

*Kenai*

REFUGE NARRATIVE REPORT

May - August, 1956

US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE--ALASKA  
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KENAI NATIONAL MOOSE RANGE

Kenai

Alaska

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KENAI NATIONAL MOOSE RANGE

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U. S. DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR  
Fish & Wildlife Service  
Kenai, Alaska

US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE--ALASKA



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Kenai Alaska

## I GENERAL

A. Weather Conditions

Rainfall and maximum temperatures as recorded at the Kenai  
CAA were as follows:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Rainfall (in inches)</u>			<u>Maximum Temperatures</u>		
	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>
1	.02	0	0	57	54	63
2	0	0	0	51	53	62
3	.03	T	0	52	58	58
4	T	0	0	53	60	58
5	0	0	.12	55	66	57
6	0	0	.78	54	68	62
7	0	0	0	53	55	59
8	0	0	0	49	54	70
9	T	.05	0	46	52	59
10	.01	.25	0	51	50	60
11	0	.17	0	61	58	69
12	T	0	0	61	69	68
13	.05	0	.11	56	71	56
14	0	0	.20	57	69	64
15	T	0	.20	70	69	68
16	T	0	.02	63	57	69
17	0	T	T	64	54	69
18	T	.01	.16	63	60	63
19	0	T	.04	54	63	61
20	.06	0	.06	48	69	56
21	.46	.20	.21	47	58	62
22	.05	.23	.23	55	59	60
23	0	.01	.02	54	61	58
24	.04	.12	.11	49	63	58
25	T	0	.04	59	59	56
26	0	0	.03	65	59	59
27	T	T	.24	60	57	55
28	T	.01	.04	55	56	61
29	T	0	.23	55	63	59
30	0	.29	T	57	59	56
31		.78	.02		61	61

## B. Water Conditions

Prolonged rainy spells during August raised the water level in swamps and ponds slightly above normal for the period.

## C. Fires

The entire summer was marked by damp weather which resulted in a low fire danger. During a brief dry spell in early July, three small fires aggregating less than one acre occurred as follows:

Date	No. F.R.	Origin	Cause	Acre Size	Est. Damages	HLM Suppression Cost
7/1	#1	R.L.	Campfire	1/4 acre	-0-	\$29.44
7/6	#2	R.L.	"	1/10 "	-0-	11.03
7/6	#3	R.L.	"	1/2 "	-0-	44.16

Dave Schroer, Bureau Land Management fire guard, remained on duty at the Skilak Guard Station throughout the period.

## II WILDLIFE

### A. Migratory Birds

Local nesting of mallards and scaup was noted on a few of the small ponds and potholes in the lowland forested area. The first migrating geese were seen at high altitudes passing eastward through the Kenai Range on August 29, 1956.

### B. Upland Game Birds

The observed hatching success of spruce grouse was good. Crown broods averaging five birds were frequently seen towards the end of the period throughout the lowland area.

### C. Big Game

Moose:

No composition or distribution counts were made during the period. During the first ten days of the hunting season during August, the moose population appeared relatively low on the

flatland area and the headwaters of the Funny River. General observations on calves indicated a normal or slightly high production for this area. An additional eleven dead moose were found during the early part of the period - probably all late winter kills. These included three calves, five adults and three unknown.

#### Sheep Surveys:

Composition counts were made afoot by D. Klein under the Federal Aid program on Indian Creek and Surprise Mountain in June.

Klein checked 188 sheep on the north and south forks of Indian Creek. These included 16.4% lambs and 26 legal rams.

Eighty-eight sheep were checked on Surprise Mountain including 15% lambs and 23 legal rams.

Intensive aerial surveys were made of the Moose Range sheep ranges on August 29 and September 6, 1956. A total of 671 sheep were counted on Moose Range lands. TABLE I shows the recorded composition of this count by areas. MAP I shows the approximate distribution of sheep on the Range.

TABLE II lists total aerial sheep counts on the Moose Range for the period 1949 to 1956. The count this year of 671 as contrasted with counts of previous years which did not exceed 500 is indicative of error in former counts. It seems likely that some sheep were missed in 1954 and 1955. Topography is such that it is unlikely that sheep would move into this area from other Kenai ranges. Rams recorded are probably those with 1/2 curl or larger that can be readily distinguished from the air.

Five sheep were recorded on Round Mountain just north of the Kenai River. Sheep have not been seen in this area for ten years.

#### Mountain Goat

A total of 91 mountain goats were tallied on the Moose Range during surveys on August 29 and September 6, 1956. Of these, twelve were recorded as Kids. MAP II shows the distribution of these goats. TABLE II records the Moose Range goat counts for the period 1949-1956. The counts show no particular population changes over the period. Two of the counts are incomplete. No count was made in 1950. Movement of goats off and on the Refuge occurs to the extent that populations are normally variable from year to year.

TABLE I

Sheep Survey

Kenai National Moose Range - 1956

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number Recorded</u>	<u>Limbs</u>	<u>Rams</u>	<u>Others</u>
Sheep Creek	53	4	22	27
Fox River-Tustumena Glacier	69	9	28	32
Tustumena Glacier-S. Fork Indian Creek	147	10	27	110
S. Fork-N. Fork Indian Creek	86	3	32	51
N. Fork Indian Creek-Killey River	193	40	24	129
Killey River-Benjamin Creek	23		21	2
Benjamin Creek	25	4	12	9
Surprise Mountain	70	8	4	58
Round Mountain	<u>5</u>			<u>5</u>
Totals:	671	78	170	423

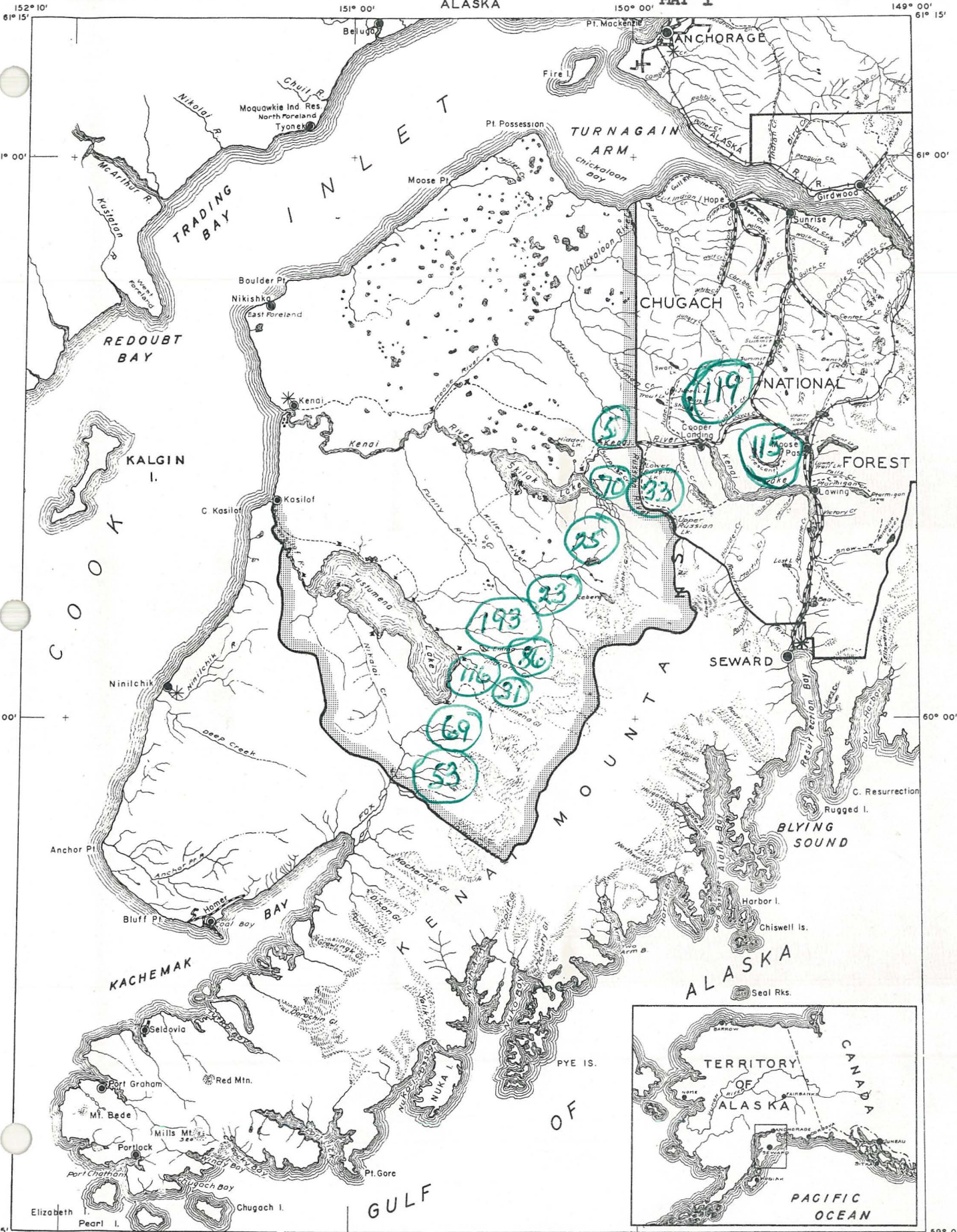
# KENAI NATIONAL MOOSE RANGE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

ALASKA

MAP I

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



COMPILED IN THE DIVISION OF LAND ACQUISITION  
BASE BY U.S.D. OF A. FOREST SERVICE.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 1956

Scale



SHEEP SURVEY  
1956



MEAN DECLINATION  
1934

TABLE II

Sheep & Goat Surveys - 1956

## Kenai National Moose Range

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Goat</u>
1949	169	37 (incomplete)
1950	---	---
1951	350	90
1952	440	40 (incomplete)
1953	499	37 (incomplete)
1954	480	41
1955	455	58
1956	671	91

# KENAI NATIONAL MOOSE RANGE

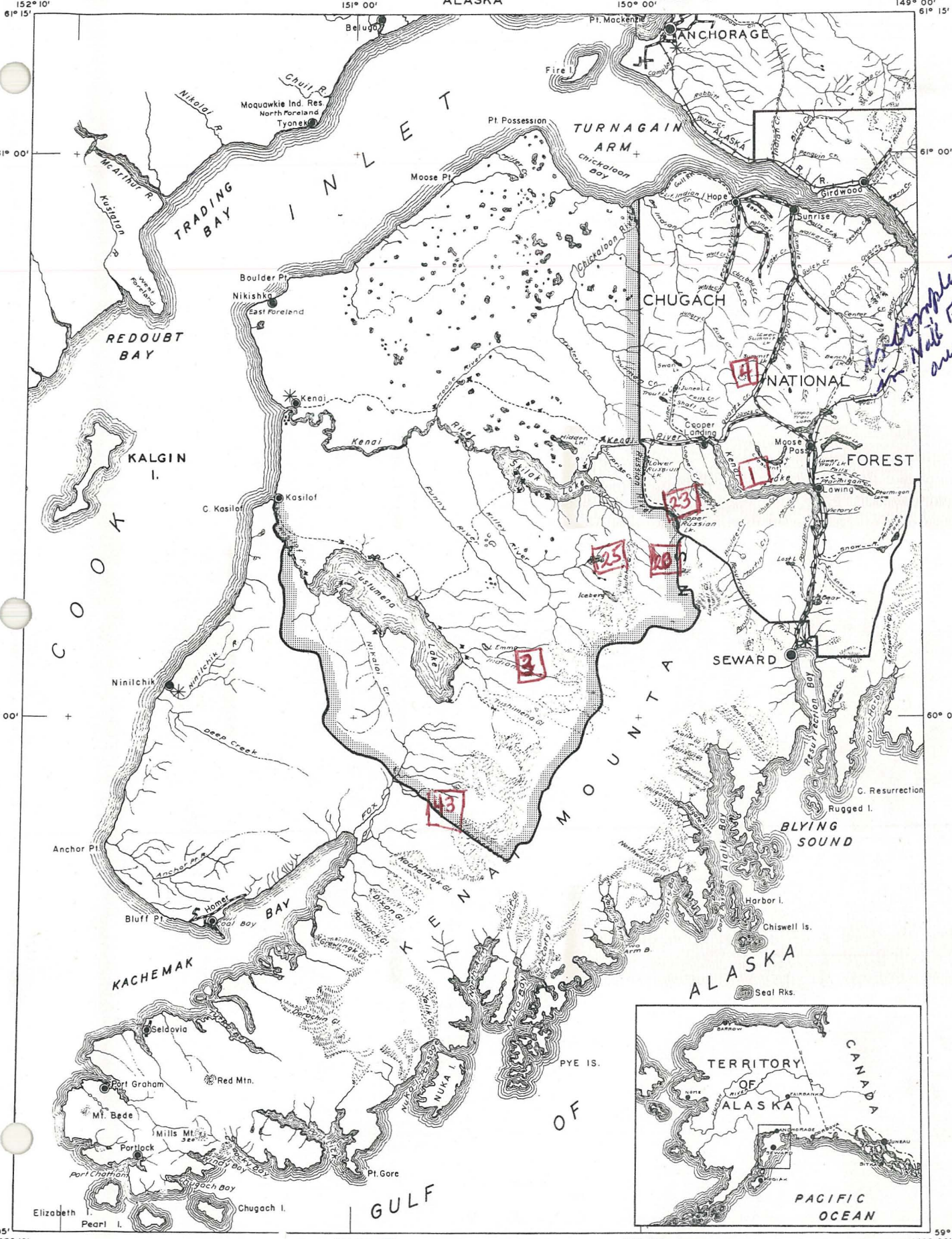
P. 7

MAP 2

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

ALASKA



*See map sheets  
for this area.*



**GOAT SURVEY**  
**1956**

Scale 0 10 20 30 MILES

TRUE NORTH  
MAGNETIC N  
MEAN DECLINATION  
1934

COMPILED IN THE DIVISION OF LAND ACQUISITION  
BASE BY U.S.D. OF A. FOREST SERVICE.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. MAY 1956

2 KEN 8

Bear

Brown bear observed and reported during the period were as follows:

1 female and 1 cub	- Upper King County Creek
1 bear	- Cottonwood Basin
1 bear	- Eagle Rock
1 bear	- North shore of Tustumena Lake, 2 miles east of Tustumena Lodge.

Black bear were seen frequently in the lowland area near the mountains.

Other Mammals

No report.

E. Fish

No report.

## III REFUGE DEVELOPMENT

A. Physical DevelopmentPublic Recreation Facilities:

Timber signs with log mounts were erected at access roads for both Skilak recreational areas. Toilets were installed at the lower Skilak campground. Fire grates were installed at the two Skilak campgrounds and Hidden Lake campground. Extensive clean-up of slashing and windfalls was done at the Hidden Lake campground. At the Skilak Guard Station, grading was done at the cabin site and the foundation beneath the cabin was enclosed with logs. A new wood heating stove was installed.

At the Kenai Headquarters Site, four buildings were painted. An underground wiring system was partially completed. Twenty-five thousand feet of surplus lumber was moved from Anchorage for the present temporary structures. An additional trailer was installed in the trailer facility area for use of temporary personnel. A large fuel storage tank was installed for the office.

**Control Burn Project:**

This project was inactive during the summer because weather did not provide a suitable burning period.

**Mechanical Range Improvement:**

A tract, approximately one square mile, three miles northwest of Tustumena Lake was cleared of spruce growth during the early part of the summer. The understory browse growth was left undisturbed. Spruce removed in this area measured 4-6 inches in diameter.

Additional bulldozing work of approximately eighty acres was done in the Slikok Lake area. This consisted of running over a dense stand of thirty year old spruce with the tractor. Here again, browse growth was left undisturbed.

A five-acre tract in the Slikok Lake area was cleared to mineral soil in preparation for seeding experiments. Two acres of this tract were enclosed with a wire fence for the exclusion of moose. A small amount of willow seed was planted.

## IV ECONOMIC USE OF REFUGE

**D. Timber Removal**

The following permits were issued during the period:

28603 6/28/56 Free Use 25 cords of dead & down trees

**E. Other Uses**

The following permits were issued for other uses:

28602	5/31/56	Alwin W. Smith	Establishing hunting & fishing camp
28604	7/11/56	Harry White	Maint. of commercial Hunting and fishing camp
28605	8/28/56	Don Johnson	Maintenance of hunting camp
28606	8/28/56	George Pollard	Establishing a guided hunting camp

A set of stipulations was drafted to cover oil leasing and operations on the Moose Range. A preliminary operating program submitted by the Richfield Oil Company was reviewed and conferences held with Richfield Oil Co. officials. The operating program was later approved by the Central Office. The area covered by the operating program authorizes an access road to the drilling site from the Sterling Highway near the town of Sterling.

Operating plans were received for a total of 149 other leases most of which will fall in areas listed as Appendix B lands. These plans submitted in connection with lease applications do not constitute unified operating programs.

The barracks building at the former Military recreation camp at Skilak Lake was sold on bid. Removal of the building is not yet complete because of the condition of the access road during the summer.

## VI PUBLIC RELATIONS

### A. Recreational Use

Recreational use of the Kenai River-Skilak Lake area was moderately heavy throughout the summer. Eleven fishing camps were maintained on lakes in the north end of the Range by aircraft transportation companies in Anchorage. These received heavy use throughout the season. Public use of the Tustumena area was light.

- C. Refuge Supervisor Spencer participated in a waterfowl survey on the Alaska Peninsula May 25-30, conducted the annual muskox survey of Nunivak Island June 18-25, and participated in a joint FWS-BLM grazing area-bear range survey August 1-10, 1956.

Submitted by: *R. Spencer*

September 24, 1956

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_