage in animated discussion of their answer.  
DCC photo

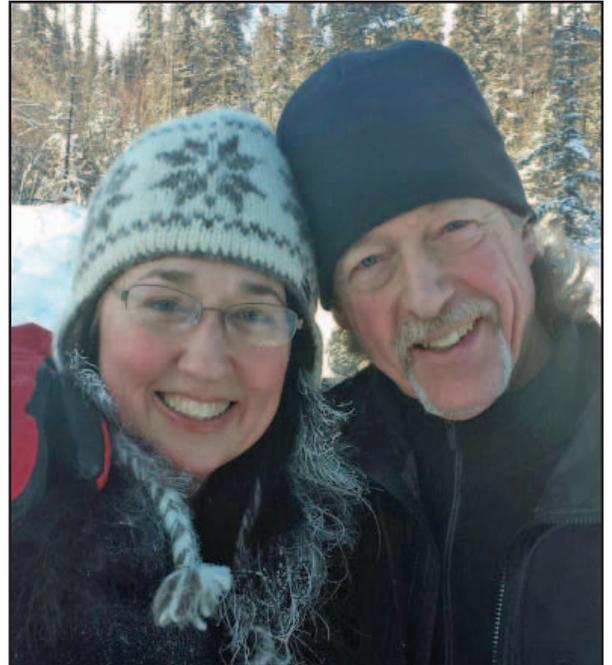


Retiring President Charlie Loeb receives a farewell gift, a framed print of *Denali Web*, by local artist Donna Gates.  
DCC photo

## WELCOME TO THE BOARD, DAVE ARNOLD !

DCC's board of directors is pleased to welcome our latest member, Dr. David Arnold, who joined at our monthly meeting in June. Though a relative newcomer to the Denali community, Dave has been involved in environmental science and advocacy throughout North America for years. He has an extensive background in hydrology and atmospheric science, and first came to Alaska during his tenure at Frostburg State University, doing climate reconstruction fieldwork on the Colville River Delta. While camping in the Delta, he got to know local Inupiaq people, and those friendships led him to accept a job offer from the Native Village of Nuiqsut as city administrator. He and his wife Cindy moved to Nuiqsut in 2009, and continued to work for the village after their move to Fairbanks. Dave served as Executive Director of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center before they relocated to McKinley Village last fall. He continues to work remotely for the village of Nuiqsut.

Dave is an avid backpacker, photographer, and fly-fisherman, and he and Cindy look forward to getting to know their new community. We're excited to have him on the board, and grateful for the breadth of knowledge and experience he brings to the organization. 📷



Dave and Cindy Arnold Photo courtesy of David Arnold

## WELCOME IAN WILL, OUR GAS RESOURCE CONTRATOR

Ian Will recently signed a contract to do research and writing for DCC on potential gas development projects in the Denali Borough, particularly gas pipeline projects. He has been delving into the legislation, status and details concerning the proposed LNG pipeline, currently planned to run through the Denali Borough. He is helping DCC develop a database of contacts for gas pipeline projects and a webpage of information on these potential projects. This is the first visit to the Denali area for Ian, who was born and grew up in Mont Vernon, New Hampshire.

Outside his work for DCC, Ian is a full-time student enrolled at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Upon his return in the fall for his senior year, Ian will continue his efforts to achieve a double major in Environmental Studies and Political Science. Also at Bucknell, Ian serves as the recruitment chairman for his fraternity, Phi Kappa Psi, as well as being the President of the University Ski Team. Prior to the start of the school year, Ian will be working for the University as an Orientation Advisor, welcoming a new hall of freshman to the university and ushering them into their college careers.

In past summers Ian has worked as a lifeguard and head coach of a swim team. He taught non-competitive swim lessons as well. In the winters between semesters, Ian works with his father at Pats Peak Ski Mountain in Henniker, New Hampshire as a ski instructor. His other hobbies include hiking, fishing, lacrosse and snowboarding.

We welcome Ian's assistance and insight into the complex issues that gas development brings to the Denali Borough. He'll be in the Denali region until mid-August, when college again beckons. 📷



Ian Will

Photo courtesy of Ian Will

# BRIEF NEWS AND VIEWS

## DENALI BOROUGH- PLANNING TALK, LITTLE ACTION by Hannah Ragland

The decision by the Denali Borough Planning Commission to scrap all work on classification of Borough-owned land is perplexing for the few residents who have tracked this process through its entirety. Deletions include the list of classification categories (i.e. residential, commercial, etc.) that the Commission had been working on updating for years. A recent work session exercise produced a map of Panguingue B, and a document listing facts about the parcel and public comments. This was called a management plan, yet the terms used to define different areas of the map were clearly derived from the last draft of classification code that was scrapped. It's no wonder these terms were used, because otherwise there would be no list of terms to pull from, and planning for each Borough-owned parcel would start from scratch. Yet, if the Commission moves forward with replacing classification with management plans, these terms will not exist in code. Practicing the planning process before code is finalized is no doubt a helpful exercise, but in some ways is putting the cart before the horse. DCC will continue to track, despite our frustration with this drawn out process. In a separate, and somewhat ironic situation, the Planning Commission is also looking at adding zoning restrictions requiring a permit for buildings above three-stories tall to ensure safety in case of a structure fire. The Volunteer Fire Department is not adequately equipped to respond to fires in taller structures. These restrictions would apply to all parts of the Borough zoned as "unrestricted," which is all of the Denali Borough, with the exception of the landfill. This is a striking example of how the community is at a crossroads. Adding restrictions to "unrestricted" lands is only a partial solution to the larger problem that more and more individuals are recognizing: the lack of planning for lands in the Denali Borough. 

## INFLUENTIAL DENALI MANAGERS DEPART by Charlie Loeb

The month of June brought the departure of both of Denali's Assistant Superintendents, Elwood Lynn and Philip Hooge. Elwood is retiring after 40 years with the National Park Service, while Philip is moving up (and back) to become Superintendent of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, where he worked as a research ecologist before coming to Denali. Both superintendents have been extremely influential, and are known for their hard work and dedication to the National Park Service and the park.

Elwood started at Denali as Chief of Maintenance in 1996 before moving to the Assistant Superintendent role in 2004. Elwood is very quiet and understated even when representing NPS at public events, which belies his extraordinary effectiveness. Here at DCC we know him mostly as the guy with a genius for cobbling money and other resources together for infrastructure developments, including the build-out of virtually the entire program described in the 1997 Entrance Area and Road Corridor Development Concept Plan. We have not been enthused about everything that got built, but we can still admire his ability to make it happen! We have very much appreciated Elwood's strong commitment to environmental sustainability in park facilities and operations, as well as his leadership in the "School to Work Building Trades" program with the Denali Borough School District which provides local students the opportunity to learn to build cabins that ultimately end up as much-needed seasonal housing in the park – a great community involvement project, and one more example of his ability to put resources together for new park infrastructure.

Philip was the first-ever Assistant Superintendent of Resources, Science, and Learning at Denali, and was brought to the park in part to oversee the development of the Murie Science and Learning Center. The MSLC seeks to integrate the park's scientific research and public education, and in that spirit Philip's management portfolio also included all of the park's natural and cultural research and resource management programs along with the division of Interpretation. In addition to his role in the evolution of the MSLC, Philip spearheaded ground-breaking projects including the first-ever Resource Stewardship Strategy for a large national park and the adaptive management program in the Denali Park Road Vehicle Management Plan. While DCC still disagrees with many of the conclusions of the Vehicle Management Plan, we are appreciative of the extensive research program that was developed to inform the planning process and its implementation, which is likely unprecedented for NPS planning efforts.

Both superintendents showed great perseverance and dedication during their tenures at Denali. We wish both of them well in their new endeavors. 



Native Knowledge Network

# Denali Citizens Council

PO Box 78

Denali Park, Alaska 99755

907-683-3396

<http://www.denalicitizens.org>

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## DCC NEWS

### Editorial Board

Nancy Bale

Hannah Ragland

Erica Watson

### Contributors

Nancy Bale

Sarah Bartholow

Charlie Loeb

Brian Napier

Hannah Ragland

Erica Watson

Submissions are welcome  
[mail@denalicitizens.org](mailto:mail@denalicitizens.org)

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Write to us at [mail@denalicitizens.org](mailto:mail@denalicitizens.org),

or call us at 907-683-3396 and give us address changes.

### Denali Citizens Council



*Advocating for Denali's Wilderness, Wildlife and Way of life.*

## Join Us

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 above. Or join on the web at <http://www.denalicitizens.org>.

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