



# Initial Study Report Meeting

## Study 10.19 Evaluation of Wildlife Habitat Use

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Prepared by

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## Study 10.19 Objectives

- Use Project-specific survey data and scientific literature to **determine local habitat associations** for selected wildlife species occurring in the Project area that are of conservation, management, subsistence/cultural, or ecological concern.
- Categorically **rank habitat values** for each selected wildlife species for each of the wildlife habitat types being mapped for the Project.

## Study 10.19 Components

- Selection of bird, mammal, and amphibian species for assessment, emphasizing species that are of conservation, management, subsistence/cultural, or ecological concern (RSP Section 10.19.4.1).
- Categorically rank habitat values for each species and local mapped habitat type using Project-specific survey data as much as possible and the scientific literature when local data are not available (RSP Section 10.19.4.1).

## Study 10.19 Variances

- The selection of species and the initial literature review for this study have been deferred to 2015, rather than being initiated in 2013 as proposed in RSP Section 10.19.6. This study involves the use of data from other studies and can be completed in one study year.
- This study cannot be completed until mapping and data are available from Study 11.5 (Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Mapping Study in the Upper and Middle Susitna Basin), Study 11.6 (Riparian Vegetation Study Downstream of the Proposed Susitna-Watana Dam), and various wildlife studies (Studies 10.5 through 10.18), as described in RSP Section 10.19.4.

## Study 10.19 Summary of Results in ISR (ISR Part A – Section 5)

- No work has been initiated on this study; the study will be completed in 2015 and the findings will be reported in the USR.

# AEA Proposed Modifications to Study 10.19 in ISR (ISR Part C – Section 7.1.2)

- The 4-mile study area buffer surrounding the proposed Project areas and access road/transmission alignments has been reduced to a 2-mile buffer. This change corresponds directly to the reduction of the study area buffer for Study 11.5 (Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Mapping Study in the Upper and Middle Susitna Basin) because the habitat data for the Project area used in this study will come from the habitat map prepared for Study 11.5.
- AEA added the alternative Denali East Option (access road and transmission line corridor) to the study area; for this study, the new corridor includes a 2-mile buffer surrounding the road and transmission line alignments for the Denali East Option.
- In contrast to a selected set of bird species of concern for analysis, as described in the RSP, each bird species recorded in the study area will be ranked for habitat values for each mapped wildlife habitat type. This modification will increase the amount of information available to assess impacts on bird species from the proposed Project.



## New Modifications to Study 10.19 since ISR

The Chulitna Corridor has been dropped from the study area.

## Steps to Complete Study 10.19 (ISR Part C – Section 7.1)

Following completion of the Project-specific wildlife habitat mapping and wildlife surveys:

- Select mammal species to evaluate for habitat use (all bird species recorded in the Project area will be evaluated, as will the single amphibian species).
- Use Project-specific wildlife survey data (from Studies 10.5 through 10.18) and, when needed, from the scientific literature to assess habitat associations for the species selected for evaluation.
- Categorically rank habitat values for each selected wildlife species for each of the wildlife habitat types being mapped in the study area (i.e., the combined study areas for Studies 11.5 and 11.6).

## Licensing Participants' Proposed Modifications to Study 10.19?

- Agencies
- CIRWG members and Ahtna
- Public