

APPENDIX E

ANILCA 810 EVALUATION

ANILCA Section 810 Subsistence Evaluation

Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) requires evaluation of proposed withdrawals of federal public lands in Alaska to determine if the proposed activity will significantly restrict subsistence uses or access to subsistence in an area. This project involves the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River Withdrawal managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

The project area lies within Game Management Unit (GMU) 20E and potential harvestable resources are regulated by the Alaska Board of Game, Alaska Board of Fisheries, and the Federal Subsistence Board. Federal subsistence land in the project area includes the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River Withdrawal. In the project area there are several species recognized as subsistence species through determinations by the State or Federal Board. These species include black bear, brown bear, caribou, sheep, moose, bison (*Bison bison*), coyote, fox, hare, lynx, wolf, wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), grouse, ptarmigan, beaver, coyote, marten, and otter. Of these species only moose and caribou have a specific federal determination and establishment of a federal season, which provides for preferential access to the resource by subsistence users. The winter hunting season for Fortymile caribou begins on November 1 on federal lands. During the caribou hunting season, hunters drive the Taylor Highway as far as possible and then hunt from snowmachines. Moose seasons in GMU 20E are August 20-28 and September 1-15 (Gronquist, 2003). Other harvestable resources, which may be used in a subsistence manner include fish and berries. Utilization of the project area for subsistence and non-subsistence use is high for local and non-local moose and caribou hunting (Marcotte, 1991, Gronquist, 2003). Residents of Tanacross, Tok, Tetlin, Northway, and Dot Lake frequently use the area for subsistence hunting. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), the area around Chicken and Jack Wade Junction are intensively used caribou, moose and bear hunting areas. During construction, access will be maintained for subsistence and non-subsistence use. Short term (2-4 hour) road closures may be required during certain construction activities. If road closures are necessary, they will be coordinated with BLM, ADNR Office of Habitat Management and Permitting (OHMP), ADFG, and USFWS.

The nature of the proposed project, rehabilitation of an existing highway, will not likely result in a significant reduction of subsistence uses or increased competition due to: direct impacts on the

resource or habitat; changes in availability of the resource; or limitations on access to the resource.

Therefore, the proposed action will not result in significant restrictions of subsistence uses.

References

Gronquist, Ruth, 2003. BLM Wildlife Biologist. Email correspondence with E. Miller, ASCG Incorporated, February 28.

Marcotte, J.R. 1991. *Wild Fish and Game Harvest and Use by Residents of Five Upper Tanana Communities, Alaska 1987-88*. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

CORRESPONDENCE

Miller, Beth

From: Donald_Mike@fws.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2003 7:35 AM
To: Miller, Beth
Cc: Pete_DeMatteo@fws.gov; Ruth_Gronquist@ak.blm.gov; Polly_Wheeler@fws.gov
Subject: Re: Subsistence use along the Taylor Highway

Beth,

Yes, we do have federal lands on the Taylor Highway corridor area. The Mosquito Fork drainage is part of the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River managed by the BLM. The Taylor Highway has caribou and moose seasons open for federally qualified subsistence users. For biological and harvest information please contact Pete DeMatteo, Eastern Interior Team Biologist for the Office of Subsistence Management or Ruth Gronquist the BLM wildlife biologist. You may also contact Craig Gardner, ADFG Biologist. Craig was the area biologist out of Tok and has since moved to Fairbanks. This should get you started.

Donald Mike
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To: <Donald_mike@fws.gov>
cc:
Subject: Subsistence use along the Taylor

Highway

02/10/03 04:31
PM

Hi Donald,

I got your name from the internet as being the eastern interior regional subsistence coordinator. ASCG is working with ADOT Northern Region on an EA to upgrade the Taylor Highway from MP 64.5 (Mosquito Fork) to the Canadian Border (Quad maps Eagle A-1 and A-2). The highway will remain on virtually the same alignment with some minor realignment near Wade Creek to move the highway out of the floodplain. The road is going to be widened, drainage will be improved, and high float asphalt will be laid down. I have a couple of subsistence questions that I am hoping you can answer or can direct me to someone that could.

Are there federal subsistence areas within our project area?

What are the main subsistence species?

Do you have any information on the amount of use?

Any other information that you think might be helpful would be great. I have contacted James Simon at ADFG and he gave me some good information, but he also suggested I talk to federal staff.

Thanks.

Beth Miller

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Miller, Beth

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**From:** Ruth\_Gronquist@ak.blm.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, February 28, 2003 2:41 PM  
**To:** Miller, Beth  
**Subject:** Re: Taylor Highway Subsistence Use

The Taylor Highway is a heavily used corridor for subsistence hunters, especially for caribou. Any road work or closures for construction from August 10 - September 30 would impact the subsistence harvest activities. Fortymile caribou do cross the Taylor during this time, although in the last few years the major portion of the herd has remained in the western portion of the range within the Steese National Conservation Area, which is bisected by the Steese Highway. A winter season for Fortymile Caribou begins November 1 on federal lands. Hunters may drive the Taylor as far as conditions allow and then hunt from snow machines.

Moose seasons in the area of your proposed action within Game Management Unit 20E are August 20- 28 and September 1 - 15. Although the Taylor Highway offers access for moose hunters, hunting occurs away from the highway. Any construction closures of the road at this time would impact subsistence moose hunters. Most other subsistence activities occur during the winter months, likely after work has halted on construction for the year.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game has published a few Technical bulletins with information on subsistence uses in the area. They offer some information about use, timing, and subsistence areas. Often they are a snap shot in time and don't answer all our questions. They are in some cases the only published references we have.

Here is the document I reference for NEPA actions within the area.

Marcotte, J. 1991. Wild Fish and Game Harvest and Uses by Residents of Five Upper Tanana Communities, Alaska, 1987 - 88. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Division of Subsistence. Technical Paper No. 168. 200p.

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|      To:      <Ruth_Gronquist@ak.blm.gov>
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|      cc:
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|      Subject: Taylor Highway Subsistence Use
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Hi Ruth,

Donald Mike gave me your name as a contact for subsistence information on the Taylor Highway corridor. ASCG is working with ADOT on an EA to upgrade the Taylor Highway from the Mosquito Fork (MP 64.5) to the Canadian Border. Do you have any information on the amount of subsistence use the area gets?

Thanks.

Beth Miller

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