

[illegible]

**N0013**

■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]

5 MR. PETERSON: Tony Peterson. As to the expansion area of  
6 MOA 3 Paxson the suggestion would be to put a three mile  
7 corridor to the east of the Gakona (ph), Gulkana (ph) River and  
8 three miles west of the.....

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Now (indiscernible) rivers. They all  
10 start (indiscernible).

11 MR. PETERSON: Gakona, Gulkana. And three miles to the  
12 east as well with a ceiling of 10,000 feet -- this area would be  
13 open to 10,000 feet and above for exercises. The way to  
14 designate this as a no fly zone is to put this as a kill zone  
15 during activity. If they drop below 10,000 feet in this area,  
16 in this no fly zone, then they would be essentially terminated  
17 as far as the exercise goes.

■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

**N0014**

Submittal ID	Commenter	Title	Organization	Topic List	Comment
N0014	John Schandelmeier	Chair	Paxson Fish and Game Advisory	Cumulative Impacts, Cultural Resources, 1 - Fox 3 Military Operations Area (MOA) Expansion and New Paxson MOA	Paxson Fish and Game Advisory Committee strongly opposes the new proposed Paxson MOA. Sonic booms will adversely affect the largest Sockeye salmon hatchery in the world in time periods when they are the most vulnerable. We urge that a 20 mile wide corridor be implemented where there is no air traffic what-so-ever. 10 miles either side of the Richardson Highway. Frequent violations of current MOA's have convinced us that the Air Force is either unable, or unwilling to monitor it's own activities. We also ask for the same restrictions along the Denali Highway corridor. thank you, John Schandelmeier, chair

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**March 2013**

**N0015**

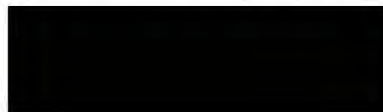
1 I appreciate the courage of you men in uniform. I wore  
2 the uniform myself. I was never in combat, but I appreciate  
3 your courage. I understand -- I do understand your courage, but  
4 I want to speak real briefly about the courage of another man  
5 and another type of courage. Three weeks ago I attended a pre  
6 court-martial hearing of a young PFC who exhibited a different  
7 kind of courage. I only hope that down the road if you men  
8 realize -- come to realize that the misplaced power, the  
9 disastrous rise of misplaced power is not only a potential, but  
10 it exists in these technologies and these policies that are  
11 based on these technologies. That you find the courage within  
12 yourself to do much the same thing that that brave young PFC,  
13 Private Bradley Manning (ph), did and help save this country  
14 from this disastrous rise of misplaced power. Thank you.

**N0016**



10           MR. MCGREGOR: Oh, okay. Dan McGregor, M-C-G-R-E-G-O-R.  
11   As we reported, with Denali Air. Primarily focusing concerns on  
12   areas basically out the Nenana River Valley and glaciers  
13   surrounding the Mount Devera (ph) area. There are right now two  
14   main operators that spend a lot of time, but there's more,  
15   Atkins Flying Service in different areas, different companies  
16   that fly out there with regular routine flights out that area  
17   doing landings, being on the glaciers. The concern was low  
18   level traffic in that area affecting that commercial status and  
19   the ability to make money and of course safety concerns with  
20   fast movers and very slow movers, being us, on wheel skis and  
21   different things. So I just wanted to mostly go on record that  
22   that was brought up in concern.

23           A lot of the areas focus more under the Fox 1 MOA, which  
24   is not going to be an issue as long as that surface ceiling goes  
25   down to -- or stays above 5,000 AGL. Any change to that in the







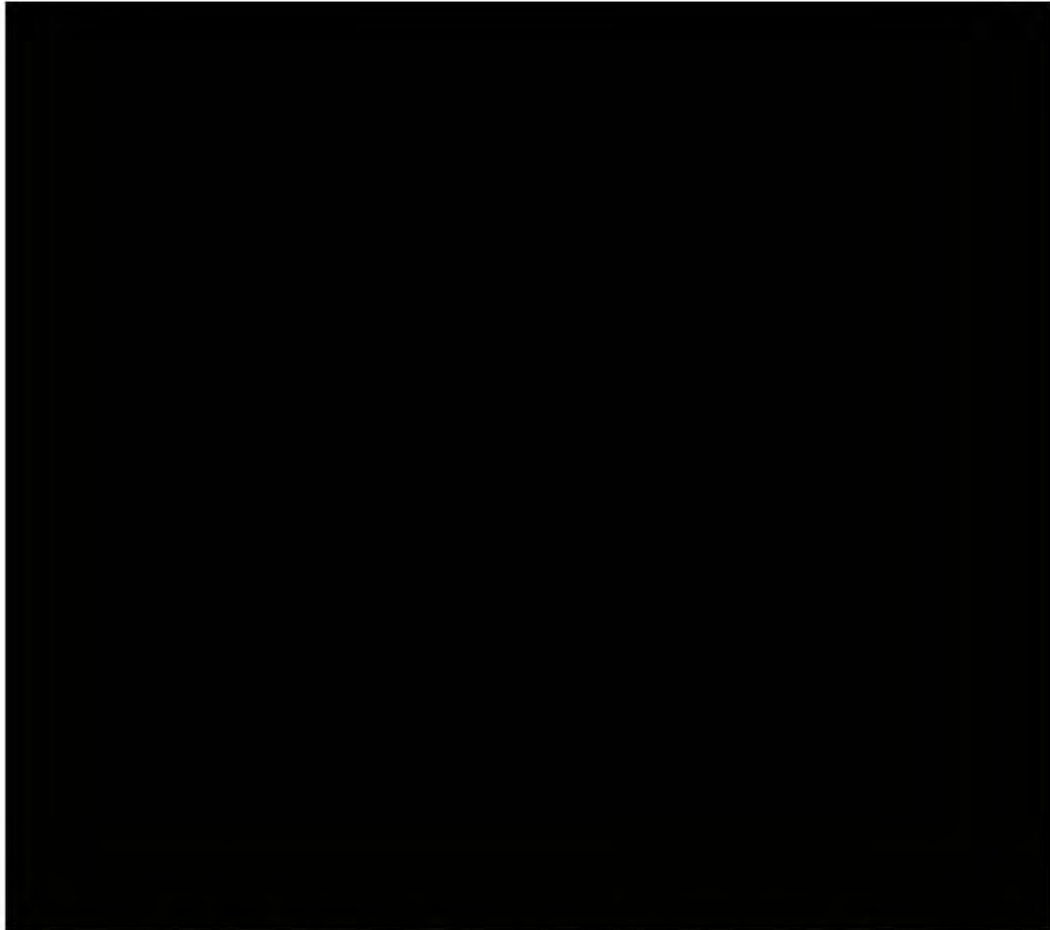
**N0016**

1 Fox 3, that 500 feet. I understand the need for training at  
2 that low level and that's of value. It's a drastic change and  
3 that's one of the things that concerns us I guess is the severe  
4 change in that from 5,000 down to 500. Most of the glaciers  
5 that we are flying into are going to be out of that realm, but  
6 there are some and there's transit areas where we cross that --  
7 through that. It's very difficult without being able to get in  
8 contact and alert the MOAs. I think radio repeater -- as I  
9 understand it, the radio repeater or the alert systems through  
10 the radio traffic is not quite operational yet and the funding  
11 is in place, but those aren't at full capacity yet I guess for  
12 us to be able to update or get updates on any MOA traffic while  
13 we're in the air as far as I understood and I can find out more  
14 on that later.

15 But in general I just wanted to have it known that there  
16 is commercial traffic out there. We do fly out there regularly  
17 and if that is taken into account that would be a good thing to  
18 have noted. That's it.



**N0017**



19 COLONEL WEISS: Thank you very much. Mr. Adam White.

20 MR. WHITE: Thank you. Name is Adam White serving as the  
21 President of the Alaska Airmen's Association, last name spelled  
22 W-H-I-T-E. First of all, I want to thank the military for your  
23 efforts in educating the public. I've learned an awful lot  
24 about the way our government operates and this whole NEPA  
25 process. Appreciate your patience as you have been educating me






**N0017**

1 and a lot of our constituents and members and thank you for your  
2 efforts and your time for that.

3 A couple of areas that I wanted to comment on tonight.  
4 We, especially here north of the Alaska Range, have really  
5 appreciated and enjoyed the safety and the peace of mind of  
6 having access to the SUAIS Service, the Special Use Airspace  
7 Information Service. That has been a tremendous help in us  
8 transiting the area that you guys use for your operations. It  
9 has helped de-conflict our passage through that area and from  
10 what I hear from your direction back towards us you appreciate  
11 having the knowledge where we are and when we're going to  
12 transit that area.

13 I would like to encourage you to expand that system, and I  
14 know that's been talked about, but especially with the proposal  
15 for the Fox MOA expansion and the Paxson MOA. The most coverage  
16 we could have down there the better and it would -- from our  
17 perspective if the coverage is not there or if a certain  
18 repeater may be out of service consider mitigations for not  
19 using the lower level, lower strata of that airspace when the  
20 communications may not be available for any given time. Because  
21 we've had such great success with that service we would like to  
22 see it implemented actually nationwide to be honest with you.  
23 And we know that there's a couple of other areas in the U.S.  
24 where they have similar type systems, but knowing the success  
25 that we've had here we especially want it implemented statewide




**N0017**

1 and especially in these lower altitudes where the potential for  
2 conflicts exist.

3 One of the things, that as the Airmen's Association we try  
4 to make sure that we're up to speed and aware of what's going on  
5 not just with this particular procedure and policy change, but  
6 with other areas that the military's acting as well as how that  
7 interacts with the FAA. And it's not an easy task, but some of  
8 the things that we've talked about previously, the moving of the  
9 F-16s from Eielson down to JBER and how that might affect some  
10 of your proposals and want to make sure that that's at least  
11 considered or talked about during some of these areas.

12 Looking at my notes here. As we brought up earlier, with  
13 the UAV corridors and the lack of definition from the FAA about  
14 your ability to operate these vehicles in the national airspace  
15 system, want to make sure that if your proposal for the  
16 realistic live ordinance does include connecting R-2211 and R-  
17 2202 that you would not be limited to using that airspace for  
18 what it was specifically requested for. But since that airspace  
19 would potentially be there it would be better to be able to use  
20 it for multiple uses, including the UAVs.

21 Question that we also have that -- not sure that it's been  
22 dealt with sufficiently is the use of Fort Greely and class  
23 delta airspace there with the potential for traffic to possibly  
24 decline in that area and the potential for that no longer being  
25 a full-time type operations, what would that do for some of the





**N0017**

1 transit areas through that area as far as general aviation and  
2 civilian traffic. One of the things that has been brought up  
3 numerous times by our members.....

4 COLONEL WEISS: Sir, you've.....

5 MR. WHITE: Okay.


6 COLONEL WEISS: .....you've taken up four minutes at  
7 least.

8 MR. WHITE: Okay.

9 COLONEL WEISS: (Indiscernible).

10 MR. WHITE: Sorry about that. One of the things that's  
11 been brought up by our members is the narrow slot that would be  
12 available to transit up the Richardson Highway and the  
13 possibility of possibly shaving some of the eastern boundary of  
14 2202 if the restricted area is approved over the battle area  
15 complex to give us a little more breathing room to transit that  
16 area and de-conflict with opposite traffic. That is a heavily  
17 traveled area, especially in low weather, because we tend to  
18 follow low terrain and we need as much room as we can. Also  
19 understanding that if it's bad weather chances of you having  
20 live weapons release from an aerial platform in the battle area  
21 complex is probably pretty limited.

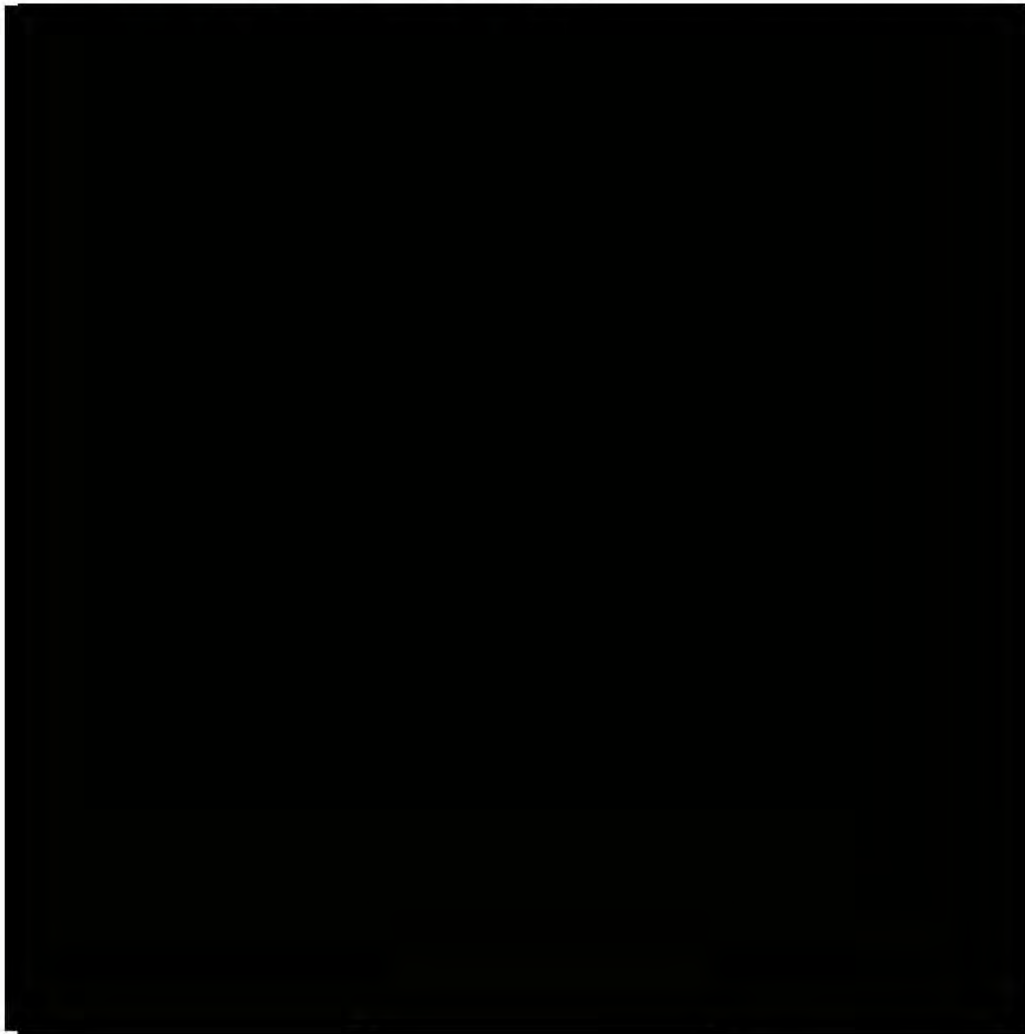
22 But here again, we're dealing with an education issue of  
23 our constituents. They see an area on a map. Unfortunately  
24 they don't always research it to the point to realize that it's  
25 only activated during certain times and that's an education



**N0017**

1 issue that we constantly struggle and deal with and ask for your  
2 patience on especially.

3 And I guess that concludes my oral statements and  
4 encourage you to look for a written statement before the  
5 deadline of June 7th. So thank you.



**N0018**



421 Aviation Way  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

T. 301-695-2000  
F. 301-695-2375

[www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org)

May 23, 2012

ALCOM Public Affairs  
9480 Pease Avenue  
Suite 120  
JBER, AK 99506

Re: AOPA requests for extension of Comment Period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex

To Whom It May Concern,

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), representing more than 400,000 general aviation members nationwide, requests a 60 day extension to the comment period slated to close on June 7, 2012 for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) comment period.

Based on AOPA's participation during recent DEIS public meetings and the complexity of concerns raised by both the aviation industry as well as local communities impacted by the JPARC proposed changes, the current 70 day comment period is inadequate to allow for a comprehensive review and public input. The sheer volume and complexity of the JPARC initiative would typically necessitate a minimum of 90 days for public comment and while recognizing the military's desire to move ahead and remain on schedule, attempting to aggressively move forward without ample public review opportunity seems to negate the true spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

AOPA strongly suggests the Department of Defense offer an additional 60 days for public review of this complex and lengthy DEIS to ensure the public is offered time to provide substantive comments on the potential consequences of the proposed actions. While understanding the desire to adhere to a schedule and budget, there is no substitute for allowing an adequate and thorough public comment period - especially when the DEIS public comment meetings overlapped with a number of already scheduled community events precluding the public from participation at these public meetings.

AOPA looks forward to an extension of the comment period to allow for a thorough public review opportunity and to allow the aviation community and public to provide substantive feedback on this complex DEIS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi J. Williams".

Heidi J. Williams  
Vice President  
Air Traffic Services and Modernization

AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION





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**N0019**

May 10, 2012

Lieutenant General Stephen L. Hoog  
Commander, Alaskan Command  
9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 110  
JBer, AK 99506-2101

Dear Sir:

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce (GFCC) would like to respectfully request the extension of the comment period for the Joint Alaska Pacific Range Complex (JPARC) draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We would like to recommend an additional 60 days which will allow for further comments and analysis based on recent USAF proposals and basing decisions at Alaskan installations.

The Air Force, by its force restructuring action, which is not considered in the current EIS draft, of shifting the Eielson F-16s, associated military, and civilian personnel to JBer has created undetermined impacts on Alaskan air space and Alaska's population. These changes are more than sufficient to warrant an extended period for analysis and comment by the local governments, businesses, organizations and individuals potentially affected by, as yet, unidentified impacts on Alaska's land, water and air space.

The GFCC has a longstanding relationship with the military in Alaska and supports the military's involvement in the Interior in several ways. In 2012 the Chamber's Board of Directors and Military Affairs Committee adopted "Continue to Strengthen the Military Presence in Interior Alaska" as one of its most important priorities. We understand the importance and strategic advantage that JPARC offers for a variety of military training opportunities. However, for the reasons stated above we believe this 60 day extension is warranted.

Sincerely,

Lorna Shaw  
Chair, Board of Directors

Steve Lundgren  
Chair, Military Affairs Committee

Lisa Herbert  
Executive Director

### **INVESTORS**

#### **DIAMOND**

BP Exploration  
ConocoPhillips  
ExxonMobil  
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner  
Fairbanks Memorial Hospital &  
Denali Center  
Flint Hills Resources Alaska  
Mt. McKinley Bank  
Santini's Flowers & Gifts

#### **PLATINUM**

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.  
Carlson Center  
Doyon, Limited  
Fred Meyer Stores  
Golden Heart Utilities  
Wells Fargo Bank Alaska

#### **GOLD**

Birchwood Homes  
Denali State Bank  
Design Alaska  
Doyon Utilities LLC  
First National Bank Alaska  
GCI  
Kinross-Fort Knox Mine  
Lynden  
MAC Federal Credit Union  
Northrim Bank  
Sumitomo Metal Mining Pogo LLC  
Usibelli Coal Mine

#### **SILVER**

ACS  
Alaska Airlines  
Alaska Railroad  
Alaska USA  
Dr. Christopher Henry – Henry  
Orthodontics  
Everts Air Cargo, Everts Air AK  
Exclusive Paving/Univ. Redi-Mix  
Fairbanks Natural Gas  
Flowline Alaska  
Fountainhead Hotels  
General Teamsters Local 959  
GVEA  
Hale & Associates, Inc.  
JL Properties, Inc.  
Key Bank  
Personnel Plus  
Shell Exploration & Production Co.  
Sprint of Alaska FCU  
Tanana Valley Clinic  
TDL Staffing  
Totem Ocean Trailer Express, Inc.  
Tower Hill Mines-Livengood Gold  
Project  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Venzon Wireless  
WAL-MART Stores, Inc.  
Yukon Title Company



**N0020**

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Corky [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 30, 2012 8:24 PM  
**To:** ALCOM J08 Admin Box  
**Subject:** JPARC  
**Attachments:** MOA LLCNPC.docx; MOA Letter Matthews 2.docx

**N0020**

**LAKE LOUISE COMMUNITY  
NON-PROFIT CORPORATION**

May 30, 2012

To: ALCOM Public Affairs  
Subject: MOA Expansion

The Lake Louise Non-Profit Corp. (LLCNPC) represents the 245 homes and cabins in the Tri-Lakes area. With the exception of a few owners, the Community is opposed to the expansion of the FOX 3 and Paxson MOA.

Residents have expressed many different reasons for their opposition: low level military aircraft pose a hazard to civil aircraft, disturbance of nesting birds and waterfowl, disturbance of caribou calving, excess noise, fire hazard, use of State lands when the majority of Alaska land is held by the Federal Government.

The Lake Louise area has been chosen by residents because of its beauty, quiet, clean water, and wildlife. Had they wanted air traffic, their property would have been selected next to an airport.

Five hundred AGL operations are totally unacceptable and the LLCNPC wants to go on record as strongly opposed.

Sincerely;

Beverly Matthews, President

HC 01 Box 1684b  
Lake Louise Road  
Glennallen, Alaska 99588

**N0021**

**From:** Barney Lowe [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 01, 2012 6:30 AM  
**To:** ALCOM J08 Admin Box  
**Subject:** Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) proposed changes

As a former military aviator and currently a civil aviation user I feel this is a good example wasted federal dollars and valuable military assets. This whole project is not needed. It appears to be an EMPIRE BUILDING PROJECT which I oppose.

Thank You  
Barney Lowe Mgr  
Pico Aviation  
Del Rio, Tx

**N0022**

1

ALCOM PA,  
9480 Pease Ave.  
Suite 120  
JBER, AK 99506  
June, 6, 2012

Dana L. Olson

RE: Moderation and Enhancement of Ranges, Airspace, and Training Areas

On behalf of the AmberLake North Homeowner's Association, who won, material sites, for the prosperity of its creation by the DNR, the position is that we object.

We were created for public purpose and mission. We have had past experiences, of being excluded from consistencies reviews in coastal consistencies, due to re-drawn boundaries. We have had plane crashes, not addressed by the DNR, to the satisfaction needed. We can not be subject to political whim, because there is a record establishing the objectionable nature <sup>was</sup> is ruled under a recreational standard, such as when opposing the loss of Oil Well Road, for keeping animals protected in the corridor called Alaska Wild Rivers; before the Alaska legislature( by testimony).

The State has a whistle blower statue, but only for state employees. This makes the EIS deficient on its face, because there are unsettled land claims in our area. If the State has not reconciled, the tentatively transferred federal land to the state, and notices have been ignored because of the whistleblower statue and employees, who do not have confidence in their job security.....the region known as Amberlake/ Amberlake North; humbly respects removal, from your consideration.

Creating titles on non recognized parties, before claims are settled, makes this region unsuitable for your or the nation's needs.

Peer review is deficient under an engineering standard, because this past semester, peer review demonstrated that buildings do not implode by fire intensity, because the quantum physics properties recognize the second property of thermodynamics. That property has fire reversing on its self, and is seen. The necessity does not call for an EIS.

The idea that you can use quantum physics, and I can get academically punished, is ground, to file a complaint. Who am I going to complain to?

When a student desires to know the truth and the truth is structured to support social sciences only, I object under science.

Until the President of the United States decides the land Claim issues, decisions concerning who owns what, will cloud your efforts. I applaud your science, but I am



**N0022**

2

bound to a rock geology standard, that is suppose to give the prevailing notice or approval. While those who seek to discredit me, my work is on Elmendorf, and Eielson ABF.

Sincerely in objection,  
The folks and dissents in the AmberLake/ AmberLake North region  
Dana L. Olson

[REDACTED]

*Dana L Olson*  
*June 6, 2012*  
*by fax and mail (hard copy)*

N0023

Submittal ID	Commenter	Title	Organization	Topic List	Comment
N0023	Dwayne King	Director	Kingdom Air Corps	1 - Fox 3 Military Operations Area (MOA) Expansion and New Paxon MOA	<p>We at Kingdom Air Corps, mile 81 on the Glenn Highway are grateful for the opportunity to make comments to the Alaskan Command. We appreciate your desire to get public input, and we hope and pray that you take us very seriously. I have over 15000 hours, and 45 years experience as a commercial pilot and flight instructor in this area of Alaska. Training dozens of people in the Glennallen, Chickaloon, Tok, and Bettles area. We make numerous flights to Fairbanks from our base at AK-59 King Ranch, operating 14 aircraft, 3 turbine helicopters, from our base north toward Fairbanks, Talkeetna and Paxson. My son, David King operates in the Alaska Range, especially in the Tangle Lakes area, with three helicopters, in mining operations. We oppose the expansion of the FOX MOA, because it endangers our people, our business, and our lifestyle. We have managed all of these years to be accident free, but an expansion of the MOAs, puts a greater risk on all of us. We're not authorities in military operations, how can we be experts in military operations? But we think it will be more risky for all of us. And for sure it will change the freedom that we have had all of our lives, hunting, mining, working, and flying in these areas that are proposed to become Military Operations areas. We fought the expansions of Federal lands for Parks, and have seen the encroachment of Federal rules upon us through the years. When we lived in Bettles, we opposed the massive Parks acquisition of The Gates of the Arctic; sitting in meetings and voicing our opinions. The same thing happened to us when we lived in Glennallen for eight years; just at the time the Wrangle-St Elias Park was established. We voiced our opinions and we never really got any good answers. They said it wouldn't effect public flying, but then we began to hear that they complained that we flew below 2000 feet above Park lands. We are the kind of people that are very supportive of our military. We really like the free lifestyle of Alaska. We like our guns, our hunting, flying low, gravel bar-hopping, and flying around the peaks. We take about 300+ people sightseeing at all different altitudes, in the Talkeetna and Chugach Mountains. I can't ever remember getting a response from these comment sections that we fill out. Does it really do any good to fill these out. We know our voices are being heard, but does it make any difference? Please respond. We are people who are seriously impacted by the expansion of military operations. Thank-you for listening, Dwayne King Kingdom Air Corps.</p>

**N0024**



*Executive Office  
Telephone: (907) 265-2498  
Facsimile: (907) 265-2312*

June 11, 2012

Lt. General Stephen Hoog  
Alaskan Command & Joint Task Force Alaska  
9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 107  
JBER, AK 99506-2100

Dear Lt. General Hoog:

On behalf of the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors and our employees, I would like to express our support for the continued development and investment in the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC). The JPARC Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is a welcomed next step in a process that we hope will result in enhanced training opportunities for our United States Armed Forces.

As a state-owned corporation, part of the Alaska Railroad's charter is to support economic development and provide critical support services to our military operations. Our current project to build a bridge across the Tanana River near Salcha meets both requirements. This project is phase one of a multi-phased project called the Northern Rail Extension that will eventually build rail to Delta Junction. This will support future resource development, passenger service options for civilians and military personnel, and will connect the Fort Greely Army Installation by rail to all other major military installations and strategic port facilities in Alaska. In the short term, the Tanana Bridge will provide an important year-round transportation land link to the vast military training grounds encompassed in the JPARC area.

We are proud to be constructing a project that represents an important first step in modernizing and enhancing JPARC and we encourage the adoption of alternatives that continue building on this investment. JPARC is the largest military training range in the United States and is critical to securing and defending our nation.

The Alaska Railroad will continue to work with the State of Alaska, the Federal Government, the U.S. Military and the local community to help ensure we are providing the best support possible to the courageous men and women who defend our nation.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Leary".

Linda Leary, Chair  
Alaska Railroad Board of Directors

327 W. Ship Creek Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

MAILING ADDRESS  
P.O. Box 107500 Anchorage, Alaska, 99510-7500

TEL 907 265 2300 FAX 907 265 2416  
AlaskaRailroad.com



**N0025**

ALCOM Public Affairs  
9480 Pease Ave, Suite 120  
JBER, AK 99506

6/14/12

Dear JPARC Planning Team.

The following comments are submitted by the Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition (AQRC) as testimony concerning the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex Modernization and Enhancement Draft EIS, published March 2012.

As stated in the AQRC scoping comment letter of 1/31/11, AQRC is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the important resource of natural quiet on our public lands for the benefit of all Alaskans, visitors, wildlife, and future generations. State surveys have shown that the majority of Alaskans cherish the beauty, peace and quiet of wild places, and consider that peace and quiet necessary and important to their lives. Natural Quiet is a natural resource that is an essential ingredient of wild areas.

**AQRC reluctantly supports the no-action alternative**, but has a strong preference for an alternative that would reduce the size of the existing MOAs, not leave them as they are or increase them. While AQRC is appreciative of the role of the military and the need for training to stay current, the proposal to, once again, expand the already enormous areas of MOAs and increase the training exercises with their accompanying noise, safety, and environmental degradation issues, sacrifices the quality of life that Alaskans cherish. It is also a major threat to wildlife resources.

**Human effects:**

Low altitudes to 500 feet are not compatible with acceptable civilian quality of life. Both Alternatives A and E include this level which was rejected in the past by both military and civilian reviewers and should be rejected now.

Noise created by military aircraft adversely affects rural and backcountry users. There are all kinds of recreationists along the Richardson and Denali Highways, cabin owners in the Lake Louise area, backpackers in the Talkeetna Mountains and near the Denali Highway, and hunters and fishers throughout the expanded areas being proposed. The mitigation suggestion of publishing times of training missions, as proposed, will not be sufficient to meet their many and varied interests and needs. Further, there are many homes and growing communities along the Glenn and Richardson Highways, and elsewhere in the Copper River Basin that would be negatively affected by either Alternative A or E.

The Draft EIS quotes various standard noise measurements such as the day-night average noise level and the FAA and EPA standards for noise safety. The FAA mission is airplane safety. The EPA standards address noise as it effects physical health. None of this is relevant. As is admitted in Chapter 3, noise is not experienced as an average and noise increase in quiet areas has greater impact than in less quiet areas. The impact of machine or ordnance noise is to remove peace and quiet. The Draft EIS Alternative A indicates that sonic booms would become much more frequent in Fox 3 and "would be expected to be considered significant." (3.1.2) According to the Draft EIS, in Alternative A subsonic noise under the Fox 3 expansion and new Paxson MOA would result in problems. "Overall, the relative (noise) change

**N0025**

is high, and in quiet settings, these increases would be highly noticeable and cause potentially significant impacts on communities.” (3-79)

The Draft EIS describes the expanded Fox 3 and the new Paxson MOA as being over rural and sparsely populated areas, as if that made noise less of a concern. The opposite is true. The very value of those areas are that they are rural and sparsely populated and therefore a resource to be enjoyed and treasured. If the military judges the effect of its actions by the number of people adversely affected, then the judgement being made is that cities are to be saved and wild areas are appropriate sacrifice zones. Many Alaskan civilians see it the other way around. Cities and noise are expanding. Wild areas and natural quiet are shrinking and becoming progressively more valuable. Alaskans live here in this cold dark place because we value the wild and the peace and quiet above all.

**Wildlife effects.**

As AQRC has stated in the scoping letter, mammal mating, birthing, feeding, resting, and migrating have been shown to be sensitive to stress in different species at different times. Similarly bird mating, nesting, feeding their young, fledging, food storing for migration or winter, migrating or wintering have been shown to be sensitive to stress in different species at different times. Few, if any, windows of opportunity are available when air noise and/or ordnance will not have negative effects on wildlife. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has written to you with concerns that both the low level flights and the large scale training could disturb all species. (March 1, 2011)


The Draft EIS Alternative maps show extensive overlay of Dall Sheep, Caribou calving, and Trumpeter Swan nesting areas. The EIS claims that effects would be short term based on a few studies in other areas. No reference adequately supports the claim that Alternative A with mitigation would have “moderate effects on wildlife and would not be measurable at the population level and not significant.”(3.1.8) No MOA expansion or decrease in flight altitude should occur before specific studies on the effect of various kinds of military noise on moose browsing, Dall sheep lambing in both the Alaska Range and Talkeetna Mountains, caribou calving in the northern Talkeetna Mountains, migration, nesting and fledging of water fowl, including Trumpeter Swan, are done.

For the above reasons, AQRC supports:

- No action alternative.
- No reduction in flight altitude levels.
- No increase in ordnance and training areas.

The perceived need to keep expanding air and training space to keep up with technology never ends. However, our land is finite. When will enough be enough? What volume of civilian outrage is sufficient to stem this inexorable take-over by the military asking itself if it should have more space and answering “More More More.”

Sincerely,

  
Elizabeth Hatton  
Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition





**N0026**

[REDACTED]

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**From:** McCaffrey, Melissa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 27, 2012 3:27 PM  
**To:** ALCOM J08 Admin Box  
**Subject:** Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex EIS  
**Attachments:** JPARC Comments 6-26-12 Final (1).pdf

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's formal comments regarding the DEIS for the JPARC, a confirmation of the receipt of our comments would be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me with any questions directly, thank you.



**Melissa McCaffrey**  
Senior Government Analyst, Air Traffic Services  
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**N0026**



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June 26, 2012

ALCOM Public Affairs  
9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 120  
JBER, AK 99506

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Modernization and Enhancement of Ranges,  
Airspace and Training areas in the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex

To Whom It May Concern:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), representing more than 400,000 members nationwide, submits the following comments in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the modernization and enhancement of ranges, airspace and training areas in the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC). The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has proposed a significant expansion to the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) in support of military training. This complex, already the largest military airspace complex in the country occupies some 65,000 square miles of airspace over land, and 42,000 nautical square miles of airspace over the Gulf of Alaska. A series of proposals are included in the DEIS that would further expand this complex. It is imperative that aviation safety and access be preserved for civil users of the complex, given the importance of aviation for basic transportation in the state of Alaska.

**Economic impact of civil aviation in Alaska**

According to *The Economic Contribution of the Alaska Aviation Industry to Alaska's Economy*, by Northern Economics, Inc., the aviation industry in Alaska contributes \$3.5 billion, or approximately 8%, of the gross state product. The fact that this is proportionately almost 40% greater than the industry's role in the national economy demonstrates the importance of the aviation industry to Alaska's economy. An estimated 47,000 jobs are directly and indirectly related to aviation in the state of Alaska. Given the importance of aviation to the state's economy, it is important that the proposed changes to the airspace do not harm this industry, or significantly limit access to resources in the state.

**Proposed MOA Expansion**

The proposed expansion of the Fox 3 Military Operations Area (MOA) is a significant increase both in lateral and vertical dimensions, lowering the floor from 5,000 feet above ground level (agl) to 500 feet agl. The area encompassed in the proposed expansion is frequently used by

AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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general aviation pilots and air taxi operators to support hunting camps and mining operations, conduct air tour operations, access recreational areas or make other uses of this region. Due to its proximity to the population centers of Anchorage, the Mat Su Borough and Fairbanks, where the airspace is heavily used by civil aviation, there would be an increased collision potential with high-speed military aircraft executing training maneuvers in the Fox 3 MOA airspace. Due to the importance of the proposed airspace area for access to the southern Alaska Range, Denali Highway and Talkeetna Mountains, and to minimize the risk of mid-air collision, expansion of the Fox MOA should be limited to no lower than 5,000 feet agl, and to the smallest possible lateral extent to minimize the risk of mid-air collision.

The DEIS includes the proposed Paxson MOA, which covers Isabel Pass and portions of the eastern Alaska Range. The pass is a major Visual Flight Rules (VFR) route which links northern Alaska with south central and south east regions of the state. Along the southern flanks of the Alaska Range are mining operations, recreational cabins, airstrips and lakes which experience high levels of use and are not compatible with high speed, low level military aircraft. While the concept of VFR corridors has been discussed, the variable weather in this area is not conducive to identifying a single corridor which tends to concentrate VFR traffic and increases additional potential for a mid-air collision risk. The proposed Paxson MOA should be limited to high altitude usage only, recognizing the importance of Isabel Pass, and the air traffic routes extending from the interior south to Gulkana and beyond for civil aviation.

#### **Special Use Airspace Information Service Coordination**

The creation of the Special Use Airspace Information Service (SUAIS) in the 1990's for portions of the JPARC has had a positive impact on VFR usage of the current airspace complex that extends across an area over 300 miles wide. In areas where there is adequate communication and surveillance, this has greatly improved the situational awareness for both civil and military airspace users. Pilots have reported that in the eastern portions of the complex, communications are not adequate and they are experiencing difficulties with the mix of civil uses and military training activities.

Any expansion of MOA airspace must have accompanying radio coverage, staffing and other elements of the SUAIS infrastructure to allow civil pilots to communicate with Range Control during times that MOAs are active. It is also essential that the tape recorded message broadcast during hours when Range Control is unmanned, be more uniformly broadcast across the JPARC complex. While the current language in the DEIS indicates that "funding will be pursued," given that we still do not have adequate communication in the existing airspace this is not ample assurance that infrastructure will be provided. It is essential that funding be allocated for the addition of radio repeaters, staffing or other infrastructure costs to provide sufficient coverage for any expanded airspace. This infrastructure should be installed and operational before any additional airspace is approved.

#### **IFR Access to MOA airspace**

Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) access is essential to improving access and aviation safety between Alaska's communities, including those that are under the MOA airspace already contained within the JPARC. Expansion of T-Routes and WAAS approaches are providing this



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access under a wider range of weather conditions, adding to the benefits of the IFR system. Those benefits are seriously degraded by expansions of MOAs that preclude IFR access for all but emergency or Lifeguard flights. AOPA requests that no additional MOA airspace be added to this complex until provisions are made to provide real-time IFR access through active MOAs. While the access may be restricted to limited flight altitudes, it is essential that civil traffic, both emergency and routine, have access to communities both inside and adjacent to MOA airspace given the critical role aviation plays in the Alaskan transportation system. For example, an aircraft needing to fly from Fairbanks to Tok would normally make a relatively direct 158 nautical mile flight along the airways. When the Delta MOAs are active, aircraft are re-routed, increasing the distance around the airspace to 450 nautical miles, a 2.8 times increase in distance. Due to the huge size of this MOA complex, lacking the ability to cross them using the protections of the IFR system is a significant safety as well as economic impact on the aircraft operators, and the customers that pay for the increased operational cost.

The relatively low volumes of IFR operations suggest that the impact to military training of supporting IFR access would be minimal. As more military actions across the globe are conducted around civil flight operations, learning how to dynamically allocate airspace will also help the military “train like they fight.” The JPARC provides an ideal test bed to develop this capability, which will require cooperation with the FAA and military agencies.

#### **Proposed Battle Area Complex Restricted Area**

The proposal to establish restricted airspace over the Battle Area Complex southeast of Delta Junction is of particular concern to the civil aviation community. Existing Restricted Area 2202 to the west already forces civil traffic out of the most desirable terrain route to and from Isabel Pass, a major VFR corridor connecting the northern half of the state to south central and south eastern Alaska. Winds and highly variable weather associated with the Alaska Range and the mountain pass make it impractical to confine civil traffic to a single, narrow corridor in this area.

AOPA opposes the addition of restricted airspace as proposed in this area, given the need to access the mountain pass, unique weather and terrain, and presence of existing restricted airspace. We suggest the military seek other means to allow training to take place, such as the controlled firing area used today, where firing is halted when a civil aircraft enters the area.

#### **Realistic Live Ordinance Delivery**

The proposals to establish restricted airspace for live ordinance delivery impact access between Fairbanks, Delta, the Richardson Highway corridor and the recreational and mineralized areas in the Alaska Range to the south. Existing Restricted Areas R2211 and R-2202 already inhibit air traffic attempting to transit the airspace. Connecting these two restricted areas would create an overall barrier to access in this area; AOPA would like to see effective mitigation to address these concerns.

#### **Remotely Piloted Aircraft/Unmanned Aerial Vehicle corridors**

The DEIS proposes establishing restricted airspace corridors for the purpose of navigating Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA)/Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) from military airfields into various restricted airspace areas. There is no doubt that unmanned aerial vehicles play an

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important role in today's military, and that training is required. Integrating these vehicles into the National Airspace System is currently a topic of discussion at the national level. Restricting civil airspace to accommodate UAV transits next to the second largest air transportation hub in the state is a concern for the civil aviation community.

The FAA has consistently denied the addition of new restricted airspace areas for the sole purpose of RPA/UAV operations or for anything other than hazardous activity since Restricted airspace is for containment of hazardous operations. En-route RPA/UAV flights transitioning between the Eielson Air Force base and existing restricted airspace is not a hazardous operation. The proposed establishment of restricted airspace corridors for this purpose is an attempt to circumnavigate the RPAs/UAVs inability to see-and-avoid participating traffic. While awaiting development of a true sense-and-avoid capability that will allow full integration of unmanned aerial vehicles into the National Airspace System, we must rely on other means to separate unmanned from manned aircraft without segregated airspace. The corridors that are proposed would clearly interfere with the safe and efficient access between Fairbanks, the Richardson Highway Corridor and the Alaska Range.

#### **F-16 Relocation Proposal**

While not identified in the JPARC Draft EIS, announcements in the press have communicated an Air Force plan to relocate the F-16 squadron, currently based at Eielson Air Force Base in support of military training activities, to Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER). The stated purpose of the proposed move is to reduce operating costs. Statements in the Draft EIS indicate that part of the justification for expanding the FOX MOA airspace to the south, is to reduce operational costs of training exercises, by lowering the amount of fuel required to reach the training airspace from JBER. These two statements seem to be in conflict with one another. It is also not clear what the impact of relocation of the F-16 squadron might have on airspace and the corresponding civil facilities in Anchorage, including Anchorage International Airport.

Given the conflicting nature of these two military proposals, it appears that the F-16 relocation cannot help but influence the cumulative impact of the overall JPARC proposal. More analysis of this plan by the military with presentation to the public is required to understand the true impact on this development to allow informed public comment.

#### **Fifth Generation Fighter Jet Statement Inconsistent**

AOPA has concerns with a portion of the JPARC document "description of proposed action and alternatives", Section 2.0, 2.1.1 Fox 3 MOA Expansion and New Paxson MOA which states, "...as the fifth generation of U.S. fighters (F-22 and F-35 aircraft) are developed, fielded and deployed in combat, pilots will need to train in the skills and tactics appropriate for these aircraft within an airspace best configured for such training." This statement is in direct contrast with the United States Air Force (USAF) F35A Training Basing EIS, Airspace and Range Use, F-35A, which states, "...flight activities would take place in existing airspace; no airspace modifications would be required for any of the scenarios."

It remains unclear whether the USAF is stating that the addition of fifth generation type fighters require additional airspace accommodations or they will be contained in existing airspace.



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AOPA would welcome clarification on this issue as these two USAF documents appear to be in conflict with one another. With the national implications inherent in this debate, AOPA opposes the creation of additional Special Use Airspace to accommodate new aircraft without further consideration of a “giveback” of airspace no longer needed.

**Evaluation of other Alaska MOAs**

While the DEIS proposals focus on expansion of the airspace in the core area centered on Eielson AFB, there are historical MOAs in other parts of the state that are defined as elements of the JPARC. Given the emphasis on reduction of operating costs, this is an appropriate time to evaluate the present uses of the Stony, Naknek, Susitna and Galena MOAs to determine if they are still required to meet modern training needs. No data was found in the DEIS on uses of these MOAs other than limited use data on the Stony MOA.

AOPA would ask the DoD to perform an analysis of existing and future uses of Stony, Naknek, Susitna, and Galena MOAs as part of JPARC to establish their continued need given the changes in training requirements, and need for operational efficiency described in these proposals. Results should be included in the final JPARC Environmental Impact Statement and shared with the public with an opportunity for comment.

**Summary**

AOPA appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the DEIS for the JPARC and looks forward to working with the DoD on solutions that equitably accommodate both the military’s need for realistic training, and the needs of the civil aviation community.

We urge the military to work collaboratively with the aviation community on plans that incorporate more effective IFR coordination for transit through active MOAs and more reliable SUAIS implementation. Finally, we implore you to keep in mind that airspace, especially in the Alaskan Frontier, is the lynchpin that enables many small communities to exist. Any alteration to this vital resource must be approached with the utmost caution. Thank you and please contact me with questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Melissa McCaffrey  
Senior Government Analyst  
Air Traffic

**N0027**

[REDACTED]

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**From:** b. long [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 05, 2012 3:27 PM  
**To:** ALCOM J08 Admin Box  
**Subject:** JPARC DRAFT EIS COMMENTS  
**Attachments:** JPARC.doc

Attached here are the comments of the group Alaska Survival regarding the JPARC draft EIS Enhancement and Modernization.

Request that you acknowledge receipt of these comments.

Thanks,  
Becky Long

**N0027**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
**MODERNIZATION AND ENHANCEMENT**  
**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**  
**JOINT PACIFIC ALASKA RANGE COMPLEX**

7/4/12

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
ALASKA SURVIVAL  
[REDACTED]

Alaska Survival is a Talkeetna-based nonprofit Alaskan corporation that seeks to protect the health of both people and the natural ecosystem by endeavoring to maintain the integrity of Alaska's land, air, and waters.

**THE NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: THE ONLY REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE**

The JPARC military representatives have said that they cannot consider the No Action Alternative. Page 6 of the DEIS says that the status quo is not good enough for the modern and emerging weapons. There is no proof for this assumption beyond what JPARC says.

At the Talkeetna public meeting, we were told that if this expansion is accepted that there would be 2 supersonic sorties a day, 5 days a week with the potential for increased supersonic flights during training periods with other military from other countries. This will irrevocably change the public lands, the environment and the quality of life for those areas. People outside the areas will hear the sonic booms.

The April, 1997, Record of Decision for the final EIS for the Alaska Military Operations Areas diminished the Fox MOA by 910 square miles to its present location and raised the proposed minimum flight altitude from 3000 feet AGL to 5000 feet AGL due to undesirable noise impacts and to preclude the potential for direct over flight of sensitive resources. These were sensible decisions and should be retained as the status quo.

Much of the existing Fox 3 and proposed expansion is within the Mat Su Borough (MSB). The MSB is the fastest growing area in Alaska with the population expecting to double in the next 20-25 years. The expansion of Fox 3 and the creation of Paxson MOA would expand military operations southerly including the Talkeetna Mountains which are adjacent to the growing communities of Lake Louise, Wasilla, Palmer, Sutton, Chickaloon, and Glacier View. The Lake Louise area has approximately 80 year round residents with about 500 private

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property parcels. To do good planning, it must be assumed that these parcels will be occupied year round in the future.

We support the Lake Louise Community Non Profit Corporation and the Talkeetna Community Council in their concerns of the noise impacts on the local economy, lifestyle, wildlife, recreational use, and civilian aviation.

In the 15 years since the last EIS, the civilian use of the air and ground space in the Fox 3 and Paxson MOAs has significantly increased. There is more public use of the air space and the military must take this into consideration. These 2 areas are the breadbasket of Alaska, the heart of valuable natural resources that make Alaska what it is. Pristine public land, fish and wildlife resources, remote wilderness lifestyles, hunting, fishing, recreating, subsistence uses. This is what makes Alaska what it is. This is threatened by anything than the No Action Alternative.

#### **SUPPORT MSB RESOLUTION 12-076**

This Resolution was passed unanimously by the Borough Assembly 6/28/12, and it states our concerns succinctly.

Many MSB residents and visitors depend upon the airspace within the proposed expanded airspace for accessing the natural resource rich lands and waters below, for accessing private and public lands via aircraft, for commercial enterprise such as air taxi operations, outfitting, hunter/hiker guiding, operating lodges, operating mines, and for various non-commercial, recreation, and subsistence activities, such as hunting, hiking, food gathering, sightseeing.

The proposed airspace expansion would cover the Nelchina caribou herd calving grounds located within the MSB and the important Dall sheep lambing area/important ewe/lamb habitat in the Black Rapids Glacier and Mountain areas.

The proposed lateral and vertical expansions would increase the probability of conflict between civilian and military aircraft. The potential for near misses or midair collisions is significant and will impact general aviation pilots, air taxi pilots, and air charter pilots who use these areas for hunting, fishing and other recreational and subsistence activities traveling at low altitudes under Visual Flight Rules.

General aviation, air taxi, and air charter pilots flying under Instrument Flight Rules conditions would be prohibited from travel through an active MOA. The Richardson Highway is a major aviation transportation corridor for civil aviation traveling north-south.



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We agree with the MSB Assembly that the minimum flight training altitude should NOT be lowered to 500 feet for the Fox 3/Paxson MOA's due to potential impacts on wildlife, civilian aircraft traffic and recreational uses. In these MOA's, the Air Force must conduct all supersonic operations at or above 5,000 feet AGL or 12,000 feet MSL whichever is higher in order to reduce sonic boom intensity and its effects on the surface.

The Department of Defense must delineate and establish seasonal flight avoidance areas and overflight/operational restrictions over wildlife areas underlying any new or expanded MOAs consistent with the current restriction identified in the 1997 Alaska MOA EIS. These restrictions would include, but not be limited to, minimum overflight altitudes over wildlife areas, including waterfowl, raptor and other migratory bird nesting/breeding/concentration areas, Dall sheep lambing areas, caribou and moose critical season habitat areas. These should be reviewed, identified and expanded if necessary with the assistance of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Time and area restrictions must be evaluated and established to ensure the public's use of the area and the sustainability of the natural resources. There should be NO Major Flying Exercises and overflight of popular subsistence areas, hunting, areas, campgrounds and trails (5000 feet AGL and half-mile lateral distance) during peak use periods between June 27-July 11, mid-August through September, and during other important hunting seasons determined by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

There must be detailed maps, aeronautical charts and information to the public especially in the communities near Fox 3 and Paxson MOA's that identifies flight corridors, restricted or closure areas and dates of training use.

#### **CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

We disagree with the statement on page 13 of DEIS that the cumulative noise impacts that would occur where the twelve JPARC proposed action overlap would not be significant and would not create disproportionately high and adverse environmental or health effects. There is no data supporting this statement. We disagree with the statement on page 14 that no significant restriction to subsistence resources are expected from the cumulative effects of the JPARC proposed action, other DoD actions, and non-DoD actions.

There are 3 current and proposed actions and 1 legislatively designated area that did not make it to your list of cumulative impacts in the DEIS and must be considered.

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#### **Proposed Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project**

This is a megaproject that would develop a large footprint in the Fox 3 MOA. It is proposed to build a 700 to 880 foot dam at River Mile 184 of the Susitna River. There would be a permanent airport and a permanent road built. During the construction of the proposed project, there would be many airplane flights bringing workers and equipment into the area. In the next three years, there will be over 50 studies done in the area as part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Licensing process and the NEPA process. The reservoir will be approximately 40 miles long by 2 miles wide and will be a focal point for increased human presence in the project area.

#### **Mineral Exploration/Production in Fox 3 and Paxson MOA**

There is active mineral exploration on claims by the company Pure Nickel's Man Alaska Project (2009-2014). These are 240 miles of claims on state land called the Denali Block as well as some on the federal Bureau of Land Management land. The production could be open pit or underground mining. Both methods involve waste rock dumps, tailing stacks and ponds, toxic dust from ore trucks, mine drainage, transmission lines, and access roads. This mineral exploration affects the same migratory wildlife, and the same recreational and subsistence resources of the JPARC expansion DEIS and has its own air and noise pollution negative impacts.

#### **Denali Air Special Recreational Use Permit**

Denali Air is requesting to be able to conduct scenic glacier landings by fixed-wing aircraft near Mt. Deborah on portions of the Yanert and Gillian Glaciers, with up to three departures daily from May 10 to October 10. Currently, BLM is conducting an Environmental Assessment.

#### **Nelchina Public Use Area (NPUA)**

The NPUA encompasses 2.5 million acres of state land in the Talkeetna Mountains and was established by the state legislature in 1985. AS 41.23.010 states that the mandate is to protect, perpetuate, and enhance the fish and wildlife habitat and the public enjoyment of such habitat by the activities of fishing, hunting, trapping, recreation, and additional public uses. In particular, the Nelchina Caribou calving grounds, trumpeter swan nesting areas, and habitats for Dall sheep and brown bear are to be protected. Under AS 41.23.020, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources is directed to adopt a management plan, but this has never been done. It has been managed for

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**N0027**

multiple-use under the guidelines of the 1985 Susitna Area Plan and now under the 2010 Susitna Matanuska Area Plan, currently under appeal.

Not enough attention is being given to the proposed JPARC expansion on this this legislatively designated area, which is vulnerable to project impacts because there is no specific management plan. This needs to be considered.

#### **CONCLUSION**

For all of the above reasons, we support the No Action Alternative, the status quo with the caveats discussed in these comments. We do NOT want Alaskan lives and lands to become a live-virtual-constructive range. This expansion creates a war zone type atmosphere in a state that treasures the pristine and spectacular public lands that underlie the expanded Fox 3 MOA and the creation of a new Paxson MOA.

Becky Long  
Board of Directors

**N0028**

Submittal ID	Commenter	Title	Organization	Topic List	Comment
N0028	paul roderick	president	talkeetna air taxi	General (to the EIS), Airspace Management, Noise, Safety (Airspace), Safety (Ground), Land Use, 1 - Fox 3 Military Operations Area (MOA) Expansion and New Paxson MOA	test not sure if these comments are submitting.



N0029

Submittal ID	Commenter	Title	Organization	Topic List	Comment
N0029	Arthur Hussey	President	General Aviation Association of Fairbanks International Airport	General (to the EIS), Airspace Management, Safety (Airspace), Infrastructure and Transportation, All proposed actions	<p>The General Aviation Association of Fairbanks International Airport works with approximately sixty pilots and businesses in promotion of general aviation in and around the Fairbanks International Airport area. In this context, we are pleased to submit comments on the proposed JPARC expansion. Key points of concern to our membership include: a) in light of the proposed relocation of fighters from Eielson to JBER, the expansion should be re-evaluated. It is likely that training requirements for Eielson based aircraft and airmen would substantially change if the relocation were to occur. b) The EIS should strongly re-examine the possibility of expanded SUAIS. This is needed because of the increased low level traffic the JPARC envisions, combined with frequent slow-moving VFR traffic in the area. c) The floors for the Fox MOAs should be re-examined and lifted from the 500 feet proposed to at least 2,000 feet. It should be noted that flight, even VFR flight, at less than 500 feet, as would be needed to remain away from active military operations, is hazardous and in some cases could be deemed illegal. d) UAV Corridors, while understandable for increasingly common UAVs, should not be constructed in such a manner as to significantly restrict access of general aviation aircraft, both VFR and IFR, to Fairbanks airport. It should be noted that there is significant General Aviation traffic on the east-west axis and that the UAV corridors, as proposed, would restrict that, placing higher requirements on fuel to be carried (due to more circuitous routings) or potentially reducing safety margins. e) Finally, the proposed Battle Area Restricted Area is of significant concern. As anyone familiar with the area knows, this Restricted Area would occur in a region of potentially high winds and varying visibilities. To confine the general aviation community to a single north south corridor could easily compromise safety. We ask that this new Restricted Area be dropped from consideration. In closing, the General Aviation Community appreciates the opportunity to comment on the EIS and looks forward to continued partnership with the military and other parties involved in this important discussion. Sincerely, Arthur Hussey President General Aviation Association of Fairbanks International Airport</p>

**N0030**

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Megan Reilly [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 09, 2012 6:40 PM  
**To:** ALCOM J08 Admin Box  
**Cc:** Deantha Crockett; Edward Hild; Jim Palmer - Staff to Murkowski ; McKie Campbell ; Tara Shaw; David Ramseur; Susanne Fleek; Chad Padgett; 'Erik Elam'; Governor Sean Parnell; Joe Balash; Kip Knudson; Randall Ruaro  
**Subject:** Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex EIS Comment Submission  
**Attachments:** AMA JPARC 07-09-2012.pdf

To Whom It May Concern,

Per Deantha Crockett, Executive Director – Alaska Miners Association, please see the attached comment response concerning the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex EIS.

Should you have any questions, Deantha Crockett can be reached at [Deantha@alaskaminers.org](mailto:Deantha@alaskaminers.org) or at 1-907-563-9229.

Kind Regards,

Megan Reilly  
Office Manager  
Alaska Miners Association  
3305 Arctic Blvd., Ste. 105  
Anchorage, AK 99503

[REDACTED]  
[www.alaskaminers.org](http://www.alaskaminers.org)

Cc:  
Senator Lisa Murkowski  
Senator Mark Begich  
Congressman Don Young  
Governor Sean Parnell

**N0030**



## ALASKA MINERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

3305 Arctic Blvd., #105, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 • (907) 563-9228 • FAX: (907) 563-9228 • [www.alaskaminers.org](http://www.alaskaminers.org)

July 9, 2012

ALCOM PA  
9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 120  
JBER, AK 99506  
[www.jpisceis.com](http://www.jpisceis.com)

RE: Comments on Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) Modernization and Enhancement  
– Draft Environmental Impact Statement

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important proposal to expand the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC). The members of the Alaska Miners Association will be severely impacted by this proposal.

The Alaska Miners Association is a non-profit membership organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. The AMA is composed of more than 1400 individual prospectors, geologists and engineers, vendors, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, and major mining companies. Our members look for and produce gold, silver, platinum, molybdenum, diamonds, lead, zinc, copper, coal, limestone, sand and gravel, crushed stone, armor rock, and other materials. Our members live and work throughout the state including much of the area covered by the proposed expansion of JPARC.

We are pleased with some of the changes that have been made over previous alternatives but the current proposals DO NOT address the concerns expressed in AMA's letter of March 4, 2011 submitted during the scoping period for the DEIS. AMA noted that "Expansion of restricted airspace will greatly complicate the ability to develop mineral resources on state, borough, federal, and private lands, including Native owned lands. Much of the region covered by JPARC alternatives is remote and is accessible only by air." With the current DEIS proposal this statement should be changed to read "...will effectively close some State of Alaska lands to any use, including exploration and mining." Also, the DEIS does not adequately recognize the conflicts between low-level high speed military aircraft and helicopters and fixed wing aircraft used to access remote exploration and mining properties. The proposed changes in the DEIS will result in significant conflicts regarding access to and use of mineral lands. The DEIS significantly underestimates the potential conflicts and the impact on mining.

Specific comments and recommendations:

1. **Maximize the use of airspace above the 60% of Alaska that is federal land.** This recommendation was made in the AMA March 4, 2011 letter but we can discern no attempt to consider this approach. Most of the land under the proposed new and expanded MOAs is state owned and currently available for mineral exploration and development and much of this land has mineral potential and/or active mineral exploration and development.

The Alaska Statehood Act promised the State it could select and receive title to approximately 104 million acres out of the 365 million total acres in the State. However, before the State could complete its selections, Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) which placed more than 100 million acres in federal Conservation System Units (CSUs) which included parks, preserves, refuges, monuments, "Wildernesses", wild and scenic rivers, etc. This Act removed these lands from the opportunity for selection by the state and removed them from all commercial development, including resource development. Much of



**N0030**

these lands were highly prospective for mineral development. The current JAPARC DEIS would eliminate mineral development on portions of the now State-owned land that was not taken by ANILCA.

**MOAs could readily be defined to overlay non-multiple use federal lands that are now in federal CSUs and this should be the very first step prior to expansion of any MOA or Restricted airspace.**

**2. Use a minimum 3,000 feet AGL base for military aircraft operating in Military Operations Areas (MOAs).** The proposed 500 feet AGL would be unsafe and such restrictions would nearly eliminate the ability for exploration or for mining companies to access their claims or conduct mineral exploration using aircraft. Generally, mining companies operate their aircraft above 1000 feet AGL for safety and to minimize impacts on wildlife and other users. A 3000 foot AGL lower limit for military aircraft would provide a separation safety zone and reduce impacts on wildlife and other users.

Expansion of Fox 3 MOA to include a larger area and much lower altitudes would be a huge problem for the mineral industry. The current Fox 3 MOA primarily overlays the Alaska Range and Denali Highway from west of Tangle Lakes to near Cantwell and has a base of 5,000 feet AGL. The proposed geographic expansion would extend south to include much of the Talkeetna Mountains and east to encompass an area east of Tangle Lakes. The proposal would lower the entire expanded MOA to include the airspace down to 500 feet AGL. The expansion would encompass areas with previous mining and much of the 260 sqmi of mining claims that makeup the M.A.N. project. This project north and west of Paxson has received several \$10s of millions of exploration investment over the past 15 years and drilling continues today as this letter is being written.

The New Paxson MOA would extend east from the expanded Fox MOA to include the Richardson Highway corridor (including Isabel Pass) down to 500 feet AGL. This MOA includes much of the Alaska Range East of the Richardson Highway to approximately Mt. Kimball, including the Slate Creek (Upper Chistochina) mineral district. There is past mining in this area and there are currently several major exploration projects working here. To impose an MOA with a 500 foot AGL base would be a significant hardship for exploration and development.

The only feasible and environmentally acceptable access to most of the Fox 3 MOA and the Paxson MOA for exploration work is by helicopter and fixed wing aircraft.

**3. The Special Use Airspace Information System (SUAIS) should be expanded to include the Fox 3 and proposed Paxson MOA and all other MOAs in the state.**

**4. Expansion of Realistic Live Ordnance Delivery (RLOD) must not be over State-owned lands.** Currently these activities occur on and over federal land controlled by Department of Defense (DoD). The proposals include expanding RLOD areas onto a considerable acreage of state lands and some BLM lands not currently under DoD control. These lands are open to mining and under Alternative A include a small, active mining in the Portage Creek area in Little Delta River drainage. RLOD requires that lands included "safety controls necessary to exclude nonparticipating persons and aircraft from the WDZ when ordnance delivery training is taking place in the range training area and the associated air and ground surface areas are active". The areas would be used and the restrictions would be in place for "90 to 150" days (see page 2-10).



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Under DEIS Alternative A, the area of state lands subject to these restrictions is 163,000 acres (page 3-144) located Northwest of the Oklahoma Impact Area in the Donnelly Training Area (described in the DEIS as the expansion of Restricted Area 2202 to include underlying lands). As noted above, this area includes a number of state mining claims. Under Alternative B, 234,600 acres of state land are subject to restrictions, including an almost continuous strip of state land between the Tanana Flats Training Area (R-2211) and the Donnelly Training Area Fort Greeley (R-2202). If these restrictions were in place for 90 – 150 days, they would effectively eliminate other uses of these state lands, and specifically mineral exploration and mining. If the area was closed 150 days of the year, it would be impossible to conduct exploration or mining on the claims. If a mining operation did operate in this area, it would repeatedly be forced to suspend operations and evacuate workers which would be totally impractical. The Environmental Consequences section of the DEIS (Section 3.2) does not address this impact on mining. The proposal would preclude current mining and no new mining operations would be possible on this state land. This should have been assessed in Section 3.2.10.3.1.

**5. Restricted airspace corridors for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) must not extend lower than 3,000 feet AGL.** The DEIS proposes to establish corridors where non-military aircraft would be prohibited (Restricted Airspace) when they are being used for UAVs. Several of these corridors bisect, and therefore would block, corridors commonly used by small aircraft, such as a corridor between Eielson AFB and the Tanana Flats Training Area (R-2211), Fort Wainwright to R-2211, and from R-2205 (Yukon Training Area) to R-2202 (Donnelly Training Area), all of which cross both the Richardson Highway and the Tanana River southeast of Fairbanks. The Corridors from Fort Wainwright to the Yukon Training Area (R-2205) and from R-2211 to R-2202 would also impact small aircraft traveling east and southeast of Fairbanks. According to Table 2-15, the corridors would be used approximately 238 days annually (2/3 of the year) and generally between 7 AM and 7 PM, Monday through Friday. The corridors are proposed to be 5 or 8 miles wide and from 1,200 feet AGL to 17,999 feet MSL.

These corridors would directly impact mining operations such as flights from Fairbanks to the Pogo Mine and flights from Fairbanks to the Fortymile Mining District. These Restricted Areas, when active, could result in very lengthy detours, at a minimum adding significant time and costs, and in marginal weather, creating a safety hazard by forcing pilots to deviate significantly from the most direct routes and often to fly over more remote areas and higher terrain to reach their destinations.

**6. The Governor of Alaska, the Alaska Congressional Delegation and the Millennium Safety Foundation should be petitioned to get the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to formally define "see and avoid".** A definition for what is meant by this term would eliminate the need for Restrictive airspace corridors for UAV operations. This is clearly the simplest solution for this problem.

**7. Establish a 3,000 feet AGL base for the expansion of R-2205 (Yukon Training Area).** This proposed expansion would establish restricted airspace from Eielson AFB to the existing restricted area R-2205 that overlies part of the Yukon Training Area. This alone would be a major problem, even if the UAV corridors were not established. The cumulative impact of the expansion of R-2205 and the proposed UAV corridors would be to restrict aircraft from traveling up and down the Tanana Valley.

**8. The restricted area proposed between the training area and Fort Greeley must have a base of on not lower than 3,000 feet AGL.** General aviation must have the ability to fly the road system from the Glennallen north through the Delta Junction area and on to Fairbanks without

**N0030**

encountering a restricted area. Inclement weather is often present in this area, especially between Glennallen and Delta Junction and not allow pilots to fly this route is guaranteed to result in the deaths of many Alaskans when they must fly other more dangerous routes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue. The Alaska Miners Association supports our military (a large percentage of our members are military veterans) and recognizes the need for realistic training but this training can be accomplished as we have recommended without compromising the limited areas of this state that are still open to mineral development.

Sincerely,



Deantha Crockett  
Executive Director

Cc: Senator Lisa Murkowski  
Senator Mark Begich  
Congressman Don Young  
Governor Sean Parnell

**N0031**

Submittal ID	Commenter	Title	Organization	Topic List	Comment
N0031	Rodney Arno	Executive Director	Alaska Outdoor Council	General (to the EIS), Subsistence, 1 - Fox 3 Military Operations Area (MOA) Expansion and New Paxon MOA	<p>ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL and Alaska Fish &amp; Wildlife Conservation Fund 310 K Street, Suite 200 Anchorage, Alaska 99501 (907) 264-6645 aoc@alaskaoutdoorcouncil.com</p> <p>July 9, 2012</p> <p>Lt. General Stephen L. Hoog Commander, Alaska Command 9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 110 JBER, AK 99506-2101</p> <p>SUBJECT: Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) Modernization and Enhancement DRAFT Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)</p> <p>RE: Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) comments on (JPARC) Modernization and Enhancement (DEIS) Dear</p> <p>Lt. General Hoog:</p> <p>As Executive Director of the Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) I have reviewed the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) Modernization and Enhancement DRAFT Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and attended a number of public and an individual meeting hosted by very knowledgeable JPARC staff. The Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) is a statewide organization made up of individual members and clubs that hunt, trap, fish, and recreate outdoors primarily on public lands and waters. AOC represents over 10,000 Alaskans in the regulatory process regarding access to public lands, waters, and renewable resources that they depend on. AOC, and its parent organizations, has advocated for equal access by the public to public resources in Alaska since before Alaskan Statehood was approved by the US Congress and signed into law. In the past AOC has worked cooperatively with the military regarding access within and over Military Operation Areas and weapons transfer across military lands. During the JPARC DEIS public process, AOC found the military staff involved with this project to be genuinely interested in informing the public. The willingness to extend the original comment period deadline is an example of how JPARC was making sure all Alaskans who may feel they could be impacted by the expansion of military training operations could have their concerns addressed. AOC thanks you for the extra time to comments and the additional information we received on the DEIS.</p>

**N0031**

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AOC offers the following comments regarding Subsistence Resources as they relate to proposed action #1. Fox 3 MOA Expansion and New Paxson MOA:

- The DEIS violates Title VIII of ANILCA by using race as a factor to determine dependence of federally qualified communities who hunt, trap, fish, and gather vegetation within the Fox 3 MOA and newly proposed Paxson MOA. The history of ANILCA clearly states a position of race neutrality regarding a priority to public resources. An evaluation of possible restrictions on subsistence uses by all federally qualified communities is required by ANILCA 810(a), not just the villages selected in Table 3-24.
- The DEIS fails to consider adverse impacts on subsistence uses of thousands of Alaskans (average 3,500 licensed hunters annually) who qualify under AS 16.05.258 as subsistence users on State and private lands in the Fox 3 MOA (GMU 13B - 1,428,519 acres of State land, 28,917 acres of private lands. GMU 13A - 2,519,061 acres of State land, 152,282 acres of private land) and newly proposed Paxson MOA (788,082 acres of State land, 330,927 acres of private lands). State and private lands are by far the major land owners under the Fox 3 MOA and proposed Paxson MOA.
- The DEIS fails to report Alaskan resident hunter participation in GMU 13. 5,015 hunters reported hunting moose in GMU 13 in 2010. 4,887 hunters reported hunting Nelchina caribou in 2010, ADF&G harvest data. The population of individual Alaskans living in subsistence communities in the vicinity of the proposed expansion of MOA (Table 3-24, JPARC DEIS) total 1,506 Alaskan residents. The final ROD on the JPARC Modernization and Enhancement should account for impacts to all subsistence users under both federal, ANILCA Title VIII and State subsistence laws, AS 16.05.258, not just the 1,506 subsistence users listed in JPARC DEIS Table 3-24. AOC offers the following comments regarding Biological Resources as they relate to proposed action #1. Fox 3 MOA Expansion and New Paxson MOA:



**N0031**

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• Biological resources are currently being managed for an abundant harvestable surplus of moose and caribou by ADF&G. The availability of moose and caribou directly impacts thousands of Alaskan families who choose to make gathering a wildfood harvest part of their sustenance. Fox 3 MOA and the proposed expansion plus the newly created Paxson MOA is airspace over one of the few areas in Alaska where predator/prey management under State law, AS 16.05.255(e) – (g), can be successfully conducted. The final ROD on the JPARC Modernization and Enhancement proposed action #1, Fox 3 MOA Expansion and New Paxson MOA should take into consideration the fact that biological resource enhancement programs are not allowed by federal land managers in the vicinity of the proposed action. Federal land managers continue to reduce the areas where the State may conduct predator/prey management, which makes any adverse impact on biological resources where the state can still manage for abundant harvest that much more of value to Alaskans.

The expansion of Fox 3 MOA and the addition of the proposed Paxson MOA in combination with the lowering of the AGL down to 500 feet has the potential to negatively impact a large number of Alaskans who hunt, trap, fish, and recreate via snowmachine, ATV, boat, or aircraft throughout the year in the proposed area. AOC does not want to see folk's use of public resources on public lands underlying this proposed action diminished by proposed military activities. AOC strongly supports the militaries presents in Alaska and hopes to work toward continuing our public access to lands under MOAs.

Sincerely,

Rod Arno Executive Director, Alaska Outdoor Council (907) 841-6849

**N0032**

ALCOM Public Affairs  
9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 120  
JBER, AK 99506

July 3, 2012

Dear Madam or Sir:

The Fairbanks International Airport Operators Council (AOC) is comprised of managers, directors, and owners of businesses and organizations conducting business at Fairbanks International Airport and in the Fairbanks aviation community. The AOC consortium includes representatives from airline and regional air carriers, ground handling services, commuter and air taxi services, local tour companies and advocates for interests in the private aviation community. We have participated in the JPARC public meetings held in Fairbanks, and based on our analysis of the Draft EIS document, would like to comments concerning the proposals.

Economic impact of the airport on Fairbanks and Fairbanks North Star Borough is significant. As second busiest passenger airport in the state, the airport serves as a hub for more than 50 communities in northern Alaska, with an estimated expenditure of \$261 million annually in wages, capital and operating expenses. It is an economic engine for the community and the state, resulting in over 2,000 jobs, primarily in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, according to a State of Alaska study conducted by Northern Economics. The ability to maintain, or grow this engine, is directly impacted by the ability of air traffic to reach the airport thorough surrounding airspace. Given this back ground, several proposed changes to airspace described in the JPARC Draft EIS are of concern.

**IFR Access to MOAs**

The FAA is working to expand and enhance the IFR infrastructure in Alaska. GPS based IFR routes are being developed, and access to rural communities is being enhanced with the addition of WAAS approaches. We have already seen impacts with the recent implementation of the Delta MOAs, which block V-444 between Fairbanks, Delta Junction and communities to the south and east. Additions to MOA airspace, specifically by the proposed Paxson MOA, would further limit IFR access, when active. This is directly in conflict with the efforts to improve safety and access thorough expanding IFR infrastructure. It is essential to develop procedures between the FAA and the military, to provide real-time IFR access to MOAs, at least for limited flight altitudes, to assure routine IFR access between Fairbanks and the surrounding communities. This not only impacts the air taxi or small commuter operators that provide service, but it also impacts the larger air carriers that those commuter flights need to connect with to efficiently move passengers and cargo to more distant locations inside and outside the state. No additional MOA airspace should be established without provisions for real-time IFR access.

**N0032****UAV Corridors**

The JPARC proposes establishment of corridors for UAV access to restricted areas south and east of Fairbanks, including the use of Restricted Airspace to establish these corridors. Restricting airspace across important civil traffic corridors (including IFR airways), has a direct negative impact on access to Fairbanks International Airport. Other means that do not include segregated airspace must be found that do not restrict access, or compromise safety, with civil aviation arriving or departing from Fairbanks International Airport.

**Restricted Areas**

Several proposals seek to add restricted airspace south and east of Fairbanks. The Realistic Live Ordinance Delivery has an alternative that would link the existing Restricted Areas 2211 and 2202, forming a barrier to civil traffic headed into the Alaska Range from Fairbanks, Delta Junction and the Richardson Highway corridor. We opposed restricting that access to mining, hunting and recreational areas in the Alaska Range. Similarly, the proposal to establish restricted airspace over the Battle Area Complex near Delta Junction also impacts access to Isabel Pass, a major civil aviation corridor between the interior and south central Alaska. Restricting access to these areas again has an impact as many of these flights either depart from or arrive at Fairbanks International Airport.

**F-16 Relocation**

Not addressed in the JPARC Draft EIS is the recently proposed relocation of the F-16 aircraft based at Eielson to Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER). This change would undoubtedly impact the already very busy airspace in the Anchorage area, including Anchorage International Airport. Fairbanks and Anchorage airports are part of a system. We would like to see an analysis of this proposal, to understand the potential impacts of the planned F-16 move on the JPARC proposals.

We recognize the value of military training, and understand these activities can have a positive impact on the Fairbanks area. Our interest is in working with the military and FAA to identify mitigations that allow this training to continue, without negatively impacting the activities at Fairbanks International Airport.

Sincerely,



Cory Christian, President  
FAI Airport Operators Council



JPARC Page 2



**N0033**



June 7, 2012

ALCOM Public Affairs

9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 120

JBER, AK 99506

To Whom it May Concern,

Ahtna Incorporated is supportive of the military's effort to enhance and upgrade the military's technological capabilities and weaponry for combat preparation. We appreciate and honor all of the servicemen and women who serve our country. Our Ahtna People have and continue to proudly serve in the military. We are proud of our armed forces, and indebted to them. Unfortunately, Ahtna Incorporated has some concerns with the preliminary JPARC Environmental Impact Statement.

**Section 3.1.9 Cultural Resources page 3-53:** In Appendix B Definition of the Resources and Regulatory Setting, section B.9 the definition is given as follows: Cultural resources are prehistoric and historic sites, buildings, districts, or objects that are important to a culture or community for scientific, traditional, religious or other purposes. Cultural resources are generally divided into six categories: archeological resources, architectural resources, traditional cultural properties, cultural landscapes, National Historic Landmarks, and National Monuments.

Traditional cultural properties are properties, sites, or other resources associated with the cultural practices and beliefs of a living community that link the community to the past and help maintain its cultural identity and are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register. Traditional cultural resources are areas associated with the cultural practices and beliefs of a living community that link the community to its past and help maintain its cultural identity that have not been evaluated for National Register eligibility. Sacred sites are well-known areas associated with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community. Most traditional cultural properties, resources, or sacred sites in Alaska are associated with Alaska Natives. Traditional cultural properties or resources can include archeological resources, locations of prehistoric or historic events, sacred areas, sources of raw materials used in manufacture of tools and sacred objects, certain plants, or traditional hunting and gathering areas. Both historic properties and significant traditional resources identified by Alaska Natives are evaluated for potential adverse impacts of action.

On page 3-50, under the title Traditional Cultural Properties and Alaska Native Concern, there is the following statement: **There are no Alaska Native tribes within this area**, but there





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are scattered remote residences. **There are no properties of traditional religious and cultural importance known to be located within the area. This needs to be corrected.**

Ahtna Incorporated is one of the 13 Alaskan regional Native corporations. The Ahtna traditional territory stretches from Cantwell across the Alaska Range through Paxson to the Mentasta Mountains. The territory continues south through the Susitna River headwaters to the Chugiak Mountains, east to the Wrangell Mountains, and west to the Talkeetna Mountains. The territory encompasses the entire length to the Copper River from the headwaters to Woods Canyon south of Chitina (Attachment A). The Ahtna people have used and occupied this land for 5000 to 7000 years (USDA –NRCS 1999). **Department of Defense Instruction number 4710.02 Enclosure 2 section E2.1 states “As tribal boundaries have shifted and tribes have migrated, tribes that seem far removed geographically may have a traditional interest in assets and action at specific, present day installations.”** The entire proposed Fox 3 MOA expansion lies entirely within the Ahtna people’s traditional territory. The majority of the proposed Paxson MOA lies within this territory as well (Kari 2010).

Ahtna Incorporated is comprised of eight villages: Cantwell, Chistochina, Chitina, Copper Center, Gakona, Gulkana, Mentasta and Tazlina. Each of these villages has a village council which is recognized as its own tribe by the United States government. Each of these villages was contacted by letter, by the United States Air force through the Alaska Command (ALCOM) concerning the JPARC proposal. The ALCOM has also had two meetings with Ahtna Incorporated in regards to the JPARC proposal.

**Paragraph 4 section 3.1.9.31 Environmental Consequences Alternative A** states: In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), ALCOM, on behalf of the Air Force, has completed consultation with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and determined that no historic properties will be affected by implementation of the proposed action. Consultation with potentially affected Alaska Native tribes, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANSCA) corporations, and Tribal government entities regarding ALCOM’s finding of no historic properties affected is ongoing. In accordance with AFI 32-7065, all NHPA Section 106 consultation will be completed, unless circumstances prevent it, prior to finalizing the EIS and signing the ROD. **By your own words and actions in this section you acknowledge the Ahtna tribes in the region.**

Under ANSCA section 14 (h) (1) Regional Native Corporations have the right to receive title from the federal government to existing cemetery sites and historical places. Currently, Ahtna has on file with BLM ten applications for 14 (h) (1) sites within the Fox 3 MOA expansion area. All ten sites have been examined by a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) archeologist and each site received a Certificate of Eligibility. Ahtna Incorporated hopes the protection of the Tangle Lakes Archeological District (VanderHock 2011) is also taken into account. It appears to be a logical conclusion that air traffic and sonic booms should not have a significant impact on these sites. **The fact remains that these sites need to be acknowledged in your report.**

**Section 3.1.8 Biological Resources page 3-38:** Under section 3.1.8.1 Affected Environment, the vegetation cover is described as: shrub communities of willow (*salix* spp.), birch (*Betula* spp.), and alder (*Alnus* spp.) occupy lower slopes and valley bottoms. Forests are rare and

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confined to low-elevation drainages (Nowacki 1995). The Copper River Basin ecoregion, which underlies the southwestern portion of the expanded Fox 3 MOA and proposed Paxson MOA, is a large wetland complex underlain by thin to moderate thick permafrost and pockmarked with thaw lakes and ponds. A mix of low shrubs and black spruce (*Picea mariana*) forests and woodlands grows in the wet organic soils. Cottonwood (*Populus* spp.), willow, and alder line rivers and streams as they braid or meander across the basin.

The paper cited in this paragraph by Nowacki is not listed in your references. A Google search of the authors name provided contact information at the USDA Forest Service. Personal correspondence with Mr. Nowacki revealed that the paper cited was an earlier version of an effort to map the ecosystems of Alaska. The newest version was published in 2003. It is a combined effort of the National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and Alaska Biological Research, Inc.

According to this paper, the Fox 3 MOA, the Fox 3 MOA expansion, and the proposed Paxson MOA lie within the Alaska Range Transitional Division (Spencer *et al*, 2003). The description given of this area is "boreal forests distributed in the valleys and lowlands of the division, but wildfire and permafrost have much influence on vegetation. Soils in the mountainous units of the Alaska Range and Lime Hills are generally thin, rocky, and cold, with scattered pockets of permafrost. The Copper Basin floor is formed of interleaved lacustrine deposits, glacial material, and volcanic debris that form fine-grained saturated soils with ice-rich permafrost. The basin support Boreal vegetation patterns, with white spruce and birch on higher ground and black spruce, low shrubs, sedges and mosses growing in wetlands. White spruce and balsam poplar form successional stands along the rivers. The lower slopes of the Talkeetna Mountains are cover with dense thickets of alder that transition to low shrubs in the sub-alpine and blueberry rich alpine tundra. Vegetation of all types succumbs to the harsh conditions at about 4000 feet, leaving the higher area to bare rock, talus (broken loose bedrock), and ice."

The soil surveys for the Copper River area, the Gulkana River describe the cover type as boreal forest. Species composition in boreal forest is determined by wildfire frequency. Wildfire frequency, intensity, and distribution create a mosaic of species across the landscape (USDA 1991). The Soils of the Gulkana Area list 47 different forest cover types (Clark and Kautz 1999). The Soils of the Copper River Area list five forest cover types: black spruce, white spruce-quaking aspen, white spruce-paper birch, white spruce-quaking aspen-balsam poplar, and white spruce-black spruce (USDA 1999). White spruce, aspen, and balsam poplar grow on soils with no permafrost (National Park Service 2012). **The area of the Fox 3 MOA expansion and the new Paxson MOA is an incredibly rich and varied ecosystem and not just black spruce and wetlands. This ecosystem supports Ahtna's year round subsistence resources.**

Boreal forests are a wildfire ecosystem. The largest wildfires in acreage are cause by lightning strikes, while most small acreage fires are human caused. Wildfires create a mosaic of vegetation types across the landscape of different stages of succession (Johnson *et al*. 2001). Fuel moisture and fuel load are the two largest factors determining fire intensity (Ross *et al*. 2001). The boreal forest contained in the proposed Fox 3 MOA expansion and Paxson MOA are particularly prone to intense wildfires. In the 1990's there was an intense spruce beetle, *Dendroctonus rufipennus*, infestation. Several million acres of spruce trees were killed in this



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decade long outbreak. The Copper River Basin was one of the areas heavily impacted by this infestation. There are still many tens of thousands of beetle killed, standing dead trees within the Copper River Basin (USDA 1997). These standing dead trees are susceptible to torching, where the fire quickly travels up the stem of the tree to the crown. If the wind is blowing the fire can quickly spread to neighboring live trees (USDA 2001).

Much of the proposed areas have forest cover types of 1) white spruce, *Picea glauca*, 2) mixed white spruce/ black spruce, *Picea mariana*, and 3) black spruce cover type (USDA 1999). These forest types are especially vulnerable to wildfire. This is because of the low moisture content of the leaves compared to deciduous tree, and the presence of dead retained lower branches that is conducive to torching. Black spruce is particularly highly flammable (Chapin *et al.* 2008).

Finally, heavy wildfire suppression since the 1950 has resulted to excessive fuel loads in the boreal forest. Fire suppression has increased landscape flammability. This is of particular concern because of climate shift in the last decade due to global warming. This volatility is of great concern around local communities (Chapin *et al.* 2008).

The use of the Chaff & Flare defensive flares over the boreal forest is a great concern to Ahtna Incorporated. In **Chapter 3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequence** it is stated that 1) there will be altitude restrictions of 5000 feet AGL from June through September, and 2000 feet AGL for the rest of the year. 2) It also states that the defensive flare is composed of small pellets of highly flammable material that burn rapidly at extremely high temperatures. It burns completely within approximately 3.5 seconds, or approximately 400 to 500 feet from the release point. **There are no independent studies to measure the chance of igniting a wildfire in this highly flammable landscape. What measures will the Air force take to ensure that a wild fire will not be ignited? What measures will the Air Force take if they do ignite a wildfire? Who will be responsible for putting the wildfire out? State and Federal agencies will not suppress fires in areas with possible live ordinance present. One of the papers in your references section (Air Force 1997) Use of flares will be suspended when warranted by the fire condition code. Who determines the fire conditions?**

In the **environmental consequences section 3.1.8.3.1** there is a discussion on chaff and flare use. It says "extensive studies of chaff particles and defensive flare constituents have found no negative impacts on biological resources. There is nothing cited here. You can't make a statement like that and not back it up. A study was located in the references (Air Force 1997). The Air Force study says that fire danger assessment will be addressed by using BEHAVE, a predictive fire model. Then the paper goes on to say "Although the study examined fire history data from various locations for correlations between level of flare use, method of flare employment, environmental conditions, and fire occurrence, no correlation could be derived at a statistically valid level." **In short, the Air Force has no idea how chaff and flare will affect the probability of starting a wild fire. There are no independent studies of chaff and flare devices cited.**

**The Environmental Effects of Self-Protection Chaff and Flare Final Report states "information from range personnel and investigative reports for specific fires indicates that fire**

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from flares have occurred, even in areas where minimum release altitude is 5000 feet AGL. Specifically, one fire in Meadow Valley, which burned 21,600 acres in 1993, was attributed to flare use according to a BLM fire investigator."

The Alaska Interagency Fire Management plan (1987) provides for a natural fire regime in unit 13 for the purpose of wildlife habitat enhancement. This plan provides for small scale fires in the area. Caribou will not return to a burn area for 50 years. It is important to create a mosaic of landscape types for optimum wildlife habitat (Schwanke 2010). Ahtna Incorporated feels that the possibility of chaff & flare cause wild fires will disrupt this management plan. The Air Force's own report supports the fact that chaff and flare can trigger large acreage fires.

**Section 3.1.8.1 Continued.** The EIS acknowledges the fact that "caribou habitat underlies most of the airspace, with summer range and calving habitat underlying the central and western parts of the airspace and winter habitat under both the eastern and western portions." **This is not just "caribou habitat". This is the Nelchina Caribou Herd range.**

The Nelchina Caribou herd (NCH) population fluctuates between 35,000 to 40,000 animals. It has a migratory range that stretches from north of Tok on the Eagle highway to their calving grounds north of Eureka and west of Lake Louise. After the calving season they disperse throughout Unit 13, and conversely throughout most of the proposed Fox 3 MOA expansion, and the proposed Paxson MOA. This is the most road and off road vehicle accessible caribou herd in Alaska. People from Kenai, Soldotna, Anchorage, Wasilla, Palmer, Chickaloon, Sutton, Eureka, Mendeltna, Tolsona, Glenallen, Valdez, Chitina, McCarthy, Copper Center, Tazlina, Glennallen, Gulkana, Gakona, Sourdough, Paxson, Delta, Chistochina, Mentasta, Tok, Tetlin, Dot Lake, Healy Lake and Tanacross depend on this herd for sustenance (Alaska Division of Fish & Game (ADFG), 2008). Harvest records from 1998 to 2010 show an average of 3,023 animals are harvested from this herd annually. There are four years that the harvest was between 4,500 and 5,800 caribou harvested (Schwanke, 2010). ADFG manages the herd to supply from 2000 to 4000 animals a year (ADFG 2008). **In 1997 there were 13,612 hunters registered for the Tier 1 hunt of the NCH. In 1996 there were 19,397 registered hunters (Fall & Simeone 2010). Though these numbers reflect the peak number of hunters since 1990, they do demonstrate the intense hunting pressures the NCH is under.**

The NCH has been intensely managed by ADFG since the 1950's. The management objective is to maintain the herd population from 35,000 to 40,000 animals. The ratio between bull to cow management objective is 40 bulls to 100 cows. The tools that ADFG use to manage for these objectives are 1) annual population counts by fixed wing aircraft and helicopter, 2) an active wolf control program, and 3) harvest quotas from several state and federal hunts, and the Ahtna Community Hunt (ADFG 2008). Limiting the flights into game unit 13 will reduce the ability to accurately assess population numbers of the NCH. **This will lower the available caribou for annual harvest, as ADFG will have to be more conservative in order to ensure management objectives (Schwanke 2012).**

**Section 3.1.8.3.1 Environmental Consequences Alternative A:** In this section it is stated that: Wildlife species would be exposed to over flight by military aircraft flying as low as 500 feet above ground level (AGL), potentially causing altered behavior or metabolic effects. Additionally,



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high speed maneuvers within the proposed air space would create sonic booms, and training would incorporate use of chaff & flares, as defensive measures. Behavioral responses to over flights of 500 feet AGL and above are generally characterized for wildlife species, including various ungulate species, as minor and include individuals assuming an alert posture, rising, walking, or running short distances. Few studies have evaluated the effect of military over flights on moose; several have studied the effect on caribou.”

The paper cited as to behavioral responses to over flights (Lawler *et al.* 2005) only studies the short term effect on caribou by over flights and sonic booms of A-10, F-15, and F-16 aircraft. **There is no study cited about over flights and sonic booms of the F-22 and F-35 aircrafts.** Additionally, another paper cited about the short term effects on caribou (Manci *et al.* 1988) states that “escape and strong panic reactions were observed in 65 to 75% of all groups to over flights of fixed wing aircraft up to 500 feet AGL. Groups consisting primarily of cows, calves and yearlings tended to show a stronger response to the aircraft than groups of bulls.” The paper goes on to state that **“Little is known of the long term effect of noise on the physiology of wild ungulates.”**

Other studies have been undertaken to understand caribou responses to human disturbances. Wolfe *et al.* in 2000 reports that **“individuals and groups of caribou move away from point sources of disturbance, increase activity and energy expenditure near disturbance, and shift away from areas of extensive and intensive development.”** Cameron *et al.* in 1992 report that **caribou herds on the North Slope of Alaska shifted their calving grounds in response to oil field development.** Initially the caribou chose to calf near the coast where predators were few. As development increased they shifted the calving ground away from the development. The area the caribou now calf in has increased predation pressure on the calves. Whitten 2001 reported to the House Committee on Resources that **caribou calving areas are considered to be critical habitats.** Oil development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was halted because the primary area sought for development lay within the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou herd. **“This large, migratory herd moves between the U.S. and Canada and is vital to the traditional subsistence cultures of numerous Native villages in both countries.”** ADFG 2008 reported that the Delta Caribou herd moved their calving grounds from north of the Alaska Range (pre-Fox 3 MOA) to south of the Alaska Range (post-Fox 3 MOA). **“No information was found in the literature describing startle effects of chaff on wildlife” (Air Force 1997).**

Discussion of the noise levels created by the sonic booms is addressed in Section 3.1.2.3.1 **Noise Environment Consequences Alternative A:** All subdivisions of the proposed Fox 3 MOA as well as the new Paxson MOA would have an established minimum flight altitude at 500 feet AGL. Subsonic aircraft noise levels beneath the Paxson MOA/ATCCAA would increase from 37 to 54 dB Ldnmr. Noise levels beneath all subunits of the expanded Fox 3 MOA would increase from 39 dB Ldnmr to 54 dB Ldnmr. Air craft would fly at lower altitudes as a result of “floor: altitude decrease. Decreasing altitudes would result in increased individual over flight noise events.”

The definition of what dB Ldnmr is lacking in this draft EIS. Consulting the Eglin Air Force Base EIS (Appendix E Noise) gives this definition: **Onset-rate Adjusted Monthly Day-Night Average Sound Level.** This average decibel calculation is worthless when taking into account 500 foot AGL over flights with accompanying sonic booms. Caribou do not care about averages. The

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in the moment experience is what will cause the startle reaction in caribou. An F-15 aircraft creates a sonic boom of 3.92 pounds per square foot and 139.6 decibels at 100 feet AGL (Hamby 2004). An internet search of various blog sites from around Air Force bases deploying F-35s say that its sonic boom is much, much louder than an F-15. They all ask the same question: What is the decibel level of the sonic boom for an F-22 and F-35? The Air Force has not published what the sonic boom decibel level for F-22 and F-35 aircraft is. **Ahtna Incorporated would like to know what the decibel levels of the sonic booms created by these aircraft at 500 feet AGL, at 1000 feet AGL, at 2000 feet AGL, and at 5000 feet AGL.**

**Section 3.1.13.2 Subsistence Impact Assessment Methodology:** Your assessment methodology is inadequate in at least 3 ways. **First, limiting the subsistence analysis to the eight communities within 20 nautical miles of the MOAs does not accurately represent patterns of resource use and distribution in the Nelchina Basin/Copper Basin area.** Many communities beyond those addressed in the analysis rely on resources in the impacted areas and consequently will be negatively impacted by the proposed actions. Resources are spread across the landscape, and local residents go to where the resources are. Sometimes that means driving substantial distances in order to put food on the table and fill the freezer. The analysis should be expanded to incorporate the Alaska Board of Game Findings (Attachment B) along with those communities with a positive Customary and Traditional (C & T) use determination under the Federal Subsistence Program for moose, caribou or both on lands within the proposed Fox 3 expansion and Paxson MOA as discussed in the EIS. Both the Board of Game Findings and the C & T determinations are based on analysis of all available data regarding patterns of resource use, and provide a more realistic basis for identifying impacted communities than the 20 nautical mile rule.

**Second, 20-plus year old community harvest data is woefully inadequate for making decisions that affect people's livelihoods.** For example, in the 1980s, when many of those studies were done, Copper Basin residents could harvest caribou in Unit 11. That area is now closed to the harvest of caribou, due to conservation concerns. There is increased reliance on caribou hunting opportunities in Unit 13, which underlies the proposed Fox 3MOA expansion and Paxson MOA. To people familiar with this data, the "most representative year" referred to in the analysis is identifiable as the most recent year for which a comprehensive subsistence survey data are available. JPARC should follow the lead of the Alaska Gas Line Pipeline Project and base its analysis on updated comprehensive community subsistence data, providing funding to support updated surveys as needed.

As a first step, the list of potentially affected communities (as discussed above) should be examined in terms of when the most recent comprehensive harvest survey took place and whether an update is scheduled in the next year or two. For those potentially affected communities that are five or more years out from the most recent update and are not on the list for an update, funding should go to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game Subsistence Division, or a similarly qualified independent organization to collect this information. **A decision on the project should be delayed until up to date subsistence information for the potentially affected communities can be incorporated into the subsistence impact assessment.**

**Third, limiting the communities with high dependence on subsistence to only those with a majority (>50%) Alaska Native population fails to recognize patterns of residence by the Ahtna**



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people in the Copper Basin communities, or the importance of subsistence to other local residents. While it is appropriate for predominantly Alaska Native communities to fall in the “high dependence” category, there are other rural communities in the area that should also be classified as such. Indeed, some of the Ahtna villages with federally recognized tribal governments were excluded from the “high dependence” category because the percentage of Alaska Native residents, while significant, does not reach the 50% level. Once up to date information is obtained regarding harvest and use of subsistence resources (as described in the previous paragraph), this question should be revisited for all potentially affected communities. **Communities in which 80% or more of households reporting using subsistence resources should be classified as “high dependence” regardless of community composition.**

ADFG Board of Game Findings #2006-170-BOG has established Ahtna’s Customary and Traditional Use rights in Game Management 13 for Moose and Caribou regardless of village affiliation or proximity to a money economy. Customary and Tradition uses of moose and caribou in Game Management Units 11, 12, and 13 are administered the ADFG Community Hunt (Attachments C & D). **This entire section needs to be re-examined using the correct sources for your assessment.**

Although the ANILCA section 810 analysis is mentioned, it is not completed. Issues that need to be addressed are 1) The effect of use, occupancy, or disposition on subsistence uses and needs, 2) The availability of other lands for the purpose sought to be achieved, 3) Cumulative effects resulting in reductions in the availability of resources used in subsistence purposes, caused by alteration of their normal locations, migration, and distribution patterns. Please refer to comments on sections 3.1.8.3.1 and 3.1.2.3.1 when completing the 810 analysis. A new section that systematically analyses the impact of the proposed actions regarding the expanded Fox 3 MOA & Paxson MOA on subsistence resources needs to be added to the EIS.

Ahtna Incorporated feels strongly that the proposed Fox 3 MOA expansion and proposed new Paxson MOA would have adverse effects on our Customary and Traditional Subsistence uses in these areas. Ahtna feels the proposed mitigation measures in the EIS are inadequate.

**Government to Government Consultation: Executive Order (EO) 13175 November 9, 2000:** There several mandates in this EO that have not been adequately addressed.

- 1) Section 1 Definitions (a): ‘Policies that have tribal implications’ refers to regulations, legislative comments or proposed legislation, and other policy statements or actions **that have substantial direct effects on one or more Indian Tribes.**
- 2) Section 1 Definitions (b): ‘Indian Tribe’ means an Indian of Alaska Native Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian tribe pursuant to the **Federally Recognized Tribe List Act of 1994. 25 U.S.C. 479a.**
- 3) Section 2 Fundamental Principles (a): The United States has a unique legal relationship **with Indian tribe governments as set forth in the Constitution or the United States, treaties, statutes, Executive Orders, and court decisions. Since the formation of the Union, the United States has recognized Indian Tribes as domestic dependent nations**

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under its protection. The Federal Government has enacted numerous statutes and promulgated regulations that establish a trust relationship with Indian tribes.

- 4) Section 2 Fundamental Principles (b): **Indian tribes exercise inherent sovereign powers over their member and territories.**
- 5) Section 3 Policy Making Criteria (a): **Agencies shall respect Indian tribal self-government and sovereignty, honor tribal treaty and other rights; and strive to meet responsibilities that arise from the unique legal relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribal governments.**
- 6) Section 5 Consultation (a): **Each agency shall have an accountable process to ensure meaningful and timely input by tribal officials in the development of regulatory policies that have tribal implications.**
- 7) Section 5 Consultation (b)(2)(B): To the extent practicable and permitted by law, no agency shall promulgate any regulation that has tribal implications and that preempts tribal law unless the agency, prior to formal promulgation of the regulation,
  - a. **consulted with tribal officials early in the process of developing the proposed regulation.**
  - b. **In a separately identified portion of the preamble to the regulation as it is to be issued in the Federal Register, provides the Director of the OMB a tribal summary impact statement, which consists of a description of the extent of the agencies prior consultation with tribal officials, a summary of the nature of their concerns and the agency's position supporting the need to issue the regulation, and a statement of the extent to which the concerns of the tribal officials have been met.**

To date, the only contact from the Department of Defense to the tribes of Cantwell, Chistochina, Chitina, Copper Center, Gakona, Gulkana, Mentasta and Tazlina has been a form letter to only some of these tribes. There were also two meetings with Ahtna Incorporated. The first meeting was approximately forty five minutes long. The second meeting was approximately one and a half hours in length. **Ahtna Incorporated feels that there is a long way to go in meeting the obligations set forth in Executive Order 13175 in regards to Government to Government Consultation. Where is the tribal summary impact statement?**

**Department of Defense Instruction Number 4710.02 DoD Interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes:** There are several instructions set forth in this document that Ahtna Incorporated believes have not been adequately addressed.

- 1) Section 6.1 Procedures: The DoD Components shall consult with tribes whenever proposing an action **that may have the potential to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights or tribal lands.**
- 2) Section 6.3 Procedures: Consultation required by paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 shall apply to proposed actions **that may have the potential to significantly affect tribes, including, but not limited to: land disturbing activities, construction, training, over-flights, management of properties of traditional religious and cultural importance, protection of sacred sites from vandalism and other damage, access to sacred sites, access to treaty**



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reserved resources, disposition of cultural items in accordance with reference (k), and land use decisions.

- 3) Section 6.4 Procedures: The DoD Components shall afford tribes that have a cultural or historical affiliation with the lands encompassed by the installation an opportunity to consult on the development of the Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP), and where tribal treaty rights or other rights to natural resources potentially may be affected, Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans (INRMPs).
- 4) The DoD Components shall involve tribal governments early in the planning process for proposed actions that may have the potential to affect protected tribal rights, land, or resources, and shall endeavor to complete consultations prior to implementation of the proposed action. Early involvement means that the tribal government is given an opportunity to comment on a proposed action in time for the tribal government to provide meaningful comments that may affect the decision. Installations should take advantage of the processes put forth in 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 to involve tribes in early planning.

**Where is the INRMP?** A form letter to some of the affected tribes, and two short meetings with the Regional Native Corporation does not constitute Government to Government consultation.

In summary, Ahtna cannot support the proposed Fox 3 MOA expansion and proposed Paxson MOA for both alternative A and B. **Ahtna Incorporated can only support the No Action Alternative.** Ahtna Incorporated feels that there was a minimal amount of effort put towards the completion of this EIS.

- 1) The areas encompassed by the proposed action contain the traditional territories of the Ahtna Peoples.
- 2) This area is an incredibly rich ecosystem that supports the year round Customary and Traditional use of subsistence resources.
- 3) There are no studies completed concerning the possibility of wild fire ignition by the use of chaff and flare.
- 4) There is no plan in place to deal with a wildfire ignited by chaff & flare.
- 5) Caribou will not return to a burned area for 50 years.
- 6) The areas contained in the proposed Fox 3 MOA expansion and the proposed Paxson MOA contain the summer and fall ranges of the Nelchina Caribou Herd (NCH). This includes the calving ground of the NCH. Calving grounds are considered critical habitat. Ahtna feels that the Air Force has not dealt with this issue adequately.
- 7) The literature cited in this EIS concerning the effect of caribou to over flights, sonic booms, and chaff and flare deployment is lacking and incomplete. Ahtna feels that only literature supporting the proposed action is cited. The Air Force has reported that there is no literature on the effects of chaff & flare on wildlife. A complete literature review needs to be included in this EIS. Several studies of other caribou herds in Alaska show that caribou will choose avoidance when faced with development or human interaction. Ahtna feels the NCH will also choose avoidance in response to the proposed action. This will severely impact the Customary and Traditional Subsistence uses in these areas.

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- 8) The NCH already faces incredible hunting pressure. ADFG has intensely managed this herd for over 50 years to provide an annual harvest of up to 3000 animals. Air space restrictions will inhibit ADFG's ability to accurately assess herd populations. This will result in smaller harvest quotas, as ADFG will have to be more conservative to meet management objectives.
- 9) Startle response of caribou has been discussed. The decibel of the sonic boom of the F-22 and F-35 has not been discussed. The averaging of day and night sound levels is not adequate to describe what the caribou will experience when the F-22s and F-35s fly over them at 500 feet AGL. Ahtna specifically wants to know what the sonic boom decibel level will be at 500 feet AGL, 1000 feet AGL, 2000 feet AGL and 5000 feet AGL for all aircraft type proposed to use this airspace.
- 10) The extensive studies of chaff particles and defensive flare constituents need to be disclosed. The studies were mentioned in the EIS but nothing was cited. Only one paper was in the reference section.
- 11) The Subsistence Assessment Section needs to be totally rewritten using relevant source documents, specifically the ADFG Board of Game Findings #2006-170 BOG. The Federal Subsistence Program customary and traditional use determinations, and ADFG BOG Findings #2006-170-BOG have already set the criteria for subsistence uses in the Copper River Basin. The Air Force has no right to create their own criteria, and then state that there will be no substantial impact to subsistence uses.
- 12) An 810 analysis has not been completed. . Issues that need to be addressed are 1) The effect of use, occupancy, or disposition on subsistence uses and needs, 2) The availability of other lands for the purpose sought to be achieved, 3) Cumulative effects resulting in reductions in the availability of resources used in subsistence purposes, caused by alteration of their normal locations, migration, and distribution patterns.
- 13) Ahtna Incorporated feels the Air Force has not completed their obligation of Government to Government consultation in this matter as mandated by Executive Order 13175 and the Department of Defense Instruction number 4710.02. Ahtna also feels that the two meetings with Ahtna will be used to show that they accomplished this obligation. Ahtna Incorporated is the Regional Native Corporation, not a tribal entity. The Air Force needs to implement face to face meetings with all eight Ahtna villages to satisfy this obligation. Sending a form letter, and stating there was no reply, does not satisfy the obligations.
- 14) There is no Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan as required by Department of Defense Instruction number 4710.02.

Ahtna Incorporated feels that there are not enough studies done on long term effects of over flights, sonic booms, and chaff & flare deployment to ensure that unfavorable impact to subsistence uses in the Ahtna Region does not occur. The Air Force has not included other areas in Alaska where the proposed maneuvers can take place in the EIS. Ahtna Incorporated feels that these maneuvers should be done somewhere else where the impacts can be studied long term. Only after long term studies can be accessed could Ahtna Incorporated approve of these new and expanded MOAs.

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Thank You,



Kathryn Martin

Vice President of Land & Resources

Ahtna Incorporated

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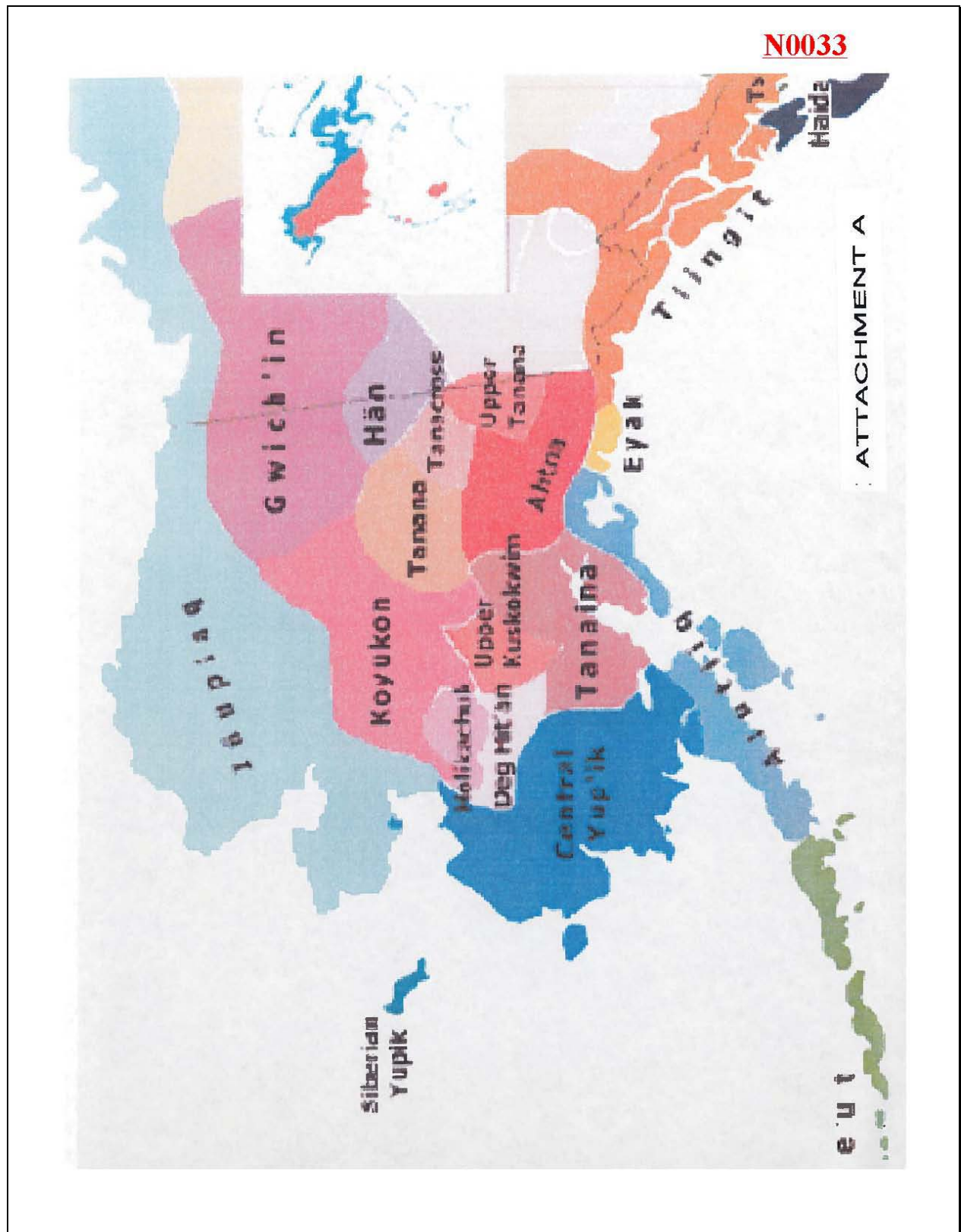
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**N0033****ATTACHMENT B****Findings for the Alaska Board of Game  
#2006 – 170 - BOG****Game Management Unit 13  
Caribou and Moose Subsistence Uses****Background**

Virtually since its inception, the Tier II subsistence permit system has been plagued with public complaints about inequities, unfairness, and false applications. Over the years, the Alaska Board of Game (Board) has amended its regulations numerous times to try to address management and legal problems, but the controversy continues and the system remains rife with problems. Public complaints have been primarily directed at the Tier II permitting system—particularly those near urban areas like the Minto moose hunt and the Nelchina Tier II caribou hunt.

The Board has primarily focused on the Nelchina basin caribou and moose hunts because these have generated the vast majority of the interest and complaints from the general public. In addition, Board members are concerned the hunting patterns no longer meet the Board's intent when these subsistence hunts were originally established in regulation. A review of these hunts question whether the current hunts are consistent with the Board's customary and traditional use findings based on the eight criteria the Joint Boards of Fish and Game established (5 AAC 99.010) for implementing the state subsistence law (AS 16.05.258(a)).

Statistics associated with the Nelchina caribou hunt illustrate some troubling trends. Permits have been slowly shifting away from local Alaskan residents the Board identified as the most dependent on the wildlife resources in the region and towards less subsistence dependent urban residents. Testimony from some local residents of Unit 13 indicated they no longer participated in the state subsistence program. The present Tier II scoring and permit allocation system has made it more difficult for long-time, resource-dependent residents of the area to compete for permits, forcing them to rely more heavily on the federal system to provide for subsistence opportunities. The system also makes it almost impossible for area newcomers and younger Alaskans to ever qualify for the limited permits despite their subsistence dependence on wildlife resources for food. In addition, many of the traditions associated with a subsistence way of life are being sidestepped and avoided, such as the traditional teaching of the art of hunting, fishing and trapping to younger generations; and the processing, utilization, and other long-term social and cultural relationships to the resources being harvested and to the land that produces those resources.

The Board's long-term goal is to design a system to accommodate subsistence-dependent users in such a manner that permits can be virtually guaranteed from year to year. The reliability of available hunting opportunities is critical to the maintenance of the subsistence way of life. This could be similar and complementary to the federal subsistence permit system. The federal program allows any Alaska resident living in the Copper Basin and several communities outside



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of GMU 13 to harvest two caribou and one moose per year, there is no limit per household except in Unit 13(E) for moose, harvest of caribou by gender is also generally unrestricted in units 13(A) and 13(B), and moose hunters may only take any antlered bull under the federal system.

Bag limits may not be accumulated across both state and federal systems, so hunters can take a total of only one moose and two caribou for the year. State regulations allow all Alaskan residents to harvest a bull moose with spike-fork or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 brow tines on at least one side from September 1 – 20. In addition, up to 150 Tier II permits are issued for any bull moose, August 15 – 31, with only one permit being allowed per household. The moose seasons for federally qualified users on federally-managed lands are much longer from August 1 – September 20.

Under the state system, all caribou permits are issued under Tier II regulations and were limited to 3 per household. The Board recently changed the limit to 2 per household. The bag limit is one caribou, although in recent years, harvest under state regulation has been limited to bulls only. The caribou season for federally qualified users on federal land is 10 days longer in the fall, ending September 30 rather than September 20.

State regulations do not jeopardize a qualified federal subsistence hunter from hunting under a federal permit. However, if there are too many state applicants, controlling statutes mandate that permits be issued under the Tier II criteria, with all of its attendant problems.

The Board intends to explore subsistence hunt provisions that reflect and accommodate the customary and traditional use patterns of Nelchina caribou and moose in Game Management Unit (GMU) 13, while distinguishing those uses from other uses.

In accordance with the Joint Boards of Fisheries and Game eight criteria for implementing the state subsistence law, the following findings are made:

#### **Findings**

When the Board originally determined there were customary and traditional uses of the Nelchina Caribou Herd and moose in GMU 13, it recognized these subsistence uses were established by Ahtna Athabascan communities within the Copper River basin, and were later adopted by other Alaska residents. Due to the importance of, and high level of competition for subsistence permits in this area, the Board has undertaken, as precisely as possible, the task to identify the particular characteristics of these customary and traditional use patterns. Although they have changed over time due to limited access associated with demographic, economic, and technological factors, the patterns are characterized by traditional fall and winter hunting seasons, efficient methods and means, thorough use of most of the harvested animal, harvest areas traditionally associated with local communities, traditions about harvesting and uses that are passed between generations orally and through practice, and reliance on other subsistence resources from within these same traditional harvest areas

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**Criterion 1. A long-term consistent pattern of noncommercial taking, use, and reliance on the fish stock or game population that has been established over a reasonable period of time of not less than one generation, excluding interruption by circumstances beyond the user's control, such as unavailability of the fish or game caused by migratory patterns.**

This criterion presupposes that an identifiable, consistent "pattern" of noncommercial taking, use, and reliance is characteristic of subsistence use. The Board finds, even though there are many similarities among all users of the moose and caribou resources in the area, there continue to be identifiable distinctions, constituting a unique pattern of subsistence use, that is traceable in direct line back to the original Ahtna Athabascan and later non-native customary and traditional use.

The Board has concluded that the pattern of moose and caribou subsistence use for this region was originally defined by the Ahtna Athabascan residents and then adopted and modified by other local settlers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This pattern of use was established over many generations and focused on the total aggregate of fish, wildlife, and plant resources locally available to the area residents.

The greatest dependency on subsistence resources occurred prior to the completion of the existing road system in the 1940s. After about 1950, historical use patterns changed rapidly, especially with the introduction of more mechanized access methods. The mobility of the subsistence and non-subsistence users, the availability of seasonal and part-time employment, increased human populations, increasing competition for wildlife resources, and fluctuating game populations (particularly moose and caribou) caused major shifts in subsistence dependency of people within and adjacent to the region. Nevertheless, aspects of the traditional Ahtna Athabascan use pattern are present today, but subsistence-dependent families engaged in that pattern now account for a smaller percentage of all users than a half-century ago.

Most of the long-term subsistence patterns in this area are community-based. The area's communities tend to be long-established, by Alaskan standards, and the residents of these communities tend to be long-term residents, descending from multi-generational families with long ties to the area. These communities tend to exhibit a use of local resources that stretches back to well before Euroamerican contact. In contrast, the use pattern based out of nearby urban areas tends to involve much more recently established communities, a high degree of turnover among residents, short-term residency and, generally, a relatively brief history of use.

**Criterion 2. A pattern of taking or use recurring in specific seasons of each year.**

Local communities established a tradition of hunting caribou, moose, and other big game species in the late summer and early fall following subsistence fishing, and again hunting in the winter as fresh meat was needed and game was available. Winter hunts have always been critical to subsistence users, as very few other subsistence resources are available during this time. This need for, and use of, winter hunting opportunities is different from use patterns developed by residents of Alaska's more developed and urban areas, where almost all big game hunting takes place exclusively in the fall and is controlled largely by regulations. Thus, as late as 1984, over 60% of the caribou harvest taken by local residents was taken during the winter. Recent changes in that pattern can be largely attributed to regulatory changes, competition from non-local



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hunters and shifting migratory patterns of the caribou herd. The seasonal use pattern was based on the traditional Ahtna seasonal movements and the general availability of game. For example, the fall hunt traditionally followed the salmon harvest, whereas the winter hunt took place whenever meat was needed and game was available.

**Criterion 3. A pattern of taking or use consisting of methods and means of harvest that are characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost.**

Before the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Ahtna Athabascan hunters tended to rely on boat access along the area's major waterways in fall, on foot along established trails, and by dog team along winter trails after freeze-up. With the opening up of the Nelchina basin to highway access, and the introduction of off-road vehicles, snowmachines, four-wheelers, and other transportation innovations, a shift in the use pattern occurred. Now, local residents tend to utilize roads as hunting corridors in place of rivers in the fall, and use snowmachines to access the backcountry in winter. Recently, expensive off-road vehicles have been purchased and used by many non-local users and a few more affluent local residents in an attempt to compete with non-local hunters and to increase their opportunity for success. The use of all terrain vehicles may create their own hunting efficiencies as hunting effort and transportation take advantage of labor-saving devices. Hunting methods have changed over the last 75 years. Automobiles, snowmachines, and less expensive all terrain vehicles may make hunting more effective because local and non-local residents can now cover larger areas when hunting caribou or moose. Local hunters can, when animals are available, make relatively short trips that fit into a contemporary work schedule. On the other hand, the use of highway, off-road, and similar vehicles has promoted more frequent short trips with considerable transportation costs for depreciation, fuel, and maintenance. What are being lost are the multi-resource harvest efficiencies associated with long subsistence-oriented summer and fall camping trips traditionally engaged in by Ahtna communities. Thus, recent transportation improvements and fuel prices may have changed traditional subsistence activities to the point where it is unlikely that there is a positive cost/benefit (from an economic standpoint) associated with some of the hunting techniques, especially in cases involving the use of expensive recreational motor vehicles. Overall, the use of some motorized vehicles such as ATVs has blurred the distinction between true customary and traditional patterns and recreational activities.

Residents of local communities—those with the longest histories of use of moose and caribou in the region—have traditionally traveled shorter distances to hunt than do non-local participants; and generally utilize less technology in doing so. Most Ahtna elders testified they still prefer to walk in to hunting areas and maintain permanent camps, whenever possible, in accordance with longstanding means and methods. On the other hand, most non-local users must travel at least 125 miles just to get to the area and have tended to be reliant on all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), aircraft and other expensive off-road and recreational vehicles.

As late as 1984, Copper Basin residents utilized only highway vehicles for hunting access over 65% of the time. It is the Board's conclusion that many of these newer technologies have been adopted based on a perceived need to compete with technologically-oriented recreational hunters from Alaska's urban areas. This may be a direct effect of the 1984 regulations.



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Historically, much of the taking of caribou, moose, and small game was done as part of a seasonal round of subsistence activities throughout defined areas used by the community. Family dependence on these resources required a commitment of considerable time and effort to accumulate adequate subsistence resources to meet annual protein requirements and other customary and traditional uses.

Another example of subsistence efficiency in the customary and traditional use pattern has been that specialized hunters tend to provide for the community at large, sometimes or often taking more than necessary for their own family's use in their capacities as community providers, and to fulfill social and cultural obligations. Community subsistence activities are then divided among members and further introduced into traditional patterns of barter and exchange. Thus, some harvest and others process, distribute, receive and utilize the results of the harvest. Each member of the community has a defined role and specialty.

A third example of subsistence efficiency, historically, has been the effort to keep hunting as close to home as reasonably possible, minimizing cost and effort necessary to obtain the wild food resources needed by families and communities. The Board believes that, if competition among users can be reduced, this efficiency is likely to be easier for subsistence users to realize.

In these community efforts, special emphasis has been placed on allowing the maximum opportunity to harvest as many animals and the widest variety of useable species as efficiently as possible. Emphasis was also placed on food gathering activities and other traditions associated with Ahtna Athabascan communities.

**Criterion 4. The area in which the noncommercial long-term, and consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance upon the fish stock or game population has been established.**

The Board is examining the area where the subsistence hunting of big and small game occurred prior to the significant change in uses and activities that occurred after approximately 1950 in Game Management Unit 13.

Subsistence uses involve an intimate and exclusive relationship between the user and a very particular set of places generally in close proximity to the hunter's residence. The user is tied to the land. Other types of uses do not exhibit these close, long-term, multi-generational ties to a particular locality. Even as late as 1981, hunters from Copper Basin communities did not report traveling out of the basin to hunt, while urban-based hunters named alternative areas if they could not hunt Nelchina caribou and moose. Testimony from Ahtna elders emphasized their reliance on local fish and game, and their reluctance, for practical and cultural reasons, to travel outside of their traditional areas for subsistence purposes. Likewise, they described the longstanding family and community use histories and patterns for such areas. Consistently, lifelong residents of the local areas did not share the attitude of utilizing other areas. When Nelchina caribou were not available to them they either added emphasis on moose, and/or use of the Mentasta caribou herd. Resident lake fish species and small game were other alternatives commonly mentioned as alternative and supplemental wild food resources. Families in the range of the Nelchina caribou who harvested little or no wild game mentioned receiving donated meat as an alternative. This differs markedly from the use patterns found in Alaska's urban areas,

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where traveling to, and exploring, new game country is deemed a virtue and an essential part of many outdoor experiences.

The Ahtna pattern exhibits a familiarity with terrain and landscape including the associated history of the region transmitted through oral traditions and Ahtna geographic placenames.

**Criterion 5. A means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing fish or game that has been traditionally used by past generations, but not excluding recent technological advances where appropriate.**

The traditional pattern has been to salvage and use all parts of the harvested animal, in conformance with traditions prohibiting waste. Lifelong residents of the Copper Basin testified they still practice their traditional methods of harvest by retrieving the entire carcass and all bones, hide, head, heart, liver, kidneys, stomach, and fat. Only the antlers were often left behind. This also differs from patterns based out of urban areas, where hunters tend to focus on the meat and antlers, usually leaving most organs, bones, and the hide in the field.

Ahtna elders also emphasized that preparation and storage are viewed as essential components of their overall use. Women traditionally look forward to practicing their roles as preparers and preservers of harvested game every bit as much as men looking forward to harvesting and providing the game. These traditions and roles are passed on by older relatives to younger family members through in-the-field training and a system of *engi* (rules of appropriate behavior or taboos) that teach traditional means of harvest, handling, and preparation. These “engiis” emphasize traditional Ahtna views of the human place within the natural world and a respectful treatment of animals.

**Criterion 6. A pattern of taking or use that includes the handing down of knowledge of fishing or hunting skills, values, and lore from generation to generation.**

The Board has concluded that the subsistence traditions of handing down the hunting and fishing knowledge, values and skills through family oriented experiences are an important aspect of the subsistence way of life in this region. Providing the opportunities for the young and old to participate in subsistence activities is critical to the perpetuation of traditional knowledge about hunting locations, hunting methods, methods of handling harvests, and respectful treatment of wildlife. To increase hunting opportunities for youth, a recent provision adopted by the Board allows a resident hunter between the ages of 10 and 17 to hunt on behalf of a resident permit holder. The youth hunter must have completed a certified Basic Hunter Education course and be in direct supervision of the permit holder, who is responsible for ensuring all legal requirements are met.

Ahtna elders have passed this knowledge on to the next generation in the context of community-based traditions that included relatively long summer and fall camping trips described above. As mentioned previously, teaching roles and lessons tend to be more formalized through the system of “engiis” than is the case for uses based out of the urban areas. Skills emphasized included not only those needed to harvest each species, but also the art of field preparation and care for a wide



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variety of species and the utilization, preparation, and distribution of game. Most local users learned how to hunt in the local area from other family members in the local area. Most older, local users have also taught other family members. On the other hand, most non-local users learn about hunting in the area by personal experience or from fellow non-local, unrelated hunters. Also, non-local users tend to be controlled primarily by applicable statutes and regulations rather than long-term oral traditions and community-based values.

The Board considers it extremely important to stress the need to pass on skills and knowledge associated with utilization of all parts of the animal taken, as well as preservation of the traditional, cultural rules and family values associated with these subsistence users in this area. Field skills need to be perpetuated for handling not only the meat but the hides, internal organs, stomach, and intestines. This is consistent with the customary practice of maximizing the use of animals taken characteristic of subsistence uses.

**Criterion 7. A pattern of taking, use, and reliance where the harvest effort or products of that harvest are distributed or shared, including customary trade, barter, and gift-giving.**

Widespread community-wide sharing is customary in local communities, involving all family members, elders, others in need, and taking place in formal settings such as during ceremonial potlatches. As such, sharing has associated social, cultural, and economic roles in the community. Sharing is expected and follows well-understood community standards that are structured on kinship relations and obligations. As an example, young hunters are required by Athabaskan tradition to give all or most of their first harvested animal to elders and others in need. Also, traditional barter and exchange follow these standards. Successful Ahtna harvesters traditionally share some of their moose and caribou meat with other families and communities to meet their social obligations and for ceremonial purposes. This, again, is in contrast to the uses arising out of the urban areas where hunters are completely free to share, or not share, as they see fit and there is not a system of sharing, barter, and exchange. In addition to the key social and cultural roles of sharing in the local rural community, sharing of subsistence resources plays a key economic role in distributing essential food supplies throughout the community. The Board has concluded it is imperative to accommodate the customary and traditional family and community harvest sharing practices as part of the subsistence way of life to the maximum extent possible.

Use of the state authorized proxy system has provided a limited opportunity for individuals to harvest for permittees who are personally incapable of participating in the field but who have a personal history of subsistence use. Proxy hunters are not required to fully accommodate the customary and traditional practices. Non-local users, on the other hand, tend to have few established rules or traditions requiring sharing, and seldom share outside of their own households. External sharing, when it occurs, is usually with friends and co-workers, and extensive kinship networks are absent. There are no non-local traditions of community-wide meat distribution.



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**Criterion 8. A pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes upon a wide diversity of the fish and game resources and that provides substantial economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements of the subsistence way of life.**

The Board has concluded it is critical to emphasize the values associated with the reliance and dependence on a wide variety of fish and wildlife resources as an important element of the subsistence way of life for this region. Subsistence use patterns historically required a significant dedication of time and effort towards the harvesting of adequate fish and game resources to meet the protein and nutritional requirements of the subsistence harvesters, their families, and their communities.

This differs markedly from the more recreational type of uses arising out of the Alaska's more urban areas, where a single, focused effort to harvest only one resource in any given location, and then salvage only what is legally required from that resource, tends to be a predominant characteristic. To the extent that other foodstuffs are harvested, they are often harvested in completely separate areas, far removed from the fall hunting area. Also, different hunting areas are explored in different years. This separation of the interconnected diversity of resource uses also seriously undermines the principles reflected in Criterion 3. As more and more emphasis is placed on single species harvesting patterns, cost is increased, and efficiency is reduced. Such practices do not reflect the customary and traditional use pattern.

Reliance on most, or all, locally available sources of wild food is characteristic of a traditional subsistence way of life where maximum economic and nutritional benefits typically must be derived from the hunt and harvests. The local harvest of salmon has historically been the most important wildlife resource in terms of useable pounds per subsistence-dependent family in Unit 13. Alaska residents are allowed to use a fish wheel in the Copper River between Slana and the Copper River bridge at Chitina to harvest salmon—permits are issued free of charge. The limit is 500 total salmon for a household with two or more members and 200 for a household with one member, with no limit on the number of Chinook salmon in the total harvest by fish wheel. The salmon run in the Copper River is primarily comprised of sockeye and Chinook salmon.

Use of moose and caribou by local communities is embedded in a wide range of other fish and wildlife uses. It is also embedded in a mixed, subsistence-cash economy characterized by seasonal employment and relatively low cash incomes. A wide variety of subsistence foods are still critically important in these local economies. Almost all hunting, fishing, and gathering takes place locally and the majority of meat and fish consumed tends to come from local sources.

Big game species are taken for food and not for their trophy value by families engaged in subsistence uses. The Board may undertake efforts to reduce or eliminate the trophy values of the resources taken to focus entirely on the inherent subsistence values.

Vote: 6/0  
November 12, 2006  
Anchorage, Alaska

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Ron Somerville, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Game

**N0033****ATTACHMENT C**

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**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**  
**Copper Basin MOOSE**  
**Community Subsistence Harvest Permit**  
**PROGRAM 2012-2013**

**HUNT ADMINISTRATION**

Community Subsistence Harvest (CSH) Hunt administration will be in accordance with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's statutory and regulatory authority, including managing this common use resource for sustained yield while adhering to laws regarding the subsistence preference passed by the Alaska State Legislature.

**COPPER BASIN MOOSE CSH PERMIT**

According to regulations found at 5 AAC 92.072 *Community Subsistence Harvest Hunt Area* and at 5 AAC 92.052 *Discretionary Permit Hunt Conditions and Procedures*, ADF&G may issue community-based subsistence harvest permits for big game species where the Alaska Board of Game has established a community harvest hunt area. The board established the Gulkana, Cantwell, Chistochina, Gakona, Mentasta, Tazlina, Chitina, and Kluti-Kaah (Copper Center) Community Harvest Area for moose and caribou in 2009 (5 AAC 92.074(d) *Community Subsistence Harvest Areas*), hereafter referred to as the Copper Basin CSH area.

The CSH permit program allows communities or groups of 25 or more to apply annually for a CSH permit for an established CSH area. A group can choose to apply for a Copper Basin moose CSH permit, a Copper Basin caribou CSH permit, or both. These groups may select, from their group members, individual harvesters who may possess particular expertise in hunting to harvest wildlife resources on behalf of the community or group.

The hunt conditions in this Copper Basin Moose CSH permit program are made for the purposes of notifying the community/group of users of how to use the moose in a manner consistent with the customary and traditional use pattern described in the board's 2006 and 2011 findings *Game Management Unit 13 Caribou and Moose Subsistence Uses* (2006-170-BOG and 2011-184-BOG), as well as to ensure an orderly administration of the CSH permit program and hunt (CM300).

A community or group may possess only one (1) Copper Basin Moose CSH permit at any given time and group members may subscribe to only one (1) Copper Basin Moose CSH group per regulatory year. The Copper Basin Moose CSH permit expires at the end of the regulatory year for which it was issued. Renewal of a Copper Basin Moose CSH permit is the responsibility of the community or group coordinator.

**APPLICATION PROCESS****THE COMMUNITY OR GROUP COORDINATOR**

In addition to permit hunt conditions and procedures found in 5 AAC 92.050 and 5 AAC 92.072, the community or group applying for a Copper Basin Moose CSH permit must designate a coordinator as part of the application process. The coordinator certifies that the information presented in a Copper Basin Moose CSH permit application is true and correct to the best of the coordinator's ability; monitors and reports on compliance with the conditions of a Copper Basin Moose CSH permit; and serves as the primary point of contact, among other duties. ADF&G will issue one (1) Copper Basin Community Moose Harvest Permit to each coordinator.

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For 2012-2013, the group application period will be November 1 – December 31, 2011. Group Applications must be postmarked by December 31 and received by January 15. Groups will not be formally approved until:

- 1) at least 25 eligible group members have applied (including the group coordinator), and
- 2) all moose CSH permit reporting requirements from the previous regulatory year have been met (not applicable to first-time CSH groups).

Once Group Applications have been submitted, individual/household Participant Applications will be accepted through July 1, 2012 by 5 p.m. (AST). Participant Applications must be submitted to a group coordinator for approval. Group coordinators must then submit approved Participant Applications to ADF&G; applications must be postmarked by June 15 and received by July 1. Incomplete applications will be void per 5 AAC 92.050 *Required Permit Hunt Conditions and Procedures*. Send completed applications to your local ADF&G office, or to the Anchorage ADF&G office (see "For More Information," below).

There is no limit to the number of communities or groups that may apply for a Copper Basin Moose CSH permit and there is no limit to the number of participants who may subscribe to a community or group, except that there must be 25 or more verified members in each group.

#### **INDIVIDUALS/HOUSEHOLDS**

Each household must submit one (1) completed Participant Application to a group coordinator for approval. All members of the household age 10 and up must be listed on the application and are subject to all CSH hunt eligibility requirements and conditions. The coordinator must ensure that group members understand the terms and conditions of the CSH permit hunt. Group coordinators may submit approved Participant Applications to ADF&G through July 1.

A "household" means that group of people domiciled in the same residence per 5 AAC 92.990 (23) *Definitions*.

By submitting a completed Participant Application, all household members are certifying they have read, understand, and will comply with the hunt conditions as well as the applicable Board of Game findings (*Game Management Unit 13 Caribou and Moose Subsistence Uses*).

ADF&G will issue one (1) Copper Basin CSH moose harvest ticket/report to each household member listed on the application (the bag limit is 1 bull / person; see "Open Seasons, Bag Limits, and Antler Restrictions," below).

Hunters must abide by all applicable state hunting regulations and statute requirements including licensing, hunter education, and reporting requirements. Similar to other state hunts, CSH harvest ticket numbers must appear on the back of the hunter's license, CSH harvest tickets must be carried in the field while hunting, they must be validated immediately upon killing an animal and before leaving the kill site, and must remain in the hunter's possession until the animal has been delivered to the location of processing for human consumption.

Copper Basin CSH harvest reports must be mailed or delivered to ADF&G within 5 days of taking the bag limit, or within 15 days of the close of the final season, even if the hunter did not hunt or did not take an animal. Hunters may also report online.

#### **PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY**

All household members subscribing to the Copper Basin Moose CSH hunt must meet the following eligibility requirements. The requirements apply to the same regulatory year as the CSH Participant Application (2012-2013).

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no collective limit to the number of moose meeting general season antler restrictions (see below) that can be taken under the Copper Basin Moose CSH permit.

The bag limit is one (1) bull moose per person in Unit 11 and 13 and one (1) bull moose with spike/fork, or 50" antlers, or 4 or more brow tines in the open portion of Unit 12, unless modified by ADF&G emergency order.

If the number of "any-bulls" reported taken for any one geographic area reaches or exceeds established conservation limits (announced prior to hunting season), the area will remain open to CSH hunters, although the bag limit will change by emergency order to reflect the general season antler restriction for the area.

The Copper Basin Moose CSH hunt season dates and general season antler restrictions are listed below:

Area	CSH Season Dates	General Season Antler Restrictions
Unit 11	August 10–September 20	Spike/fork, or 50" antlers, or 3 or more brow tines.
Unit 13	August 10–September 20	Spike/fork, or 50" antlers, or 4 or more brow tines.
Portion of Unit 12	August 24–August 28 and September 8–September 17	Spike/fork, or 50" antlers, or 4 or more brow tines.

### **DESIGNATED HUNTERS**

The CSH program allows a community or group to designate members (from within the group) who may possess particular expertise in hunting to harvest wildlife resources on behalf of the members of the community or group. To take a moose on behalf of another CSH harvest ticket holder (beneficiary), a hunter must carry both the beneficiary's and their own CSH moose harvest ticket in the field while hunting. The harvested moose must be delivered to the beneficiary. The beneficiary is responsible for all reporting requirements.

### **HUNT TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Customary and traditional uses of Unit 13 moose are thoroughly described in 2006-170-BOG and 2011-184-BOG. The Board of Game found that the subsistence pattern in the Copper Basin is characterized by thorough use of most of the harvested animal. Therefore, all participants in the Copper Basin Moose CSH hunt must salvage for human consumption:

1. All edible meat from the frontquarters, hindquarters, ribs, neck, and backbone, as well as the head, heart, liver, kidneys, stomach, and hide; and
2. Meat of the head, frontquarters, hindquarters, and ribs must remain naturally attached to the bones until delivered to the place where it is processed for human consumption.

The board also found that the subsistence pattern is characterized by meaningful communal sharing. At least one communal sharing event featuring moose harvested under the terms of a Copper Basin CSH hunt must be held. A complete description of the event (date, location, number of participants, amount of meat shared, and so forth) must be included in the final hunt report, to be submitted by the group / community coordinator.

### **CUSTOMARY AND TRADITIONAL USE PATTERN**

The edible products of moose taken under the terms of a Copper Basin Moose CSH hunt must be used for human consumption and may not be sold or offered for sale. In order to comply with 5 AAC 92.072 (c) (1) (F), the department must ensure that the applicable customary and traditional use patterns described in board findings are observed by subscribers, including meat sharing. Subscribers need not have already

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established the pattern of community use summarized below; however, by applying, subscribers will be certifying that they have read, understood, and will voluntarily attempt to participate in and establish the pattern of subsistence use described in the Unit 13 board findings summarized below:

1. Participation in the consistent pattern of noncommercial taking, use, and reliance on Nelchina caribou, Copper Basin moose and other local wild foods. The existing pattern of use has been established over many generations and is focused on the total aggregate of fish, wildlife, and plant resources in the Copper Basin CSH area.
2. Participation in the pattern of taking or use of wild resources from the Copper Basin CSH area that follows a seasonal use pattern of year-round harvest effort in the area, with harvests of moose and caribou by community members in both the fall and winter hunts, when legally permissible.
3. Participation in the pattern of taking or use of wild resources in the Copper Basin CSH area that includes methods and means of harvest characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost, especially taking advantage of the maximum opportunity to harvest, as efficiently as possible, a variety of usable species in the Copper Basin CSH area.
4. Participation in the pattern of taking or use of wild resources that occurs in the Copper Basin CSH area due to close ties to the area and a familiarity with the terrain and associated history of the Copper Basin CSH area.
5. Use of means of processing and preserving wild resources from the Copper Basin CSH area that have traditionally been used by past generations, including use of all of the parts required to be removed from the field under the terms of a Copper Basin Moose CSH permit.
6. Participation in the pattern of taking or use of wild resources from the Copper Basin CSH area that includes the handing down of knowledge of hunting skills, values, and lore about the Copper Basin CSH area from generation to generation. The board considered it critical to the perpetuation of the customary and traditional use pattern to provide opportunities for the young and old to participate in subsistence activities; the board also found it extremely important to stress the need to pass on skills and knowledge associated with use of all parts of the harvested animal.
7. Participation in the pattern of taking wild resources from the Copper Basin CSH area in which the harvest is shared throughout the community, including customary trade, barter, and gift-giving.  
  
In order to observe this pattern, a portion of the edible products of moose taken under the terms of a Copper Basin Moose CSH hunt should be primarily shared, in a meaningful way, with other members of the community or group. Hunters should also demonstrate a pattern of meaningful communal sharing that provides first for the needs of the community or group elders and disabled, as identified by the community or group. In addition, hunters who have harvested their first moose should give a portion to other members of the community or group.
8. Participation in the pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes not only on Nelchina caribou and moose, but also on a wide variety of wild resources in the Copper Basin area.

## REPORTING

Harvest ticket holders must mail or deliver Copper Basin CSH harvest reports to ADF&G within 5 days of taking the bag limit, or within 15 days of the close of the season, even if the hunter did not hunt or did not take an animal. Hunters may also report online.

Failure to report may jeopardize sustained yield management of Copper Basin moose and the future of the CSH hunt; therefore, failure to report according to this schedule may result in citation and/or placement of harvest ticket holders on the state Failure to Report (FTR) list.

To better address the subsistence needs of Copper Basin Moose CSH participants, the board requested that all moose harvested by CSH participants within the CSH area be accounted for, regardless of whether

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