

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Volume Fourteen Issue Four

July & August 2005

Two Dollars

McCarthy Visitor Information Station reopens

NPS responds to community request to provide information service



Ranger Diane Thorn (above) welcomes visitors to the McCarthy area. At the request of McCarthy community members, the “kiosk” will be staffed 8 hours a day, 7 days a week this summer.

NPS maintenance crews cleared brush in front of the kiosk area (left) so that motorists can see the facility from the McCarthy Road. Additional brushing and better signs are also planned.

A free shuttle service from the kiosk area (as well as other parking lots along the McCarthy Road) to the footbridge will operate during the month of July.

Close encounter with a mad mama!

“Suddenly, my shotgun was knocked from my hand and I fell to the ground. In that moment of horror, I realized that I had made a grave mistake...” (Story on page 6)



A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

Summer in McCarthy is well underway and locals are beginning to experience the benefits of longer daylight hours – our gardens are blossoming and salads are now the norm! As I sit at my desk and look outside the office window, I can view my own garden. It has really taken off the last few days. The only downside is that it tends to distract me from my assignments on the *WSEN*.

It is marvelous having my mom, Neta Schafer, visiting this summer. Because she missed coming up last year, we are trying to catch up on the new sights and sounds of McCarthy. Mail days come twice a week so we are making them our days for socializing. Ice cream at the McCarthy Lodge is usually on our agenda as well as a stop at the new coffee shop to check out JoAnn's homemade cookies and her specialty candy bars. It is always rewarding to see a neighbor at mail or downtown, too.

The communities of McCarthy and Kennicott celebrated the 4th of July (on the 3rd) with a parade, games, barbecues, music and fireworks. In spite of the rain, many

people turned out to participate in the festivities. Long-time resident Fran Gagnon was honored with "special guest" status for her many years of residence and contributions to our town and area. Because of the time crunch for this issue, we will not be covering the winners of the various games and raffles; however, I hope to do so in the next *WSEN*.

For our history buffs, you will be pleased to see an extra page of news from *The Chitina Leader* of 1913. I just couldn't seem to cut any of the items so Rick offered to give the article extra space. Thanks, Rick, for making my job easier!

Because there is immense interest in the draft access "guide" for park inholders, we are giving this important issue a fair amount of coverage. Much input from a variety of people and groups on this specific subject reveals the desire of all concerned to communicate as clearly as possible to the National Park Service how much access means to us all.

On a (very) sad note... in the early morning hours of July 4th, McCarthy/Kennicott residents learned of the tragic death of

James Sill of Kennicott. It is my desire to include an obituary in the September/October *WSEN*. James' most recent accomplishment was his role as Fire Chief of the Kennicott/McCarthy Volunteer Fire Department. He will be GREATLY missed by neighbors, friends and family! A funeral service will be held on Friday, July 8th at 2 pm at James' home in Kennicott. According to a family member, James will be buried on his property.

I'm sure you noticed our cover photo of the mama moose and her baby. These moose are not the actual ones that gave Susan Smith her "close encounter" you will want to read about on page 6. These particular animals came through our own yard several times recently. Just thought you would like to see what a mama and her little one looks like, especially if you are not privileged to live in our neck of the woods.

WSEN welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Ken Sletten, WA; C. Russell Lewis, TX; Robert Kelley, WI; George Lundquist, AK; Glenda and Jerry Bentz, MO; Jan and Jack Keller, WA; Judy Cook, MA.

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Jim and Peggy Guntis: The Guntis's arrived at their summer home here in the McCarthy area on June 9th. Shortly after, our local temperature rose to a blistering 82 degrees which must have felt like Tucson's 90 degrees. Jim and Peggy were here for a week unpacking their supplies and getting the house opened up, the creek's water lines running in the right direction and taking it easy before leaving again. This time it was a short trip to Anchorage and Homer to visit friends and daughter Kim. Once they return, Peggy will be out and about seeking those favorite recipes from the locals in the area for her next cooking column. I've been assured our weekly Rummikube/chess games will start again and Peggy and I will return to our summer gardening sessions. (Actually, what it boils down to is plain old weeding; a good way to burn off those extra calories, and catch up on family news!) Welcome back, Jim and Peggy.

The Keith Rowland family: While I'm welcoming back my neighbors, I want to say the same to Laurie Rowland. She recently returned from visiting her parents, Bob and Joyce Person in Willows, California. While there she attended a concert by a "world-renowned pianist" by the name of Katherine Harris who is her niece. It was a very special occasion for the Harris and Person families. Daughter Hannah traveled with her mother but remained with her grandparents for an extended visit. Father's Day this year was one Grandpa Person will remember (and Hannah, too) for years to come. He and Hannah did a duet at Sunday morning church service where Grandpa is also pastor – another very special occasion!

Speaking of Hannah reminds me to correct something I wrote in last issue's "item" concerning her. I realized after *WSEN* went to print that I had incorrectly told our readers that Hannah was 6 years old when, in fact, she is 8 and nearly 9. Now, that's a big difference! Well...because Hannah is an excellent reader, it didn't take her long to discover what I had done. Please accept my apologies, Hannah.

Keith and the boys always stay busy but usually it is running heavy equipment and operating their contracting business. Father's Day—after church—while the equipment rested for the day, the boys made good use of their hiking legs to climb up to the Erie Mine above Kennicott. They were joined by several other locals and had a grand time together.

John and Barbara Rice: The Rices arrived in McCarthy in May. They drove up from their winter home in St. Louis, Mo. Their summer "cottage," which is patterned after Kennicott's Silk Stocking cottages from the early 1900's, was well enough along for them to move in. John and Barbara are excited to be permanent summer residents of the area now.

Rick, mom and I were invited to dinner recently and we got a taste of Barbara's excellent cooking – something she loves to do. She promised to share some of her favorites with Peggy Guntis for inclusion in future cooking articles. I am looking forward to that!

John and Barbara have already received outside visitors from St. Louis – Glenda and Jerry Bentz, long-time friends, and are expecting Barbara's sister to arrive soon.

The Rices are both employed with the McCarthy Lodge this sum-

mer. You can find Barbara in the gift shop and John in the office.

Jim and Lindsay Kreblin: Father and daughter are staying more-than-busy this summer. This year is Lindsay's third summer working for Glacier View Campground. Thankfully, she is not having to commute daily from Long Lake as past years because she is able to live at her place of work. Jim is having to commute, however, since accepting a job for the Park Service. Recently someone asked Jim how he managed the lake when traveling to town. He commented: "I swam." The look on the questioner's face carried a stunned look. Of course, Jim didn't swim but he does use a boat during the summer months. According to Lindsay, her dad is still helping out at the Hotel Chitina.

Father's Day Jim and Lindsay planned on hiking up to the Erie Mine with several other locals, but due to an injured ankle, Jim declined. Instead, he and Lindsay spent the day at their Long Lake cabin doing laundry and playing a rousing game of scrabble. Although Lindsay had to return to work before the game ended, her recollection of who was winning was her, of course.

By the way, if you or your children are interested in swimming lessons, give Lindsay a call. She is planning on providing instruction at Long Lake sometime this summer.

Michelle Casey and daughter Tracey: Tracey stopped by the other day to make use of our internet services. She is working part-time this year for the Park Service under the Youth Conservation Corp program. If she is not in Kennecott greeting visitors, she can be found at the McCarthy Visitor Information Station. She took her mom out for lunch on

Father's Day treating her to an additional dessert. Because she was out-of-town on Mother's Day this year, she thought it only appropriate to spoil her mom on the next best family holiday.

Son Carl is visiting his dad, Larry Gressel, in Sweethome, Oregon, but is due back in our neck of the woods the end of July.

Don, Lynn, Rene, and Sarah Welty: Summer time is a busy season for the Welty family, says Lynn. Daughter Sarah is back home after spending a school year at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. She is working full-time as an interpretive Park Ranger giving history talks from the perspective of the Kennicott Kids.

Lynn is working part-time with the Park Service, as well. Don is flying for Wrangell Mountain Air again this year, trying to stay off the front page of this publication— not welcoming incidents like his bear encounter last September.

Daughter Rene is finishing up her school work but finding the time to continue her studies towards acquiring her pilot's license. According to Lynn, Rene is doing very well. She has soloed and completed her crosscountry flight to Chitina. She plans to travel to Cordova for the month of July to join her Aunt Carly on the Kritchen's salmon set net site.

Howard and Chris Haley: Chris stopped by today to give Rick a haircut as well as have him print up posters for her haircutting business. Be sure to look for her flyers at the mail shack, the McCarthy Lodge bulletin board and in Kennicott. She is also offering shampoos. Her plans are to offer her services once a week at the McCarthy Air office in downtown McCarthy. She will post her weekly flyers with the time she will be in town. You can call Chris for more information at 554-4496.

When Chris isn't cutting hair, she and Howard are busy at work

expanding their garden area, finishing up the living room addition in time for guests, Sue and Ed Slater (Troy's family), building a deck on the back of their house, felling trees, brush clearing and planning further projects such as Howard's shop. Whew! Just typing all the Haley's activities tired me out!

Chris's 13-year old nephew, Michael Harris, of Valdez is visiting the Haleys so is getting in on some of their outdoor projects. Chris is making sure Michael gets to try his hand at our local fishing holes – Long Lake for greyling and Scuplin Lake for trout. Leave it to Chris to always have her fishing pole handy.

Denise Jantz and Kathleen Heile: Do you remember the original "Roadside Potatohead" girls of several years back? That was when the Potato wagon (now located in downtown McCarthy under the ownership of Stephanie Piekert) was located near the footbridge on the west side of the Kennicott River.

Denise needed to purchase propane from Rick, and I was so delighted to see Kathleen again as it has been quite some time since our paths have crossed. Both ladies came by and visited us, giving me time to catch up on the happenings in each one's life.

Denise is enjoying her summer business, Swift Creek Cabins, for the tourist season. She plans on attending a pal's wedding next month in Girdwood. Some of our locals will remember Dana Ferrell, who is fixin' to tie the knot.

Kathleen is celebrating her 17-week pregnancy and is pleased to announce she is carrying a baby girl. She is married to Steve Heinle who is General Manager of the Copper River Princess Lodge in Copper Center. In the summers, she and Steve will make their home in Copper Center then return to Anchorage for the winter months. Kathleen has been teaching for 5 years now. Her latest assignment is 8th grade in

Mountain View. She says her kids are wonderful and she really enjoys her job. She plans, however, on taking some extra time off once the baby is born. That great event is expected some time around December the 2nd.

Trig Trigiano: Trig picked a great day to visit us, too. He arrived shortly before the ladies in the item above. Thankfully, he was able to assist Denise in a repair job on the tailgate of her truck. We ladies discovered that Trig often carries "treats" in the carry-all on the back of his 4-wheeler. Kathleen and I noticed Denise was "in the know" and was enjoying at least one treat in particular— chocolate. Needless to say, Kathleen and I made sure we didn't come up short. Before long, mom took notice and she appeared on the scene.

Trig is visiting his McCarthy area home for a few weeks with plans to have his house painted with primer, preparing the exterior for metal siding. A couple of locals – Michelle Casey and Lindsay Kreb- lin— are in line to give Trig a hand on the painting.

Speaking of preparations, Trig says he is preparing for his retirement from his position with the University of Alaska-Anchorage either next summer or by November 2006.

He seems to be staying more-than-busy chasing the bears away. There have been several sightings of 3 different grizzly bears in the west side neighborhood and staying alert is one thing Trig is apt to do this summer. Welcome back to the neighborhood, Trig!

More welcomes: I just can't end this portion of items without saying a big WELCOME to **Michele Hatfield** and son **Harley**, 11, of Illinois. They are in Kennicott visiting **Mike Monroe**, Michele's father and Harley's grandfather. Not long after arriving Michele landed a job at the McCarthy Lodge. They are here only

for the summer, says Michele, but we really would like to keep them longer as they are making a wonderful addition to our town!

The year of the moms: I tend to believe that kids are always kids to moms – no matter how mature we kids think we are. On June 9th Rick and I were pleased to bring my mom, **Neta Schafer**, to McCarthy after picking her up in Anchorage. She flew in from Florida where she lives alongside my brother and his family. She spends the summer with us at least every other year so has come to know the locals in our town. A couple of days ago, neighbor Kevin Smith paid us a visit and brought his mom, **Alzira Smith**, along. Rick managed to get a picture of these two “moms.” Alzira visits her sons, Matt and Kevin, regularly. She comes from Cape Cod, Mass. This year her visit will take in her son, Matt, and his bride-to-be, Megan Siefert’s, wedding celebration, scheduled for June 25th.

Other moms visiting the area (that I’m personally aware of) are **Bernice Darish**, Neil Darish’s mom from Boston and **JoAnn Collins**, Doug Miller’s mom hails from Yakima, Wa. Both these ladies are busy working at the McCarthy Lodge. Mom and I stopped by there the other day to get ice cream cones and searched out each of these fine ladies. Bernice was diligently working on a computer in the lodge office. JoAnn is going setting up and will be operating her own espresso shop in downtown McCarthy. In fact, mom and I took a peek inside the newly-constructed lodge addition where employee Toby Miller was putting the final touches on the inside paneling. I could almost smell that delicious coffee aroma, JoAnn!

Another mom is in town this summer— **Diane Thorn**, Marie’s mother, who is from Bellingham, WA. Diane acquired an Interpretive Park Ranger position (as did Marie), so we can expect to have her around



WSEN staff photo

Neta and Alzira

all summer. This is not Diane’s first trip to the McCarthy/Kennicott area. She has spent partial summers in the past with friends in Kennicott. A big WELCOME to all our moms!

The following information was taken from The Kennecott Cable, a National Park Service publication on Park News, summer 2005.

A Kennecott Community Firewise Program: Join Fire Education Specialists on July 24 at 1-5 p.m. to learn about local fire history, wildland fire and fire management in Alaska, homeowner protection, wildland fire prevention in remote areas, and where homeowners can seek further assistance. The workshop will be held at the Kennecott Recreation Hall and will include a fire safety evaluation of a local home site.

Automatic External Defibrillator location: The Automatic External Defibrillator useful in treating critical heart patients, will be located at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge for the summer. Their phone number is 554-4477.

McCarthy’s runway lights: Runway lights for the McCarthy airstrip are still available for landing aircraft during emergencies in the dark. Marshall Neeck, Stephens Harper, John Adams, Rick Kenyon, Kelly Bay and Jason Lobo are trained to use them. Contact Marshall Neeck at 822-5236 for further information.

National Creek Geomorphic Study: A contractor will be conducting hydrologic and geomorphic field work on National Creek in Kennecott this summer. The purpose of the study is to provide the National Park Service (NPS) and community with information regarding the geomorphic processes in the National Creek watershed. This will allow the NPS to evaluate the geomorphic risks to potential projects designed to protect the historic structures and cultural integrity of the National Creek drainage. There will also be recommendations to minimize risk to both the potential projects in and near National Creek, and to disruption of the natural function and behavior of National Creek itself from these projects. A report will be delivered to the NPS in December 2005.



WSEN staff photo

Remember all the cars—many of them incapable of running under their own power—parked on the east side of the footbridge? Thanks to Rowcon Services and Dave Syren for removing them!

Close encounter with a mad mama!

BY SUSAN SMITH

Memorial Day 2005 was one that I won't soon forget. A friend had emailed me suggesting a few moments of silence and meditation at 3:00 that afternoon. I had planned on it, but in reality, at that exact moment, I was frantically shooting a pistol into the air, trying to save my dogs (and myself!) from a crazed moose in the yard!

My husband, Jack, and I live off of the McCarthy Road. Our homestead is nestled on the banks of the Chokosna River, and a 1.6 mile, two-rut driveway connects our home to the road. Jack's job as a surveyor takes him away from home often during the working season.

Luckily, he had been able to get home for the holiday weekend. We enjoyed working together to get the gardens in and even managed to squeeze in a couple of barbecues before it was time for him to head back to Fairbanks on Memorial Day. The driveway was still a little muddy, so, as during every break-up, the vehicles were parked at the McCarthy Road and we had been traveling to the house by 4-wheeler. We loaded his gear into the trailer and headed slowly down to the road. On our way out of the yard, Jack un-clipped his dog Buttercup from her chain and she bounded down the trail with us.

Around here, when it comes to dogs, we have his, Buttercup, and mine, Maya. Both are MacKenzie River husky/wolf/Malamute mixes

(who don't get along) so they are chained in separate dog yards at alternate sides of the property. They are my fond companions and my first alert to visitors and wildlife during the months that I spend alone.

The mosquitoes were ferocious at the end of the driveway. We quickly loaded Jack's gear into his truck, said good-bye, and he started



Susan and Buttercup

Photo courtesy Susan Smith

off down the road. I turned the machine around and Buttercup and I headed back up the trail. Usually, as we near the house, Buttercup is tiring and running a little slower. However this time, she broke into a run as we approached the house and I knew something was up. As I made the last turn before the yard, I stopped dead in my tracks. A cow moose and newborn calf were standing 25 feet in front of me and Buttercup ran straight for them!

I never travel down the driveway without my shotgun. I quickly pulled it off my back and got it ready in case I needed it. The cow immediately started to attack the dog, trying her best to chase her down and kick her. But, Buttercup's speed and agility saved her. I called for her to back off and come to me and she obeyed instantly while I made sure the moose didn't follow. With Buttercup at bay, the cow ran

into the middle of the yard, ten feet from our front door, followed by the tiny calf. After standing there, about 100 yards away from me, for what seemed like an eternity, both moose started wandering toward the back of the yard and I inched forward on the machine, thinking I might persuade them to keep going.

At that moment, Maya, still chained, spotted her and burst into a fit of barking. To my horror, the cow spun and ran toward her, attacking with her head down, ears back and hair

raised! I could hear Maya yelping in pain as I rushed the machine across the yard to the house and jumped down. As I ran closer with my heart racing, I found the moose stomping, kicking, and trying to bite my poor dog as she spun around on her chain trying to dodge the blows. Her house was overturned, and she raced back and forth around trees and her house to avoid the angry moose. So angry, in fact, that she did not see her panicked calf flee down the bank to the river.

Buttercup was ready to lash into her again but I called her back, then fired a shotgun blast into the air in the cow's general direction. She stopped for a moment, then lashed into Maya again. I was frantic and yelling, trying to distract her before she killed my dog. I inched closer and stood behind a large spruce and fired high again. However, without realizing it, I had reached the point

In amazement, I realized I wasn't hurt so I scrambled away and ran to the house. In fact, Maya barked so crazily when she saw the moose coming after me that she lured her back and, I believe, saved me from a stomping. I found Buttercup on the back porch and got her inside, then strapped my pistol to my hip since my shotgun was still lying on the ground with a broken

the opposite bank, and re-cross to our side, sniffing the ground. Finally, she picked up the scent of the calf and walked downriver.

I carefully walked out and put Maya in an outbuilding in case the moose returned. But she never did...at least not that night. The dog yard was in disarray with moose hair scattered everywhere. My poor dog was spooked for days after her experience but unhurt except for a bloody nose. Buttercup was completely untouched. Although in my panic I don't remember being kicked, I had a dark purple bruise on the back of my thigh that looked suspiciously like a moose hoof! Afterwards, looking at her tracks and the place where I had fallen, I don't know how she could have missed me!

Three days later the dogs started barking furiously early in the morning. I looked out to see a grizzly in the back yard! Using my usual scare tactic, I fired a pistol round off and the bear scampered away. But to my amazement, I saw something move in our field and out stepped the cow and calf! I suddenly realized that the bear had been less than 100 yards behind them and I might have saved the tiny newborn's life. At least that time. Both moose trotted off down the driveway together.

Unfortunately, I've seen the cow in the yard two more times this week without her calf so a bear probably did catch up with them. But Maya, Buttercup and I survived our close encounter and I learned an important lesson about protecting my own safety before I try to protect my dogs. Life in the woods involves constant assessment of risk, and I try to be very careful. This Memorial Day I risked too much, but I was lucky. I'm even more cautious out there now and I keep my distance!



Photo courtesy Susan Smith

Maya at the scene of the attack.

of no return. She could now reach me faster than I could get back to the safety of the house. At that moment, she decided to come for me!

In three bounding leaps she was around my tree and close enough for me to reach out and touch her nose! I started running immediately when I saw her coming toward me, but she gained on me so fast that I couldn't get away. Suddenly, my shotgun was knocked from my hand and I fell to the ground. In that moment of horror, I realized that I had made a grave mistake in trying to protect my beloved dog and I was probably going to get badly hurt, or worse. I'm not sure if I tripped on her leg or on a tree root, but I went down hard.

slung. The next time I ran outside, the moose jumped over Maya and ran down the bank toward the river, out of sight.

Moments later, she ran back into the yard at the exact spot where she had left the calf, snorting and grunting loudly. I realized that my troubles were not over; she had become separated from her calf and could not find it. For another half hour, she ran crazily through the yard several more times. She made another move toward Maya and I fired the pistol into the air again. This time she retreated behind Maya's yard, but still very close. I told the dog to hush, and she was completely silent as we watched the moose cross the river, walk down

Residents of the Wrangells update

BY SUSAN SMITH

The comment period ended May 13th for the National Park Service (NPS) draft of *A User's Guide to Accessing Inholdings in a National Park Service Area in Alaska*. Through a series of meetings and written documents, NPS received comments from many organizations and individuals. A number of these statements are available for review online at http://www.nps.gov/akso/access_comments/alaska_region_internet_page_access_3.htm.

Residents of the Wrangells (ROW), McCarthy Area Council, Slana Alaskans Unite, the State of Alaska, the University of Alaska, and Alaska Miners' Association were among the many groups that prepared written comments.

All commenters praised NPS for their efforts in compiling a clear guide to clarify the access issue. However, the majority of the respondents found a contradiction between ANILCA law and the NPS proposal to force residents to obtain permits, pay fees, and pay for environmental assessments to reach their homes. Most also found fault with differentiating between commercial and non-commercial properties, and with charging residents to monitor their trails in the years to come. Many asked that Governor Murkowski's suggestion of an oversight committee be implemented to give residents an appeals body when problems arise.

ROW received a letter from Governor Frank Murkowski at the end of May thanking us for sending his office a copy of our comments on the guide. "Rest assured," he wrote, "that my administration is well aware of the proposed guide and is working diligently with the Park Service to ensure that the rights of inholders granted by

ANILCA are protected." He also remarked, "I understand that as a result of the comprehensive comments received, the Park Service is looking at major revisions to the Guide and expects additional public involvement." He enclosed a copy of the State of Alaska's formal comments on the draft and encouraged our continued participation in the public process.

NPS Regional Director Marcia Blaszak also sent ROW a copy of the form letter mailed to all respondents. More than forty comments were submitted and over sixty people participated in public meetings in Anchorage, McCarthy, Slana, and Fairbanks. Blaszak said that the Alaska Region of the NPS will work on revising the draft throughout the summer and fall based upon the comments received, and the second draft of the guide will be released before the end of the year.

Blaszak stated that her office drafted a request for a formal opinion from the Department of the Interior's Office of the Solicitor regarding "...the applicability of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to actions taken under Title 1110(b) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980." She went on to say, "We will soon begin a more thorough review of the national regulations and policies related to access in order to respond fully to comments made about the proposed fee schedule. Also, we will look closely at how we might take different approaches for documenting existing access routes, and how we consider proposals for new routes under construction."

Wrangell-St. Elias Park Superintendent Jed Davis invited me to meet briefly with him and Park Planner Vicki Snitzler while he was in McCarthy on Sunday, May 15th to talk about the draft revision process. Representatives from the ROW

advisory board and McCarthy Area Council were also in attendance. Davis' office is responsible for writing the second draft and he assured us that they will continue to write as many drafts as necessary, followed by public comment periods, until an acceptable version is achieved.

He will strive for no formal permits or fees for all access routes in existence today, irregardless of their dates of construction. He feels that NEPA environmental assessment requirements may not apply due to the special circumstances set forth by ANILCA. He hopes to provide each resident with a document certifying the legal access to their property in perpetuity, without renewals, even when properties change hands. Due to federal regulations, residents will not be allowed to participate "at the table" as the draft is being rewritten, but Davis encourages us to remain active in the comment process for each draft until "we get it right." His office hopes to have the second draft available this summer.

If NPS is sincere in its desire to reach a compromise between their first draft and the commenters' objections, dramatic changes must appear in draft two. Successful implementation of these changes will show all residents that Regional Director Blaszak and Superintendent Davis are sincere in their desire to settle our access issues once and for all. We anxiously await the completion of the second draft, and encourage residents to stay involved in the comment process until we can finally create a workable document that will meet our needs, fall within NPS regulations, and give us a document which ensures legal access to our properties.

Museum prepares for McCarthy Centennial

BY MEG HUNT

The Centennial of McCarthy is next year—2006—and the Museum is gearing up to celebrate. At our Annual Meeting over Memorial Day weekend, Neil Darish was elected to fill the vacant seat on the Board and to spearhead the Centennial Project, which will consist of new and traveling exhibits, events, and presentations relating to McCarthy's history. It was not only Kennecott copper that built this town; this corner of the old Barrett homestead was an

outfitting center for many independent miners, trappers, and others who came to take advantage of the riches of the area. We invite anyone interested to see Neil at McCarthy Lodge if there is an exhibit or event you are interested in creating!

The Museum has approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Wrangell-St. Elias National Park; this agreement enables both entities to benefit from one another's knowledge and resources. Amy Marshall, NPS Curator, recently gave two classes in McCarthy

on Museum issues and techniques, and has helped us build a cataloging system for our holdings based on work that Dianne Milliard began several years ago. Over the course of this summer, volunteers will be continuing Dianne's inventory. Amy has also helped us to identify and restore some artifacts in need of conservation.

We are very grateful to all those who have become members of the McCarthy-Kennicott Historical Museum.

McCarthy Area Council meets

McCarthy: – On Friday, June 24th twenty-three people met at the Blackburn Center for a McCarthy Area Council (MAC) meeting. Jeremy Keller, president, opened the meeting by addressing those who were, for the most part, summer seasonal participants.

Jeremy gave an up-to-date overview of MAC's activities. He spoke of an increase in deliberation of issues and mutual respect for opposing points of view. He stated his goal is for MAC to become the voice of the community. While the town meeting forum is working to debate specific issues, MAC can focus on the "nuts and bolts" of these issues.

Several issues were on the agenda: the Gateway Conference report, McCarthy Creek Tram proposal, and the free shuttle service.

A large part of the meeting was given to the McCarthy Creek Tram project as proposed by Fred Dure and Bob Cook. Both men gave a report on the history and present status of the project. According to Dure and Cook, they have been working on acquiring the funding for this project for 5 years. The requested \$200,000 for the tram comes from the Public Lands Dis-

cretionary Funds Act and is available until September 2007. The challenge for the success of this project is the need for a proper agency to step up and take ownership and liability of the tram. To date the possible agencies, Department of Transportation (DOT), the National Park Service (NPS) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have all responded in the negative.

Dure commented that even though DOT has been reluctant to take ownership of this project, he feels they can be convinced to change their position if there is enough community support. Strong backing by the community would put pressure on DOT to step up and take ownership. There was a discussion about the need to involve all community members in future decision making, since some members feel that the decision for a tram crossing was made by only a few people.

Dure emphasized that the tram project is the "lowest common denominator" since it can be completed more quickly than a footbridge or vehicular bridge, giving an estimate of 7 - 8 years for the tram completion.

One participant stated that parking in McCarthy has become quite a problem with people not being able to drive their vehicles home and strongly suggested the community address this problem first before making a final decision on the tram project. It was agreed that the issue needed more discussion and future planning. It was also recommended that DOT be asked for other options for access across McCarthy Creek so that all concerns can be examined.

Free shuttle service was addressed by Eric Nazar. There will be a free shuttle stationed at the park service kiosk at Mile 59 of the McCarthy Road starting July 1st which will pick up visitors at the various parking lots, offering free transportation to and from the footbridge. The shuttle will be on call and free. A few local businesses and the Park Service have provided enough funding for the month of July. Eric estimates operating costs to run \$5,000 a month. A total of \$5,700 has been collected so far. Donations are welcome. MAC board members will discuss funding for this project at their July 25th meeting. There will be a public discussion at the end of July to determine whether to continue the shuttle into August.

Kennicott/McCarthy gets fire truck and training

BY STACIE MILLER

On May 21st the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) brought the communities of Kennicott and McCarthy a new fire truck. In conjunction with the delivery of the truck, they also taught a four-day “red card” wildland fire fighter training class. Attendance was excellent with 17 local community members and 6 people attending from the Chitina area.

The class cumulated with a 3 mile fitness test (congratulations to Howard Haley for showing up all the young folk) and hands-on truck training. McCarthy Lodge sponsored an all-you-can-eat pizza dinner for all those who attended. The truck will be stationed here for the sum-

mer and returned to DNR for winter storage and maintenance.

The K/MVFD would like to thank Gary Mullen for coordinating the loan of the truck and scheduling of the class; Brian Carver, Jim Miller and Dave Marshal for traveling all this way to teach us.

The fire truck and crew will be available if you want to burn brush piles and are worried about fire danger. The burn has to be in a defensible area with good access and comply with state burn regulations. Please schedule at least a week in advance.

The K/MVFD is requesting that all members of the community compile pre-fire plans for their homes and land. This consists of making a map of your property which includes

on it defensible spaces, access, water sources, hazards such as fuel caches, propane tanks and such. Also, include number of inhabitants and pets. These maps will be kept in the response book in the fire truck and be used as a quick reference guide in case we have to respond to a fire in your area. If you have any questions or would like help doing this, please contact Matt Smith, Stacie Miller or James Sill.

The K/MVFD would like to thank Ken Rowland for loaning the department a 500-gallon water tank and trailer, the Blackburn Heritage Center for giving us a temporary home, Jim and Jeannie Miller for a water pump, Cobi Harris for a chainsaw, Fireweed Mountain Arts and Crafts, Ed LaChapelle and Meg Hunt, and McCarthy Lodge.

Legislature Approves 250,000 acre University Land Grant

(Juneau) — The Alaska Legislature has approved a bill to convey 250,000 acres of land to the University of Alaska.

Governor Frank H. Murkowski proposed the bill in conjunction with federal legislation that would convey 250,000 acres of federal land to the UA system. The Alaska bill includes 12,000 acres near McCarthy. The federal bill would require the University to give up to the Park Service about 8,000 acres it currently owns in the McCarthy area.

McCarthy area residents were united in opposing the land transfer. A common theme heard was that the community needed the state land to act as a “buffer” between private lands and federal park/preserve lands, as well as the fear that the land would end up in federal hands.

Representative Woodie Salmon’s office worked closely with McCarthy residents and introduced an amendment to exclude the McCarthy lands from the bill. Although other lands, including the Kodiak Rocket Launch facility at Narrow Cape and eight of the 45 parcels in Southeast Alaska were removed from the list, the Salmon amendment was defeated and the McCarthy lands remained in the bill. Many area residents were disappointed when DNR spokesman Dick Mylias said that the department was opposed to the McCarthy parcels being removed. Dick’s wife Sally founded the “Old Hardware Store” in McCarthy, which is used as a base for an environmental advocacy group called the Wrangell Mountain Center.

The bill replaces legislation approved in 2000 that would have

transferred state land to the university system. The 10-year selection process set out in the 2000 statute was difficult, expensive, and time consuming. The land transfer will be completed in three years—the time required for DNR to complete a title search and conveyance documents on the land.

The legislation establishes public notice requirements for future UA land sales, ensures protection of existing trails and access and protects Native allotments from transfer.

Much of the land to be transferred to the University is investment property that will generate revenue for the University’s endowment. About one-third of the land is education property that will strengthen the University’s research and educational mission.

Trail building classes offered

"If You ride it, help build it"

The International Mountain Biking Association has a partnership with the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance program of the National Park Service. Rivers & Trails helps communities build trail and greenway systems, conserve rivers and wildlife habitat, and preserve open space. Their work largely focuses on urban and suburban locations, where demand for trail networks is the greatest.

In July, the association, the National Park Service, Singletrack Advocates, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough will partner on upcoming trail building classes and free presentations across the state. The association and NPS will provide technical and volunteer assistance to the public who is interested in learning trail building skills. Participants will learn sustainable multi-use trail design, construction, and restoration in the field and in classroom sessions on the following dates: Free IMBA Trail Presentations @ 7:00PM Field classes:

Talkeetna— Wed. July 13 at the NPS Ranger Station, Economic Ben-

efits of Mountain Biking & Epic Rides, Chris Mannix, topnotch@gci.net 733-2427

Fairbanks— Fri. July 15 at Beaver Sports, Economic Benefits of Mountain Biking & Epic Rides, Dan Chagnon, Fairbanks North Star Borough, dchagnon@co.fairbanks.ak.us 459-1070

Anchorage— Tue. July 19 at BP Energy Center, Economic Benefits of Mountain Biking & Epic Rides, Jack Mosby, Alaska Trails, jrmosby@alaskalife.net 333-4442

MatSu Valley— Wed. July 20 at Palmer MTA Bldg., Economic Benefits of Mountain Biking & Epic Rides, Pat Owens, Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers, pato@mtaonline.net 745-7714

Anchorage— Thu. July 21 at Campbell Creek Science Center, Mountain Biking and Singletrack Presentation, Tim Woody, Singletrack Advocates, woodys@alaska.net 275-2102

Field Classes:

· Talkeetna— Wed. July 13 - 10:30AM-3PM @ Talkeetna Lakes field review located 0.8 mile on

Comsat RD at mile 12 Talkeetna Spur RD (free)

· Fairbanks— Sat. July 16 - 8:30AM-Noon @ Borough Assembly Chambers and 1-4PM at Isberg/Cripple Creek Multi-Use Trail Area

· MatSu Valley— Wed. July 20 - 9AM-4PM @ Crevasse-Moraine Trail System field review located about 2 miles west of Palmer on the south end of Loma Prieta Drive along the Palmer-Wasilla Highway (free)

· Anchorage— Fri. July 22 6-9PM @ Campbell Creek Science Center, IMBA Trail Building School, Tim Woody, Singletrack Advocates, woodys@alaska.net 275-2102

· Anchorage— Sat. July 23 - 9AM-4PM. Meet at the Campbell Creek Science Center

Registration will take place at the classes. The cost is \$10 for Sponsoring Trail Club Members, \$20 for nonmembers or \$25 for the class and a ½ year membership with your choice of One Sponsoring Trail Organization (\$50+ value). Detailed information and registration forms can be found at: www.alaska-trails.org

Chitina Ranger Station to reopen

When the Chitina community heard that Wrangell-St. Elias would be unable to staff the Chitina Ranger Station this season, due to budget limitations and staffing priorities, the newly-organized Chitina Chamber of Commerce stepped up and volunteered a solution. After members of the Chitina Chamber of

Commerce, Copper River Princess Wilderness Lodge, Backcountry Connections, and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve met on June 8 in Chitina, Wrangell-St. Elias gratefully accepted the offer of the Chitina Chamber of Commerce to staff the Ranger Station with community volunteers. "This is an initial step toward fostering an important

partnership with our neighbors in Chitina," stated Jed Davis, Superintendent of Wrangell-St. Elias.

The Ranger Station will be open Fridays through Mondays, 2:00 p.m. through 6:00 p.m., from June 17 through Labor Day. Drop by the Ranger Station to see some special touches provided by the Chitina Chamber of Commerce.

"The work of the individual still remains the spark that moves mankind forward."—Igor Sikorsky

Governor Welcomes Inholder Access Guide

Suggests improvements to Park Service manual to protect Alaskans' rights

(Juneau) – The federal government's first effort to issue clear guidelines on access to inholdings on national park land in Alaska is a good start, but needs more work to address state and public concerns about fees, environmental procedures, access permits and other issues, Governor Frank H. Murkowski said today.

"Honoring ANILCA's commitment to existing and future access to inholdings is critical to the well-being and economic viability of individuals, families and businesses throughout the state," Murkowski said. "We commend the National Park Service for taking on this challenge as the first federal agency to produce a practical guide to implementing ANILCA's access provisions for inholdings."

Last year, Murkowski expressed concerns to U.S. Interior Secretary Gale Norton that the Park Service's inconsistent and confusing approach to access enforcement under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act was causing problems with inholders.

In his April 15, 2004, letter to Norton, the governor said, "... Even though almost 24 years have elapsed since ANILCA's enactment, serious access and other implemen-

tation problems and uncertainties remain. I believe that these problems, which affect law abiding, industrious Alaskans in their daily lives, must be addressed."

The governor noted that the State of Alaska, local governments and Native corporations own 1.6 million acres of inholdings inside national park units.

In February, the NPS responded with its 22-page "User's Guide to Accessing Inholdings in a National Park Service Area in Alaska." As it is likely to be used as an example by other federal agencies, the guide drew close scrutiny by individuals, organizations representing inholder interests and the state during the 90-day public comment period.

The state's May 13 response calls for a number of revisions to the guide, including:

A shorter, more streamlined procedure to authorize permanent access to inholdings, distinct from that for access under other sections of ANILCA or other federal law.

- A even simpler process for authorizing access that is already in place.
- Clearer definition of "reasonable stipulations" regarding access.

- Maximum deference to the inholder's identification of access needs.
- A quick and simple administrative appeals process.
- Reduction or elimination of processing fees, especially for use of previously used access routes.
- Allowing landowners the ability to transfer property without administrative approval.
- Clarification that "adequate and feasible" access to inholdings cannot be denied or revoked.
- Clearer guidance on compliance with federal environmental laws, including identifying when no environmental studies are needed, such as for minimal impacts

At the urging of the state and other stakeholders, the NPS has already agreed to issue a new draft with substantial revisions based on these and other suggestions.

"We are encouraged by the efforts of the Park Service to take on this challenging task, and are pleased at their willingness to fix the problems identified by the state and the public as they develop this important policy document," Murkowski said. "We will continue to monitor the revisions and periodically advise the NPS as they work on a revised draft."

Schedule of upcoming meetings

Monday, July 11th at 7 pm –Town meeting at the Blackburn Center in McCarthy.

Thursday, July 14th at 5 pm to 7:30 pm – Public meeting at the Kennecott Recreation Hall in Kennecott with DOT concerning the McCarthy Road and other projects.

Monday, July 25th at 7 pm – MAC Board meeting (open to all) at the Blackburn Center in McCarthy.

Friday, August 12th at noon – MAC meeting at the Blackburn Center in McCarthy.

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle." —Sun Tzu

BLM asking public to recommend areas where ANILCA d(1) withdrawals can be lifted

BY DANIELLE ALIEN

No sooner did Dave Mushovic, a BLM Glennallen District Office employee, transfer to the BLM's Alaska State Office in Anchorage earlier this year, he was handed a priority assignment. He and Susan Lavin, both realty specialists with the lands branch, will prepare a report for Congress, due next year, that takes into account public land orders withdrawing millions of acres of federal land in Alaska for study and classification and consider whether these lands should be open to entry.

Besides reviewing PLOs issued by the Secretary of the Interior in the 1970s under the authority of 17 (d) (1) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, they are checking the land status, reviewing resource issues and preparing maps. Typically "d-1 withdrawals" are reviewed under the BLM's land use planning process. "This is when lands are assessed for resource potential, uses and whether withdrawn lands can be

lifted," says Mushovic. However, many of BLM's stakeholders have grown increasingly frustrated and want a more expeditious process. In response the Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to submit a report that recommends whether "d-1" withdrawn lands can be open to entry.

What concerns Mushovic and Lavin is that many of these withdrawn lands are selected by the State of Alaska or Native corporations and are included in other administrative or Congressional withdrawals. "We want people to know that lifting withdrawals doesn't mean the lands are automatically available to mining and leasing," says Lavin. "It's a little more complicated than that even if the withdrawals are lifted," she said. Selected lands will remain segregated until the land is conveyed or selections are relinquished. Some lands under study include national wildlife refuge, park and forest systems and conservation units which may have more restrictive or addi-

tional administrative procedures to follow before mining or leasing could occur.

BLM is ready to involve the public in this process and this month will be sending out information and soliciting comment on what withdrawals should be lifted. Ads in statewide papers will also announce a public comment period. You can review maps depicting withdrawn lands at BLM offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kotzebue, Nome and Juneau.

Mushovic cautions, "The report is advisory and no environmental analysis is required under the National Environmental Policy Act." BLM is responsible for making recommendations only on lands managed by BLM.

Questions about the process and report can be answered by Dave Mushovic at (907) 271-3293 or Susan Lavin at (907) 271-3826.

Wet and Wild Summer Science Camp

Paul Nylund, manager at Anadyr Adventures in Valdez, told us about a summer program they are offering called the Wet and Wild Summer Science Camp. It is for kids ages 7-11. Four sessions will be offered at the Anadyr Adventure office on North Harbor Drive in Valdez. Camp will begin at 10:00 am and run until 4:00 pm.

Each three-day session will be \$99 per child with a maximum of 10 kids per session.

Schedule

Day 1: Group orientation and an introduction to the water cycle. Field trip to explore Mineral Creek

Day 2: A fun packed day of kayaking on and exploring in and under Robe Lake.

Day 3: The week of fun will end with an exhilarating experience on

Port Valdez. The children will intimately learn about the wetlands and the ecosystem that they support.

Session 1 - June 27, 29, July 1

Session 2 - July 18, 20, 22

Session 3 - July 25, 27, 29

Session 4 - August 1, 3, 5

For further information, contact Anadyr Adventures at (907)835-2814

"Government is instituted to protect property of every sort. ...[T]hat alone is a just government which impartially secures to every man, whatever is his own." —James Madison

The world around us

BY DON WELTY

Flying here in the Wrangells, year after year, enables a person to observe many changes in the environment from one year to the next, especially in the many glacial valleys surrounding the McCarthy area. The most noticeable changes include glacial recession, melt water drainage changes, surges and landslides. Slower and less obvious changes occur as newly-exposed areas such as glacial moraines, gravel bars and slide areas become vegetated. The first plants to establish themselves in these areas are referred to as "pioneer plants." With the help of a marvelous microbe they stabilize and add much needed nutrients to these barren areas. These microbes, called nitrogen-fixing bacteria, live in symbiosis (mutually beneficial relationship) with these plants, forming visible nodules on their roots in which the process of nitrogen cracking takes place. Some local examples of plants that contain these nitrogen crackers are dryas, mountain aven, lupine, locoweed, silverberry, and alder.

To appreciate the importance of these nitrogen fixers we can start with examining the importance of nitrogen in our world. Our atmosphere is made up of 21% oxygen and 78% nitrogen.

Both are integral parts of amino acids, which join together into proteins to form DNA and RNA. We get our nitrogen from our food either directly from plants or through animals that eat plants. Plants must get their nitrogen from the soil. Elemental oxygen is reactive so splitting it apart for life structures is not hard. Elemental nitrogen, however, has one of the hardest chemical bonds to break.

As our need for higher plant production has increased with population, the need for artificially pro-

duced nitrogen increased. In 1918 Fritz Haber was given the Nobel Prize for chemistry for discovering a large-scale process that could convert atmospheric nitrogen to ammonia.

This process required drastic conditions, using an iron-based catalyst with around 1000 degree F heat and 300 atmospheres of pressure. However these chemists of a century ago did not realize there was already a process for cracking nitrogen in place. Its designer did not receive the Nobel Prize and rarely receives recognition. This process did not require high heat and pressures. It was working quietly and efficiently supplying an estimated 100 million tons of nitrogen every year to the soil, a process carried out by so-called, "low life forms," nitrogen-fixing bacteria.¹ Modern biochemistry has given us a glimpse of the enzyme system used in this process.

The chief enzyme is nitrogenase, which, like hemoglobin, is a large metalloprotein complex. Like Fritz Haber's process, and like catalytic converters in cars today, it uses the principle of metal catalysis. However, like all biological enzymatic processes, it works in a more exact and efficient way than the clumsy chemical processes of human invention. Several atoms of iron and molybdenum are held in an organic lattice to form the active chemical site. With assistance from an energy source (ATP) and a powerful and specific complementary reducing agent (ferredoxin), nitrogen molecules are bound and cleaved with surgical precision. In this way, a "molecular sledgehammer" is applied to the NN bond, and a single nitrogen molecule yields two molecules of ammonia. The ammonia then ascends the "food chain," and is used as amino groups in protein synthesis for plants and

animals. This is a very tiny mechanism, but when multiplied on a large scale it is of critical importance in allowing plant growth and food production on our planet to continue.²

Currently, in another application of genetic engineering, chemists are trying to improve the efficiency of the Haber process by implanting the genetic instructions for this nitrogenase complex into coliform bacteria (which may yield significant results when a host of associated bioengineering problems have been solved).³ Thus, man tacitly acknowledges the pre-existence of a vastly superior technology for nitrogen breakdown, but fails to acknowledge or give thanks to God for it. And, once again, man does his imperfect best to copy the perfection of design that God achieved in the first week of this world.

Quoting Dr. David Demick, qualified pathologist, "One thing is certain—matter, obeying existing laws of chemistry, could not have created, on its own, such a masterpiece of chemical engineering."⁴

Quoting Professor of Biochemistry at Lehigh University, Michael J. Behe, "Life on earth at its most fundamental level, in its most critical components, is the product of intelligent activity. The conclusion of intelligent design flows naturally from the data itself—not from sacred books or sectarian beliefs. Inferring that biochemical systems were designed by an intelligent agent is a humdrum process that requires no new principals of logic or science. It comes simply from the hard work biochemistry has done over the past forty years, combined with the consideration of the way in which we reach conclusions of design everyday."⁵

Ah, but, intelligent design does flow naturally from sacred books also. In fact the Bible says that cre-

ation shows us His invisible attributes and eternal power. * Lets give credit where credit is due as we marvel at this amazing world around us.

For more info on this and other marvels in the world around us check out some of these websites: www.icr.org

www.answersingenesis.org
www.evolution-facts.org

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*Romans 1:20

Town meetings debate specific issues

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy: – Two town meetings were held in June to discuss and seek out solutions to several issues that concern area residents and visitors alike. Both gatherings met at the Blackburn Center with approximately 50 people turning out for the first meeting of June 14 and about half that amount for the second meeting held on June 21.

Representatives from several local businesses and year ‘round and summer residents met to address issues such as how customers, locals and visitors should be treated once they reach the end of the McCarthy Road. Private property owners are providing services from camping, parking and lodging. It was of great concern to those in attendance the manner in which people are greeted by those they first come in contact with.

Another topic of discussion was how to provide proper information to visitors who are arriving in the McCarthy/Kennicott area. Vicki Snitzler, Park Service (NPS) planner with the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, was on hand to answer questions and listen to the requests of the area residents. Ms.

Snitzler explained that the NPS cannot enter into “partnerships” with individuals, such as a local business owner, to provide services but can consider agreements from community groups that present formal proposals.

One particular suggestion was for the NPS to enter into a lease agreement with a privately-owned business at the end of the McCarthy Road for the operation of a free parking lot, instead of paid parking, toilets, and an informational kiosk. It was pointed out that this could not happen easily or speedily.

Further discussion and suggestions requested the NPS to improve on their own property at Mile 59 of the McCarthy Road. Presently, there are two small buildings especially constructed for the purpose of disseminating information to those entering the McCarthy/Kennicott area. Appeals from the community to keep the McCarthy Road Information Station opened full-time throughout the summer months has resulted in the station being funded this summer, after being closed last year. Suggestions included the NPS brushing around the entrance to the station, expanded signage and possibly an enlargement of the ex-

isting day-parking area to accommodate the increased visitor activity being encouraged to stop for NPS and area information.

In the June 21 meeting John Bennett, from the state’s right-of-way division in Fairbanks, addressed the attendees via phone conference. Questions were posed to Bennett concerning what is permissible in the DOT right-of-way at the end of the road. Such “encroachments” that are allowed, or permitted, by DOT include utilities, commercial parking, waysides, dumpsters, and outhouses.

The subject of a free shuttle service on the west side of the Kennicott River to the footbridge or across the Rowland service bridge was also discussed. The shuttle would make scheduled stops at all west side parking areas and be subsidized by local businesses and park service.

The next town meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 11th at 7 p.m. The place of meeting will be the Blackburn Center. The scheduled guest is Jed Davis, Superintendent of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve.

“I...believe this blessed land was set apart in a very special way, a country created by men and women who came here not in search of gold, but in search of God. They would be free people, living under the law with faith in their Maker and their future. Sometimes it seems we’ve strayed from that noble beginning, from our conviction that standards of right and wrong do exist and must be lived up to.”—Ronald Reagan

Access guide for park inholders draws sharp comments from Alaskans

BY CARL PORTMAN

Based on the number of concerns raised during an initial public comment period this spring, the National Park Service has decided to revise a draft user's guide to help Alaskans understand the process they must follow to gain access to their inholdings inside park units. The second draft will be released for additional comment later this year.

Within Alaska's national park units, there are more than 1.6 million acres of land owned by private individuals and Native corporations, the State of Alaska and local governments. These owners and other valid occupants are entitled to "adequate and feasible access" to their property, but in most cases there is no practical access except across federal lands under Park Service jurisdiction.

The Park Service received dozens of comment letters from individuals, Native corporations and governments on the draft describing how landowners and valid occupants can secure access rights under Section 1110 (b) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). This section of ANILCA addresses motorized access to inholdings, as well as access that would require improvements such as construction or maintenance of a road, power line or landing strip on park land.

"Comments covered a wide variety of concerns, and these will be considered when revising the document," said NPS Regional Director Marcia Blaszak. While the Resource Development Council (RDC) believes a formal user's guide will be a valuable resource for those seeking access to inholdings, Executive Director Tadd Owens expressed sev-

eral concerns, including language in the guide referencing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

"Given access to private property within Alaska's national parks is a right guaranteed by ANILCA. RDC does not believe the cumbersome, costly and time-consuming process associated with either an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement is necessary for the Park Service to grant proper access," said Owens in comments submitted to the federal agency.

If the Park Service determines it is legally bound to follow the NEPA process, Owens said it should seek a categorical exclusion from the requirement of NEPA for access associated with ANILCA inholdings.

Chugach Alaska Corporation, which owns 139,000 acres of surface and subsurface estate within park boundaries, noted Congress made ANILCA senior to other federal laws such as NEPA.

"ANILCA did require the Park Service to regulate access, but in the context and under the authority of ANILCA," explained Rick Rogers, the corporation's Vice President for Lands, Resources and Tourism. Rogers argued that the guidance document did little to bring the Park Service access policy in line with the access rights Congress reserved for inholders in the passage of ANILCA.

Rogers said in order for Alaska Native corporations to realize the full economic benefits of their lands as Congress intended, the ability to obtain access across Park units in a timely and pragmatic manner, without additional fees or commercial land-use charges, is essential.

Because of the unique provisions of ANILCA and the circum-

stances leading up to its passage, inholders in Alaska should not be required to pay user fees for easements or rights of ways to access their lands, Rogers said. He explained that ANILCA clearly acknowledged inholders have preexisting property rights.

Doyon Native Corporation, which owns or has valid selection rights to 300,000 acres of surface and subsurface estate within park units, emphasized that ANILCA's access provisions are fundamental to the purposes of the lands act and without them, there would be no ANILCA or national parks created under the act.

Jim Mery, Doyon's Senior Vice President, Lands and Resources, was critical of the Park Service's process to date in developing the user's guide.

"The process of drafting this user's guide has been exclusively a government process that improperly fails to include or consider the viewpoints of the stakeholders on this issue, those that possess inholdings in national parks in Alaska," Mery said.

"One round of written public comment following the issuance of the draft guide is inadequate to compensate for the lack of stakeholder participation in a process that has spanned over a year."

Mery suggested the Park Service withdraw the guide, then involve inholder representatives in the process, and create a new guide that reflects the participation of those who are most affected by its content.

Doyon also took exception to the permitting process proposed by the Park Service, calling it "unduly burdensome" and lacking clear

guidance on when permits are required. Moreover, the corporation predicted the process would lead to delays in issuing a permit – up to 19 months if an environmental impact statement is required.

Mery also took aim at proposed permitting fees, calling them unreasonable and excessive. He warned that the permitting process would discourage and frustrate adequate and feasible access because of excessive costs, length of time and unpredictable results.

The Alaska Miners Association (AMA) encouraged the Park Service to recognize and clarify the different types of valid occupancies in park units.

“One gets the sense from the draft guide that the document focuses on residents who live on inholdings, but access to these inholdings is just one part of the picture,” said Steve Borell, AMA Executive Director. “Other valid inholdings with access needs include private property that is patented land, Native allotments, mining claims, subsurface estate and access to state-owned land and waters.”

Borell recommended the Park Service recognize and treat existing pre-park access and associated facil-

ities different from access rights that involve new construction.

“There needs to be a clear mechanism to assure access accompanies the title of the inholding so the existing access is properly documented as a permanent right, which was intended by Congress,” Borell said. He urged the Park Service to recognize and designate all historic routes, roads, trails, airstrips, and barge landings through existing mechanisms such as “designated park roads.”

With regard to permitting, Borell said “the guide needs to make it clear that a ‘permit’ is not a discretionary option for the administrator because access to an inholding is a right.”

The State of Alaska, itself a major inholder, told the Park Service in its comments that honoring ANILCA’s commitment to existing and future access to inholdings is critical to the well being and economic viability of individuals, families and businesses throughout the state.

The State strongly urged the Park Service to evaluate ways “to quickly and simply provide inholders with the security of a permanent authorization” for access to inhold-

ings which already exist. It also requested the guide be expanded to address impacts inholders may face if access is restricted by regulation. For example, if airplane landings by the general public are restricted by regulation because of public safety concerns or to prevent resource damage, how will this affect those who have historically relied on airplanes to reach their land?

Recommendations offered by the State included a standardized procedure designed to process applications for access to inholdings; a precise timeline for processing an access application; further guidance concerning compliance with NEPA, and additional guidance on what constitutes reasonable stipulations governing access.

The State also said fees should be very small or eliminated in cases involving access to inholdings, especially where the route has been used previously. The State also suggested that visits by Park Service personnel to an inholder’s residence, as well as low-flying aircraft, be noticed in advance.

(Reprinted from the July 2005 issue of Resource Review with permission of the Resource Development Council for Alaska.)

New Telecommunications Regulations

ANCHORAGE, AK — The Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) adopted new regulations for telecommunications carriers, including tariff policies, depreciation practices, local competitive market rules, and inter-exchange market rules. The RCA opened the regulations review nearly two years ago in response to a directive by the State legislature to consider changes to its telecommunications regulations in view of policies and principles identified in CSHB 111 (2003). Since then, the

RCA conducted 28 public meetings, five public hearings, and a four-day workshop. Finally, during its public meetings on June 8 and June 9, 2, 2005, the RCA adopted final regulations.

The regulations adopted by the RCA respond to the input received from telecommunications providers all across Alaska, as well as the Alaska Legislature. It encompasses policies applying to local and inter-exchange carriers in the new competitive markets functioning throughout most of Alaska. “We

achieved a fair balance enabling carriers to respond to competitive market forces while preserving the public interest and consumer rights,” said RCA Chairman, Kate Gland.

A copy of the full text of the final order is available on the RCA’s website at www.state.ak.us/rca.

The regulations become effective following review by offices of the Attorney General Office and Lt. Governor.

“Politics is the art of preventing people from taking part in affairs which properly concern them.” —Paul Valery

THE CHITINA LEADER

July 1913 August

FATAL ACCIDENT ON ROAD

(From Thursday's *Cordova Alaskan*)

Superintendent of Bridges and Buildings, L. M. Price was killed and General Superintendent Caleb Corser, of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway was seriously injured early last evening at Mile 192 by the overturning of a motor speeder, on which they were making a trip of inspection.

The accident occurred within about 500 feet of the Blackburn Roadhouse, at the foot of the Kennicott hill. The car was running at a speed of about twelve miles an hour, when a horse, which was grazing within a few feet of the track, became frightened and dashed across the track immediately in front of the car. The movement was so sudden and unexpected that there was no opportunity to stop the car, which struck the horse and overturned, the occupants falling underneath it. Mr. Price was struck on the head by one of the wheels, sustaining a fractured skull, both legs broken and other injuries from which he died about three hours later without having gained consciousness. Mr. Corser escaped dangerous injuries, but was seriously bruised and is suffering from the shock.

Immediately after the accident Mr. Schrock was summoned from Kennicott, four miles distant, and hastened to the scene on horseback. Upon his arrival every effort was made to resuscitate Mr. Price, but without avail, the end coming about three hours after the accident. Mr. Corser's injuries were dressed and he was made as comfortable as possible.

In the meantime, a message was sent to Chitina, and the train, which left here yesterday morning, and which had just reached that point, was at once sent to the scene of the accident, carrying Dr. Payzant, a brother-in-law of Mr. Price, but the latter died ten minutes after the arrival of the train. The victims were taken aboard the train and brought to Chitina, and at 3:15 this morning left for Cordova, arriving at 7:50, after making one of the quickest trips ever made on the road.

Shortly after 8 o'clock last evening news of the accident was received at the office of the company here and a special train was at once made up to carry Dr. Council to Chitina, but the train returned after proceeding to Mile 19 on receipt of a wire that all aid had been rendered and that the victims were on the way to Cordova.

Mr. Corser was at once taken to his home, where he is now resting comfortably and his recovery is expected to be a matter of a comparatively short time. The remains of Mr. Price were removed to Lambert's undertaking parlors.

Mr. Price had been connected with the Copper River & Northwestern Railroad almost since its inception. He was one of the locating engineers and remained with the road during the construction period. Later he was made superintendent of bridges and buildings, a position he has held for some time past. At the recent city election, Mr. Price was elected a member of the city council and was chosen mayor. He leaves a wife and young son; a mother, Mrs. W. L. Price, residing at Zenith, Wyoming, to mourn the loss of a devoted husband and father and loving son.

Throughout the city numerous flags are displayed at half mast as a mark of the sincere esteem and respect with which the memory of the deceased is held by his fellow citizens.

The remains of Mr. Price will be taken to Seattle for interment, leaving on the steamer Alameda tomorrow morning. Upon the arrival of the steamer the remains will be taken from the undertaking par-

lors to the wharf, and will be accompanied by a body of citizens.

As a mark of respect to the deceased mayor, the city council has requested that all places of business close from 11 a.m. until noon, while the body of the deceased is being taken to the steamer.

Memorial services will be held in the Presbyterian church on Sunday at 11 a.m. Revs. Koonce and Zeigler participating.

Edwin H. Gillman, manager of the Chitina Cash Store, has tendered his resignation and intends to shortly leave for the states. John Nelson will succeed Mr. Gillman as manager and Oscar Fish will go to Chitina as book-keeper for the firm.

July 1

CHITINAITES PLAY ELEVEN INNING GAME

Last Saturday afternoon the ditcher crew beat the Chitina ball team by a score of 7 to 5. Batteries, Ditchers, Nettleton and Kennedy, Chitina, Boehme and Hartman. It was a close game and well contested. The result would have been different had not Solomon, Chitina's star-player elected to play with the ditcher crew.

On Sunday the Chitina Nationals beat the Chitina

Americans in an 11-inning game. Score 4 to 2. With the bases full and two men out, the Nationals' third baseman pulled off that old stunt of holding the ball and catching an American off base, winning the game and almost causing a riot. Batteries: nationals, Boehme and Hartman; Americans: Smith and Kennedy. The town is baseball mad and every man, woman, child, either player or a fan.

PAYMASTER REED RESIGNS

Grant Reed has tendered his resignation as cashier and paymaster for the Copper River and Northwestern Railway and he will be succeeded by H. J. Brandt, who returned on today's steamer from a trip to the States, accompanied by a bride. Mr. Brandt was formerly station agent at Chitina and will enter upon his new duties next Monday.

The fact that the Morgan-Guggenheim interests have distributed in the last twenty months of their operations on Copper River, Alaska, \$3,000,000 in dividends, should draw attention to the copper resources of that country. These dividends amount to 120 per cent on the capital of the Kennecott Mines Company, the subsidiary organization under which the operations of the Bonanza Mine are conducted. — Mining and Engineering Record.

The Copper River & Northwestern Railway train for Kennecott, which left

here yesterday morning, was making excellent time when it encountered a small land slide, late in the afternoon, at the south end of Mile 127. A crew of men were at once put to work and just as the slide was cleared away, and the train ready to proceed on its way, another one thirty by one hundred feet occurred. This consisted mostly of large rock and filled the track again and the steam shovel was dispatched to the scene and is doing good work.

The passengers and mail aboard the train were transferred to a hand car and taken to Chitina. As the distance was short some preferred to walk and with the exception of Mr. R. J. De Leo and Mrs. Horace Leach, who stayed in the private car, all reached Chitina last night. It is expected that the track will be cleared by tonight, when through traffic will again be resumed.

July 8

CHURCH HAS SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

Dr. W. W. Council, assisted by Dr. Chase, successfully performed an operation for the removal of the appendix of Al Church of McCarthy, at the Katalla Company hospital this morning.

Mr. Church arrived in Cordova on the train last night and it was the intention to operate at once, his condition being such as to render such action imperative, but owing to the late arrival of the train it was

deferred until this morning.

The operation was successfully performed and Mr. Church's condition this afternoon is such as to warrant the belief that his recovery will be a rapid one.

BLACKBURN, July 7— Men representing large capital have been inspecting the property of the Bonanza Gold Mines Company and there is good reason to believe that a deal for further development may result.

Harry Fagerberg nearly lost a horse in McCarthy Creek the other day. The high water swept the pack animal from its feet and banged it against the boulders. Luckily the pack came loose and the horse scrambled to a gravel bar. It collapsed soon afterwards and has been rigged up in a sling, in the hopes that it may recover.

July 15

SHUSHANNA STRIKE CONFIRMED

McCarthy, July 18 — Jim Morris and Dan Stacey returned here today from the Shushanna with news of the camp and letters for McCarthy people from parties who are now on the ground. They report the strike a genuine one, and even better than first reports indicated.

Pay has been found on Bonanza, Eldorado and other tributaries of the Shushanna, pans ranging from 75c up being common. The diggings are shallow, bedrock lying but four to five feet from the

surface. The hills are rolling and well worn, and the country offers an extensive area of promising ground. The strike is said to be the greatest since the Klondike.

Among the letters brought out is one from Axel Walstrom to John Lindquist of this place. Walstrom writes that the ground is very rich, and that he personally took out pans that run as high as \$4 and \$5 on No. 6 above on Bonanza Creek. Two men, with crude apparatus, are said to be taking out \$2,500 per day.

Laborers in the new camp command good wages, \$12 being the ruling scale at this time, and as the gravel runs but from one to five feet in depth the work is easy. There were about 25 men on the ground when Morris and Stacey left.

Morris and Stacey state that they met a large number of stampedeers bound for the Shushanna. The trip is a difficult one owing to the high waters in most of the streams. They state that the temporary shelter erected by the government on Scolai Pass last winter has undoubtedly been the means of saving many lives.

The news from the new strike has created great excitement here and a stampede for the Shushanna is now in progress. Miners at the Bonanza, Mother Lode, and from the placer camps on Dan, Chititu and other creeks are quitting their jobs and outfitting for the new camp. Several men from this place have outfit-

(Continued on next page)

THE CHITINA LEADER

July 1913 August

(Continued)

ted and are leaving at once. Horses are scarce and in great demand.

BIG STAMPEDE ON TO SHUSHANNA

(From Saturday's *Daily Alaskan*)

The greatest stampede of late years is now in progress to the new diggings on the Shushanna. The confirmation of the strike, and the glowing reports coming out as to the richness of the gravel has stirred up the prospectors as nothing since the palmy days of the Nome rush, and from all quarters of the country men are hastening at all speed to be early on the ground before it is all taken. Even as far away as Dawson the fever has seized upon the people and a number of prospectors are hurrying to the new camp with all speed. From every camp throughout the Copper River Valley, comes the report that men are leaving the mines and joining the stampede. It is said that so many men have left the placer camps of the Nizina and Dan creeks that the mines have been compelled to shut down. At Blackburn, and McCarthy no one that could get away remains and this morning word came from Chitina that more than half the population of the town had left or would leave Monday for the Shushanna. On the train which left here this morning for Kennicott a

special car had to be taken on the train at Chitina to accommodate the stampede. There is not a horse left in town that is not engaged for the trip and a special stock car has been ordered attached to tomorrow's train to carry seventeen to the end of the line.

The excitement raised by the glowing reports from the new camp has caused great excitement here and a number of Cordova people have gone or will leave here tomorrow for the interior. M. J. Sullivan, F. H. Fields and a party of five, whose names could not be ascertained, left on the special train this morning. Grant Reed, Floyd Smith, Jim Clark, Dr. Montgomery, Charles St. Clair, of Katalla, John St. Clair, who arrived on yesterday's steamer from Wallace, Idaho, will leave on the train tomorrow morning, as will a number of others whose names cannot be learned, including several members of the pile driver crew which came in day before yesterday, and five men who arrived on the Mariposa yesterday.

Messages from the interior to parties in Valdez have been the cause of a stampede from that town and several parties have already left for the scene of the strike, while others are preparing to get away as soon as possible.

Chitina reports that the news received from the Shushanna more than bears out the early reports of the richness of the strike, and there remains no doubt that it is the richest since the famous Klondike, and bids fair to equal in production that section. While there was considerable doubt expressed as to the truthfulness of the first reports, from the new camp, from parties believed to be perfectly reliable, bear out all the statements that have been made relative to the find, and there no longer remains any doubt but that the Shushanna strike will be numbered among the greatest in the north.

From the reports received it is confidently expected that pay will be found in a number of the creeks which have not yet been prospected, as the country has long been known to be highly mineralized and the formation is favorable to the occurrence of gold over a considerable area of country.

TAM DROWNS IN CHITTYSTONE

McCarthy, Alaska, July 16 - H. H. Fields brought to McCarthy the news of the drowning of a man whose name is believed to be Fred Tam, of Fairbanks, in the Chittystone. The man was with Westburg and came with the latter

from Fairbanks with pack-horses.

The animals were placed on the train and shipped to McCarthy and the two men bought their outfit here and started for the new gold stampede near White River. They joined another party headed by George William Handy. In crossing the river below Chittystone Glacier, Tam was riding behind a pack. His horse was swept from its feet and recovered later by the other members of the party. They then reported the drowning and continued on their way, having spent half a day looking for the body. It was recovered and buried by C. E. Lewis, Peter Miller and J. J. Munsell.

A party outfitted and financed by Dora Keen is on its way to the White River to start a fox farm.

Vegetables of all kinds from Long Lake are now being sold at McCarthy and Kennicott.

McCarthy held a successful Fourth of July celebration.

The Mother Lode has over twenty men employed and will begin work soon on a thousand feet tunnel.

July 22

Alaska yellow-cedar as mosquito repellent?

BY NED ROZELL

Massive Alaska yellow-cedar trees contain natural preservatives that repel mosquitoes, kill ticks, and prevent diseases from attacking other trees. Alaska yellow-cedar has the strongest wood of any in the state, and grows on coastlines from Prince William Sound to northern California. In recent years, yellow-cedar have been dying of causes other than old age on more than 500,000 acres of Southeast Alaska, and scientists aren't yet sure why. Some think it may be warm winters and springs that are limiting snowfall accumulation, exposing shallow root systems to blasts of lethal cold air. As the trees' cause of death is investigated, scientists have come up with an innovative way to utilize the dead trees.

When Alaska yellow-cedars die, they often remain standing for more than a century. Rick Kelsey and Nick Panella are two scientists who are finding uses for the mass of dead trees, beyond lumber and firewood. Kelsey, who works for the U.S. Forest Service in Corvallis, Oregon, traveled with Paul Hennon of the Forest Service in Juneau to collect heartwood samples from live and dead yellow-cedar trees in Southeast Alaska. From those samples, Kelsey and others looked at 16

compounds within the trees' essential oil. They tested a few of those compounds, nootkatin and carvacrol, in the lab and found they killed spores of *Phytophthora ramorum*, the fungus that causes sudden oak death. Sudden oak death has killed thousands of oak trees in California.

The anti-fungal compounds in Alaska yellow-cedar persist in the heartwood for up to a quarter-century after the trees die. Kelsey thinks that shavings or chips of Alaska yellow-cedar could prevent the spread of sudden oak death in some areas. He envisions spreading the chips over pathways in recreational areas where hikers and bicyclists pick up the spores that cause sudden oak death and carry them without knowing it. The chipped pathways might kill the spores before the disease can get established in a new area.

Panella is a biologist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Vector-borne Infectious Diseases, based out of Fort Collins, Colorado. He and his coworkers' search for all-natural pesticides led them to check out the virtues of dead Alaska yellow-cedar. In a lab where his agency raises about 10 different species of mosquitoes for use in experiments, Panella coated the inside of bottles with the essential oils from yellow-

cedar heartwood and dropped 25 to 50 mosquitoes into each bottle. He found that the compounds carvacrol, nootkatone, and valencene-13-OL were effective at killing *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, and that the compound nootkatol was a repellent. Both compounds did the job in many cases after being in the bottles for up to six weeks. *Aedes aegypti* don't occur in Alaska, but the mosquitoes carry dengue and yellow fever in other parts of the world.

Panella and his colleagues have mixed up a repellent from the Alaska yellow-cedar compounds and it has worked for several hours. Yellow-cedar compounds also work against ticks and fleas, Panella said, and have low toxicity to mammals. The researchers have filed patents on their mixtures as repellents and insecticides, and are talking with businesspeople who are interested in developing and selling the final products. Some day in the near future, Alaska's most valuable lumber export may also repel its worst summer pest.

This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer at the institute. He can be reached by e-mail at nrozell@gi.alaska.edu

Chitina Chamber of Commerce – up and running

Chitina: – The Chitina Chamber of Commerce is inviting area businesses to join them in their vision to advance the economic, professional and civic prosperity of their town. In short, they are working toward enhancing the business community of

Chitina. “The inclusion of your business in our organization is welcome to promote a unified business environment as Chitina grows into the future,” writes the chamber’s new president, Carla Hilgendorf, who owns and operates the Chitina House Bed and Breakfast.

A year’s membership fee costs \$100. A membership application can be acquired by writing Chitina Chamber of Commerce, HC60 Box 320, Copper Center, AK. 99573. Visit their website at www.chitina.org or email at Chitinachamber@yahoo.com.

“When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing — they believe in anything.” —G. K. Chesterton

All at your fingertips...

BLM-DNR brings land records online to your home

BY WENDY LONGTIN

For decades people have been coming to BLM offices to find out about property boundaries and easements, get land status maps and information about mining claims, and other land records data. But that may be a thing of the past, thanks to the Internet. A lot of federal, state, local and private land records are now available online at landrecords.info thanks to funding from the Alaska Cadastral Project (ACP), a partnership between the BLM and the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. As a result, you can save time and money by getting land information at home.

Since 2002, the ACP has funneled more than \$2.5 million to 13 state, local and tribal governments and agencies to develop electronic land records that are accessible online. In addition, Skagway, Sitka, Valdez and Juneau in Southeast Alaska are on track to join the program by July and will share \$600,000 with four ongoing projects this year.

The project was initiated by the Western Governors Association to move boundary systems and other geographic information from paper-based to digitized Geographic Information System (GIS) databases. As land in Alaska has been transferred to state and local governments, they have developed their own land records databases that must be available to the public.

The BLM has its land records available online and state and local governments have been digitizing

their records too with funding from the ACP, which provides a major convenience to the public.

"The importance of having the land records available to the public cannot be overemphasized," says Orrin Frederick, BLM-Alaska Geographic Coordinate Data Base branch chief. "One of the foundational aspects of the American government is land tenure. Having that information available to the public is vital and having that information accessible electronically is great."

In addition to public access, the cadastral project gives community leaders a critical tool to manage livable areas and in turn, encourage economic growth. For example, planners can use the information to route sewer or electrical systems and other infrastructure.

Having the information available also reduces confusion among resource developers, communities and village corporations, land managers, environmental groups and others who work with land records because they all are using the same data set. The information assists policymakers with decisions on various issues including disaster response, open space protection, transportation planning and wilderness designations.

LandRecords.info screen

The landrecords.info website and many of its related systems are the product of a joint project by the BLM and the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. It provides a common entrance to cadastral-related data systems by

these agencies as well as local government and Native organizations.

Mineral Estate Map

The Mining Claims Mapper (www.akmining.info) portrays both state and federal mining properties on a single, interactive website allowing the public and government agencies to view current and accurate mining and mineral property information like this mineral estate status map near Hope.

Easement Map

BLM-Alaska's Spatial Data Management System (sdms.ak.blm.gov/sdms/index.jsp) allows users to view public land records including survey information, land ownership, easements and mining claims.

Communities and agencies interested in funding from the cadastral project must submit detailed proposals. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough was granted funding in 2002 and 2003 to develop an interactive GIS website www.matsugov.us containing land parcel information, trails, city boundaries and roads.

Other communities have used funds for surveying, converting land data, and upgrading computer systems and software in an effort to get digital land records ready to go online.

For more information about the Alaska Cadastral Project, contact Orrin Frederick, BLM-Alaska, at 907-271-5236. For technical assistance using the land records websites, please contact the agency publishing the information.

(Reprinted from Summer 2005 *BLM Alaska Frontiers*)

"But bearing what we cannot change and going on with what God has given us, confident there is a destiny, somehow seems to bring a reward we wouldn't exchange for any other. It takes a lot of fire and heat to make a piece of steel." —Ronald Reagan

Book Review — The World-Famous Alaska Highway: A Guide to the Alcan and other wilderness roads of the north

Often referred to as “world famous,” the Alaska Highway is still the drive of a lifetime. Alaska Northwest Books is pleased to announce a new and fully revised edition of *The World Famous Alaska Highway: A Guide to the Alcan & Other Wilderness Roads of the North*.

The author, Tricia Brown, first drove north more than 20 years ago, enduring multiple flat tires and mechanical emergencies. Despite the hassles of that first trip, she still loves the drive and her enthusiasm and her curiosity about the people and places and history of the route shine throughout the book. She shares wonderful tidbits and lots of useful information as well. It’s as if she is sitting next to you, as your

personal guide on the trip, offering tips on what to see and do along the way.

Wending through breathtaking mountain vista, along sparkling streams and lakes, over the Canadian Rockies and into the Last Frontier, the Alaska Highway is a portal to some of the most beautiful places in North America. Follow the historic Alcan to former mining trails and ancient trading routes that today connect far-flung communities. From Dawson Creek to Fairbanks, Homer to Deadhorse, this personal and comprehensive guidebook, with 6 full-color maps and 75 photographs, details the routes, driving conditions, unique people, and all that awaits the adventurous traveler along the way. The book includes:

roadway information for routes through Alaska and Canada, historical sites, recreation hot spots, festivals, parades and more!

Each year thousands of vehicles head north to Alaska. While the Alaska Highway is not the wilderness road it once was, it still qualifies as one of the most scenic and remote drives in North America. As your personal tour guide, *The World Famous Alaska Highway* will see you through a trip of a lifetime.

The 288-page softbound book sells for \$21.95 and is published by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company of Anchorage, Alaska. Look for it at your favorite book store.

What is happening around your homestead with bears?

The National Park Service (NPS) requests information about bear activity in the Kennecott-McCarthy area. This information helps the NPS play a proactive role in helping bears and humans live together with minimal conflict. For example, based on information included in Jim Wilder’s

master's thesis about bear-human interactions in the Kennicott Valley, the NPS established a cooperative electric fencing program which provided bear-resistant electric fencing to many valley residents. The NPS hopes to continue to establish proactive programs based on information provided by local residents and

park visitors. If you see bears, or observe bears obtaining food, or experience aggressive behavior by bears, please fill out and return an observation/conflict form, available at the Kennecott Visitor Center or the McCarthy Road Information Station.

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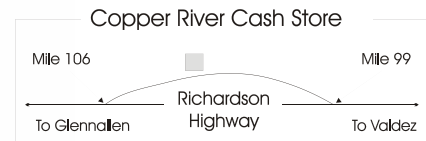
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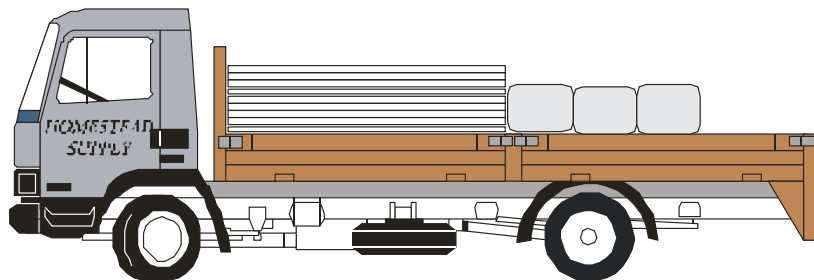
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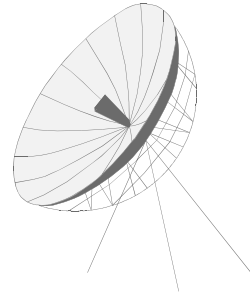
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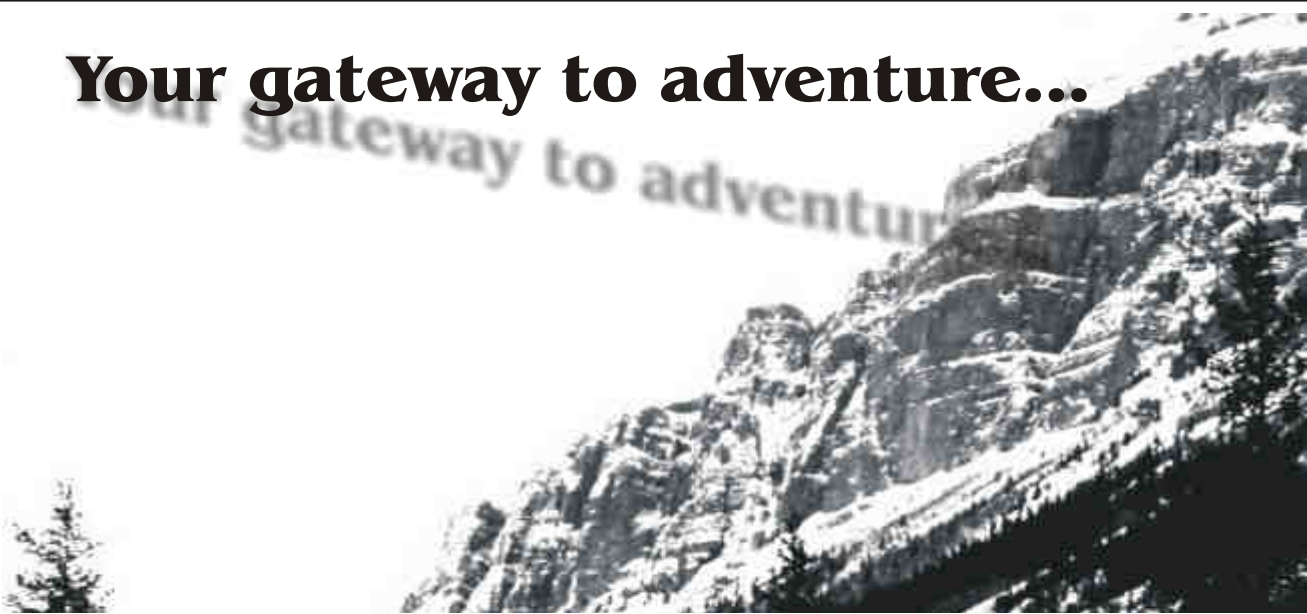
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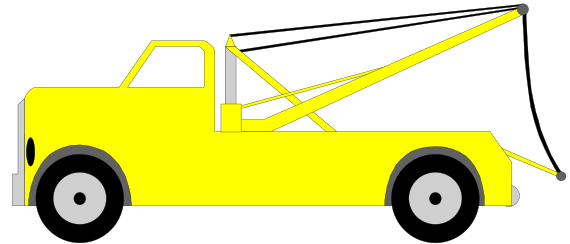
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Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Hi everyone! When you read this, Jim and I will have made the 2,000-mile trip from Tucson and be comfortably settled into our McCarthy home. I will have been able to sit and have coffee with Bonnie and her wonderful mother, Neta, and Jim will have pulled out the chess board, and we will have hugged our granddaughter, Anna, for the first time since we left last September.

I will also be cooking up a storm for all our summer visitors. Let me share some recipes.

Since I wrote you last time, I received a WONDERFUL recipe from Kristin, one of our readers in New Hampshire. I couldn't wait to try it, because we eat soups all year 'round. It is so....good!

Beef Barley Soup

- 1/2 lb. lean ground beef or stew beef
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 7 cups water
- 16 oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup pearl barley
- 1/2 cup sliced/chopped celery
- 1/2 cup sliced/chopped carrots
- 2 beef bouillon cubes
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 9 oz. frozen mixed vegetables

In Dutch Oven, brown beef. Add onion and garlic. Cook until onion is tender; drain. Add remaining ingredients, except frozen vegetables. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; cover. Simmer 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add frozen vegetables and cook 10-15 minutes more or until veggies and barley are tender. Add additional water if soup becomes too thick.

Kristin added that she uses whatever she has on hand and just makes substitutions as she needs to. I had a little of both kinds of meat so used them both.

Here is one from an old friend of mine from Virginia that is perfect if you live next door to Bonnie's garden.

Easy Garden Pie

- 2 cups broccoli or cauliflower florets
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 3/4 cup Bisquick
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
- 4 oz. shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Heat oven to 400 degrees; lightly grease pie pan 10 x 1 1/2". Mix broccoli, onion, green pepper and cheese in pie plate. Beat remaining ingredients in blender until smooth

(about 15 seconds on high). Pour into pie plate and bake 35 to 40 minutes.

Here is another that was given to me. I plan on trying it this summer for the first time. Try it with me and we'll see how it tastes!

Dutch Slaw

- 1 head cabbage, shredded
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup cooking oil
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed

Combine cabbage, pepper and onion. Pour sugar over all. Combine remaining ingredients in sauce pan and boil. Pour over cabbage and stir. Cover and refrigerate over night.

Here is a cooking tip I saw somewhere that I really liked. "Don't throw away any leftover wine. Freeze it into ice cubes for future use in stews and casseroles or sauces."

Enjoy your summer everyone, and keep in touch!

"The power to tax involves, as Chief Justice John Marshall said, the power to destroy. So does the power of tax reform, which is one reason why Rep. John Linder, a Georgia Republican, has a 133-page bill to replace 55,000 pages of tax rules. His bill would abolish the IRS and the many billions of tax forms it sends out and receives. He would erase the federal income tax system—personal and corporate income taxes, the regressive payroll tax and self-employment tax, capital gains, gift and estate taxes, the alternative minimum tax and the earned income tax credit—and replace all that with a 23 percent national sales tax on personal consumption. That would... sensitize consumers to the cost of government with every purchase. ... Today the percentage of taxpayers who rely on professional tax preparers is at an all-time high. The 67 percent of tax filers who do not itemize may think they avoid compliance costs, which include nagging uncertainty about whether one has properly complied with a tax code about the meaning of which experts differ. But everyone pays the cost of the tax system's vast drag on the economy." —George Will

A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

As in the past, April saw the last of a long winter and the end of the snow. April 2005 had above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation. The high temperature for the month was 70 on the 28th and 29th (60 on Apr. 30, '04 and 71 on Apr. 27, '03). The low was 1 on the 4th (-14 on Apr. 1, '04 and -18 on Apr. 2, '03). The average temperature for April was 37.4, compared to 36.1 in '04 and 32.8 in '03. The lowest average temperatures for April were 22.4 in 1972 and 24.7 in 1986. *Silver Lake had a high of 70 on the 30th (54 on Apr. 30, '04 and 71 on Apr. 28, '03) and a low of 6 on the 5th (-14 on Apr. 1, '04 and -12 on Apr. 2, '03). The April average temperature at Silver Lake was 36.2 (32.7 in '04 and 31.7 in '03).*

The precipitation for April was about average with 0.08 inches (0.77 inches in '04 and trace in '03). There was no snow recorded (8.7 inches in '04 and a trace in '03). *Silver Lake had 0.04 inches of precipitation in April (0.43 in '04 and none in '03) and no snow (4.5 inches in '04 and none in '03).*

Again the total snowfall at McCarthy for '04-'05 was 79.4 inches (110.6 in '03-'04, 46.0 in '02-'03, 74.2 in '01-'02, 85.2 in '00-'01,

65.8 in '99-'00 and 38.9 in '98-'99). *Silver Lake's snowfall for '04-'05 was 45.2 inches (55.5 in '03-'04, 51.0 in '02-'03 and 57.5 in '01-'02).*

McCarthy started the month with 18 inches of snow on the ground and was clear of snow on the 29th. *Silver Lake was free of snow the entire month.*

The temperatures were above average for May. The high temperature for May was 75 on the 9th (73 on May 15, '04 and 70 on May 29, '03). The low temperature was 21 on the 2nd (25 on May 4, '04 and 21 on May 6, '03). The May average temperature was 48.8. This compares with 49.3 in '04, 44.4 in '03 and 45.9 in '02. There were 7 days with a high of 70 or above. *Silver Lake had a high of 73 on the 10th (72 on May 22, '04 and 67 on May 29, '03), a low of 23 on the 2nd (26 on May 3, '04 and 25 on May 19, '03) and an average temperature of 47.6 (49.3 in '04, 44.0 in '03 and 45.0 in '02).*

The May precipitation at McCarthy was below normal with 1.64 inches of liquid. This compares with 1.05 inches in '04 and 1.42 inches in '03. There was no snow recorded in May at either McCarthy or Silver Lake. *Silver Lake recorded 2.37 inches of liquid (0.95 inches in '04 and 0.62 inches in '03).*

The ice on the West Fork of the Kennicott River began to break apart around April 15th and water was moving over the top. The river was clear of moving ice by April 25th and all the shore ice was gone by April 30th. *The ice on Silver Lake was too soft for travel in late April and it was completely gone the morning of May 11th (May 14, '04, May 5, '03 and May 21, '02).*

The first half of June was warm and dry with highs in the low to mid 70's. The lows were in the mid 30's to low 40's. Summer should be in full swing by late June. June and July are the warmest months with the highs usually in the low 80s. The temperature begins to cool in August with highs only getting into the low 70s. The all time high recorded at McCarthy was 87 on June 21, 1991. Freezing temperatures should be back by the end of August, although they can be observed at any time. Average monthly rainfall is about 2 inches (June-August). Hidden Lake should empty sometime in July, with a rapid rise of the water level in the Kennicott River and some possible flooding. The first snow usually arrives sometime in late September.

ENJOY THE SUMMER WHATEVER THE WEATHER!

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. —That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. —Declaration of Independence

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The National Park Service released a draft of *A User's Guide to Accessing Inholdings in a National Park Service Area in Alaska* in February. The document created quite a stir among Alaskans, many of whom believe the basic premises of the *Guide* are flawed.

The following link will allow people outside the NPS to view the correspondence they received on the Access User's Guide:

http://www.nps.gov/akso/access_comments/alaska_region_internet_page_access_3.htm

Below are excerpts from some of those comments.

While we support the concept of the Users' Guide, we strongly object to language in the Draft Users' Guide, issued on February 11, 2005, that would improperly impose National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") requirements on access determinations made under §1110(b) of ANILCA.

Although Congress makes clear that §1110(h) determinations are not subject to NEPA review, "Step 4" of the Draft Users' Guide erroneously requires NEPA compliance for access determinations under §1110(b).

We are committed to working with NPS to develop a comprehensive Users' Guide to Accessing Inholdings in a National Park Service Area in Alaska; however, the Guide must be consistent with ANILCA and not impede §1110(b) access determinations. Accordingly, we cannot support the Draft Users' Guide as it constitutes an illegal extension of the Secretary's authority. —**Alaska State Legislature**

Valid Existing Rights "1109 Nothing in this title shall be construed to adversely affect any valid existing right of access."

We, as a community body, and in a single voice, state that a permit process and fee structure for access to private property DOES adversely affect our "valid existing rights of access." The documentation process that we wish to assist with should reaffirm our right of access in perpetuity. Our valid existing right of

access should not be subject to review by future park administrations, either per arbitrary schedule or at time of property transfer. —**McCarthy Area Council**

The draft document is based upon the flawed notion that Alaskan inholders must secure the right to access their properties. Section 1110(b) of ANILCA states "...the State or private owner or occupier shall be given by the Secretary such rights as may be necessary to assure adequate and feasible access for economic and other purposes." Obtaining a permit forces residents to exchange their Congressional-mandated right to access for a privilege granted by the National Park Service (NPS) which may be revoked or subject to frequent renewals and crippling stipulations. We already have the right to access our properties; at question is how the NPS will recognize and document that right. —**Residents of the Wrangells**

The requirement in the 43 CFR Part 36 regulations for inholders to complete the Standard Form 299 is not appropriate. SF 229 was designed for the "transportation and utility" sections of Title XI. The Guide should address the discretion of the park managers to modify this form to require only the information originally envisioned in the 36 CFR Part 13 regulations that fit the circumstances and minimum information for new access applications to fulfill the needs of inholders. The managers should not require information unrelated to determining

"adequate and feasible" access. The Guide should include a specific modified form for this use. —**Alaska Miners Association**

The process underlying the User's Guide is flawed because NPS failed to include any stakeholders in its creation or preparation, and because it amounts to a rule-making without use of rule-making processes. Further, the User's Guide provides for a burdensome and unpredictable process that denies "adequate and feasible" access by inholders of their lands. The fees set forth in the User's Guide far exceed the costs of accessing inholdings but instead reflect NPS's attempt to burden inholders with paying for the costs of protecting unit resources. Those costs should be paid by the NPS. —**Doyon Limited**

NPS agency regulations should be changed to provide an exception for Alaskan inholders and comply with ANILCA law. Monitoring fees should not be paid by residents since NPS budgets should contain funding for normal NPS oversight of parklands. ANILCA law gives the right to access "for economic and other purposes"; neither private nor commercial landowners should have to pay annual rental fees for their access. —**Residents of the Wrangells**

Rather than limit access, Congress's main concern in ANILCA was to ensure "adequate and feasible," and *safe*, access. Congress stated that Inholders and their suc-

cessors in interest have “the right to traverse the federal land with aircraft, motor boats, or land vehicles, and to use such parts of the federal lands as are necessary to construct *safe* routes for such vehicles.” The draft User’s Guide, on the other hand, claims NPS could require access by “float or ski-equipped plane,” rather than allow an Inholder to use a driveway. The draft User’s Guide also has route determination backwards. Early Federal Regulations implementing ANILCA made clear that the Inholder had the right to select “the routes and methods desired” for access. The draft User’s Guide, however, states that NPS “is responsible for determining the specific terms and conditions, including the route, in the right-of-way permit.” —**Slana Alaskans Unite**

In summary, while we concur that a consistent policy for access to inholdings within CSUs in Alaska is desirable, we find the current users guide as drafted to be ill conceived. Without wholesale changes the document will only entrench the agency’s unwillingness to provide the reasonable access as envisioned by Congress. The agency should step back and recognizing that 1110 of ANILCA is not withstanding other provisions of federal law, develop a streamlined means of adjudicating these preexisting access rights devoid of fees and cumbersome procedures. Such access rights when adjudicated should be perpetual and appurtenant to the inholding. —**Chugach Alaska Corporation**

On page one of the Draft User’s Guide the NPS states, “We want the process of obtaining access across park areas to be as straightforward

as possible, while also assuring protection of park resources.” Relying upon the NEPA process, charging unnecessary fees and establishing an arbitrary 10-year lifespan for right-of-way permits are actions inconsistent with the goal of making park access as straightforward as possible. RDC believes the NPS can employ other, less burdensome, means to ensure inholders exercise their property and access rights appropriately. —**Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc.**

Restrictions on types of vehicles used, frequency and number of passes, seasonal use, ranger escorts, and maintenance represent a form of closure imposed before any resource damage is assessed. Any perceived damage should be discussed with residents to correct the situation before any type of stipulations are imposed. Closures should be made only after failure to reach a compromise with the resident, public meetings in the affected area and through normal NPS closure procedures. Residents should not be held responsible or punished for damages to their rights-of-way incurred by the general public. —**Residents of the Wrangells**

SAU proposes this draft be scrapped in its entirety. Instead, NPS should promulgate a User’s Guide which includes a categorical exclusion for access established prior to ANILCA as well as certain other types of access. Most of all, the finished User’s Guide should be based upon accurate principles of law. It should streamline, rather than simply promote unfettered NPS discretion over, the access process. —**Slana Alaskans Unite**

Also as a general comment, we recommend that the NPS recognize

and treat existing pre-park access and associated access facilities different from access rights that involve new construction. This would be much less burdensome for both the inholders and the NPS. There needs to be a clear mechanism to assure that the access accompanies the title of the inholding so the existing access is properly documented as a permanent right, which was as intended by Congress. —**Alaska Miners Association**

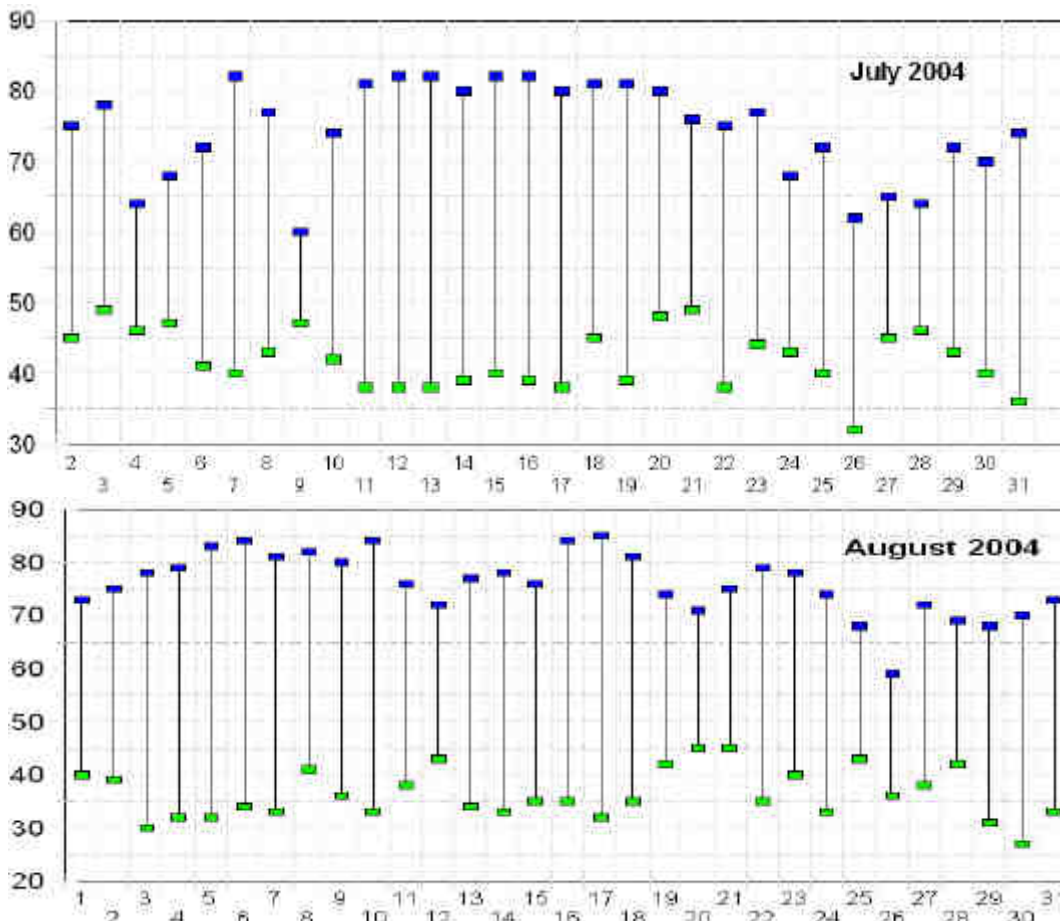
Our primary comment is one of tone. We recommend greater emphasis be given to the fact that access requests may be modified to protect park resources. What’s guaranteed is “adequate and feasible” access, not necessarily the applicant’s preferred mode of access. Since the document is primarily about the process of making a request, some readers may inadvertently conclude that if they correctly apply for a permit and provide all the requested information they will be granted a permit with the terms and conditions they seek. — **National Parks and Conservation Association**

Our mission is to advocate for the natural integrity of Denali National Park and environs. We support the fee structure listed here. NPS needs to make clear that this is for permit applications, and that costs of an EA or EIS will be higher.

Protection of designated and de facto wilderness: The guide should stipulate that access through designated Wilderness, though legal under ANILCA, may be subject to more stringent regulation to protect park resources. —**Denali Citizens Council**

“Democracy extends the sphere of individual freedom, socialism restricts it. Democracy attaches all possible value to each man; socialism makes each man a mere agent, a mere number. Democracy and socialism have nothing in common but one word: quality. But notice the difference: while democracy seeks equality in liberty, socialism seeks equality in restraint and servitude.” —Alexis de Tocqueville

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