

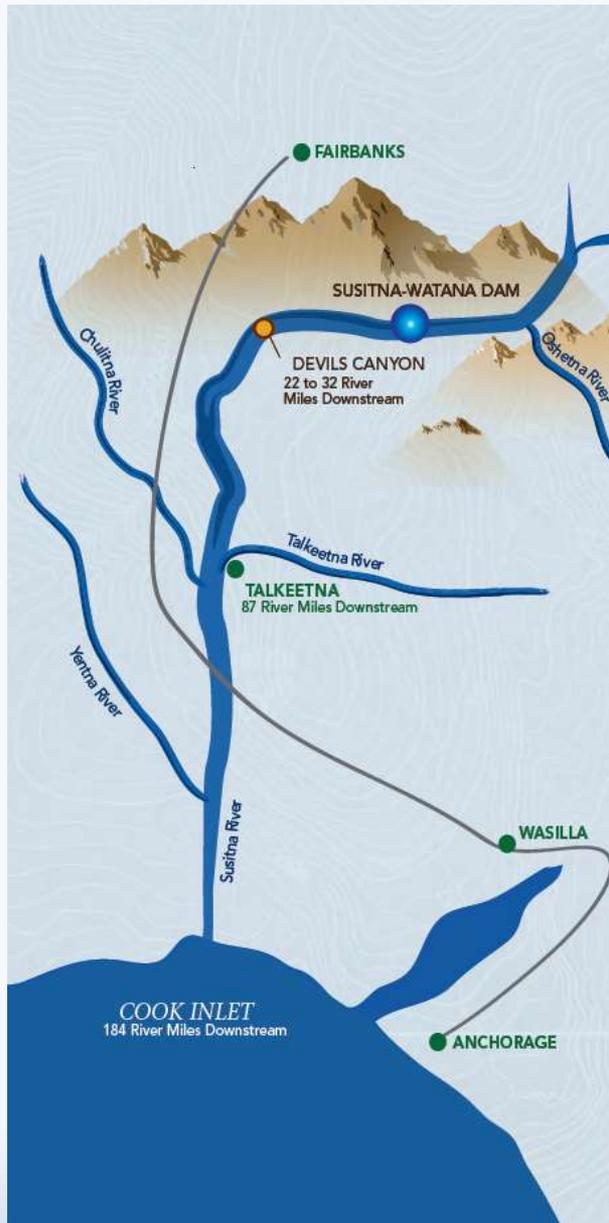
Initial Study Report Meeting

Study 11.8 Rare Plants

October 21, 2014

Prepared by

*ABR, Inc.—Environmental
Research & Services*



Study 11.8 Objectives

- Identify habitats in the Project area that may support rare vascular plant species, which were previously found within a broad region surrounding the Project area
- Search those habitats in portions of the Project area that would be disturbed by Project construction and operations activities for populations of rare vascular plant species
- Map the locations and estimate population sizes for any rare species found

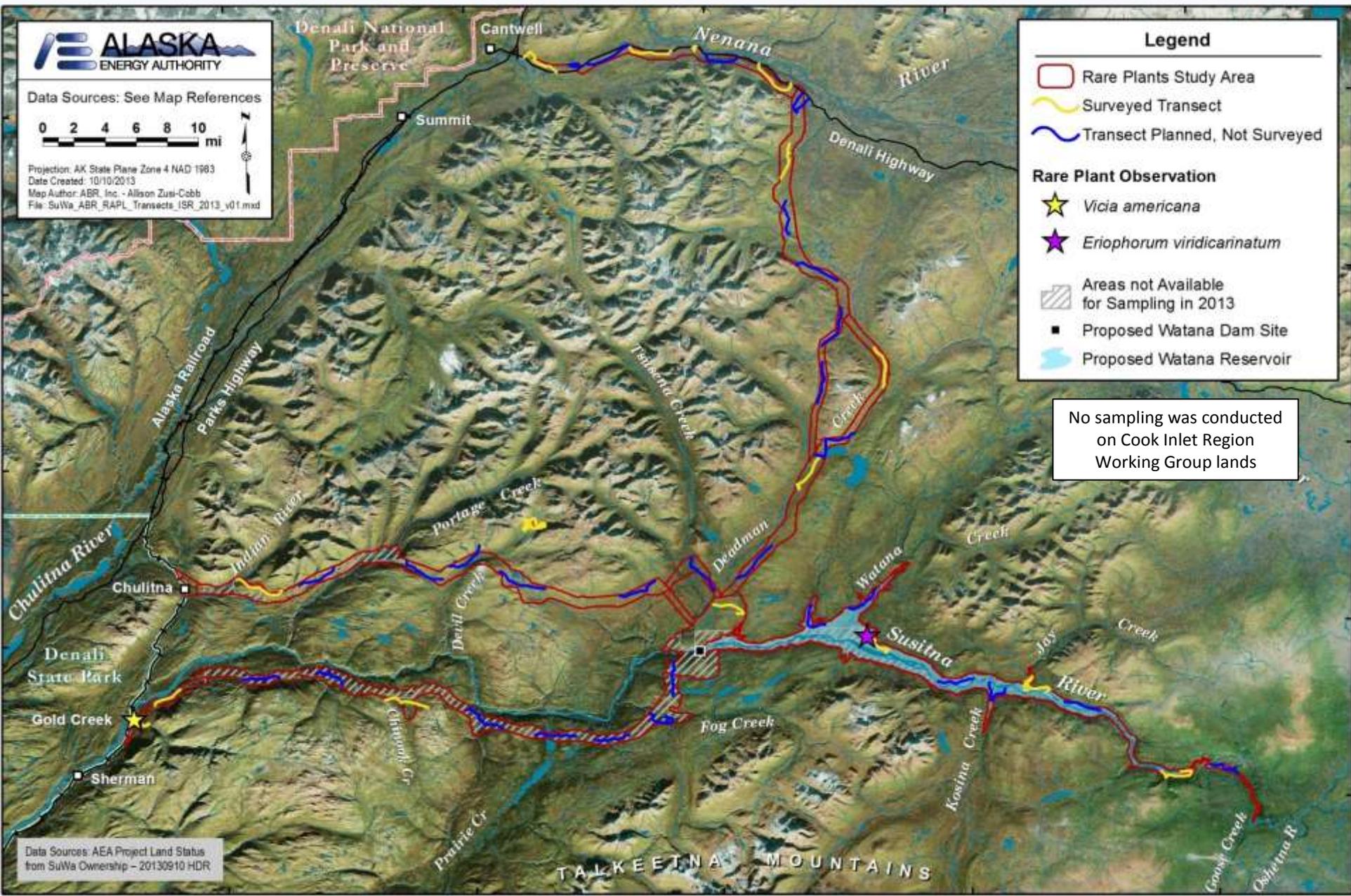
Study 11.8 Components

- Selection of focal species and habitats in which to search for rare plant populations—using data from the records of rare plants previously collected in a broad region surrounding the Project area (ISR Part A, Section 4.1, p. 2)
- Work focused on those species listed as more rare within the state (S1, S1S2, S2, and S2S3 rankings) by the Alaska Natural Heritage Program (ISR Part A, Section 4.1, p. 2)
- Field surveys for rare vascular plant taxa (ISR Part A, Section 4.2, p. 3)

Study 11.8 Variances

There were no variances from the methods for the selection of focal species and habitats, and the field surveys for rare plants as described in the RSP (Section 11.8.4.1)

Study 11.8 Summary of Results in ISR (ISR Part A – Section 5)



Data Sources: AEA Project Land Status from SuWa Ownership - 20130910 HDR

Study 11.8 Summary of Results in ISR (ISR Part A – Section 5)

- Field surveys conducted in early July and early August, 2013; a total of 16 transects were sampled
- Two rare species were found; both identifications have been confirmed by UAF Herbarium staff:
 - *Vicia americana* (American vetch; S2) was found at Gold Creek Camp at the western end of the Gold Creek Corridor
 - *Eriophorum viridicarinatum* (thinleaf cottonsedge; S2S3) was found on a terrace above the Susitna River in the proposed Watana Reservoir near PRM 199; it was also found by other botanical field crews outside of the rare plant study area
- Several other rare taxa were found in other Project botanical studies (identifications yet to be confirmed)

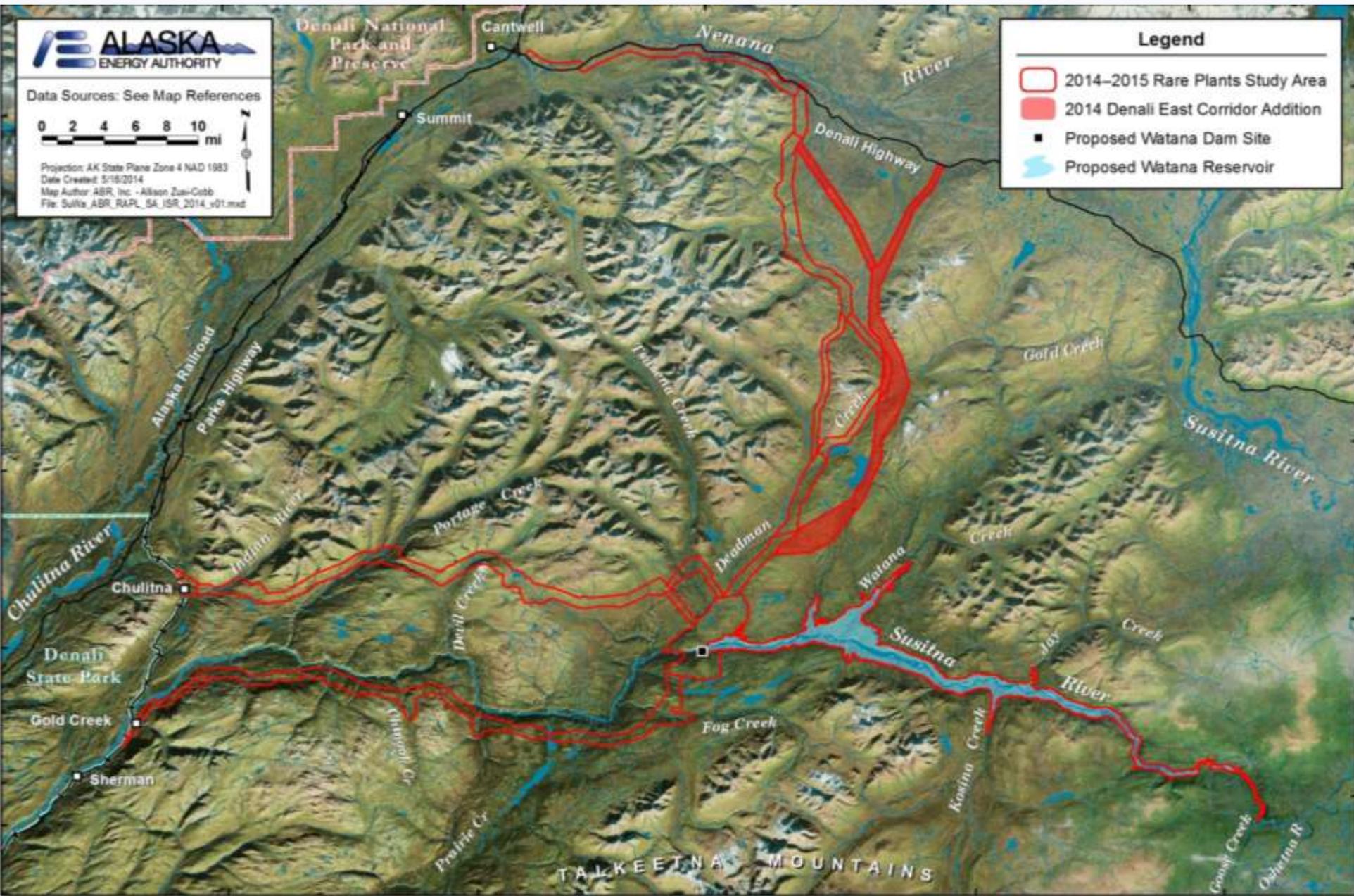
Study 11.8 Summary of Results since ISR

No additional work has been conducted for this study since submittal of the ISR.

AEA Proposed Modifications to Study 11.8 in ISR (ISR Part C – Section 7.1.2)

- No modifications to the Study Plan methods are needed to complete this study and meet the Study Plan objectives.
- However, the study area has changed from that described in the RSP (Section 11.8.3), with the addition of the alternative Denali Corridor East Option road and transmission line corridor. The corridor addition to the study area includes the Project area buffer surrounding the road and transmission line alignments of new Denali Corridor East Option.

AEA Proposed Revision to Study Area (ISR Study 11.8, Part C – Section 7.1.2)



New Modifications to Study 11.8 since ISR

The Chulitna Corridor has been dropped from the study area.

Current Status Study 11.8

- In 2013, field surveys for rare plants were completed as described in the RSP (Section 11.8.4.1) with no variances; no field surveys were conducted in 2014.
- In 2013, the study team was able to sample a wide range of habitat types in the study area that could have harbored rare plants, as described in the RSP (Section 11.8.4.1), and found two rare species.
- Due to access restrictions in 2013, researchers were unable to sample CIRWG lands in the Gold Creek Corridor and in the southwestern part of the proposed Watana Reservoir. To complete the survey of the Project area, field surveys for rare plants will be conducted in those areas in 2015.
- No work was performed on the Rare Plant Study in 2014.

Steps to Complete Study 11.8 (ISR Part C – Section 7.1)

- Using the list of rare plant species compiled in 2013, conduct field surveys in 2015 to locate any additional populations of rare vascular plant species that occur in those portions of the Project area that were unsurveyed in 2013 and could be disturbed by Project construction and operations activities (RSP Section 11.8.4.1).
- Estimate population sizes for any rare vascular plant species found in 2013 and 2015 and map their locations in GIS (RSP Section 11.8.4.1).
- Both of these tasks will be completed as described in the ISR.

Licensing Participants Proposed Modifications to Study 11.8?

- **Agencies**
- **CIRWG members and Ahtna**
- **Public**