

5.	Communications Systems	.	.	.	.	.	.	104
6.	Computer Systems	.	.	.	.	.	.	104
7.	Other.	.	.	.	.	.	Nothing To Report	

J. OTHER ITEMS

1.	Cooperative Programs.	.	.	.	.	.	Nothing To Report
2.	Other Economic Uses	Nothing To Report
3.	Credits	104

K. FEEDBACK

1.	Summary	Nothing To Report
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L. INFORMATION PACKET



Spruce grouse, known locally as a 'chicken' (BA 8/94).

INTRODUCTION

Innoko National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) was established December 2, 1980, with the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The Refuge is located in west central Alaska, about 270 miles southwest of Fairbanks and 221 miles northwest of Anchorage. The Refuge headquarters is in McGrath, a community located on the south bank of the Kuskokwim River approximately 70 miles east of the Refuge boundary. The exterior boundaries encompass approximately 3.8 million acres. After the conveyance of Native allotments, village and Native regional corporation (Doyon, Inc.) lands, and state lands, the Refuge will consist of approximately 3.5 million acres.

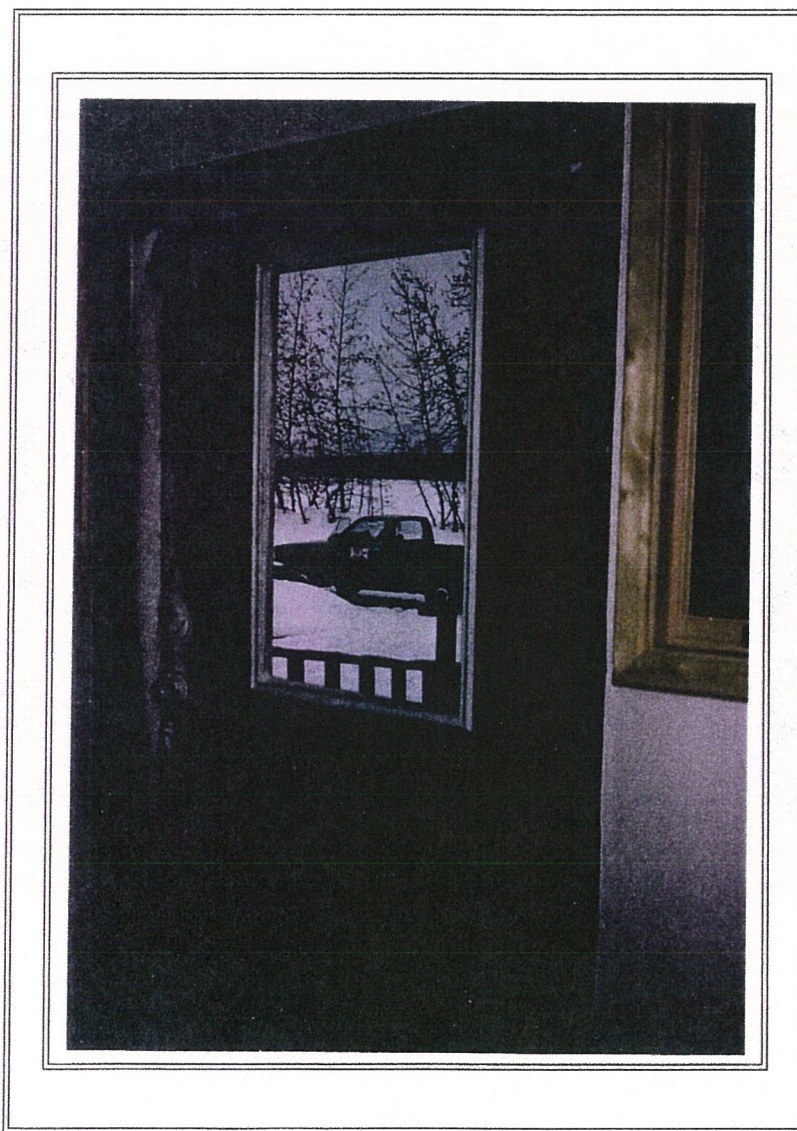
Innoko Refuge is a relatively flat plain with the highest point reaching 1461 feet. Water dominates the landscape with the Yukon River forming the western border of the Refuge, while the Innoko, Iditarod, Dishna and Yetna Rivers flow through the Innoko Wilderness Area. These rivers tend to be slow-moving and silty with innumerable small lakes, streams, and bogs occurring over much of the Refuge. Wetlands are particularly abundant across the southeast quadrant. Many of the bogs support thick, floating mats of vegetation which give the appearance of solid ground. Much of this rich wetland area depends on the yearly flooding and drawdown regime for nutrient input. To a lesser extent, wildfire also plays an important role.

The vegetation of the Refuge reflects a transition zone between the boreal forest of interior Alaska, and the shrub-land and tundra types common in western and northern Alaska. White spruce dominates in large stands along the rivers where the soil is better-drained. Numerous fires have set vast areas back to earlier seral stages of aspen, birch, and willow. Black spruce muskegs or bogs develop on the poorly-drained soils. Dense willow stands are common along the rivers and sloughs. The most conspicuous characteristic of the vegetation is the complex interspersed of types.

A primary focus of the Refuge is the protection of the extensive wetlands which serve as nesting and breeding habitat for as many as 250,000 waterfowl; primarily wigeon, pintail, scaup, white-fronted geese, Canada geese, tundra and trumpeter swans. Innoko Refuge is well known for its large beaver population. Moose are abundant and provide an important source of meat for local residents. The success of the moose population is attributed to flooding that enhances the growth of willow which is the major winter food of moose. In addition to these species, wolf, black bear, grizzly bear, other furbearers, and caribou inhabit the Refuge. Fish including salmon, sheefish, and especially northern pike, abound in Refuge streams and lakes supporting subsistence and sport fisheries.

B. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS1. Summary**Winter:**

The year began in typical interior Alaska "style", dark and cold. Temperatures in January remained mostly below zero. The monthly low temperature, recorded on January 10th was -46°F , while the average temperature for the entire month was -8.3°F . The mercury climbed to reflect a high temperature of 27°F on the 30th. January's total precipitation was 28.7 inches of snow which contained 1.96 inches of water. The cold, in conjunction with total snow accumulation at 139.1 inches for the season, made it tough for wildlife and people. This pattern of winter weather continued throughout February, but with moderation in both temperature and precipitation by month's end.



Frost accumulated on the door during -40°F temperatures (SC 1/94)

Spring:

March weather provided relief from "cabin fever" with relatively pleasant temperatures and long, sunny days. The average temperature in March was 18.8°F, with a high of 48°F recorded on the 28th. Average high temperatures recorded in April and May were 42.4°F and 61.3°F, respectively. Ice break-up on the Kuskokwim River occurred during the first week in May in a rather benign manner, with break-up on the Yukon River occurring approximately three weeks later. McGrath escaped the usual spring flooding caused by ice jamming except for minor road and culvert damage on the outskirts of the village. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for our field headquarters on the Innoko River where we received the usual high water and associated problems.



A cow moose and her new spring calf (BA 5/94).