

Wildlife Restoration
FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Restoration Grant

GRANT NUMBER: AKW-14

PROJECT NUMBER: 2.0

PROJECT TITLE: Hunter Access Projects FY2016: Denali Highway Trailhead Kiosks

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: December 1, 2015–July 30, 2020

REPORT DUE DATE: March 1, 2020

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This is the final report for a multi-year project. This template is applicable to both:

- the final closeout report of a multi-year grant; or
- the final closeout report of a multi-year project within the annual operating grant, summarizing all accomplishments for all objectives.

Authorities: 2 CFR 200.328
2 CFR 200.301
50 CFR 80.90

I. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON PROJECT

Objective 1: Trailhead Kiosks – Denali Highway

Accomplishments:

Spring/summer of 2017: Trailhead kiosks were designed and fabricated through the DNR Interpretation and Education section. A cultural resource review (Form B) was submitted

and the activity was found to be exempt under Appendix B of the PA and nothing further was required for NHPA compliance.

Spring 2018: A contract was awarded to Happy Trails, Inc. for the installation of the kiosks, however due to weather the installation was postponed until summer 2019.

Spring 2019: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requested that the Butte Creek trailhead kiosk be removed from the project as it is not on State owned land. ADF&G submitted this request to FWS as a significant development report which was approved. Additionally, DNR underestimated the cost of installation and additional funds were required to complete the project. DNR requested that ADF&G allow additional funds for the Trailhead Kiosk project by transferring the remaining balance of \$18,507.10 from the AKW-14-1-2016 Project 1.0 Maclaren Summit Trail Extension. ADF&G submitted this request to FWS as a significant development report which was also approved.

Summer 2019: Happy Trails, Inc. completed installation of the kiosks and the project is now completed in full.

Federal funds expended on this project totaled \$44,251.26 (72%), match funds of \$17,040.33 (28%) were paid by the DNR for a total project cost of \$61,291.59. There are remaining funds of \$12,756.74 that will be released back to the program.

II. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.

Objective 1: Trailhead Kiosks – Denali Highway

Since the last interim reporting period the installation of kiosks has been completed and the project is now completed in full in accordance with the grant requirements. Spring 2019 ADF&G submitted significant development reports to allow DNR to remove the kiosk sign from the Butte Creek trailhead and to roll \$18,507.10 from AKW-14-1-2016 Project 1.0 to this project. Both were approved.

III. PUBLICATIONS

Below are pictures of the interpretative panels that were placed at each of the Denali Highway trailheads as part of this project.

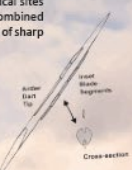
Tangle Lakes Archaeological District Special Use Area

Hunting Prehistory

Today's Tangle Lakes caribou hunters continue a traditional harvest that began thousands of years ago at the end of the last great Ice Age. As we travel across the landscape the evidence of these ancient hunters is all around us.

People of the Early Tundra

Vast glaciers and glacial lakes covered the Denali Highway region until about 14,000 years ago. By 13,000 years ago the glaciers had melted and a shrub-tundra habitat rich in forage for caribou and other game animals covered the land. At least 12,000 years ago prehistoric hunters belonging to the Denali Complex culture had discovered these upland hunting grounds. The Denali Complex hunters left behind dozens of archaeological sites containing evidence of spear points that combined sharpened antler cylinders with tiny insets of sharp stone that created a cutting edge.




The Great Gap

Denali Complex hunters mysteriously disappeared from the Tangle Lakes about 10,200 years ago and for over 5,000 years the region was unoccupied. Archaeologists have yet to discover why people abandoned the uplands for so many centuries. A combination of events may have driven them out. Catastrophic floods occurred at about this time when the natural dams holding back two huge glacial lakes collapsed. Also, the climate became warmer and wetter, and spruce trees flourished above the modern tree-line. These events may have reduced tundra habitat for caribou, robbing the Denali Complex people of their main source of food.

New People, New Tools


At about 5,300 years ago, a new culture, archaeologists call the Northern Archaic, arrived in the Tangles Lakes. They brought with them many different types of tools, including stone spear tips with notched bases and hide scraping tools. They also made more substantial dwellings than the preceding Denali Complex people, now seen as shallow house pits with a central fire ring. Climate in the region had been cooling for several thousand years prior to the appearance of the Northern Archaic hunters, and over time this may have improved the tundra habitat enough that caribou returned in large numbers. Northern Archaic sites discovered around the lakes contain both caribou and beaver bones with butchering marks found close to fire circles. About 4,000 years ago a great volcanic ash fall occurred, covering the land and disrupting caribou habitat. Following the ash fall, the Northern Archaic people disappeared temporarily from Tangle Lakes, returning only after the caribou had recovered hundreds of years later.

Timeline of Tangle Lakes



Prehistoric Athabaskans – High Tech Hunters

For many thousands of years prehistoric Alaskans used light weight throwing spears as their main hunting weapon. A wooden implement called a throwing board was also used as an extension of the hunter's arm to add greater velocity to the spear cast. About 1,300 years ago the bow and arrow replaced throwing spears as shown by dozens of radiocarbon dated examples found melting from permanent ice patches in the mountains of Alaska and Yukon Territory. Beaten copper implements appeared in prehistoric sites at about the same time. These technologies are hallmarks of Prehistoric Athabaskan culture and are evidence that the immediate ancestors of the Ahtna people of the Copper River basin used the Tangle Lakes as part of their yearly subsistence cycle.






Figure 1. Close up of hunting history interpretative panel design installed at each trailhead.



Figure 2. Close up of Glacier Gap trailhead interpretative panel design.



Figure 3. Close up of Landmark Gap trailhead interpretative panel design.



Figure 4. Close up of Maclaren River trailhead interpretative panel design.

Tangle Lakes Archaeological District Special Use Area

Maclaren Summit Trailhead

The first hunters to roam this area 12,000 years ago used tools made from the landscape around them to survive.

Maclaren Summit Trail  (MP 37)

This 8.4 mile trail provides access across the tundra at Maclaren Summit, opening up fantastic views and ending at the west end of Sevenmile Lake. This trail is located within the Department of Fish and Game's Clearwater Creek Control Use Area, which prohibits hunting with motorized vehicles.



Please Ride Responsibly

- Do not collect or disturb artifacts
- Stay on designated trails

Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks & Recreation
www.dnr.state.ak.us
4575-266-4029

Figure 5. Close up of Maclaren Summit trailhead interpretative panel.



Figure 6. Photo of Maclaren Summit trailhead kiosks after installation.



Figure 7. Photo of Glacier Gap trailhead kiosks after installation.



Figure 8. Photo of Landmark Gap-North trailhead kiosks after installation.



Figure 9. Photo of Maclaren River trailhead kiosk after installation.

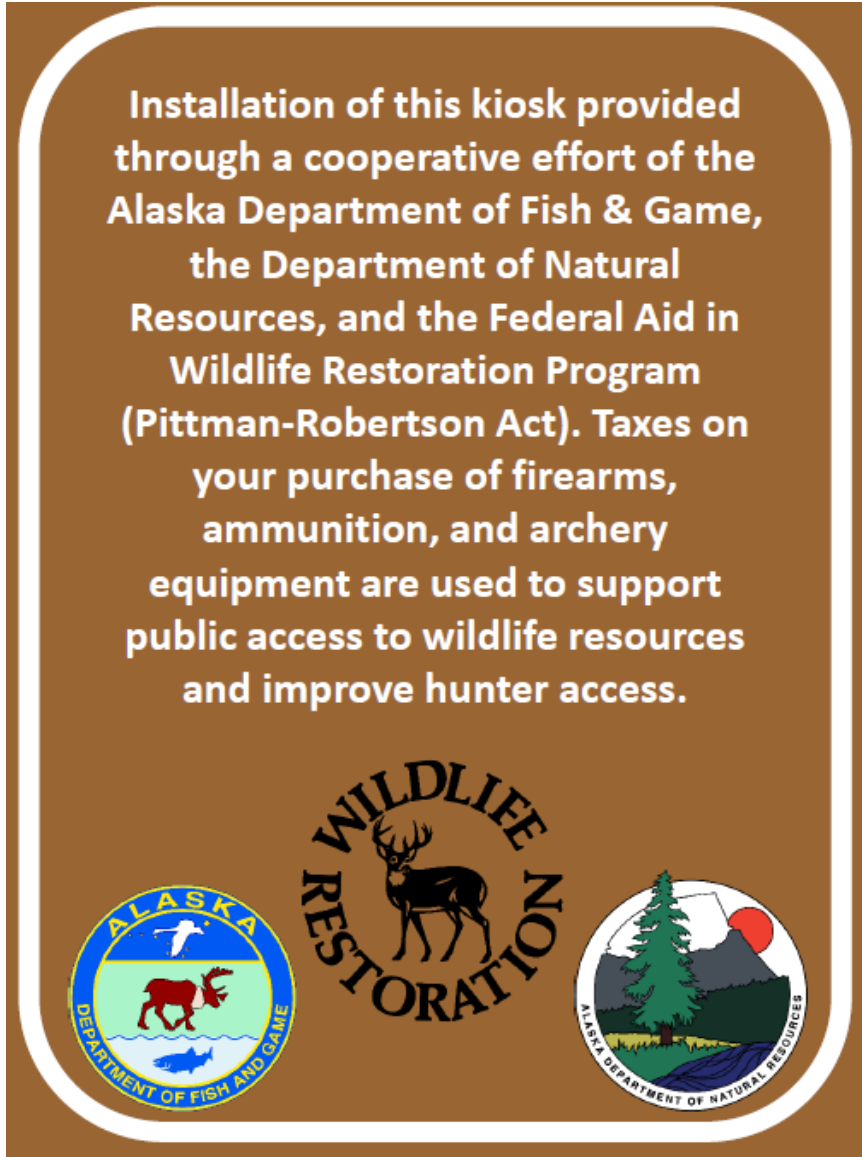


Figure 10. Sign attached to the leg of one kiosk at each trailhead.

I. REVIEW OF PRIOR RESEARCH AND STUDIES IN PROGRESS ON THE PROBLEM OR NEED

No problems were encountered during the final reporting period.

Prepared by:

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