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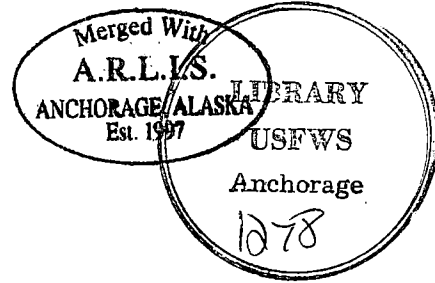
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WILDERNESS RECORD - SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL

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US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE--ALASKA



WILDERNESS RECORD

SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL.

Involving
SEMIDI ISLANDS
(256,422 Acres)

in the

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Third Judicial Division

ALASKA

MARCH 1972

ARLIS

Alaska Resources
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VOLUME I
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STUDY REPORT

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, ALASKA

WILDERNESS STUDY REPORT

This is a preliminary draft. The contents and recommendations are subject to change.

December, 1972

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PREFACE

The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge lies 100 miles southwest of Kodiak Island in the Western Gulf of Alaska. Refuge islands are characterized by precipitous shorelines, important as nesting habitat for millions of pelagic birds.

The nine named islands and small islets total 8,422 acres. In addition approximately 248,000 acres of surrounding submerged lands are included in the refuge.

The treeless islands are uninhabited by man and are covered with subarctic vegetation. Millions of murre, kittiwake, puffin, fulmar, and other birds inhabit the area. The refuge supports one of the largest Pacific fulmar colonies in Alaska. Sea lions, hair seals, sea otters, and several species of whales inhabit off-shore waters. Commercial fishing for halibut and king crab in refuge waters is of substantial economic importance to American fishermen.

The area was established by Executive Order in 1932 for the protection of the pelagic bird colonies and other forms of wildlife. It is now being reviewed, as required by the Wilderness Act of 1964, for possible inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

SEMIDI WILDERNESS STUDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge is located in the Gulf of Alaska near latitude 56°N and longitude 157°W. The remote, treeless refuge lies some 50 miles from the nearest Alaskan mainland and contains some of the greatest pelagic bird colonies in North America. The area was established as a refuge and breeding ground for its vast colonies of seabirds and other forms of wildlife, by Executive Order 5858 on June 17, 1932. It includes all islands, rocks, and reefs and underwater lands lying between parallels 55 degrees 57 minutes and 56 degrees 15 minutes north latitude, and meridians 156 degrees 30 minutes and 157 degrees longitude west. The refuge contains approximately 256,000 acres of which all but 8,422 acres are submerged lands (Figure 1).

The Semidi Islands are composed of nine major islands: Aghiyuk, Aghik, Anowik, Kiliktagik, Chowiet, Aliksemit, Suklik, Kateekuk, South, and numerous smaller islets and rocks. Islands range in size from 8 to 3,000 acres with Aghiyuk and Chowiet Islands the two largest in the group. The former is approximately six miles long and at its widest point is 2 miles in width. Its highest elevation is 1,024 feet. Chowiet Island is approximately 4 1/2 miles in length and 3 miles in width with the highest elevation 679 feet.

The shorelines of the islands are extremely precipitous with sheer rock cliffs rising 100 to 200 feet in many places. There are only a few suit-

able bays for vessel anchorages. The only extensive gravel beach in the island group is located on the east side of Aghiyuk Island directly west of Aghik Island.

There are no known shallow reefs within the refuge, except those adjacent to exposed rocky shorelines.

The marine waters within the refuge have not been charted in great detail. Water depths drop rapidly to 10 and 30 fathoms around the islands according to Coast and Geodetic Chart #8851 and 40 to 50 fathoms off-shore. A 100+ fathom trough occurs east of the refuge boundary.

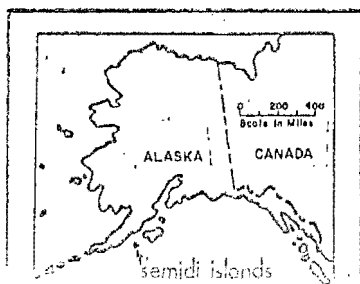
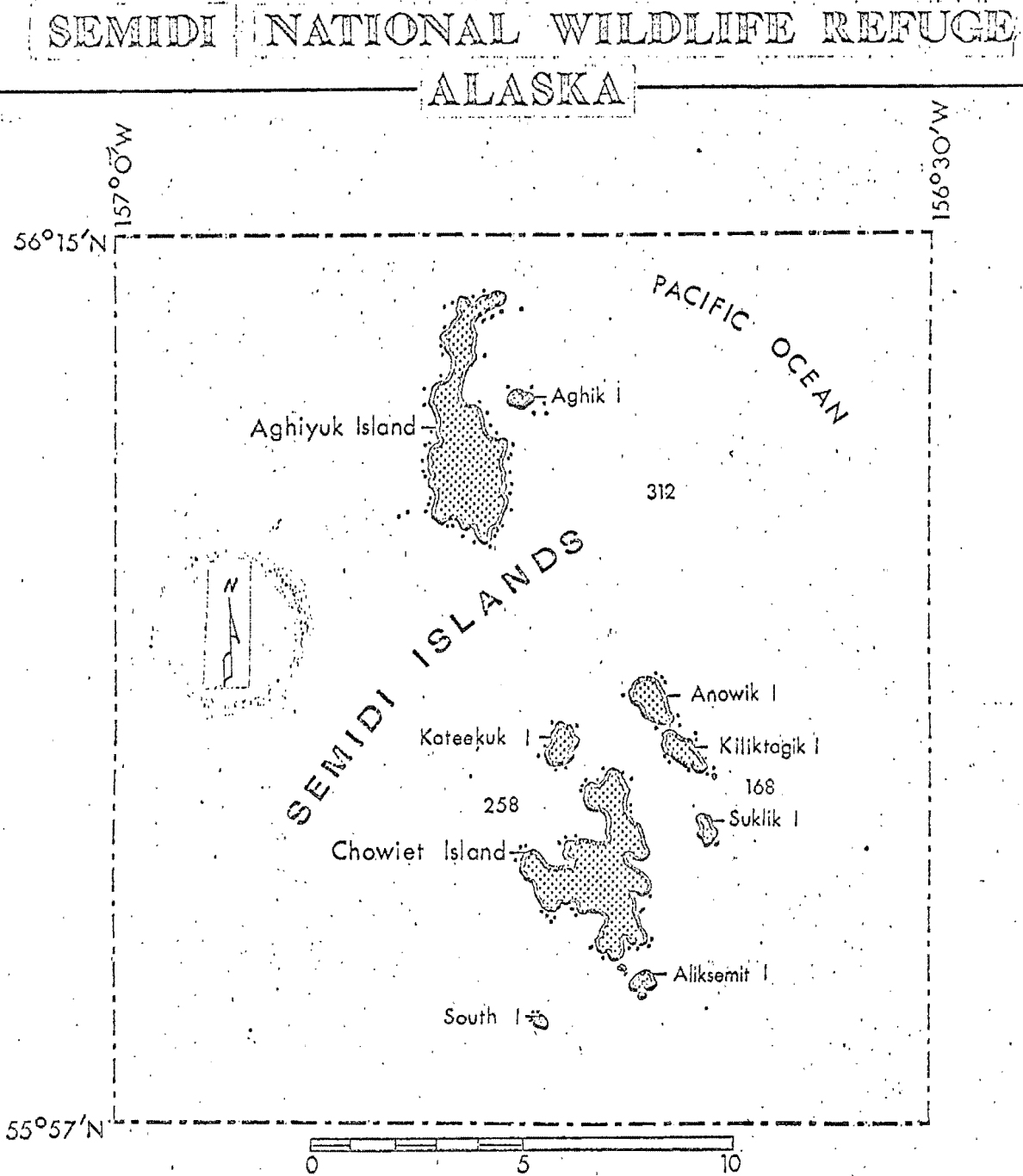
The islands are treeless, and support typical subarctic plant communities with prostrate shrubs, grasses and sedges predominate.

The Semidis are believed to have been glaciated during the Pleistocene and rise as an erosional remnant of a broad shoal on the Shumagin-Kodiak Shelf. They consist of biotite-rich granodiorite except in northern Aghiyuk Island, which contains fragments of dark siltstones and thin sandstones. Volcanic rocks are not exposed on these islands.

The refuge's climate is polar maritime, typical of the western Gulf of Alaska, with cool, cloudy summers, considerable fog, and mild winters. Storms are frequent and winds exceeding 80 knots per hour can be expected. The mean annual temperature is 40°F, with an average precipitation of about 60 inches. The Alaska Current which passes the islands in a southwesterly flow has a moderating effect on the regions climate. Pack-ice does not occur and the sea temperatures range from 55.0°F in summer to 37.5°F in winter.

Daily tides vary from a high of 10.9 feet to a low of -2.4 feet. The proposal lies in the Pacific earthquake zone. Severe earthquakes may cause tidal waves which in the past have caused considerable loss of life and property in adjacent regions.

Figure 1. Location and boundary of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge.



CHAPTER II
STUDY AND REFUGE OBJECTIVES

The Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (Public Law 88-577), requires the Secretary of the Interior to review every roadless area of 5,000 contiguous acres or more and every roadless island within the National Wildlife Refuge System and, within ten years after the effective date of the Act, report to the President of the United States his recommendations as to the suitability or non-suitability of each such area or island as wilderness. In defining wilderness, the Act permits review of roadless areas of less than 5,000 acres that are of sufficient size to make preservation and use in an unimpaired condition practical.

As announced in the Federal Register (Volume 35, No. 80, April 24, 1970), the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge contains potential wilderness resources that meet the basic criteria contained in the Wilderness Act for detailed study to determine suitability or non-suitability as wilderness.

The principal objective of field investigations was to evaluate, at the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, the suitability or non-suitability of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge, or a portion of the refuge, for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

In addition, field studies were designed to:

1. Clearly delineate and describe those areas within the refuge that were found to be suitable for consideration as wilderness.
2. Clearly delineate and describe those areas within the refuge that were found to be non-suitable as wilderness.

3. Determine whether classifying all or part of the refuge as wilderness would conflict with the purposes for which it was established and is administered as a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System.
4. Determine what conflicts or benefits there might be if all or part of the refuge were classified as wilderness by the Congress of the United States.

Refuge Objectives

A master plan has not been prepared on the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge.

The primary purposes of the refuge according to the current Refuge Objectives Statement is to preserve the breeding and feeding habitat of the pelagic birds and marine animals endemic to the area.

Because of the tremendous number of pelagic birds on the refuge the Semidis serve a vital role in the overall Alaskan refuge system.

CHAPTER III
HISTORY AND LAND STATUS

A. History

The Semidi Islands are thought to have been discovered in August 1741 by Vitus Bering who reportedly named them Tumanoi (Foggy) Islands. There does seem to be some question to the validity of this discovery as he reported, "high, large, wooded islands". It is now known the islands are not wooded, but during foggy weather and at a distance, an error in vegetation could have been made. Captain Cook sighted the islands on June 16, 1778. It is thought the present word Semidi stems from the Russian word "Sem" meaning seven.

Little history has been recorded on the islands since discovery although they probably have been visited by humans at various times. The lone spruce tree on Chowiet Islands was no doubt planted by man, and the remains of a barrel near a barbara found on Aghiyuk Island, indicates this occupancy was fairly recent.

B. Land Status

There are no known private tracts within the refuge nor is it subject to any Native land claims.

In recent years an agreement between the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union designated the waters between 56° and 56°19' latitude as a loading zone for fishing fleets of the latter two countries operating on the high seas near this area. This loading zone covered most of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge marine waters. The agreement however was renegotiated with Japan in December 1972

and is no longer valid. It was cancelled primarily because of the possible detrimental effects a loading area might have on pelagic birds. The agreement will also be re-negotiated with Russia in February 1973. Similar decisions with Russia are expected.

It has been determined by the Regional Solicitor, and the Associate Solicitor, Territories, Wildlife and Claims, U.S. Department of the Interior, that the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife has jurisdiction over all tidelands and submerged lands located within that area encompassed with the legal description in Executive Order 5858. These lands did not pass to the State of Alaska by the Statehood Act inasmuch as they were excluded by Section 6(e) of the Act. Navigable waters overlying these tidelands and submerged lands are, therefore, also within the refuge (Price, 1970).

Executive Order 5858, dated June 17, 1932 established the refuge and Presidential Proclamation 2416 dated July 15, 1940 changed the name of the refuge from Semidi Islands Wildlife Refuge to Semidi National Wildlife Refuge.

CHAPTER IV

RESOURCES

A. Wildlife

1. Mammals: Ground squirrels are common on both Chowiet and Aghiyuk Islands. They are the only known land mammals present. It isn't known for certain whether these are endemic to the islands or were introduced by man in more recent times. The islands may have been used for fox-farming but records of such an enterprise are not known. No evidence of fox was noted in a 1972 survey.

Sea lions, hair seals, and sea otter inhabit adjacent marinewaters. A sea lion rookery containing approximately 500 animals is located on the southern tip of Chowiet Island. Most of these animals were hauled out on a large rock just south of Chowiet in May 1972. Another 100 were seen on the northern tip of Suklik Island. Gabrielson (1968) also reported about 500 sea lions off the southern tip of Chowiet in his 1940 visit to these islands.

Hair seals were scattered in May 1972 with approximately 60 hauled out on the northwest portion of Chowiet Island and another 75 in the gravel beach on the northeast side of Aghiyuk Island. An aerial survey on August 27, 1972 revealed several hundred hair seal on the northwest side of the latter island where none were noted in May. This may indicate greater populations of marine mammals use the area during other seasons than those recorded in May.

Sea otter are present but in low numbers. Those observed in May 1972 were single adults. The lack of kelp beds and shallow waters may be a factor in the low sea otter population. Various species of whales and porpoise inhabit

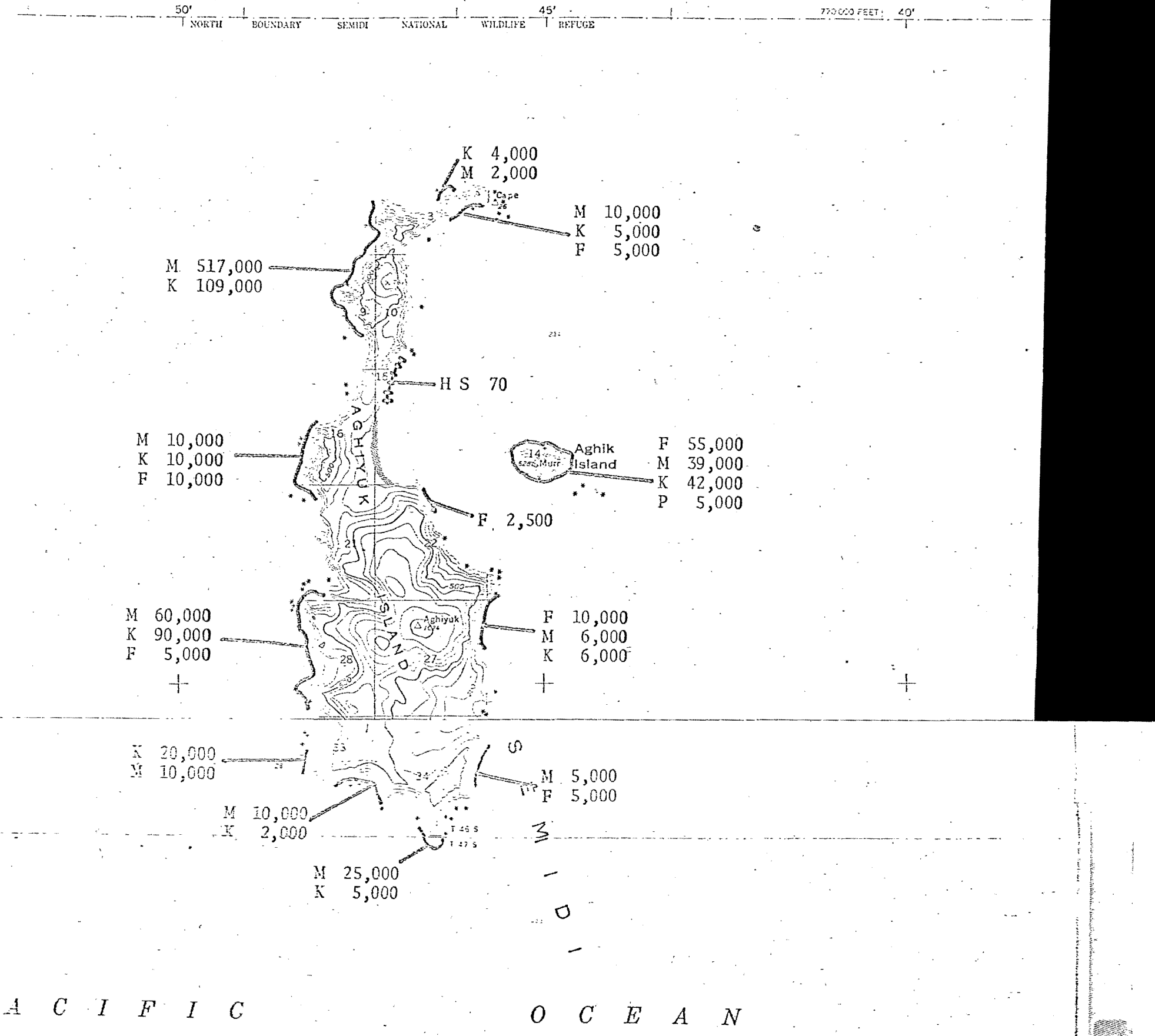
the refuge waters. The more common species are the Pacific killer whale, finback whale, sei whale, gray whale, sperm whale, and Dall porpoise.

2. Birds: The outstanding wildlife characteristic of the islands are the extensive pelagic bird colonies which are some of the largest in Alaska. Murres, kittiwakes, fulmars, and puffins fill the cliff ledges like squads of soldiers. Gabrielson (1968) described this scene in his 1940 visit, "Murres hung like necklaces about the cliffs, each ledge and flat spot having its quota standing shoulder to shoulder. It looked like millions of murres".

In cruising the shorelines there appears to be no end to the number of birds as they crowd the rock ledges, thousands of wheeling birds speckle the skies, and in places, the waters are black and white with feeding murres, kittiwakes, and fulmars.

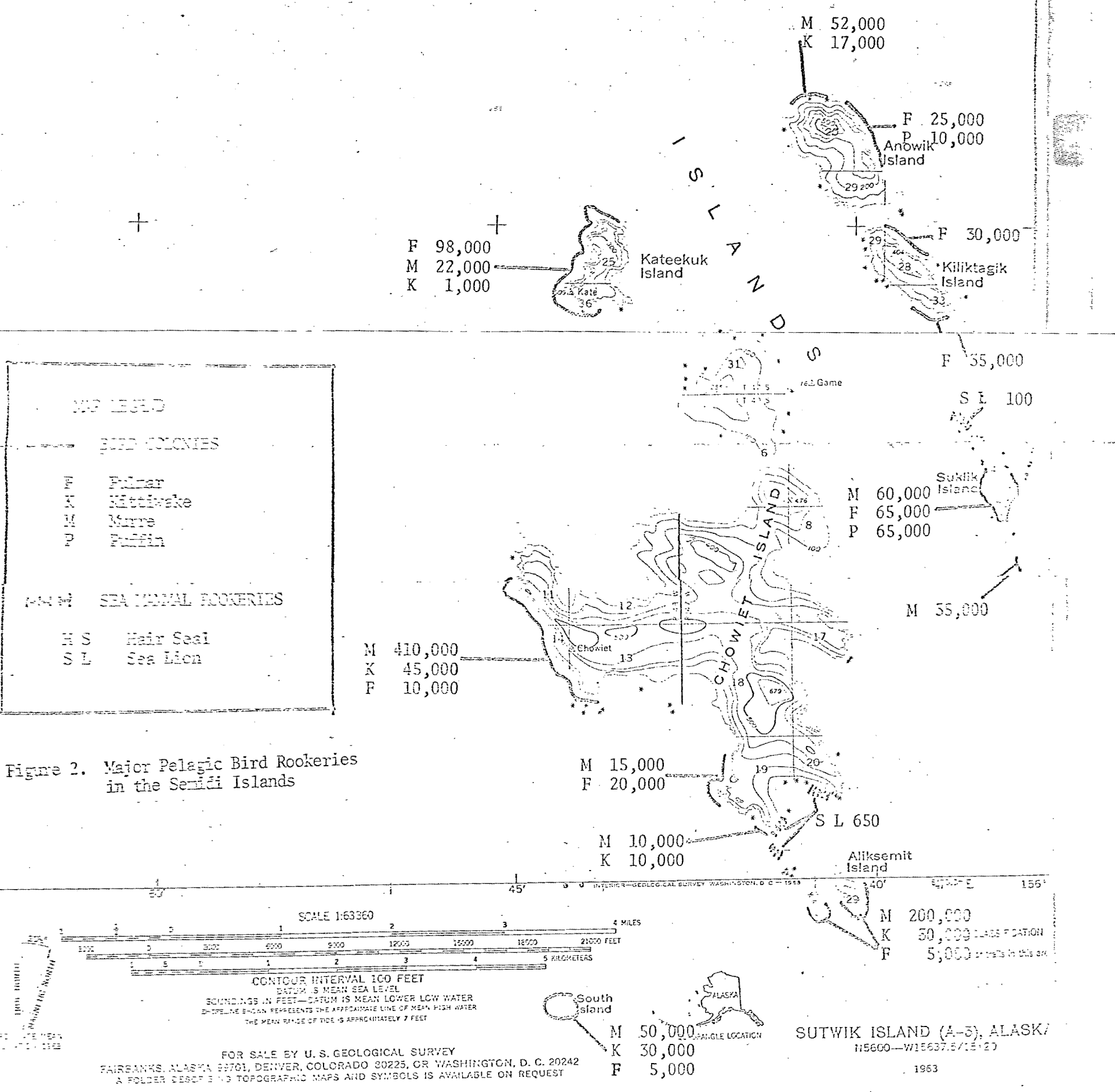
The most abundant species present was the common murre with a lesser number of thick-billed murres. The largest colony was located on the northwestern side of Aghiyuk Island and the second largest on the west side of Chowiet Island (Figure 2), The only island in the group that did not contain murres was Kiliktaglik. The murre populations census taken in May 1972 recorded 1,549,000 birds. These counts should be considered minimum population figures as no attempts were made to census birds on nearby waters except for dense concentrations immediately below the rookeries. In addition, these spring counts were conducted prior to the entry of the current year's nesting production into the population. The figures were obtained by estimating blocks of birds on the cliffs as we cruised by and are considered estimates rather than precise numbers.

The second most abundant species censused in 1972 was the black-legged kittiwake with 420,000 recorded. Pacific fulmars were third with 386,000 and



MAP LEGEND	
BIRD COLONIES	
M	Murre
K	Mitlenake
F	Murre
P	Puffin
SEA MAMMAL ROOKERIES	
H S	Hair Seal
S L	Sea Lion

Figure 2. Major Pelagic Bird Rookeries in the Semidi Islands



tufted puffins fourth with 80,000 birds.

Kittiwakes were closely associated with the murrens and often were mixed within the same rookeries; with kittiwakes occupying one ledge, murrens the next, kittiwakes the next, etc. In general there is a much closer association of rookery use between kittiwakes and murrens than with fulmars.

Fulmars are found on all the islands but seemed to prefer less precipitous slopes. Favorite nesting habitat are the canyons which indent the shoreline on some islands, and ledges containing tufts of grass. Since about 90 percent of the fulmars were of the dark phase variety, they blended extremely well with their habitat and no doubt our counts represent a smaller proportion of the actual population than of some of the other more visible species.

Puffins were only present on Aghik, Anowik, and Kiliktagik Islands. We accounted for 80,000 birds which were all of the tufted variety. Gabrielson (1968) in his 1940 survey indicated horned and tufted puffin were equally abundant. He also indicated many birds on both Chowiet and Aghiyuk Islands which we failed to see. Possibly the time of the visit, since he surveyed the area in August, may account for the difference.

Population estimates for the four species mentioned are given below by island:

<u>Island</u>	<u>Murrens</u>	<u>Number of Birds</u>		<u>Puffin</u>
		<u>Kittiwakes</u>	<u>Fulmar</u>	
Aghiyuk	661,000	245,000	38,000	
Choweit	435,000	55,000	30,000	
South	50,000	30,000	5,000	
Suklik	95,000		65,000	65,000
Kateekuh	22,000	1,000	98,000	
Anowik	52,000	17,000	25,000	10,000
Aghik	39,000	42,000	55,000	5,000
Aliksemit	200,000	30,000	5,000	
Kiliktagik			65,000	
	<u>1,557,000</u>	<u>402,000</u>	<u>386,000</u>	<u>80,000</u>

Glaucous-winged gulls and red-faced cormorants were also numerous and the song sparrow was the most common passerine bird. Gabrielson (1968) reported the savannah sparrow the most common passerine. Three eagle nests were seen on Chowiet Island and juveniles were common. Eagles were seen on each island and the nesting population probably included at least a dozen pairs. Petrels were no apparent during the day, but wheeled and turned continuously around our anchor light at night. Two pairs of peregrin falcon were recorded and one pair occupied a nesting territory.

Gabrielson also lists the winter wren as a sub-species of the Semidi Islands and reports it as being resident to the islands.

A total of 33 species of birds, listed below, were identified during our May visit:

<u>Birds Seen</u>	<u>Status</u>
Yellow-billed loon	one
Red-necked grebe	four
Pacific fulmar	numerous
Fork-tailed petrel	common
Leaches petrel	common
Red-faced cormorant	common
Brant	12
Pintail	2 pair
Shoveler	one
Harlequin duck	common
Common eider	common
Surf scoter	a few
Common scoter	a few
Bald eagle	common
Peregrine falcon	2 pair
Oystercatcher	common
Ruddy turnstone	one
Parasitic jaeger	several pairs
Glaucous winged gulls	numerous
Black-legged kittiwake	numerous
Common murre	numerous
Thick-billed murre	common
Pigeon guillemot	common
Parakeet auklet	common
Tufted puffin	numerous
Raven	several
Water pipit	common
Gray-crowned night hawk	common

Savannah sparrow	common
Fox sparrow	several
Song sparrow	common
Winter wren	several
Lapland longspur	a few

In Gabrielson's 1940 and 1945 visits, he reported several species which we failed to see. These included:

- Pelagic cormorant
- Horned puffin
- Crested auklet
- Northern phalarope
- Snow bunting
- Yellow warbler
- Golden-crowned sparrow
- Pileolated warbler
- Hermit thrush
- Alaska longspur

Thus, a total of 43 species of birds have been identified. No doubt many others are visitors during migratory periods and also are residents.

The pelagic birds colonies such as these on the Semidi Islands numbering in the millions have a tremendous impact on their surroundings. This vast number of birds utilize tons of food obtained from the sea, and their excrement, rich in potash, returned to the sea is important to the growth and abundance of small marine organisms. These colonies have been called the fertilizer factories of the northern seas, and are an important link in the intricate ecology of the area. Thus off-shore waters within the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge are extremely important to the welfare of the birds. We are fortunate in having control of the surrounding submerged lands, a control which is lacking for most sea bird refuges in Alaska. The island actually would be of little importance if the vital marine food resources were destroyed through man-made influences.

Although this study did not permit researching the inter-relationships of the various species to each other and their environment, Tuck (1960) reported on such

studies for pelagic birds of the Atlantic Ocean. Fulmars and kittiwakes feed principally on surface macroplankton, while murre are predominately fish eaters and can dive to depths of 40 fathoms to obtain food. Tuck (1960) states, "Adaptation to different types of food by selection of feeding habitat is a marked characteristic of the sea birds of the sea-cliff nesting association. The Larus gulls feed close inshore, scavenge along the shoreline, and prey on eggs in the murre colonies. Along the coast are found cormorants and black guillemots; a little farther out gannets, razor-bills, puffins and murre; farthest out are fulmars, kittiwakes, and petrels."

"The impact of a seabird colony is felt not only in the sea but also on the cliffs, where a particularly rich and abundant growth of nitrophilous plants results from the accumulated excrement. The growth of grasses and such circumpolar northern plants as Oxyria and Cochlearia is more luxuriant there than elsewhere. This vegetation harbors an immense population of spiders, springtails, mites, and insects."..."In closely packed seabird colonies, the nitrogen concentration is so high that all the vegetation is scorched and the cliffs are completely bare and of a light grayish color".

It may then be speculated that such large bird numbers are a vital link to sea life and indirectly contribute to the welfare of the halibut, crab, and other fish of great commercial importance which have a direct monetary benefit to Alaskan fishermen.

During winter months many of the birds scatter over extensive areas of the Pacific Ocean, thus contributing immensely to the total ocean ecosystem.

B. Fish

Halibut is currently the major species sought. The refuge waters fall within Halibut Regulatory Area 3A and also within Statistical Area 30 as recorded by the International Pacific Halibut Commission. The 60-mile Statistical Area 30 includes all refuge waters but extends beyond the boundaries. The statistical catch data therefore includes some fishing outside the refuge waters. Halibut catches in Statistical Area 30 from 1967 through 1971 were 3,361,000; 3,978,000; 3,470,000; 3,915,000; and 2,134,000 pounds respectively. The number of halibut vessels fishing one or more days in Area 30 for the same years was 33,48,43,48, and 40 (Myhre, 1972).

Some king crab fishing also occurs, but again the statistical catch data for surrounding waters is not confined solely to refuge waters. The crab fishing is considered rather small, however, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game only recorded catches in 1968 and 1966 in their statistical sub-area surrounding the Semidi Islands. The catch for 1968 was 1,637 crabs and 130 in 1966. No catch has been recorded since 1968 (Powell, 1972).

Commercial fishery values in refuge waters are therefore believed significant, and should be treated as an important economic resource.

C. Water

No ponds or lakes are on the islands. Several small streams are located on the two larger islands which are capable of supplying fresh water for a small number of people that might use the area.

The off-shore waters, as already discussed, provide important habitat for the marine birds, mammals, and fish. There are no shallow lagoons, water depths

increase rapidly along the island shoreline. The marine waters support the food resources on which the pelagic birds are dependent. The constant stirring of the water from severe storms brings much of the macro-and micro-zooplankton to the surface, where it is available to the birds. The vital importance of these waters to the pelagic bird colonies is discussed under the bird section.

D. Vegetation

The vegetation of the islands is of the low heather and grass types. Calamagrostis and beach rye grass cover much of the islands with other grasses and sedges mixed in. The darker spring vegetation consists of an extensive coverage of crowberry mixed with prostrate willow and a small amount of lowbush cranberry. In a few wetter sites dense stands of willow are present, however, none of these are more than of knee height. Fireweed, cow parsnip, yarrow and anemone was also present. One lone spruce tree, about 15 feet in height was found on the south end of Chowiet. This was probably transplanted by man, since it was near some cabin remains.

E. Minerals

The Semidi Islands have no known minerals of commercial value. Grantz and Cobb (1968) state:

'No deposits of minerals subject to leasing under the mineral leasing laws have been found in or near the areas embraced by the Simeonof and Semidi National Wildlife Refuges except for some lignitic coal that underlies an area of 35 or 40 square miles on Unga Island (Atwood, 1911, p. 117-120), the largest of the Shumagin group. These coal-bearing rocks are entirely absent from Simeonof and the Semidi Islands. The

granitic rocks that make up Simeonof and the Semidi Islands and the rocks of Burk's Shumagin Formation which they intrude are types with which the minerals subject to the leasing laws are not associated".

The nearest reported mineral deposits are an oil seep near the mouth of the Aniakchak River and copper, lead, and silver locations on Nakchamik Island.

F. Public Use

Because of its remoteness, lack of suitable bays and anchorages, and adverse weather, the refuge has received little public use. A few commercial fishermen may at times anchor in its shallow bays. Several years ago one vessel spent several days in the area commercially hunting hair seal. A number of vessels use the refuge waters during the halibut fishing season as discussed under the "fish" section of this report.

The only recreational attraction that might be anticipated in the future is people traveling through the islands by boat to observe and photograph the tremendous bird rookeries. Most of this would be off-shore use rather than on-shore.

Possibly some scientific studies will be conducted in the area in the future. This would then result in at least some seasonal use of the area by scientific personnel. Of course birds produced on the island migrate to other areas of the world where they may be observed and provide aesthetic attraction of international value.

CHAPTER V
MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

No developments on the island are planned in the immediate future. If scientific studies are undertaken on a seasonal basis, a small cabin or shelter may be required.

The area is not under active management at present. Any census and patrol activities would probably be conducted by aerial means or from a large vessel.

The refuge has always been managed as a wilderness; therefore wilderness status would not affect past management or change in present administration.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATION

The islands, as mentioned previously, are rarely visited by man. Placing these into the National Wilderness System would not change the use present today. Suitable harbors and adequate fresh water supply are non-existent; therefore it is unlikely that any industry such as commercial canning operations for fishery resources would desire to locate in such an area.

Refuge waters do provide economic use by commercial fishermen, particularly halibut fishermen. If these waters were given wilderness status it would not affect these commercial fishing operations providing the use of motors was permitted. If, however, under wilderness status, motorboats were not permitted, then there would be an economic loss to the fishermen now using the area.

As mentioned previously, the area was a loading zone for Japanese fishing fleets and as of this writing still is for Russian fleets. Possible harmful effects to bird life could result from this type of activity and closure of the waters to such use should be considered.

There is no evidence of Native use in recent times and none of the area qualifies for Native selection. Therefore any action proposed regarding wilderness status would not affect Native land selection rights under terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

The nearest existing wilderness area is the 6,402 acre Tuxedni Wilderness, consisting of 2 small islands 210 miles to the northeast in Cook Inlet.

Proposals for 301,451 acres of wilderness on the Izembek Refuge and 25,140 acres on Simeonof Island were transmitted to Congress from the White House

in April 1971. Wilderness proposals are currently being developed for both the Aleutian Islands and Kodiak National Wildlife Refuges. In addition, the National Park Service has proposed that approximately 2.5 million acres of Katmai National Monument be designated as wilderness. Katmai lies about 130 miles northeast of the Semidi Islands on the Alaska Peninsula.

The village of Chignik with 83 residents is the nearest area of human settlement. It lies about 60 miles northwest of the Alaska Peninsula. The city of Kodiak with a population of about 3,800 is the largest community in the region. Anchorage, Alaska's largest city, is 430 miles to the northeast, and has a census division population of 124,542.

CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge lies in the Gulf of Alaska southwest of Kodiak Island. It was established by Executive Order 5858 on June 17, 1932, and contains 8,422 acres of surface lands and approximately 248,000 acres of submerged lands.

The refuge consists of nine small islands, numerous smaller rocks, and islets. The largest island is approximately 6 miles in length and 3,000 acres in size. The shoreline of the islands are extremely precipitous with many rock ledges rising 200 feet perpendicular above the sea. The sub-arctic vegetation consists primarily of crowberry, sedges, grasses, and prostrate forms of willow. The climate is maritime with frequent storms, fog, and rain.

Its major attractions are the extensive pelagic bird colonies with murre, kittiwakes, fulmars, and puffins the predominate species. It contains one of the largest Pacific fulmar colonies in Alaska waters. Bald eagles and peregrin falcons nest on the steep ledges as do a variety of less numerous birds.

Ground squirrels are the only land mammals present and sea lions, hair seals, and sea otters utilize the adjacent marine waters. Several species of whales, porpoises and other marine mammals inhabit the off-shore marine waters.

Halibut and some king crab fishing occurs in the waters of the refuge and the area is a loading and unloading zone for Russian fishermen by an international agreement. This agreement will be reconsidered in February 1973. The former Japanese agreement was cancelled in December 1972.

The surrounding submerged lands and marine waters within the refuge are of extreme

importance since the vast colonies of birds are dependent on the marine food resources for survival. They in turn through feeding habits and potash-rich excrement provide a vital link in the intricate ecology of the area.

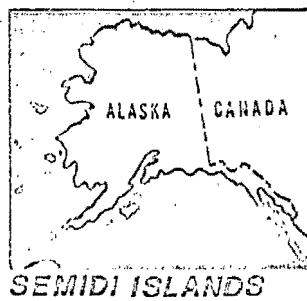
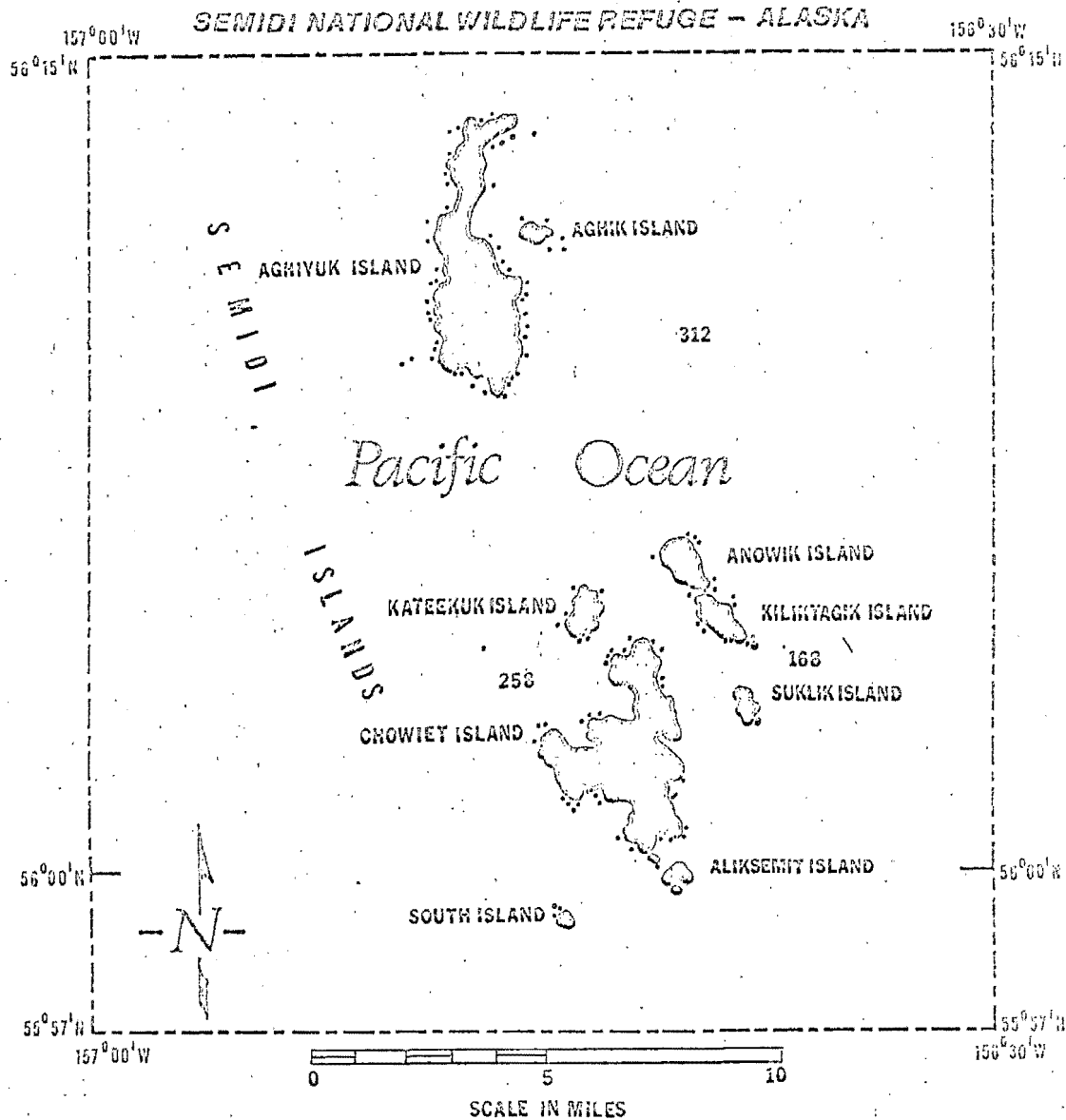
The islands are uninhabited and are currently of wilderness character. Management plans are to retain the islands in a natural state as at present.

It is recommended that all of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge be placed into the National Wilderness Preservation System. The marine waters are utilized by commercial halibut and crab fishermen and since these vessels are equipped with motors and since this is an established use, it is further recommended that such motorized use be permitted to continue as provided for in the Wilderness Act.

Wilderness designation will provide additional protection to this vast marine ecosystem.

An alternative proposal could exclude the marine waters and only include the islands. The marine waters, however, are vital to the well-being of the wildlife and any detrimental effects to these waters could seriously jeopardize this wildlife. Wilderness protection would provide better assurance that possible detrimental uses of the marine waters and submerged lands, such as oil and mineral development, would occur.

SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL



----- REFUGE AND PROPOSED WILDERNESS BOUNDARY

Figure 3. Proposed Semidi Wilderness Area.

OCTOBER-1972
PRELIMINARY - SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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APPENDIX

SECTION II. MINERAL APPRAISAL¹
REPORT

STUDIES RELATED TO WILDERNESS WILDLIFE REFUGES

The Wilderness Act (Public Law 88-577, Sept. 3, 1964) directs the Secretary of the Interior to review roadless areas of 5,000 contiguous acres or more, and every roadless island, within the national wildlife refuges and game ranges under his jurisdiction and to report on the suitability or nonsuitability of each such area or island for preservation as wilderness. As one aspect of the suitability studies, existing published and unpublished data on the geology and the occurrence of minerals subject to leasing under the mineral leasing laws are assembled in brief reports on each area. This bulletin is one such report and is one of a series by the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Bureau of Mines on lands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Summary Report on the
Geology and Mineral Resources
of the Bering Sea, Bogoslof,
Simeonof, Semidi, Tuxedni,
St. Lazaria, Hazy Islands,
and Forrester Island
National Wildlife Refuges
Alaska

By EDWARD H. COBB, ALEXANDER A. WANEK, ARTHUR GRANTZ, and CLAIRE CARTER

STUDIES RELATED TO WILDERNESS—WILDLIFE REFUGES

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY BULLETIN 1260-K

*A compilation of available
geologic information*



KS STUDIES RELATED TO WILDERNESS—WILDLIFE REFUGES

are plastered against the steep north and east cliffs of Castle Rock and form an extensive terrace that slopes to the northeast. The youngest volcanic unit in the wildlife refuge is the dome formed in 1927 by the viscous extrusion of basalt at the westernmost bulge of Bogoslof Island.

Beaches composed of rounded cobbles and boulders as much as 6 feet in diameter extend southeastward from Castle Rock and both northeastward and southeastward from the rocky cliffs cut in the basalt dome. Sand makes up the beach east of the area underlain by ash and agglomerate and the beach at the southeastern spit of Bogoslof. Sand and gravel containing scattered cobbles and boulders border the salt-water lake on three sides and merge into the beaches.

MINERAL RESOURCES

There are no deposits of minerals subject to leasing under the mineral leasing laws or to location in the Bogoslof National Wildlife Refuge. Isolation precludes any possibility of utilizing the volcanic rock or beach deposits as construction materials.

SIMEONOF AND SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

By ARTHUR GRANTZ and EDWARD H. COBB

SUMMARY

Granitic rocks and surficial deposits make up the islands and islets in the Simeonof and Semidi National Wildlife Refuges. No deposits of minerals subject to leasing under the mineral leasing laws or to location are known in either refuge.

INTRODUCTION

This report is based on a 3-day reconnaissance of the outer Shumagin Islands by Grantz in June 1962, some of the results of which have been published (Grantz, 1963), and on other published reports.

Simeonof Island, the most easterly of the Shumagin Islands, is near lat 55° N. and long 159° W. and is about 330 miles from Kodiak, the nearest city and major supply center (fig. 1). The Shumagin Islands (fig. 4) were named by Vitus Bering for one of his sailors who died and was buried there in 1741 during Bering's second voyage, the exploration which discovered Alaska (Baker, 1906, p. 573). It is noteworthy that Georg Wilhelm Steller, who made the first recorded geologic observations in Alaska while serving as physician and naturalist for Bering on this voyage, recorded each major rock type in the outer Shumagins in his journal (Grantz, 1963, p. B106; Golder, 1925, p. 79). Simeonof was called Semenovskiye (Simon) by the Russians and has

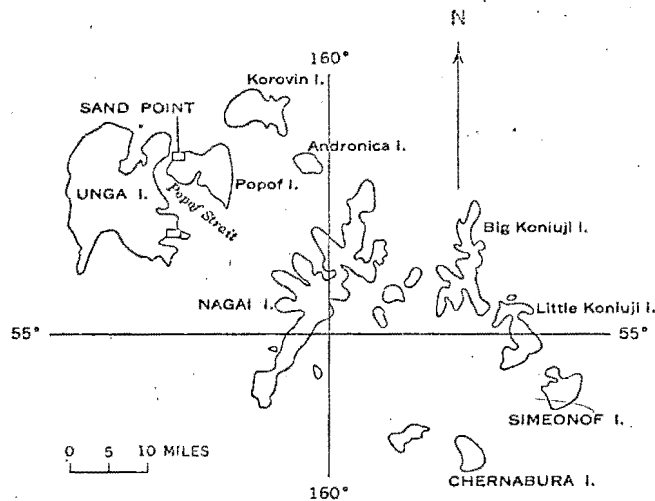


FIGURE 4.—Map of Shumagin Islands. From Grantz (1963).


been known since by that name, by the native name Tiakinak, and by variants of both (Baker, 1906, p. 576).

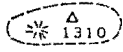
Simeonof Island (fig. 5) rises as an erosional remnant from a broad shoal on the Shumagin-Kodiak Shelf and is composed of two bedrock islands joined by a sand bar. The composite island is crudely equidimensional and has a total area of about $17\frac{1}{2}$ square miles. Steep hills with bedrock at or near the surface occupy an aggregate area of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ square miles; the hills are surrounded by a lake-dotted surface of low relief that is underlain by surficial deposits. The island can be reached by light plane, small- or medium-sized boat, or helicopter from Sand Point (fig. 4), a town with a population of about 225 that is served by a scheduled airline from Anchorage. Early in the 20th century Simeonof Island was used as a blue-fox farm (Baker, 1906, p. 576), and it has since been the site of a cattle ranch. In 1962 several dozen beef cattle and a few horses were on the island, but there were no permanent inhabitants, though at the head of Simeonof Harbor there was a modest ranchhouse, with outbuildings, that appeared habitable (fig. 5). Simeonof Harbor, which is on the west side of the island near its north end, is protected from winds, and the inner anchorage has 2 fathoms of water at low tide. Small airplanes having wheels can land on a beach near the harbor. Vegetation is restricted to a few trees planted near the ranch buildings and to low Arctic-type plants.

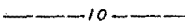
The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge comprises the Semidi Islands, which are near lat 56° N. and long 157° W. and lie about 50 miles from

KIO STUDIES RELATED TO WILDERNESS—WILDLIFE REFUGES

EXPLANATION

 Large area of unvegetated sand

 Large hills with steep gradients. Exposures consist of granitic rock. Elevations given in feet

 Depth curves, in fathoms. 10-fathom curve is an approximation

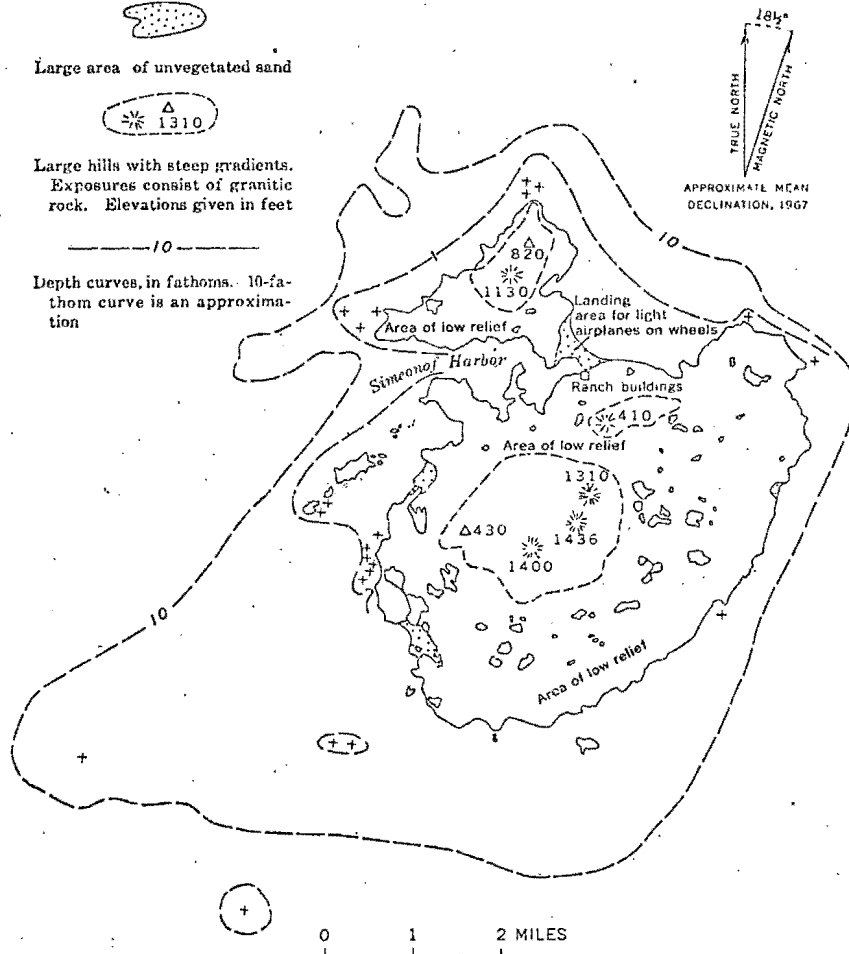


FIGURE 5.—Map of Simeonof National Wildlife Refuge.

the Alaska Peninsula between the Shumagin Islands and Kodiak Island (fig. 1). The Semidi Islands are a group of seven small islands, several islets, and offshore reefs and ledges with a total area of about 15½ square miles (fig. 6). Like Simeonof Island, they are erosional remnants on the Shumagin-Kodiak Shelf. The islands, bounded by steep and practically unscalable cliffs, rise to elevations of from 345 to more than 1,000 feet (U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1964, p. 131-132). The islands are thought to have been discovered by Bering in 1741. Because sem is Russian for the numeral seven (Baker, 1906, p. 561), it seems probable that the name refers to the seven islands of the group.

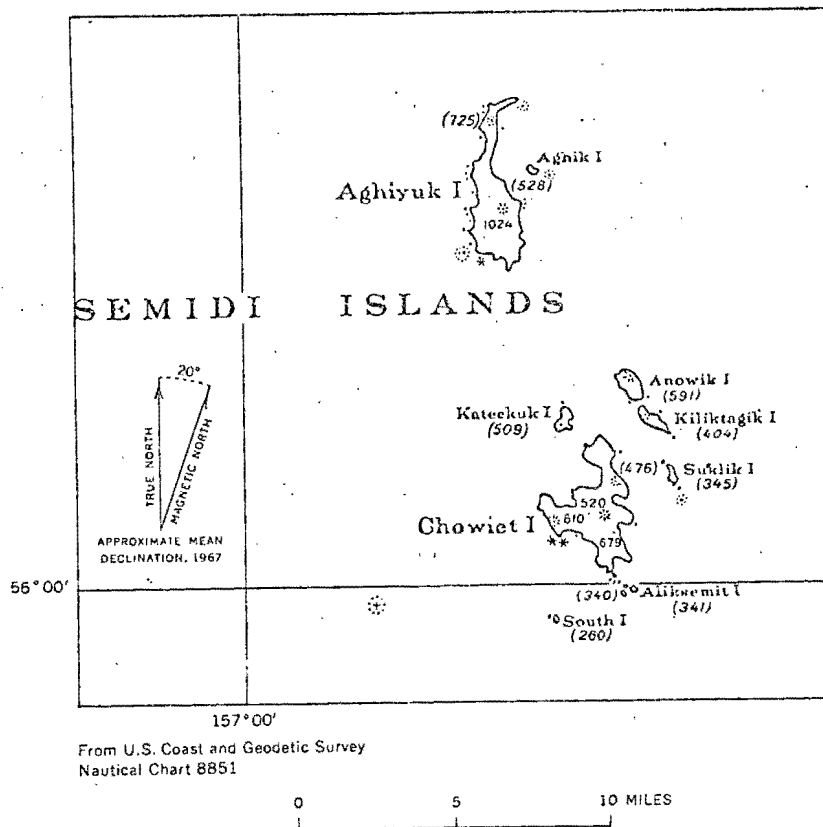


FIGURE 6.—Map of Semidi National Wildlife Refuge.

The islands are nearly inaccessible, but the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (1964, p. 131) lists three anchorages in the group. The south-central part of Aghiyuk Island is a grassy plateau from which the highest point in the group rises. The ridges on Chowiet Island are covered with grass and alders (U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1964, p. 131).

GEOLOGY

A thick sequence of dark-gray graywacke sandstone, black argillite and slate, and some conglomerate underlies a large part of the extensive Shumagin-Kodiak Shelf, including much of the outer Shumagin Islands and the Kodiak Island group. These rocks are part of the great "slate and graywacke belt" of coastal southern Alaska. They were named the Shumagin Formation by Burk (1965, p. 63-71) but have been variously called the Sunrise Series, the Valdez Group, and the Yakutat Group where they extend into the Kenai-Chugach-St. Elias Mountains of south-central Alaska. These rocks are intruded by

K12 STUDIES RELATED TO WILDERNESS—WILDLIFE REFUGES

many granitic plutons, one of which, the Shumagin batholith, is at least 30 miles in diameter and underlies Simeonof Island (Burk, 1965, p. 110; Grantz, 1963, p. B108). Another underlies the Semidi Islands (Burk, 1965, pt. 3). Fossils collected from Burk's Shumagin Formation on Nagai Island in the Shumagin group include an *Inoceramus*, which defines the age of the rocks only as Jurassic or Cretaceous (Burk, 1965, p. 66). On the basis of lithologic evidence, however, Burk (1965, p. 68) speculates that his Shumagin Formation may be of middle to Late Cretaceous age. Potassium-argon ages indicate that the Shumagin batholith, which intrudes the Shumagin Formation, is Paleocene (Burk, 1965, p. 110).

Plutonic rocks make up Simeonof and neighboring islands. Four samples are light-gray medium-grained biotite granodiorite; a fifth sample, from southern Nagai, is biotite adamellite, a closely related rock (Grantz, 1963, p. B108). The Semidi Islands consist entirely of biotite granodiorite with the possible exception of what may be argillaceous material in a shear zone on Aghiyuk Island (Burk, 1965, p. 110). On Simeonof Island, bedrock beneath the lake-dotted surface of low relief, a wave-cut platform, is overlain by unconsolidated deposits of variable thickness. In a few places, the thickness of these deposits probably exceeds a few tens of feet. In two places that were visited deposits consist of beach and windblown sand, but features observed on aerial photographs suggest that in other places they consist of glacially deposited material (D. M. Hopkins and D. S. McCulloch, oral commun., 1962). Other unconsolidated deposits are small areas of alluvium and colluvium next to steep-sided hills, inactive vegetation-covered sand dunes, and bare beach sand and active sand dunes. Examination of aerial photographs suggests that the small amount of unconsolidated material on the Semidi Islands consists mainly of thin soil and windblown material, a narrow steep beach at the head of a bight on the east coast of Aghiyuk Island, and a little bare sand at the head of small inlets.

MINERAL RESOURCES

No deposits of minerals subject to leasing under the mineral leasing laws have been found in or near the areas embraced by the Simeonof and Semidi National Wildlife Refuges except for some lignitic coal that underlies an area of 35 or 40 square miles on Unga Island (Atwood, 1911, p. 117-120), the largest of the Shumagin group (fig. 4). These coal-bearing rocks are entirely absent from Simeonof and the Semidi Islands. The granitic rocks that make up Simeonof and the Semidi Islands and the rocks of Burk's Shumagin Formation which they intrude are types with which the minerals subject to the leasing laws are not associated. Lode deposits containing base and precious

metals have been found in rocks correlative with the Shumagin Formation in other parts of Alaska and in volcanic rocks on Unga and Popof Islands (fig. 4) (Atwood, 1911, p. 125-127). Volcanic rocks, however, are not exposed on Simeonof or the Semidi Islands, so that similar lodes will not be found on them. A little gold has been recovered from beach placer deposits near Sand Point on Popof Island (Atwood, 1911, p. 125). Although it is not impossible that some of the sands on Simeonof Island might be auriferous, no gold placers have been reported, and the distance from source lodes would make their presence highly unlikely. Under certain economic conditions, such as accessibility and proximity to markets, granitic rocks can be valuable for dimension stone, riprap, road metal, and similar uses, but the isolation of the islands would preclude the development of such mineral resources in the Simeonof and Semidi Wildlife Refuges.

TUXEDNI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

By ALEXANDER A. WANER

SUMMARY

Chisik Island, the site of the Tuxedni National Wildlife Refuge, is made up of sedimentary rocks of Jurassic age. Test wells drilled in the Tuxedni Group of rocks at Oil Bay, Dry Bay, and Fitz Creek about 40 miles southwest of Chisik Island have produced numerous oil and gas shows, but no commercial production. No test wells have been drilled on Chisik Island, but the absence of favorable structures and the fact that possible reservoir rocks are near the surface are not favorable indications for potential petroleum. No mineral deposits are known on the refuge and there is no record of mineral production.

INTRODUCTION

The Tuxedni National Wildlife Refuge includes all of Chisik Island, which is located at the mouth of Tuxedni Bay on the west side of Cook Inlet about 120 miles southwest of Anchorage, Alaska (fig. 1). Chisik Island is roughly wedge shaped and has an area of approximately 9 square miles. It is $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles wide across the north part of the island but narrows to less than one-fourth mile at its southernmost point. Tuxedni Bay is very shallow except for Tuxedni Channel which separates Chisik Island from the mainland approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles away. Most of Tuxedni Bay is dry at low tide, and even at high tide much of the bay is shallow. High winds and tricky tidal currents at the head of Tuxedni Bay make landing in the area by seaplane or boats quite hazardous. During the salmon season, a cannery, the Snug Harbor Packing Co., is in operation in the southern part of Chisik Island, where a safe harbor is available. There are no roads on the island except within the cannery site. A large colony of black-legged kittiwake and associated seafowl nest on Chisik Island.

SECTION III. REFUGE OBJECTIVE
STATEMENT

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

REFUGE OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife
Cold Bay, Alaska
November 1971

PREFACE

The nine islands comprising the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge are planned for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The extremely isolated, rugged islands are administered by the Aleutian Islands Refuge with headquarters at Cold Bay, Alaska. No Bureau personnel or facilities are stationed at the refuge. The Semidi Islands best be preserved in their present completely undisturbed state. With the exception of biological research, no reasonable amount of additional funds will increase benefits produced by the refuge.

REFUGE OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

Semidi National Wildlife Refuge

Nearest town
or post office: Chignik

Region: Alaska Area

County: Alaska

Congressional District: 00

State: Alaska

Flyway: Pacific

I. BACKGROUND

A. Establishment authority

Executive Order No. 5858 signed by President Herbert Hoover on June 17, 1932, set aside the following islands to be reserved from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws: Aghiyuk, Chowiet, Kateekuk, Anowik, Kiliktagik, Suklik, Aghik, Aliksemit, and South Island.

B. Primary purposes

The area was set aside as a refuge and breeding ground for wild birds and game and fur animals, primarily cormorants, alcids, gulls, kittiwakes, Fulmars, guillemots, petrels, oystercatchers, and other land and sea birds. Protection also is afforded sea otters and other marine mammals. Extreme isolation and lack of good landfalls preclude general public use.

C. Special commitments

The executive order is subject to existing valid rights. Wilderness status is planned for the islands.

D. General aspects of the refuge

The Semidi Islands, located about 60 miles south of the Alaska Peninsula near Chignik, are a group of nine islands, several islets,

and offshore reefs and ~~WATERS~~ with a total area of about 256,000 acres. The two largest islands are Aghiyuk and Chowiet. Aghiyuk has the group's highest peak, 1,024 feet. Chowiet's highest elevation is 810 feet, with three lesser hills rising to elevations of over 450 feet.

The Semidi Islands are bounded by steep cliffs overlooking narrow rocky beaches. Aghiyuk and Chowiet have grass-covered ridges and plateaus, and their higher elevations are covered by heath and scattered rocky outcrops. Alder is scattered over the treeless islands at various elevations, and wildflowers adorn them in summer. Song Sparrows, Winter Wrens, and Common Eiders inhabit the beach rye bordering rough beaches; Lapland Longspurs and Savannah Sparrows nest on the grassy hills and plateaus. Yellow and Wilson's Warblers, Fox and Golden-crowned Sparrows, and an occasional Hermit Thrush are found in alder thickets. Water Pipits and Snow Buntings probably nest at higher elevations. Large numbers of Fulmars, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Common Murres, Pelagic and Red-faced Cormorants, puffins nest along the cliffs. Gabrielson in Birds of Alaska describes the combined Fulmar colonies on Chowiet and Aghiyuk as one of the four largest in Alaska. Bald Eagles are common in the Semidis, and nests were discovered in May 1972. Glaucous-winged Gulls and Black Oystercatchers frequent the small islets. Arctic ground squirrels are abundant on Chowiet and Aghiyuk; harbor seals and sea lions are common throughout the islands, and some sea otters occur.

II. QUALITATIVE OBJECTIVES

A. Wildlife interpretation

The remoteness, lack of travel means to the islands, characteristic foul weather, and unsuitable landing areas preclude interpretative programs. Moreover, no facilities or personnel are contemplated for these rugged islands.

B. Environmental education

No objectives are set for the same reasons as wildlife interpretation.

C. Wildlife consumptive recreation

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are not permitted (50 CFR Part 32 and 22 and Executive Order 5858); neither are they refuge objectives.

D. Wildlife non-consumptive recreation

1. Wildlife observation

A unique experience of bird and marine mammal observations in a pristine setting beckons the few individuals able to reach the remote islands.

2. Photography

Unusual and exciting photographic opportunities await those able to get there.

3. Off refuge

It would be unwise to publicize on television, radio, or in newspapers a virtually inaccessible refuge where disturbance of colonial nesting sea birds would be deleterious. But the wildlife resources of these islands could be made known in "Alaska Magazine's" refuge series.

E. Non-wildlife oriented recreation

The extreme isolation plus anticipated wilderness status of the refuge preclude non-wildlife oriented recreation.

F. Professional services

1. Refuge publications and studies

The Semidi Islands with their huge sea bird rookeries have been very poorly documented. The only visit to the islands by refuge personnel was by a wilderness study team in May 1972. The extremely isolated islands provide a model study area of undisturbed habitats and populations.

2. Ecological monitoring

The extreme isolation of the area makes such activities impractical.

3. Banding

Banding is impractical on these remote islands.

G. Natural environments preserved

The main objective is to maintain the refuge's natural, undisturbed character as a designated wilderness area.

H. Wildlife

1. Peripheral species

Protection of the Red-faced Cormorant and other nesting pelagic birds is of primary concern.

2. Status undetermined species

The islands constitute the only home of the Semidi Winter Wren, making protection of this subspecies an important consideration.

3. National unique species

Preservation of the islands' sea otters will be assured.

4. Special recognition species

Semidi Islands Refuge will be maintained in its present natural condition to provide optimum habitat for grebes, loons, fulmars, petrels, terns, gulls, alcids, shorebirds, and all other birdlife found there.

5. Eagles

A few Bald Eagles nest on the islands.

6. Other raptors

The refuge will protect Peregrine Falcons and other birds of prey.

7. Wildlife diversity

Present indigenous species will be perpetuated.

8. Waterfowl maintenance

Wintering Emperor Geese and sea ducks frequent the islands.

9. Waterfowl production

Common Eiders nest on refuge beaches.

(This completes output capabilities for this refuge)

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

RBU COMPUTATION

Current Outputs Estimated Estimated RBU Total
Average Number x Number Days x Value = RBU's

Publications & Studies

Unpublished Refuge Oriented Studies by refuge personnel (wilderness study
= 100,000 RBU)

Wildlife

Peripheral species

Red-faced Cormorant * 100 365 10 365,000

Status undetermined

Winter Wren 1,000 365 10 3,650,000

National unique species

Sea otter * 20 365 50 365,000

Special recognition species

Cormorants * 200 365 0.5 36,500

Grebes * 100 180 0.5 9,000

Loons * 50 365 0.5 18,250

Fulmars & Petrels * 400,000 100 0.5 20,000,000

Gulls & Terns * 450,000 100 0.5 22,500,000

Alcids * 1,700,000 100 0.5 85,000,000

Oystercatchers * 20 365 0.5 3,700

Plovers & Turnstones 200 60 0.5 6,000

Snipe & Sandpipers 50 60 0.5 1,500

Phalaropes * 50 60 0.5 1,500

Jaegers 10 180 0.5 900

Bald Eagle 20 365 5 36,500

Other raptors 10 270 1 2,700

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

RBU COMPUTATION

<u>Current Outputs</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Average Number</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Number Days</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>RBU</u> <u>Value</u>	<u>=</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>RBU's</u>
<u>Waterfowl Maintenance</u>							
*Geese	100		180		1		18,000
*Ducks	500		180		1		90,000

*Aforementioned data based on 8,422-acre land area. Total refuge with 2 to 10 miles of offshore waters (total area 256,000 acres) would increase use days of these species considerably. Use days for these species probably should be doubled in 1973 output reports.

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

RBU COMPUTATION

<u>Current Outputs</u>	<u>Estimated Number of Young Fledged</u>	<u>RBU Value</u>	<u>Total RBU's</u>
------------------------	----------------------------------------------	----------------------	------------------------

Waterfowl Production

Ducks - Group 3
(Common Eider)

100

200

20,000

SEMI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

RBU COMPUTATION

OBJECTIVES

Wildlife non-consumptive
recreation

Other published articles

"Alaska Magazine" (one article x 3,000 = 3,000 RBU)

Professional services

Refuge oriented studies published by refuge personnel

General avifauna (one study x 500,000 = 500,000 RBU)

Refuge oriented unpublished studies by refuge personnel

General avifauna (one study x 50,000 = 50,000 RBU)

Wildlife

Objectives RBU computation = current outputs.

BIRDS OF THE SEWARD ISLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Common Loon
Yellow-billed Loon
Red-necked Grebe
Fulmar
Slender-billed Shearwater
Fork-tailed Petrel
Leach's Petrel
Pelagic Cormorant
Red-faced Cormorant
Black Brant
Emperor Goose
Pintail
Shoveler
Oldsquaw
Harlequin Duck
Steller's Eider
Common Eider
White-winged Scoter
Surf Scoter
Common Scoter
Bald Eagle
Peregrine Falcon
Black Oystercatcher
Ruddy Turnstone
Rock Sandpiper

Northern Phalarope
Parasitic Jaeger
Glaucous-winged Gull
Black-legged Kittiwake
Arctic Tern
Common Murre
Thick-billed Murre
Pigeon Guillemot
Cassin's Auklet
Parakeet Auklet
Crested Auklet
Horned Puffin
Tufted Puffin
Common Raven
Winter Wren
Hermit Thrush
Water Pipit
Yellow Warbler
Wilson's Warbler
Gray-crowned Rosy Finch
Savannah Sparrow
Golden-crowned Sparrow
Fox Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Lapland Longspur
Snow Bunting

MAMMALS

Steller sea lion
Harbor seal
Sea otter
Arctic ground squirrel

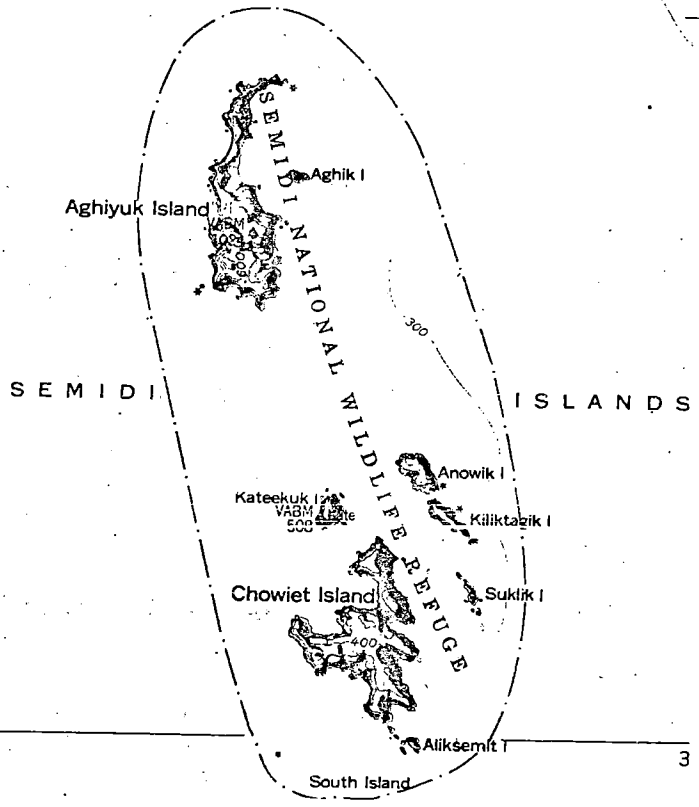


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
 BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

SEMIDI

**NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
 CANDIDATE WILDERNESS AREA**

PACIFIC OCEAN



Region _____

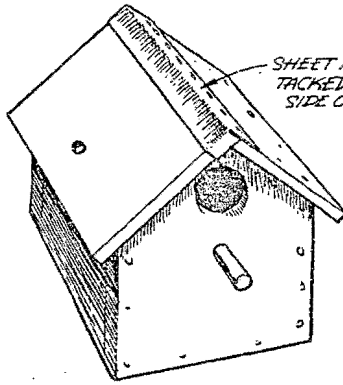
III. QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES

Refuge Semidi NWRFY 73Station No. 3510-03

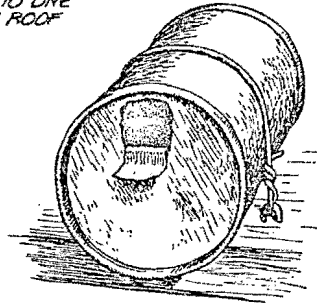
Output Code	Output	UNIT of EXPR	CURRENT		OBJECTIVE LEVEL		OBJECTIVE in OTU CAP or PEAK	OBJ. in other FORMS	
			Outputs	RBU's (thou.)	Output	RBU's (thou.)		No.	Units
374	Other published articles	ea	0	0	1	3			
501	R/O publications (refuge staff)	"	0	0	1	500			
503	R/O unpublished (refuge staff)	"	1	100	1	100			
600	Environments preserved	acres	256,000	5,120	256,000	5,120			
620	Wilderness areas	acres	0	0	1	17,550			
701	Peripheral birds	U/D	36,500	365	36,500	365			
701	Status undetermined birds	"	365,000	3,650	365,000	3,650			
710	Sea otter	"	7,300	365	7,300	365			
720	Loons	"	18,250	9	18,250	9			
720	Grebes	"	18,000	9	18,000	9			
720	Fulmars, petrels	"	40,000,000	20,000	40,000,000	20,000			
720	Cormorants	"	73,000	37	73,000	37			
720	Oystercatchers	"	7,300	4	7,300	4			
720	Plovers, turnstones	"	12,000	6	12,000	6			
720	Sandpipers	"	3,000	2	3,000	2			
720	Phalaropes	"	3,000	2	3,000	2			

Output Code	Output	UNIT of EXPR	CURRENT		OBJECTIVE LEVEL		OBJECTIVE in OTU CAP or PEAK	OBJ. in other FORMS	
			Outputs	RBU's (thou.)	Output	RBU's (thou.)		No.	Units
720	Jaegers	U/D	1,800	1	1,800	1			
720	Gulls & terns	"	45,000,000	22,500	45,000,000	22,500			
720	Alcids	"	170,000,000	85,000	170,000,000	85,000			
720	Eagles	"	7,300	37	7,300	37			
720	Other raptors	"	2,700	3	2,700	3			
730	Wildlife diversity	species	115	23,000	115	23,000			
741	Geese	"	18,000	18	18,000	18			
742	Ducks	"	90,000	90	90,000	90			
803	<u>Production:</u> Ducks - Group 3	prod	100	20	100	20			
TOTALS				160,338		178,391			

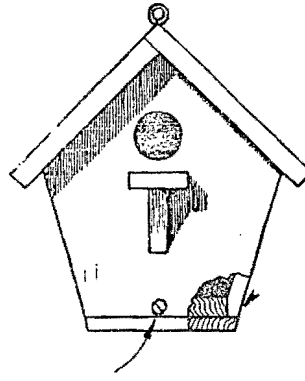
BIRD HOUSES



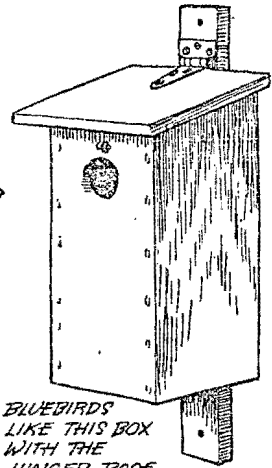
TO OPEN FOR CLEANING REMOVE SCREW AND SLIDE MOVEABLE HALF OF ROOF OUT FROM BENEATH METAL RIDGE.



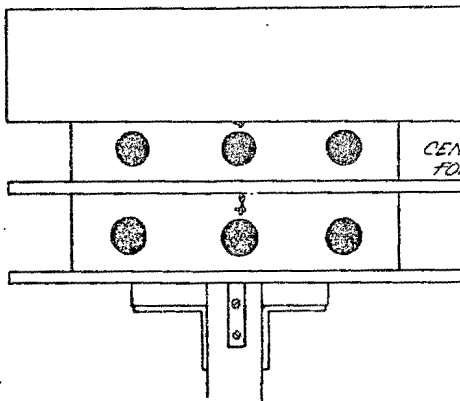
TIN CAN WREN HOUSES SHOULD BE PLACED IN A SHADY LOCATION TO PREVENT OVERHEATING.



2 SCREWS SECURE THE FLOOR OF THIS WREN HOUSE. ONLY BOXES INTENDED FOR WRENS & MARTINS SHOULD BE HUNG FROM LIMB; OTHERS TO BE FASTENED SECURELY TO A POST OR TREE TRUNK.



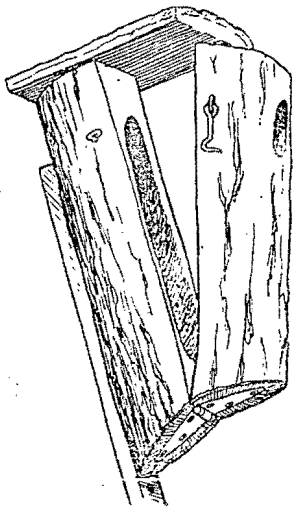
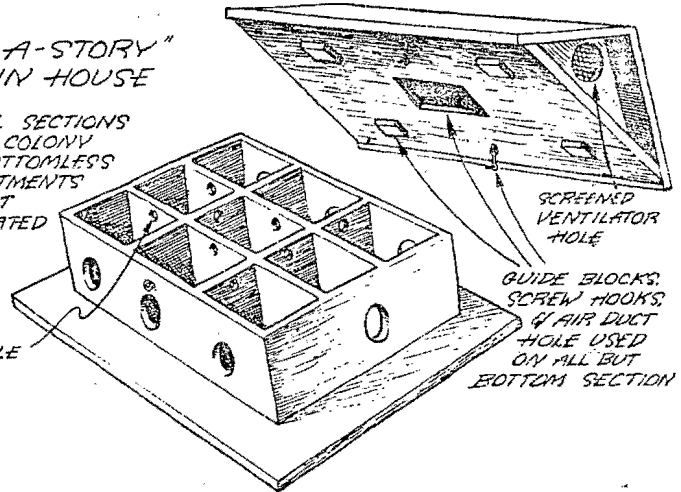
BLUEBIRDS LIKE THIS BOX WITH THE HINGED ROOF.



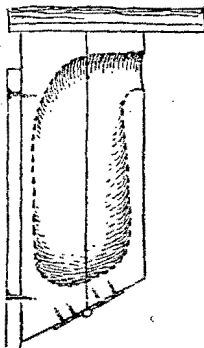
"ADD-A-STORY" MARTIN HOUSE

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS ADDED AS COLONY GROWS. BOTTOMLESS CENTER COMPARTMENTS FORM AIR DUCT TO VENTILATED "ATTIC".

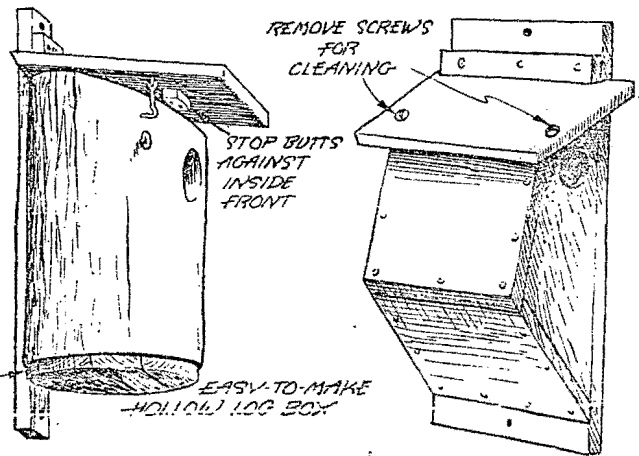
5" HOLE



THIS RUSTIC HOUSE IS MADE BY SPLITTING A SECTION OF LOG, THEN CARVING OUT A NESTING CAVITY.



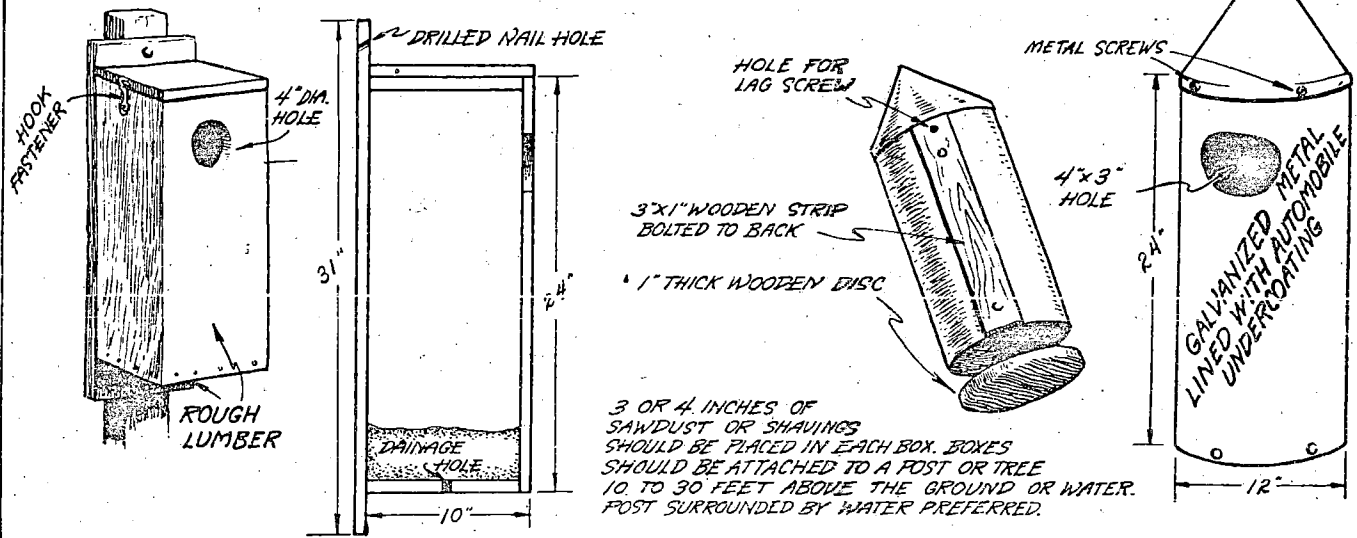
DON'T ALLOW BOTTOM TO EXTEND BEYOND SIDES OF LOG



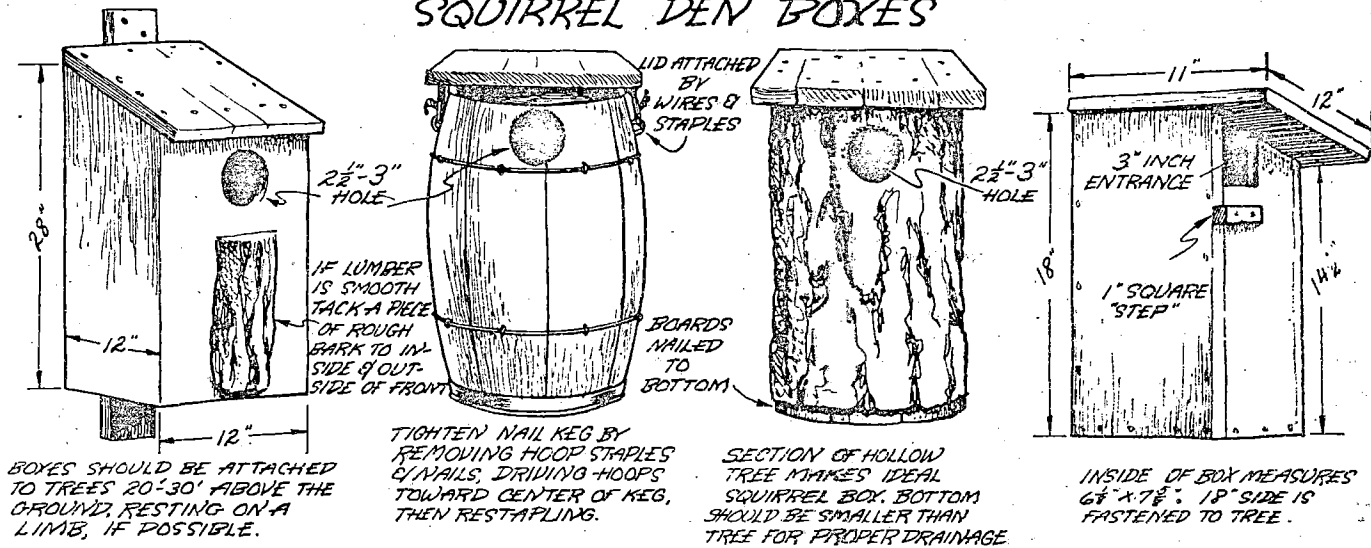
SPECIES	FLOOR OF CAVITY	DEPTH OF CAVITY	ENTRANCE ABOVE FLOOR	DIA. OF ENTRANCE
BLUEBIRD	5x5"	8"	6"	1 1/2"
CHICKADEE	4x4"	8-10"	6-8"	1 1/8"
TITMOUSE	4x4"	8-10"	6-8"	1 1/4"
NUTHATCHES	4x4"	8-10"	6-8"	1 1/4"
HOUSE WREN	4x4"	6-8"	1-6"	7/8"
CAROLINA WREN	4x4"	6-8"	1-6"	1 1/8"
CRESTED FLYCATCHER	6x6"	8-10"	6-8"	2"

SPECIES	FLOOR OF CAVITY	DEPTH OF CAVITY	ENTRANCE ABOVE FLOOR	DIA. OF ENTRANCE
FLICKER	7x7"	16-18"	14-16"	2 1/2"
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	6x6"	12-15"	9-12"	2"
DOWNY WOODPECKER	4x4"	8-10"	6-8"	1 1/4"
PURPLE MARTIN	6x6"	6"	1"	2 1/2"
TREE SWALLOW	5x5"	6"	1-5"	1 1/2"
BARN OWL	10x18"	15-18"	4"	6"
SPARROW HAWK	8x8"	12-15"	9-12"	3"

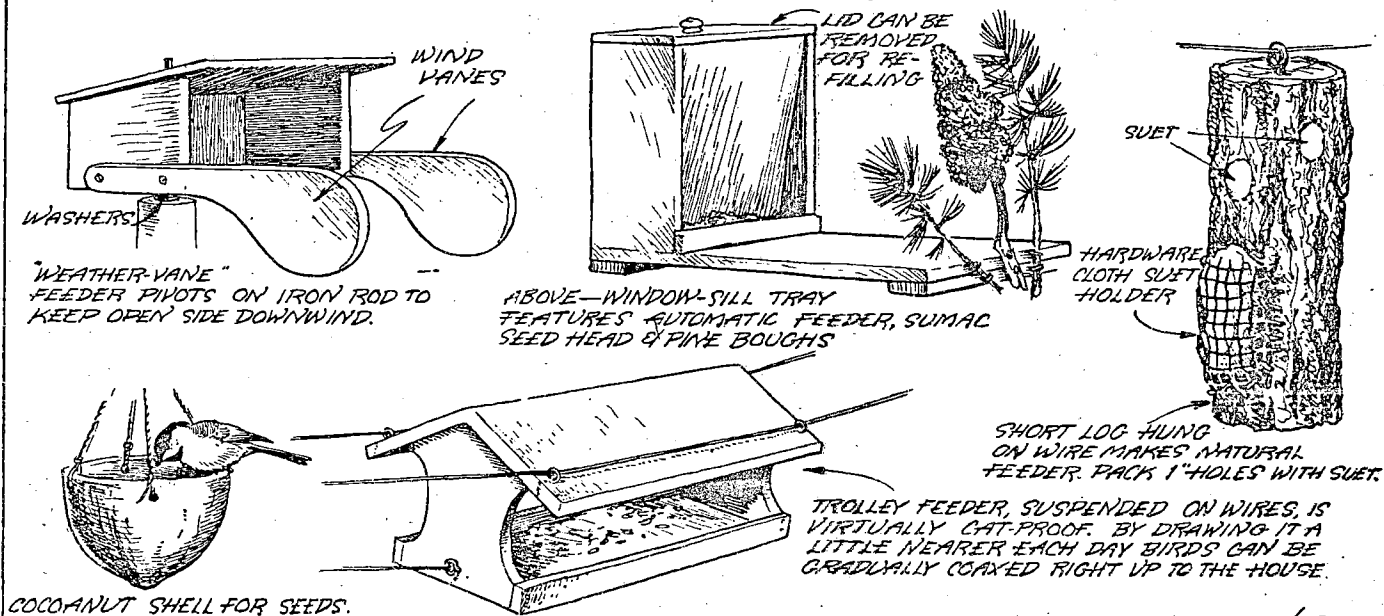
WOOD DUCK NESTING BOXES



SQUIRREL DEN BOXES



FEEDING STATIONS FOR SONGBIRDS



SECTION IV. FEDERAL REGISTER
NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Wilderness Proposal: Cancellation of Public Hearing

Notice of the public hearing for the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge wilderness proposal published on page 26743 of the December 15, 1972, issue of the FEDERAL REGISTER as Document 72-21597 is hereby cancelled.

SPENCER H. SMITH,
*Director, Bureau of
Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.*

JANUARY 5, 1973.

[FR Doc.73-500 Filed 1-9-73;8:45 am]

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Notice of Public Hearing Regarding Wilderness Proposal

Notice is hereby given in accordance with provisions of the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (Public Law 85-577; 78 Stat. 890-896; 16 U.S.C. 1131-1136), that a public hearing will be held beginning at 7 p.m. on February 20, 1973, at Loussac Library, Anchorage, Third Judicial District, Alaska, on a proposal leading to a recommendation to be made to the President of the United States by the Secretary of the Interior regarding the desirability of including all or part of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge within the National Wilderness Preservation System. The wilderness proposal consists of approximately 256,000 acres of lands and waters located in the Gulf of Alaska.

A study summary containing a map and information about the Semidi Wilderness proposal may be obtained from the Refuge Manager, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, Alaska 99571; or from the Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 813 D Street, Anchorage, AK 99501.

Individuals or organizations may express their oral or written views by appearing at this hearing, or they may submit written comments for inclusion in the official record of the hearing to the area director at the above address by March 22, 1973.

SPENCER H. SMITH,
*Director, Bureau of Sport
Fisheries and Wildlife.*

JANUARY 5, 1973.

[FR Doc.73-499 Filed 1-9-73;8:45 am]

SECTION V. NEWS
RELEASES

Public Hearing Slated On Semidi

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in the Department of the Interior has scheduled a public hearing to consider a proposal to include the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The hearing will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Loussac Library in Anchorage, on Feb. 20. All citizens wishing to express their views on this proposal are cordially invited to attend.

The approximately 256,000 acre Semidi National Wildlife Refuge is composed of nine islands containing 8,422 acres and surrounding submerged lands. The shorelines of the remote Semidis are extremely precipitous with sheer rock cliffs rising 100 to 200 feet above sea level in many places. There are only a few suitable bays for anchoring small boats. The islands are treeless with grasses and prostrate shrubs such as crowberry predominate.

The most striking feature of the islands is the extensive bird populations which utilize the rocky shorelines for nesting purposes. Murres, kittiwakes, fulmars, and puffins are the predominant species. One of the largest Pacific fulmar colonies in Alaska occurs on the Semidis. Bald eagles and peregrin falcons nest on the steep ledges and a variety of lesser song birds and shore birds utilize the islands.

Ground squirrels are the only known land mammals present, but the surrounding waters are inhabited by many marine mammals including sea lions, hair seals, sea otter and several species of whales. Commercial fishing for halibut and king crab occurs within the refuge boundaries, and the area is presently a loading zone for Russian

fishermen by international agreement. The islands are rarely visited by man and are currently in a natural state.

An informational brochure describing the proposal is available upon request from the Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 318 D Street, Anchorage, 99501, or the Refuge Manager, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay,



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Information

BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
813 D Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

REFER: Gordon Watson
Area Director
265-4864

Will Troyer
Wilderness Coordinator
265-4312

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED ON WILDERNESS PROPOSAL
Anchorage, Alaska

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in the Department of the Interior has scheduled a public hearing to consider a proposal to include the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The hearing will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Loussac Library in Anchorage, Alaska, on February 20, 1973. All citizens wishing to express their views on this proposal are cordially invited to attend.

The approximately 256,000 acre Semidi National Wildlife Refuge is composed of nine islands containing 8,422 acres and surrounding submerged lands. The shorelines of the remote Semidis are extremely precipitous with sheer rock cliffs rising 100 to 200 feet above sea level in many places. There are only a few suitable bays for anchoring small boats. The islands are treeless with grasses and prostrate shrubs such as crowberry predominate.

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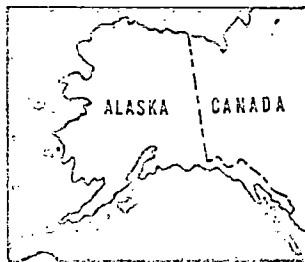
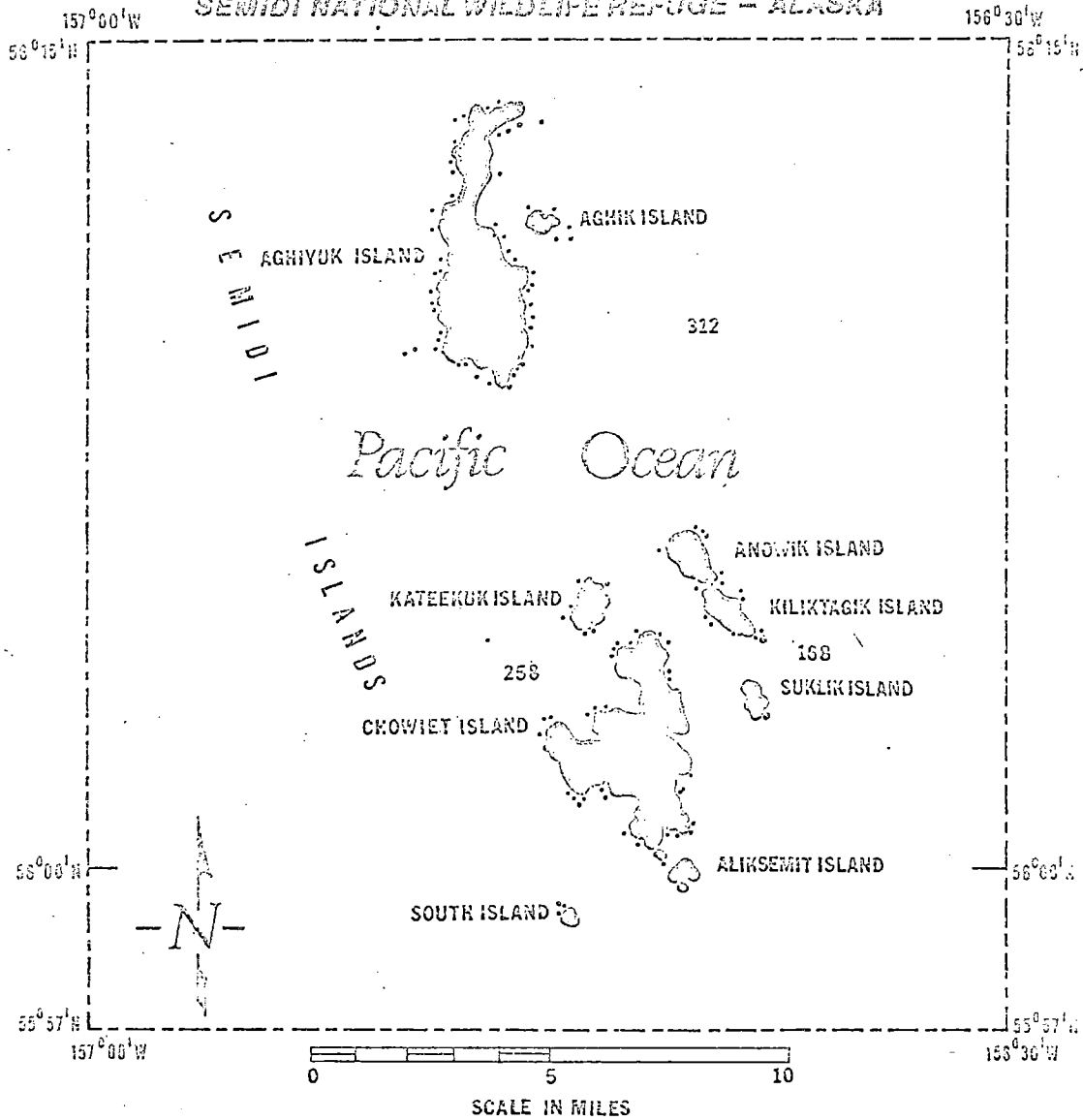
An informational brochure describing the proposal is available upon request from the Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 318 D Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, or the Refuge Manager, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, Alaska 99571.

Citizens are invited to express their views on this proposal pertaining to their public lands. Oral or written statements may either be presented at the public hearing or submitted in writing to the Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 813 D Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, by March 23, 1973, when the hearing record will be closed.

SECTION VI. PUBLIC HEARING
PACKAGE

SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL

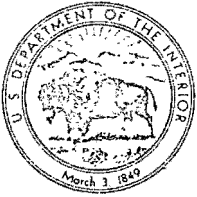
SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - ALASKA



SEMIDI ISLANDS

REFUGE AND PROPOSED
WILDERNESS BOUNDARY

OCTOBER-1972
PRELIMINARY - SUBJECT TO CHANGE



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

813 D Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

A PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to your attention a public hearing which will be held in the Loussac Library at Anchorage, Alaska, on February 20, 1973. The hearing concerns a wilderness proposal within the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge. Copies of the public notice and wilderness brochure are enclosed.

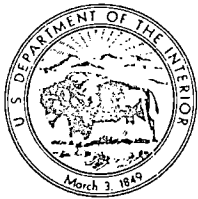
Your views may be presented before, during, or after the public hearing. Your statement, if submitted after the hearing, must be submitted to this office at the above address by March 23, 1973, in order to become a part of the official hearing record.

If we may provide any assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon W. Watson
Alaska Area Director

Enclosure



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

813 D Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING WILDERNESS PROPOSAL

Notice is hereby given in accordance with provisions of the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (P. L. 88-577; 78 Stat. 890-896; 16 U.S.C. 1131-1136), that a Public Hearing will be held beginning at 7:00 pm on February 20, 1973, at Loussac Library, Anchorage, Third Judicial District, Alaska, on a proposal leading to a recommendation to be made to the President of the United States by the Secretary of the Interior, regarding the desirability of including all or part of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge within the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge contains approximately 256,000 acres of land and waters located in the Gulf of Alaska.

A brochure containing a map and information about the Semidi Wilderness Proposal may be obtained free of charge from the Refuge Manager, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, Alaska 99571; or from the Alaska Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 813 D Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

Individual citizens and representatives of organizations or government agencies may express their views orally or in writing by attending the public hearing. For those unable to attend the hearing, written testimony may be submitted to the Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 813 D Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, by March 23, 1973.

Gordon W. Watson
Gordon W. Watson
Alaska Area Director

SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL

**SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
ALASKA**

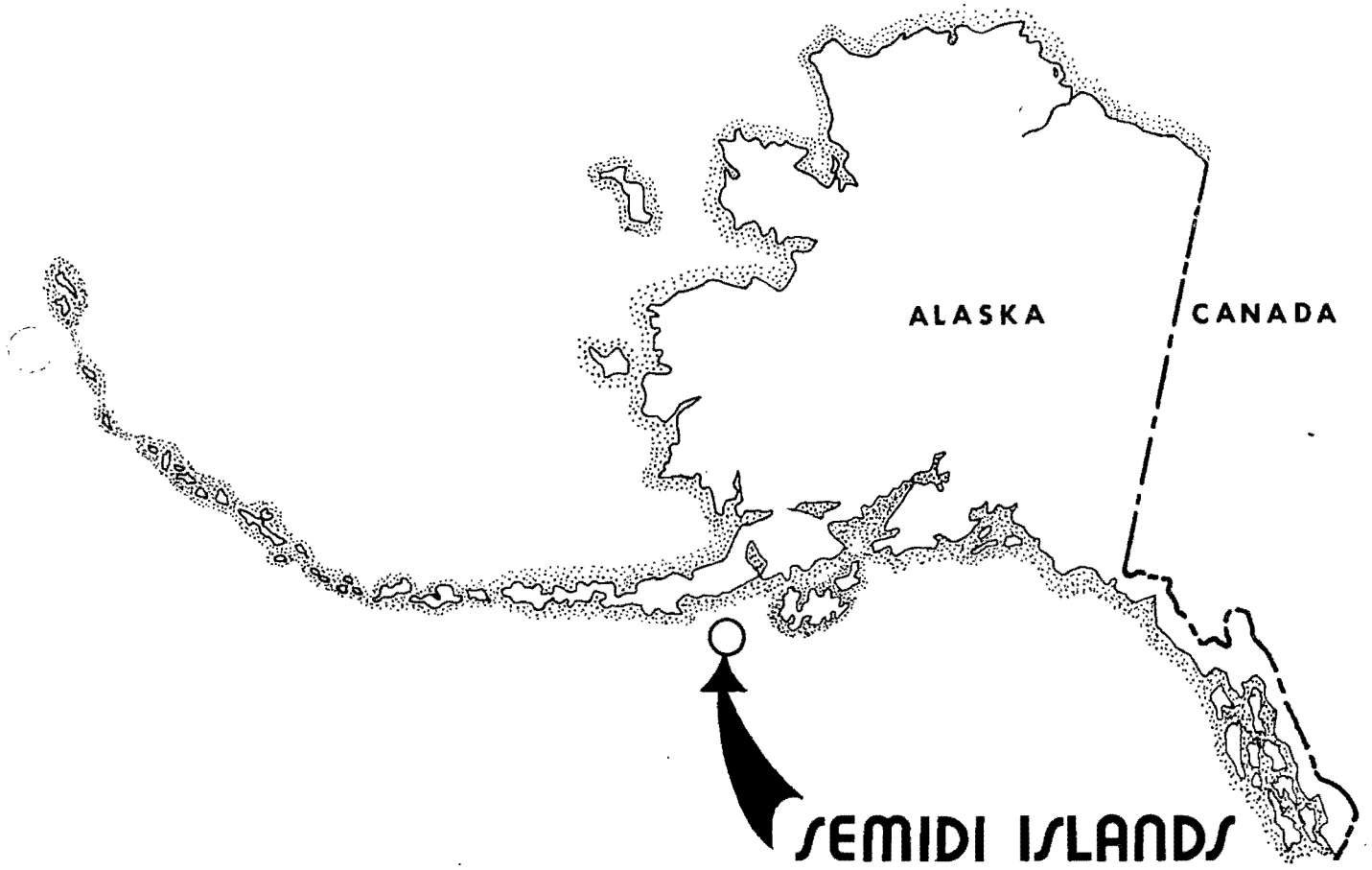
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

This report was prepared pursuant to the Wilderness Act, Public Law 88-577. Publication of the findings and recommendations herein should not be construed as representing either the approval or disapproval of the Secretary of the Interior. The purpose of this report is to provide information and alternatives for further consideration by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Secretary of the Interior, and other Federal agencies.



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources."

The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.



ALASKA

CANADA

SEMIDI ISLANDS

THE REMOTE SEMIDI ISLANDS



PREFACE

This brochure summarizes the wilderness study conducted on the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife as directed by the Secretary of the Interior. Its aim is to assist the reader in forming an opinion of the desirability of including the refuge into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (Public Law 88-577), requires that the Secretary of the Interior review every roadless area of 5,000 contiguous acres or more and every roadless island regardless of size within the National Wildlife Refuge System within ten years after the effective date of the Act, and report to the President of the United States his recommendations as to the suitability or unsuitability of each such area or island for preservation as wilderness. A recommendation of the President for designation as wilderness does not become effective unless provided for by an Act of Congress.

In defining wilderness, the Act also included areas of fewer than 5,000 acres that are of sufficient size to make preservation and use in an unimpaired condition practicable.

Sections 4(a) and (b) of the Wilderness Act provide that: (1) the Act is to be within and supplemental to the purposes for which national wildlife refuges are established; and (2) wilderness areas shall be administered so as to preserve their wilderness character and shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use insofar as primary refuge objectives permit. Wilderness designation does not remove or alter an area's status as a national wildlife refuge.

ERRATA SHEET

Paragraph 2 of Socio-Economic Considerations section should read as follows:

The international agreement concerning the U. S. contiguous fishery zone off Alaska was renegotiated with Japan in December 1972, and Semidi Refuge is no longer within the loading and unloading zone. A similar agreement with Russian is currently pending.

INTRODUCTION

The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge was established by Executive Order 5858 in 1932 primarily to protect the habitat of several million seabirds. It lies in the Gulf of Alaska, approximately 35 miles from the Alaska Peninsula and 110 miles southwest of Kodiak Island.

The remote treeless islands surrounded by stormy seas of the North Pacific Ocean are rarely visited by man. They are a haven for vast colonies of pelagic birds that nest on the rocky cliffs and feed in the surrounding waters.

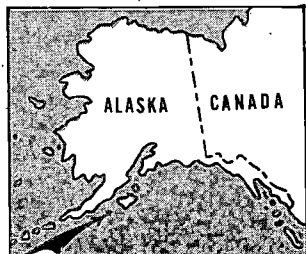
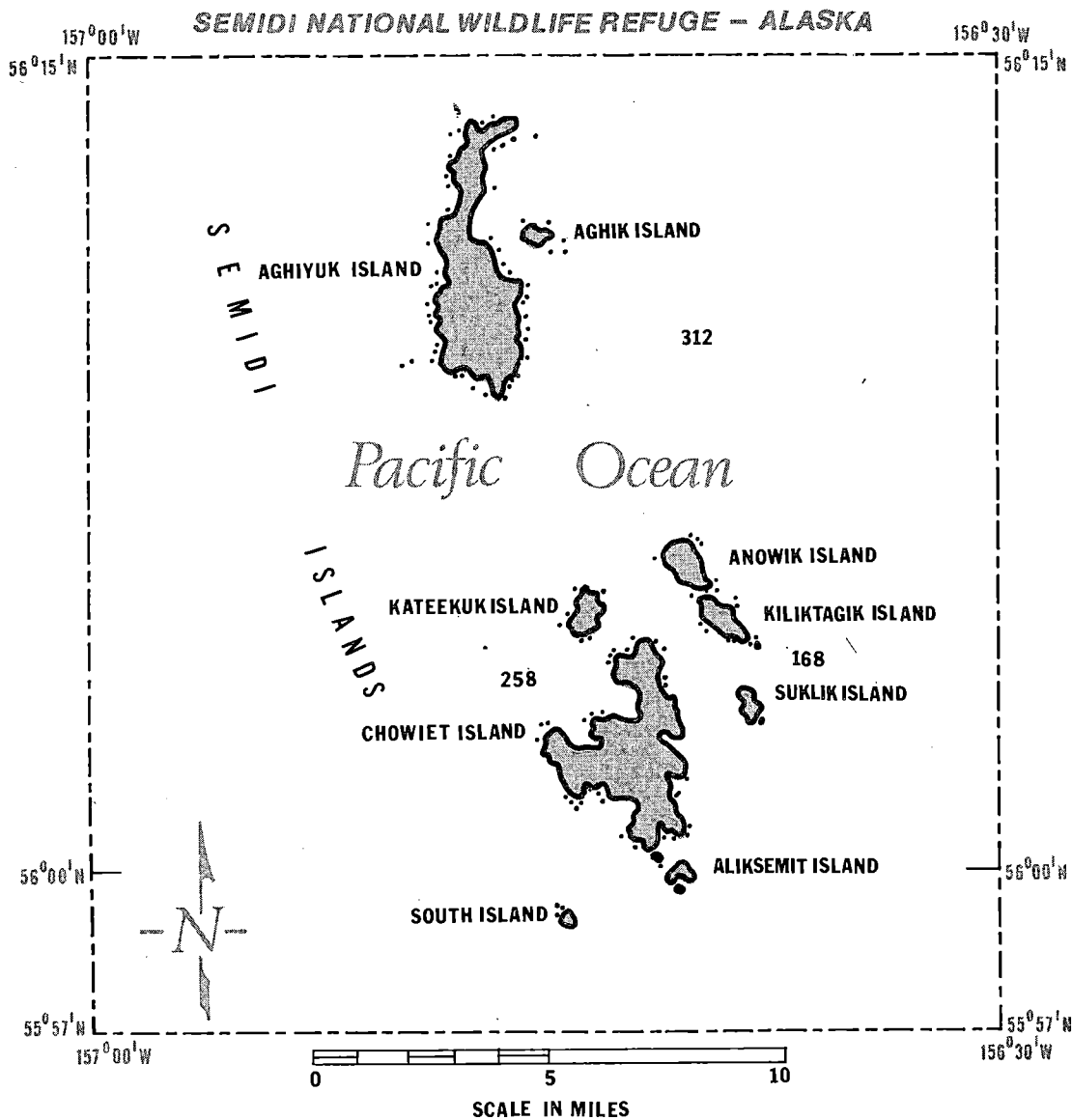
The 256,000-acre refuge consists of submerged lands, and nine small islands and associated offshore rocks containing 8,422 acres.

HISTORY

The Semidi Islands were discovered in August 1741 by a Norwegian explorer, Vitus Bering, sailing under the Russian flag, who named them Tumanoi (Foggy) Islands. The present word, Semidi, is believed to stem from the Russian word "sem" meaning seven, probably referring to the seven larger islands. Captain James Cook reported sighting the islands on June 16, 1778.

Little history has been recorded on the islands since discovery. Apparently they were not occupied by Natives. However, the remains of a small cabin on Aghiyuk Island and a lone spruce tree planted on Chowiet Island give evidence of some human occupancy in recent times.

SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL



SEMIDI ISLANDS

----- REFUGE AND PROPOSED WILDERNESS BOUNDARY

OCTOBER-1972
PRELIMINARY - SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

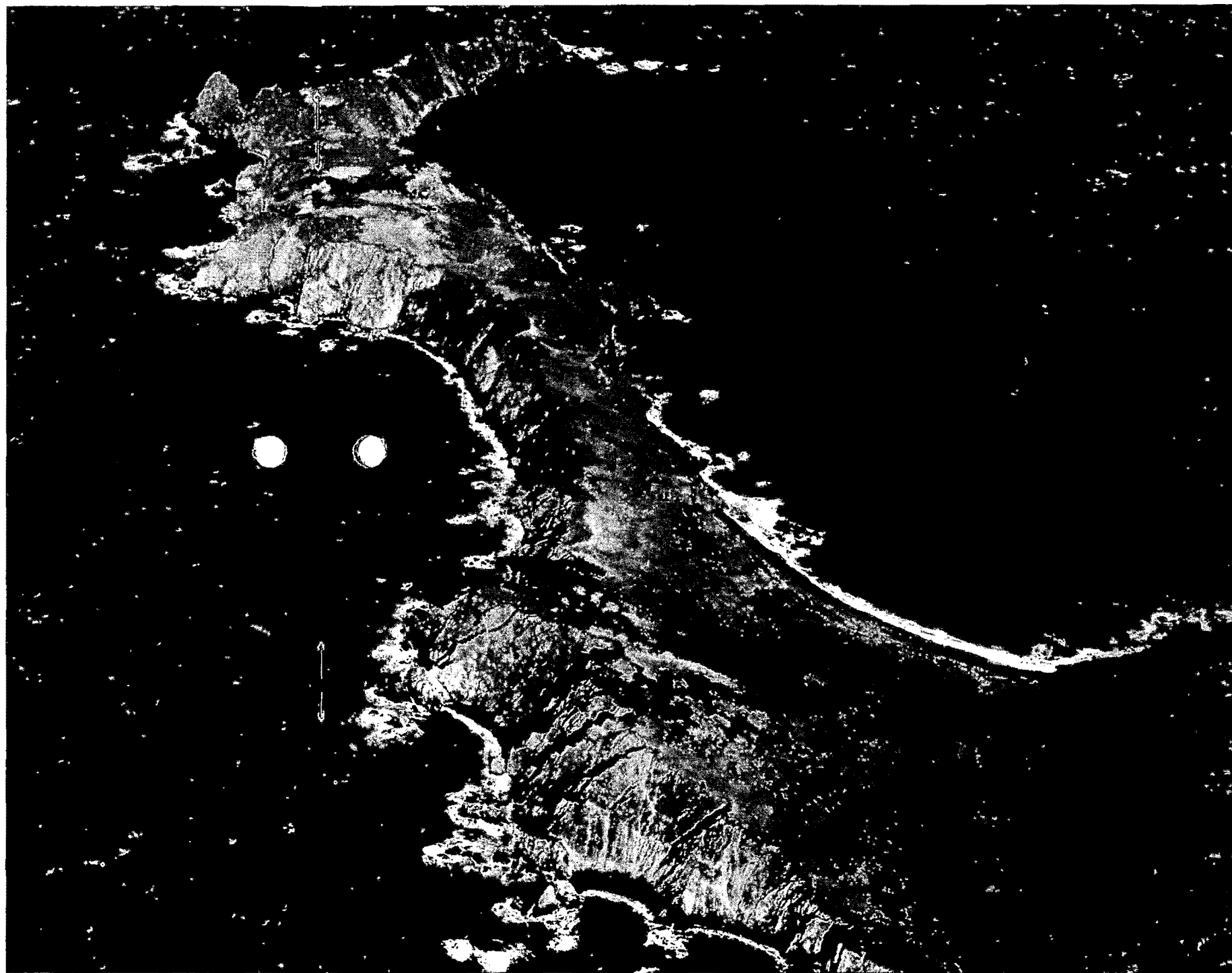
Aghiyuk, Aghik, Anowik, Kiliktagik, Chowiet, Aliksemit, Suklik, Kateekuk and South Islands, and a few smaller rocks and islands are the composite of the Semidi Islands group. Aghiyuk, the largest, has an elevation of 1,024 feet and is approximately six miles long and two miles wide.

Island shorelines are extremely precipitous with sheer rock cliffs rising 100 to 200 feet above the seas. There are few suitable anchorages or boat landings and only on Aghiyuk is there a gradually sloping gravel beach. Water depth increases rapidly offshore from 10 fathoms near island shores to 50 fathoms or more further out to sea with no shallow reefs. The submerged lands lie within the 12-mile limit of the continental shelf.

The islands are treeless, covered with a typical subarctic low mat vegetation consisting primarily of grasses, mosses, and a scattering of broad-leaved plants with willow and crowberry the principal shrubs. An array of wild flowers is conspicuous during summer months and some kelp beds occur in offshore waters.

The maritime climate is characterized by frequent cloudiness, fog, and gale-force winds. Precipitation occurs regularly and exceeds 50 inches annually. The mean annual temperature is about 40°F with summers short and cool, and winters long, cold and stormy.

BIRD CLIFFS ON AGHIYUK ISLAND



RESOURCES

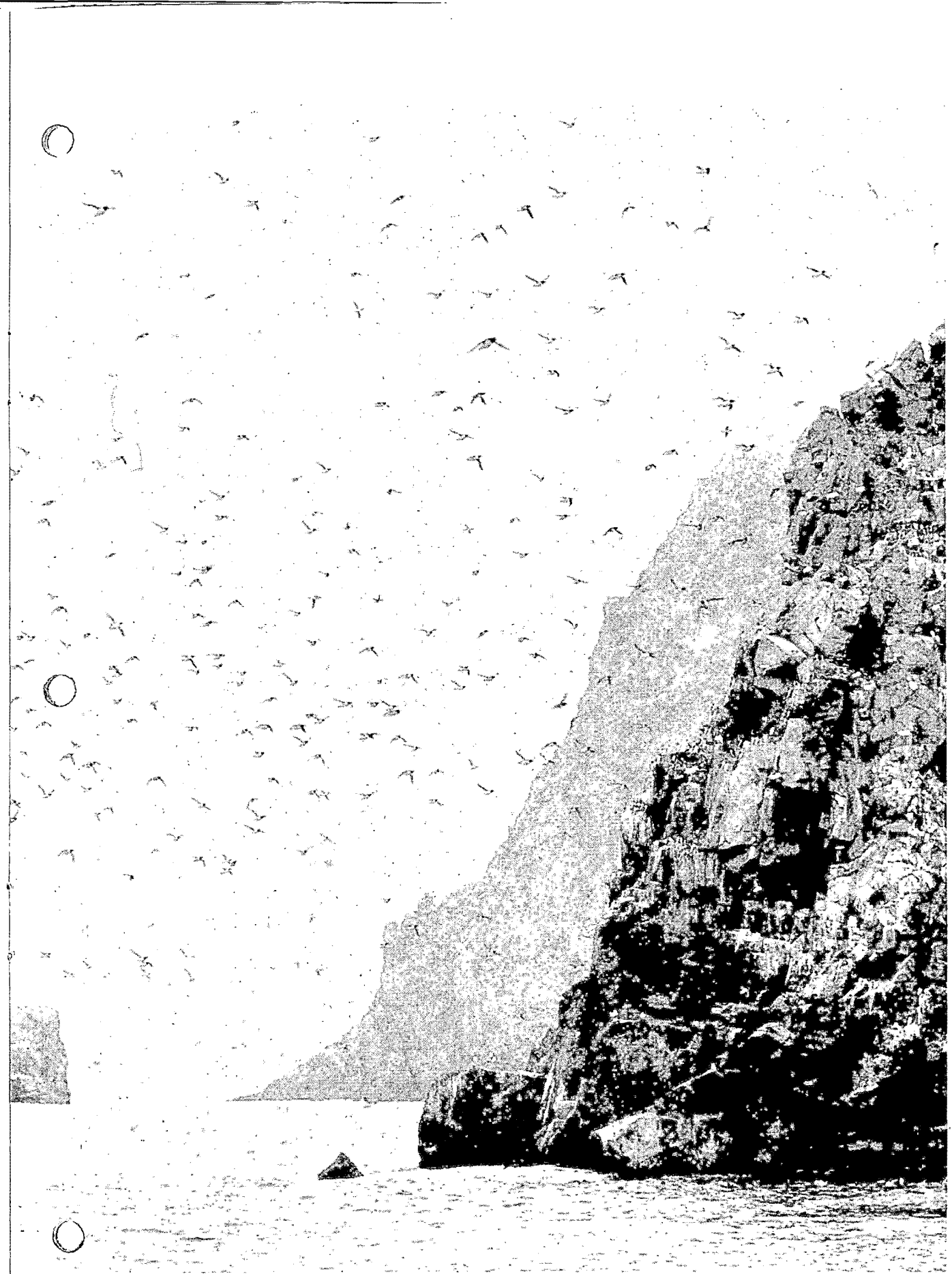
The extensive pelagic bird colonies are the outstanding wildlife feature of the islands. There appears no end to the number of seabirds as they crowd the rock ledges, while thousands of others wheel about overhead. At times offshore waters are literally alive with feeding birds. Common and thick-billed murre, black-legged kittiwakes, Pacific fulmars and horned puffins are the major species present and they number in the millions. One of the largest Pacific fulmar colonies in Alaska is found on the Semidis. All the islands are used by nesting birds and the surrounding waters, rich in marine life, provide food resources necessary to sustain such a massive concentration of wildlife.

A total of 43 species of birds has been identified on the islands. Among these, the American bald eagle is considered a common resident and at least 2 pairs of the endangered peregrine falcon also occur. The song sparrow, winter wren, parasitic jaeger, red-faced cormorant, glaucous-winged gull and the colorful harlequin duck are other common species.

The only known land mammal is the arctic ground squirrel, but a variety of marine mammals inhabits surrounding ocean waters. Various species of whales are commonly seen, and harbor seals and sea lions maintain rookeries on several islands. Sea otters are present but are not abundant.

King crab and halibut are harvested annually from the seas by commercial fishermen. Their catch is worth several million dollars.

The refuge is outside the major petroleum provinces of Alaska and has no known mineral deposits.



NESTING HABITAT OF MURRES AND KITTIWAKES

PUBLIC USE

The refuge's sheer remoteness discourages public use and there are few well-protected bays suitable for anchorage. The surrounding waters are seldom calm enough for seaplane landings.

The only anticipated recreational uses are wildlife-oriented, since bird watchers and photographers may be attracted to the islands to view and photograph the large bird colonies.

Commercial fishing for halibut and, to a lesser degree, king crab, are established uses within the refuge and would continue under wilderness designation.

MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

No development or physical manipulation of the habitat has occurred, nor is any planned. The refuge's value to birds and other forms of fish and wildlife can best be preserved by maintaining a natural environment.

The massive concentration of birds and associated marine resources in a relatively isolated setting provides unusual opportunities for scientific studies. Such studies, undertaken in the future, may provide many answers to the complex ecology within a coastal ecosystem.

A small administrative cabin may be necessary sometime in the future for patrol and scientific studies. Restrictions may be required to avoid human disturbance to birds and mammals during breeding season.



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Halibut fishing is of major economic importance in surrounding waters and limited crab fishing occurs. Some 30 to 40 vessels harvest from two to four million pounds of halibut in refuge and adjacent waters. Such existing enterprises would not be affected by wilderness status.

The refuge is currently within a loading and unloading zone for Russian and Japanese fishing fleets under an international agreement. Renegotiation of this treaty may be in order if these activities become detrimental to the wildlife resources of the refuge.

Adequate harbors and freshwater resources are not available in the islands. It is doubtful, therefore, that any industry such as a commercial fish cannery operation would desire to locate in such an area.

There is no evidence of recent Native use of the islands and they are not under consideration as lands for Alaska Natives under the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

Perpetuating the great bird resources such as are present in the islands adds to the social wellbeing of all citizens of the United States, who may observe some of these birds during migration periods or view photographs of such unique bird colonies, even though the majority of people will never set foot on the Semidis.

CONCLUSION

All of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge is still in a natural state and qualifies for inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System. No adverse economic or environmental impacts can be foreseen from the proposed action. Commercial fishing using motor-powered boats is an established use and does not conflict with management objectives. It is proposed, therefore, that this activity be permitted to continue subject only to existing federal and state laws.

Designating the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness will provide legislative protection to the refuge and will assure that the insular ecosystem will remain in a natural state for the use and enjoyment of this and future generations of Americans.

Persons interested in the proposal are encouraged to visit the Semidi Island. Additional information may be obtained from the Refuge Manager, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, Alaska 99571 or from the Area Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 813 D Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

PHOTO CREDITS: Page 2, Karl Kenyon; page 5, Richard J. Hensel; pages 7, 9 and 11, Willard A. Troyer.



PACIFIC FULMARS

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU OF SPORTS FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

813 D STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
99501



POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INT 423

SECTION VII. PUBLIC HEARING
MAILING LIST

William Dock Adams
Union Oil Co.
909 W. Ninth Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Jim Allan
834 W. 3rd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Robert T. Anderson
Union Oil Co. of Calif.
909 W. 9th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Glenn L. Audsley
U. S. Weather Bureau
632 Sixth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Ray M. Barnds
Union Oil of Calif.
909 W. Ninth Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Larry Beede
Box 3-711
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. William Bishop
1016 Beech Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Burton C. Biss
425 G Street Suite 770
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Patrick J. Bliss
129 E. 11th St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Gerald R. Brookman
1220 F Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mrs. Alice E. Brown
532 E. 9th
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. B. R. Brown
Atlantic Richfield Co.
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Edward Burton
825 W. 8th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Glen D. Chambers
2020 E. 3rd Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Sharon Cissna
Box 1086
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Roger P. Clancy
836 M Street, Apt. 310
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Connors
842 Elm Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Robert Crow
1200 W. 6th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Art Davidson, Alaska Rep.
Friends of the Earth
Box 1977
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Geert C. Doorlag
P. O. Box 1097
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Russ Dunn
Trout Unlimited
Suite 201, 429 D St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Theodore R. Dunn
429 D Street, Suite 201
Anchorage, AK 99501

Virginia Eide
1318 G Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. & Mrs. S. J. Erickson
833 13th Avenue W.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Sewell Faulkner
c/o Jack White Co.
909 W. 9th
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. & Mrs. R. W. Fischer
Box 954
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. James Grandjean
Alaska Legal Services Corp.
308 G Street, Suite 313
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Eugene F. Griffin
Union Oil of Calif.
909 W. Ninth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Clifford J. Groh, II
1576 Coffey Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

James Harle
Box 7002
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rev. Donald Hart
1541 I Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Fred Hoefler
109 W. Harvard Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Thomas H. Hutto, Jr.
425 G Street, Suite 800
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Joseph Britch
1320 E Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Nan Marshall
1200 L Street, Apt. 108
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

J. R. Sager
Shell Oil Company
430 Seventh Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Bill Johnson
704 Second Avenue, Suite B
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Warren Matthews Jr.
429 D St., Suite 201
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dave Saunders
c/o Chugach Electric
P. O. Box 3158
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Llewellyn Johnson
1338 West 15th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Tom Meacham
1410 H Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Richard Schwendinger
221 E. 7th Ave., Apt. 114
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Walter M. Johnson
1521 G Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Wm J. Mills, M.D.
742 K Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. John R. Scott, Attorney
ARCO
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Jun J. Kawakami
1222 W. 10th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Bob Price
P. O. Box 4-1970
Eastman Oil Well
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Alfred Service
Room G81, Federal Bldg.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Millett F. Keller
SCS Data Processing
3111 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Forrest Nelson
515 D Street, Room 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Bob Shanks
628 E. Fifth Avenue, Suite 202
Dresser Atlas
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Andy Klein
539 H Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. & Mrs. Collin A. Niver
1431 Denali St., Apt. 4
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Steve Smith
2600 Draper Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Edward Kramer
Box 738
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Daniel E. Ranshaw
519 W. 8th, Room 209
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

William Stone
1509 E. Bluff Drive, Apt. 242
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Edwin J. Kreitlow
803 E. 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Robert Renkert
1225 S Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Ben Talley
909 W. 9th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Harry C. Lee
Union Oil Company of Calif.
909 W. Ninth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Elaine M. & Richard N. Rife
842 Dogwood Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Betty Thielson
727 N Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. William F. Madison
Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Ruth Schmidt
1040 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Charles C. Thomas
835 Medfra
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Ernest M. Thompson
327 E. 15th
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Top o' the World Four Wheelers
Box 3134
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KFQD
Box 1160
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dr. Robert D. Whaley
1546 Coffey Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Trout Unlimited
George Dickson
360 K Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KHAR TV
Pouch 7-016
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Alaska Center for the Environ-
ment
913 West Sixth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Exploration Services Co., Inc.
Alaska Office
P. O. Box 1611
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KNIK FM
Box 2200
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Alaska Federation of Natives
1675 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mobil Oil Corporation
Att: Art Field
Geophysical Supervisor
Pouch 7-003
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KTVA TV
Box 2200
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Alaska Geological Society
Box 1388
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Shell Oil Company
430 Seventh Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KWKO FM Radio
Box 1808
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Alaska Oil & Gas Association
425 G Street, Suite 550
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Z. J. Loussac Public Library
427 F Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Roy Peratrovich, Super.
Bureau of Indian Affairs
P. O. Box 120
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Alcor, Inc.
3701 Linn Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Anchorage Daily Times
820 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Robert Price
Regional Solicitor
U. S. Dept. of the Interior
Box 166
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Dale F. Dorn, Manager
Alaskan Operations
Forest Oil Corporation
425 G Street, Suite 990
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

M. B. Wallace
c/o Anchorage Times
Box 40
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Curtis McVee, State Direct
Bureau of Land Management
U. S. Dept. of the Interior
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Greater Anchorage Chamber of
Commerce
612 F Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Anchorage Daily News
133 Post Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Walter L. Kubley
Program Representative
U. S. Dept. of Agriculture
Room 325, 308 G Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

President
Nordic Ski Club of Anchorage
P. O. Box 3-301
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KBYR
Box 1960
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Barney Coster
Chugach Forestry Super.
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mountaineering Club of Alaska
Box 2037
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

KENI TV
Box 1160
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

U. S. Geological Survey
218 E. Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dr. O. E. Dickason, Director
Water Quality Office
Environmental Protection Agency
Room 8, 605 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. T. G. Smith, Director
Division of Parks
Department of Natural Resources
323 E. 4th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Senator John Rador
Box 2068
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Federal Aviation Administration
632 W. 6th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rep. Edward G. Barbar
1001 E Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Jon Aase
Star Route A, Box 453
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Richard Shepherd
Field Rep., Alaska Region
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Mackay Building
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rep. Genie Chance
Box 2392
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Ted Ashby
P. O. Box 6207
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

KHAR
Pouch No. 7-016
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rep. Marty Farrell
1215 West 8th
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mrs. Alma Best
3137 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Jack G. Webb
Director, Alaskan Region
Federal Aviation Administration
632 Sixth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rep. Gene Guess
Box 1332
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Gary Bocarde
Box 1734, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Wayne Morgan, Dist. Engineer
Federal Highway Administration
213 Federal Building
600 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rep. Jess Harris
1016 11th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dennis Bromley
6637 Linden Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Ernest Borgman
General Superintendent
National Park Service
P. O. Box 2252
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Rep. William Moran
Box 1891
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. & Mrs. Eivin Brudie
Box 241, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Russel Brown
Special Assistant
Office of Rep. Nicholas Begich
209 Federal Building
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Senator Chancy Croft
1511 G Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Ray A. Causton
8306 Loganberry
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mrs. Adelaide Blomfield
Special Assistant
Office of Senator Mike Gravel
P. O. Box 2283
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Senator Clifford Groh
430 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Charles Champion
3708 Tree Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mrs. Barbara Andrews
Office of Sen. Ted Stevens
P. O. Box 1960
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Senator Joseph Josephson
326 H Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. & Mrs. P. H. Connor
S.R.A. Box 381-A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Parks & Recreation Section
Alaska State Div. of Lands
323 E. 4th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Senator C. R. Lewis
1922 Logan Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Mr. Charles W. Cox
8616 Abbott Loop Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Charles Evans
Star Route A, Box 1621
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Drs. Jim and Nancy Lethcoe
Star Route A, Box 402E
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Kurt Rein
1554 Eagle St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Ted Fathauer
2716 Lore Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. & Mrs. Ames Luce
713 W. 72nd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

John C. Riggs
Casper Court
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

James Francis
5300 Lupin Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Charles Lucier
8331 Huckleberry
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Wiley D. Robinson
3708 Jewell Lake Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Katherine Gill
Star Route A, Box 1500W
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Peter Martin
3447 E. 88th Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Bob Ross
4300 Arctic, Space 20
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Arthur Goedeker
6917 Warfield Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. & Mrs. Warren Matthews
8916 Gloralee
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Allen Scouler
7136 Terry Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

John L. Hall
Star Route A, Box 1466C
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. John Miller
3001 Porcupine Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Theodore Shohl, M.D.
6034 Tanaina Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Dr. Richard L. Hanks
3625 North Point Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Walter Parker
3724 Campbell Airstrip Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Thomas Springer
Star Route A, Box 1744
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. & Mrs. Dick Howe
Star Route A, Box 1455
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Theodore Pease
Star Route A, Box 478J
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. and Mrs. John Strachan
4110 Terrace Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mrs. Gene Kvalvik
Box 404B, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Wendell Oderkirk
Box 442, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Robert W. Swift
Box 6292
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Stephen Laposki
705 Pearl Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Stanley Owen
Star Route A, Box 1466
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Pauline Titus
Box 498, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Dave Law
6929 Warfield Pl.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Austin Reid
Box 6287 Airport Annex
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Steve Vranick
Box 6-245 Annex
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Katherine West
3854 Helvetia Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Ron Somerville
Game Division
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
1018 International Airport Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Dayton Curtis
726 W. 20th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Tyron Wieland, M.D.
395 Caravelle
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Rep. Willard L. Bowman
1112 East 69th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. B. E. Davies
3103 Eide St., Apt. H
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alan Wicks
2666 Northrup Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Senator Lowell Thomas Jr.
7022 Tanaina Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Harm DeBoer
3003 Wendys Way, Apt. 8
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Roger Wirch
Box 199R, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Billy C. Anderson
909 Southampton
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Skip Deegans c/o CEDC
503 W. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

William G. Zaegel
3676 N. Point Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Primula M. Babcock
2803 Barbara Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Louise DeVoe
4036 Balchen Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

The Aleut League
P. O. Box 6265
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. John A. Ban
1100 W. 32nd Avenue, #3
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Dickson
2126 Dawson Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

The Moose Jaw News
3406 W. 82nd Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Daisy Lee Bitter
2804 Breezewood Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

David Dolese
2517 Foraker Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Jim Scott, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
4700 E. 72nd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Bailey O. Breedlove
2615 Turnagain Parkway
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. & Mrs. Jack R. Doyle
2401 Juneau Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Sport Fish Division
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
1018 International Airport Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

James Cadden
304 E. 26th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Clarice Eberly
2600 W. Northern Lights, #D-1
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Commercial Fisheries Division
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
212 E. International Airport Rd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Mr. Jimmie E. Church
Union Oil Co.
2037 Churchill Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. Clark Engle, President
Alaska Prof. Hunter's Assoc.
1003 Chugach Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Protection Division
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
212 E. International Airport Rd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Bruce Clardy
2912 Breezewood Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. W. C. Fackler
2512 Lord Baranof
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Darrell Farnen
3822 Spenard Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Ginny Harris
3945 Balchen Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. Robert Lally
ITT Arctic Services
703 W. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Terrill Fleming
1505 W. 31st Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Marv Hathorn
3915 Borland Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Kathy & Ron Lautaret
2627 West 34
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Scott & Odette Foster
2631 W. 34th
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Jean Hilchey
2506 29th Avenue
Spenard, Alaska 99503

Charles Lippitt
2203 McKinley Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Robert Gallison
4828 Canterbury Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Robert Howard
3236 29th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

M. W. Moore
4106 Arkansas Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mark Ganapole
Alaska Wilderness Council
Box 4-470
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Ward Hulbert
1840 W. Northern Lights
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

John Murphy
3103 W. 32nd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. & Mrs. Dick Glasheen
2604 W. 33rd, #7
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. W. R. Hutson
2425 Captain Cook
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. Benno J. Patsch
2205 Arlington Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Gerald Goldschmidt
3927 Crosson Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. Ken Jarvi
3929 Westwood Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mrs. R. Pender
2419 Spurr Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Don Goodwin
3710 B-70
Eureka Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Elaine Kallos
2204 W. Northern Lights, #112
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dorothy Pohls
2607 W. 33rd Ave., #3
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. James H. Gribbin
Grant Oil Tool
3143 Denali Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. James D. Keasler
5125 Cambridge Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. Vance Porter
2567 Arlington Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Robert Hall
2900 Wendy's Way
Spenard, Alaska 99503

Adolf Kuhn
1012 36th Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Ray N. Osborne
2606 29th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Leo Hannan
2413 Chilligan Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Kenneth Kuhns
2303 Eureka St., Apt. 4
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Marie Lundstrom
Box 4964
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. Charles E. Overton
ITT Arctic Services
703 W. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

P. I. Norman Stadem
2446 Spurr Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Barbara Anne Winkley
915 West 25th Street, Apt. 8
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

W. C. Ray
3001 Brookside
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

William Stivers
4107 No. Star Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Charles Wirschem
3306 Woodland Park Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. and Mrs. T. Richards
3004 Brookside Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. C. E. Tanner
ITT Arctic Services
703 W. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

R. E. Woodrow
4867 Newcastle Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dan Riker
Box 4-275
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Joan Thompson
2635 W. 34th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Sam Wright
1005 W. 27th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Lynn Roumagoux
3915 Borland Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Troy Troyer
3200 Turnagain Blvd. East
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alaska Federation of Garden Clubs
Box 40844
Spenard, Alaska 99503

Dr. William Ryan
Alaska State Archery Assoc.
4 Cambridge Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dale P. Tubbs
1234 W. Hillcrest Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alaska Professional Hunter's
Assoc.
1003 Chugach Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. George R. Schmidt
2356 Sonstrom Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Vanalen
3326 W. 29th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alaska State Archery Assoc.
4761 Cambridge Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dr. James R. Scott
2000 Stanford
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Jerry Vezina
711 Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

J. R. Wojcik
American Smelting and
Refining Company
2212 Roosevelt Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Kathy Selken
Bldg. 1, Apt. 5
2600 W. Northern Lights
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

George Wagon, M.D.
4614 Spenard Park Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alaska Sportsman
P. O. Box 4-EEE
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alex Sisson
2413 Lord Baranof Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Patrick Webb
3112 W. 33rd, #3
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Rep. Tom Fink
1350 23rd Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Tobben Spurkland
3007 W. 33rd Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Cynthia Wentworth
2607 W. 33rd, Apt. 2
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Rep. Helen Fischer
2023 Wildwood Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Rep. Earl D. Hillstrand
2100 Lake Otis Parkway
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. & Mrs. Herb Blake
7729 Anne Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Ralph F. Cox
2018 Duke Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Rep. Richard McVeigh
4800 Nottingham Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Andrew Bodnar
5805 Sterling
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Charles Cranston
3401 Stanford Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Rep. Mike Rose
Box 4-252
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Jay Brause
2606 Maplewood
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. L. A. Davis
3400 Princeton Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Rep. Joshua Wright
1033 W. Fireweed Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Mr. & Mrs. Ray Briggs
801 S. Bragaw
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Carl Denny
400 N. Bragaw, Apt. 105
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Senator Ron Rettig
2567 Loussac Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dr. Keith Brownsberger
3036 Madison Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

David H. DeVoe
243 S. Park Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Roger F. Holmes
4001 Westwood Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Roy Burkhardt
3524 E. 18th
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

James DiFalco
1830 Aleutian
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Alman
1514 Marten Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Jim Burkholder
5810 Sterling
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Anna B. Dugan
6501 E. 10th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Leo Mark Anthony
2020 Lake Otis Parkway
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Dr. & Mrs. J. P. Caterinichio
3701 Mt. View Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Gus and Margritt Engel
Alaska Methodist University
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Douglas Bailey
3035 Madison Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Joseph Childers
1410 Patterson Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

David Evanson
4028 Warwick Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Donald C. Barnett
1516 Birchwood Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Clark Corbridge
7420 Tikchik Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Hugh Fleischer
3922 Deborah Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Alan N. Corthell

John Baxandall
4200 E. 4th, A-12
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

3013 Cottonwood Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Mike Gephardt
2635 Lovejoy
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Nat Goodhue
3220 East 40th St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Wally Hopkins
1630 East 40th Ct.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Steven Leirer
P. O. Box 4-1661
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Carl Gonder
1604 Stanton Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Howard J. Hunt
6924 E. 6th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

John A. Levorsen
2140 Stanford Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mrs. Kathy Gorham
1428 Twining
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Neil and Elizabeth Johannsen
2610B Lee Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Robert Lund
5526 Penn Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Elizabeth Halton
The Children's Clinic
3300 Providence Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Bob Jones
4516 East 9th
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Al Maguire
1811 Toklat St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Dave Harbour
Alaska Methodist University
Box 23
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Perley Jones
6604 Mink Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

George Mark
2105 Otter St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Sharron Harris
600 Cherry Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Richard C. Keller
5850 Kennyhill Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. T. R. Marshall, Jr.
1569 Birchwood St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

James Hemming
3831 Robin Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Charles Konigsberg
Dept. of Political Science
Alaska Methodist University
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

David Mathews
3343 Wesleyan Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. David Hendrickson
4407 Irene Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

James W. Kross
3401 East 15th
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Dorik Mechau
AMU Box 19
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Andrew Hess
424 N. Klevin Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Lawson
2710 Glacier
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Miller
3500 Mt. View Dr., Sp. 8
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Bill Hobbs
4817 Wesleyan Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Harry R. Lee
1915 Stanford Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Pam Milsap
2401 Redwood
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Andrew Hoge
1603 Northwestern Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Vincent R. Lee
2128 Providence Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Stu Motter
3000 Dartmouth
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

J. L. Moustakis
1013 E. 27th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Helen Nienhueser
2561 Lovejoy Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

James I. Tanis
3141 Madison Way
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Scott Mueller
1684 Winterset Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Michael O'Meara
800 South Lane, Apt. 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Thomas
905 Muldoon Rd, Space A-56
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Charles Munns
1701 Stanford Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. William A. O'Neill
3213 Wentworth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Tex Walton
3212 Robin St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. and Mrs. Roy McFadden
205 Davis
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Fred C. Rathbun
4129 James Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Chester Zenone
2246 Maudest Place, Apt. B
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Michael C. McGoodwin, MD
1603 East 41st Court
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Paul Rausch
3325 Upland Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

A. K. Howard, Chairman
Soc. of Pet. Engineers of AIME
Southwest Alaska Section
Box 1459
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Steve Pavich
705 Muldoon Road, Space 91
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Jeff Richardson
2205 Boniface, Sp. 84
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Library
Alaska Methodist University
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Eugene Pizzuto
1552 Airport Heights
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Thomas Ritter
6820 Foothill Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Unisafe Division
Denali Services
P. O. Box 4-895
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

David Pope
400 N. Lane St., Apt. 11
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Lonnie G. Smith
3001 Porcupine Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. Homer Burrell, Director
Division of Oil and Gas
Dept. of Natural Resources
3001 Porcupine Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Richard Prasil
1023 E. 27th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. Rolf Strickland
4210 Dorothy Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Rep. Mike Colietta
1500 Norene Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mr. & Mrs. John Pugh
6800 E. 10th
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Mrs. J. A. Sturgulewski
2957 Sheldon Jackson
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Rollin F. dal Piaz
USAF Hosp PSC-4, B-9436
Elmendorf AFB Alaska 99506

Ed Swanson

Richard C. Newman
4230 Warwick Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Knik Kanoosers
3014 Columbia
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Kenneth Marshall
30-392 B Cherry Drive
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 99506

Al Pedersen
CMR #1, Box 1237
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 99506

George Moerlein
Star Route A, Box 40
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Jan and Roger Smith
Box 8664
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

LTC W. C. Tomsen
ALM (J4) Installations Officer
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 99506

Mr. & Mrs. Ronald McNay
Star Route A, Box 1537C
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Mason W. Thayer
P. O. Box 8909
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Elmendorf Rod and Gun Club
c/o Lt. Col. W. A. Hess
9320 Chinook, Apt. F
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 99506

Milton Norton
4734 Pavalof Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Blazek
Box 4-621
Spennard, Alaska 99509

Lt. General R. G. Ruegg
Commander in Chief, Alaska
Headquarters, Alaskan Command
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 99506

Mr. Anson L. Renshaw, Jr.
1850 Wickersham Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Mr. Edward R. Clinton
P. O. Box 4-1286
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. & Mrs. G. L. Arcand
Box 1731, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Donald Richter
Star Route A, Box 398
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Gerald Ganopole
Box 4-1261
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Carl Bonomo
Star Route A, Box 42
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Mr. Ted Schultz, Chairman
Alaska Chapter, Sierra Club
Star Route A, Box 22
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Michael Geiger
Box 4-1826
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. John R. Eaton
4722 Pavalof
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Alice Shoe
Star Route A, Box 461B
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Mr. Archie L. Green
P. O. Box 4-1276
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Sven Eriksson
Star Route A, Box 49
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Barbara Whorton
Star Route A, Box 78C
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Kaye Howard
B.P. Alaska
P. O. Box 4-1379
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mary Evans
Box 1621, S.R.A.
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Wiseman
3920 E. 64th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Betty Kester
Box 4-1089
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. & Mrs. James C. Harle
Box 1721, Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Marilyn Kane
P. O. Box 8-308
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Mr. J. A. Kruppenbach
Geophysical Service, Inc.
P. O. Box 4-FF
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. Charles C. Hawley
Star Route A, Box 48E
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Patrick Maurin
P. O. Box 8-572
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Vernon A. Luthman
Box 4-1118
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. Leonard McCann
P. O. Box 4-1579
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Donald Blasko
Box 2314
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Werner Fitze
P. O. Box 1007
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Anthony Noto
Box 4-1258
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Larry Brayton
Box 1343
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Leland V. Gefvert
Atlantic Richfield Co.
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Selma Weise
Box 4244
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. Cecil V. Chapman
ARCO
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. G. David Golder
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

General Manager
BP Alaska Inc.
Box 4-1379
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. C. R. Chapman
P. O. Box 7-839
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. John I. Gordon
AMOCO
P. O. Box 779
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

BP Alaska Inc.
P. O. Box 4-1379
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. Robert T. Cherry
Marathon Oil Co.
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Charles F. Guion
Humble Oil Co.
P. O. Box 440
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Herman Schmidt
B P Alaska
P. O. Box 4-1379
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Don Coolidge
Box 2006
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. James L. Heisel
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Paul McAndrews
Standard Oil of California
Land Dept.
P. O. Box 7-839
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Rodney Delin
Box 1362
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. B. G. Howard
Marathon Oil Co.
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Claude Brown, District Land.
Texaco, Inc.
P.O. Box 4-1579
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

Mr. Jerry C. Dewbre
Mobil Oil
Pouch 7-003
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

George Jackson
P. O. Box 352
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Owen W. Akins
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Lewis W. Edwards
Atlantic Richfield
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Robert Iden
c/o Atlantic Richfield
Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Bill Bailey
P. O. Box 66
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. William H. Fairfield
P. O. Box 7-839
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Charles Keffer
ARCO
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Jim Bailey
P. O. Box 66
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Donald Finch
P. O. Box 2234
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. J. Roger Kearns
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Charles R. Knowles, Jr.
Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Charles Reser
P. O. Box 72
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. William Sole, Jr.
Pouch 7-003
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. A. R. Kukla
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Robert Riddle
P. O. Box 440
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Donald W. Spafford
P. O. Box 6052
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Harold D. Lee
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Joseph Riendl
P. O. Box 1105
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. J. H. Steger
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Anton F. Leneis
P. O. Box 518
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. John Robison
P. O. Box 4-1379
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. J. M. Sweet
Atlantic Richfield Company
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Fred Martin
Box 1613
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. John B. Rogers
Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Robert Wilson
Sun Oil Company
P. O. Box 435
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Ralph D. Mathis
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Laurence J. Sheehan
P. O. Box 2436
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

John Wolfe
Box 1572
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Brady R. Montgomery
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Donald Simasko
P. O. Box 1515
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mrs. Marga Zink
P. O. Box 216
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Jerry McCutcheon
Box 2340
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Charles Simonds
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Upper Cook Inlet Chapter
Alaska Conservation Society
Box 3395
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Harry Porter
Pouch 7-033
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Glenn Simpson
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Gulf Oil Company - U.S.
P. O. Box 2211
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Paul Nordaard
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Brad Sinex
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. John Barber, Area Super.
Marathon Oil Company
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. J. S. Ramstad
P.O. Box 1454
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Howard A. Slack
P. O. Box 360
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. Morris L. Lowman, Dist. Lar
Marathon Oil Company
P. O. Box 2380
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Mr. C. V. Chatterton, Dist. Super.
Standard Oil - Western Operations
P. O. Box 7-839
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Tribal Operations Officer, BIA
Anchorage Agency
P. O. Box 120
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Donald P. Blasko, Petro. Engineer
Bureau of Mines
Department of the Interior
P. O. Box 2259
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Joseph M. Fischler
7416 E. 20th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

R. I. Swetnam
Phillips Petroleum Company
515 D Street, Room 204
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Jim Sumner
General Delivery
Indian, Alaska 99540

Norris Nims
Mi. 62 Richardson Highway
Copper Center, Alaska 99573

Rep. Martin Moore
Lower Yukon River
Emmonak, Alaska 99581

John Botens
North Fork Route
Anchorage Point, Alaska 99556

Cordova District Fisheries Union
Box 939
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Alan R. Finifrock
Chistochina School
Gakona, Alaska 99586

Rep. George Hohman
Bethel, Alaska 99559

KLAM
Box 278
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Nancy Simmerman
Girdwood, Alaska 99587

Senator Raymond Christianson
Bethel, Alaska 99559

Rep. Joe McGill
Box 218
Dillingham, Alaska 99576

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Wright
Girdwood, Alaska 99587

Alaska Sportsmen's Council
Box 90
Chugiak, Alaska 99567

Joseph Bishop
Box 715
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Lee Adler
Box 285
Glenallen, Alaska 99588

Glenn H. Davenport
Box 127
Columbia Bay, Alaska 99571

L. A. Bockstahler
Star Route, Box 60
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Mr. & Mrs. Dave Johnston
Star Route
Willow, Alaska 99688

Harold Fuller
Cooper Landing, Alaska 99572

Richard H. Brinker
General Delivery
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Mr. W. T. Kenyon
Box 266
Glenallen, Alaska 99588

Larry Painter
P. O. Box 711
Cooper Landing, Alaska 99572

Miss Elizabeth Carroll
P. O. Box 325
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Mr. & Mrs. Graham K. Ward
Box 23
Glenallen, Alaska 99588

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth D. Olsen
Sportsmen's Lodge
Cooper Landing, Alaska 99572

John Liska
Box 421 Star Route
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

KCAM
Box 125
Glenallen, Alaska 99588

R. and B. Wilburn
Cooper Landing, Alaska 99572

George McCubbin
Savage Dr. Box 150
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Mr. Samuel C. Matthews
P. O. Box 1235
Homer, Alaska 99603

Frances Kibble
Kenny Lake
Copper Center, Alaska 99572

Don DeHart
Hart D Ranch
Gakona, Alaska 99580

Mike McBride
Box 742
Homer, Alaska 99603

Mr. Bill Nippes
Box 752
Homer, Alaska 99603

Patrick McElroy
Rt. 2
Kasilof, Alaska 99610

Mr. Harold D. Smith
P. O. Box N
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Jim Rearden
Box 513
Homer, Alaska 99603

Mr. George R. Pollard
Kenai Guide Service
P. O. Box 40
Kasilof, Alaska 99610

Stanley Thompson
Box 217
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Tupper
Box 851
Homer, Alaska 99603

Fred Braun
Route #1
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Cook Inlet Courier
Kenai, Alaska 99611

David Vanderbrink
P. O. Box 1235
Homer, Alaska 99603

James E. Fisher
Box 397
Kenai, Alaska 99611

The Peninsula Clarion
Box 3572
Kenai, Alaska 99611

The Homer News
Homer, Alaska 99603

Mr. John Imle, Jr.
P. O. Box 7600
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
King Cove, Alaska 99612

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Box 234
Homer, Alaska 99603

Nels Kjelstad
Kalifonski Ski Club
P. O. Box 1229
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Dean Paddock
Box 6
King Salmon, Alaska 99613

Mr. Al Davis
Fisheries Biologist
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Homer, Alaska 99603

R. Moll
Box 355
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
King Salmon, Alaska 99613

Rep. Clem Tillion
Halibut Cove, Alaska 99603

John McCarthy
Box 1342
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Jack Alexander
Box 2291
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Walt Cunningham
Hope, Alaska 99605

J. V. Phillips
Box 333
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Mr. Gerry Atwell
Box 603
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Rep. Keith Specking
Hope, Alaska 99603

Mr. Neal Porter
Phillips Petroleum
Drawer 66
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Mr. & Mrs. Ben Ballenger
Box 126
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Ira Miller
Box 1
Kasilof, Alaska 99610

Bill Saffell
Drawer A
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Mr. & Mrs. William N. Bellingar
Box 2696
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Vernon Berns
Box 26
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Eugene Erwin
Box 1247
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. P. Norman Holm
Box 365
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

C. D. Billings
Box 751
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. John Finley
Box 2258
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Ernest Johnson
Box 102
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. Allen D. Blume
Box 1668
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Jim Fitzpatrick
Box 2102
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Liz Johnson
Box 1561
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. James Branson
Box 291
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Jack Fredericksen
Box 2855
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Roland Jones
Box 375
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Michael Cathey
Box 592
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. Lenhart J. Grothe
Box 1504
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. Howard Josh
Box 19
U.S. Naval Station
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. David T. Chen
Box 1314
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Jo Hajdu
Box 627
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Denison Lane
Box 354
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

William Dickinson
Box 564
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Hans
Box 621
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Jack Lechner
Box 1616
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. William Donaldson
Box 2
U. S. Naval Station
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. and Mrs. Old Harder
Box 1706
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mrs. Danna Madsen
Box 785
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Doubt
Box 4
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Murray Hayes
Box 135
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Park Munsey
Box 1186
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ecklund
Box 146
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Kristjen Helgason
Terror Bay
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Miss Rita Neibauer
Box 785
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Edgars
Box 1456
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. David Henley
Box 1545
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Robert Owen
Box 621
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Guy Powell
Box 2285
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mrs. Corinne Wilson
Box 2103
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Boyd Shaffer
Moose Pass, Alaska 99631

Mrs. Libby Presnall
Box 1083
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. Edward Winter
Box 2002
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Senator Jay Hammond
Naknek, Alaska 99633

Arnold Shaul
Box 2081
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Milstead Zahn
Box 1602
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Michael Dimmick
Box 151
Ninilchik, Alaska 99639

Miss Sandra Shonerd
Box 2198
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Kodiak Aleutian Chapter
Alaska Conservation Society
Mr. Norm Holm, President
Box 1691
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Senator W. I. Palmer
Box 103
Ninilchik, Alaska 99639

Mr. Bruce Short
Box 4
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Island Times
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. John D. Bury
Box 565AA (Star Rt. B)
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Wally Sleness
Box 2403
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Kodiak Mirror
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

David Cornelius
SR-A, Box 172
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Mr. & Mrs. David Stanchfield
Box 2655
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Phoenix Log
Seward, Alaska 99615

Russel Dow
Box 667
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Mr. Fred Stone
Box 1638
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. Jim Nutgrass
Senior Protection Officer
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Thomas Johnson
Box 545
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Norman Sutliff
P. O. Box 1157
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Rep. Edward Naughton
Box 765
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mrs. Merritt C. Long
Box 773
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Mr. Barry L. Torp
Box 2482
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Senator Kathryn Poland
Box 45
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Matanuska Valley Sportsmen
c/o Noel Woods
Box 827
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Mark White
Box 1132
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Mr. & Mrs. Cecil Rhode
Moose Pass, Alaska 99615

The Frontiersman
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Mr. Weymeth Long
Soil Conservation Service
P. O. Box F
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Seward Chapter
Alaska Conservation Society
Mr. David Schimberg, President
Box 477
Seward, Alaska 99664

Howard Keiser
Box 841
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Rep. Jalmar Kerttula
Box Z
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Box 936
Seward, Alaska 99664

Steve Koch
Box 373
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Senator Jan Koslosky
Box I
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Mr. Philip Gum
Ranger, U.S.F.S.
P. O. Box 275
Seward, Alaska 99664

Pete Larson
Box 744
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
Pauloff Harbor, Alaska 99646

Mr. Chad Lively
Protection
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Seward, Alaska 99664

James R. Mackorijak
Box 59
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
Sand Point, Alaska 99661

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Box R
Soldotna, Alaska 99665

Margaret Mullen
Box 602
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Donald Blanc
Box 1045
Seward, Alaska 99664

Lee Bowman
Box 122
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Drew O'Brien
Box 813
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Glen Erickson
Box 1051
Seward, Alaska 99664

Denise Clark
Box 889
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

William Schrier
Box 1051
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Daniel Seavey
Box 923
Seward, Alaska 99664

Celeste Egan
Box 238
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Mr. E. Odin Strandberg
Box 717
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Ottokar Skal
Star Route
Seward, Alaska 99664

Calvin Fair
P. O. Box 369
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Donald Telshaw
P. O. Box 59
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Leonard C. Weimar
Box 916
Seward, Alaska 99664

Irene Girves
Box 327
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

David Thomas
Box 291
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

KIBH
Box 575
Seward, Alaska 99664

J. H. Hummel
Box 806
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Darwin Waldsmith
Box 1154
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Kenai Peninsula Chapter
Alaska Conservation Society
Mr. James E. Fisher, President
Box 563
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Ray McNutt
Charter Flying Service
Box 10
Sterling, Alaska 99672

Mr. & Mrs. C. Howard Baltzo
Box 27
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

Mr. Wayne Wilson, Oper. Manager
Standard Oil Company
Soldotna River Oil Field
P. O. Box 529
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Laura L. Tyson
Pedersen's Moose River Resort
Star Route
Sterling, Alaska 99672

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
Port Heiden, Alaska 99695

Cheechako News
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Harry Warren
Sterling, Alaska 99672

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
Adak, Alaska 99695

Mr. Jim Davis
Moose Research Center
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Mr. Robert Tucker
Box 88
Sutton, Alaska 99674

Forbes Baker
Box 1479
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. Sid Logan, Fishery Biol.
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Foliart
Unalaska, Alaska 99685

Richard Barney
218 Bently Dr. E
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. Robert LeResche, Chief
Moose Research Center
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Postmaster
U.S. Post Office
Unalaska, Alaska 99685

James Bartonek
1613 Crosson Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. Dan France, Protection
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Rep. Carl E. Moses
Unalaska, Alaska 99685

Jimmy Bedford
Journalism Department
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Mr. Larry Engel, Fishery Biol.
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Julie Cesarini
Box 151
Valdez, Alaska 99686

Mr. Earl H. Beistline
Dean, College of Earth Science
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Mr. Paul A. LeRoux, Game Biol.
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

George Perkins
Box 501
Valdez, Alaska 99686

Richard Bishop
Box 81749
College, Alaska 99701

Mr. Al Thompson, Protection
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Drawer R
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Valdez-Copper Basin News
Valdez, Alaska 99686

Mr. & Mrs. Terry T. Brady
Box 3187
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Richard Bogard
Star Route
Sterling, Alaska 99672

Rep. Robert Ditman
Box 144
Valdez, Alaska 99686

John P. Bryant
Box 81663
College, Alaska 99701

John J. Burns
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Frederick Dean
Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
University of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Arthur E. Hippler
ISEGR
University of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

D. C. Burrell
Associate Professor
Institute of Marine Science
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Roseann Densmore
7 3/4 Farmers' Loop Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

William Hogan
P.O. Box 80883
College, Alaska 99701

Betty L. Carlson
316 Front St.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Irma Duncan
Town & Country Trailer Court
McGrath Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Louise Hollister
939 Riverview Drive
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. Bill Case
Arctic Oil Journal
228 Chena Building
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Reg Emmert
Box 80-256
College, Alaska 99701

William Humpheries
322 2nd St. Graehl
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Conrad Christianson
#17 Wildwood
1 mi. McGrath
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dr. Francis H. Fay
Grenac Road, 1 Mile
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Celia Hunter
Box D
College, Alaska 99701

Wayne Clark
306 Church Street, #105
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Victor Fischer
Box 80767
College, Alaska 99701

Mr. & Mrs. James A. Hunter
Box 1442
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Bob Clasby
Institute of Marine Science
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Bruce Foote
Box 80809
College, Alaska 99701

David Klein
Star Route 3
Mile 2, Yankovich Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mrs. Judy R. Coleman
Box 81025
College, Alaska 99701

Daniel D. Gibson
P.O. Box 1551
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

James Kowalsky, Director
Fairbanks Environment Center
Friends of the Earth; John Muir
529 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

John Cook
c/o Dept. of Anthropology
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Dr. Wyatt G. Gilbert
Department of Geology
College of EarthSci. & Min. Ind.
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

James Lake
915 7th Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

David W. Cowee
7.7 Mile Chena Ridge
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Michael T. Gottschalk
Institute of Marine Science
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Lando
43 Yankovich Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dr. Nicholas Deely
P. O. Box 80503
College, Alaska 99701

Ernest Hanauer
Box 2100
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Peter Lent
Wolvering Lane
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Robert LeResche
1300 College Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Jerry D. McGowan
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Becky Silvers
7.7 m. Chena Ridge
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Miss Shirley Liss
1.5 Mile Goldstream Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Amy W. Paige
Box 81142
College, Alaska 99701

Dr. Charles W. Slaughter
c/o Alaska Division
HSALRREL
Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99701

Richard Lyons
Box 80-545
College, Alaska 99701

Catherine Putchler
1120 Kodiak Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Ronald L. Smith
Box 5272
College, Alaska 99701

Larry Mayo
1 m. Sheep Creek Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Kenneth Neiland
Box 1593
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

David Snarski
Shuros Dr.
Farmer's Loop Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Orlando Miller
Box 80-753
College, Alaska 99701

Dan Osborne
Box 81465
College, Alaska 99701

Robert Spies
c/o Geophysical Institute
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Ernst Mueller
Box 81730
College, Alaska 99701

Dr. & Mrs. Robert Rausch
Box 80569
College, Alaska 99701

David and Patricia Stark
418 Farewell
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. Robin Muench
4526 Wood River Dr.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mrs. Frank Reuter
852-D Yak Estates
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Robert Stephenson
2/10 m. Dolly Vardon Lane
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dave Murray
Biology Dept. U of A
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. & Mrs. L. J. Rowinski
Box 80-182
College, Alaska 99701

Bill & Fronzie Straub
Box 81207
College, Alaska 99701

Jerc Murray
Box 80744
College, Alaska 99701

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Roy
314 Harwood Hall
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Daniel W. Swift
1/2 Mile Grenac Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

John T. & Mary Anne McCauley
1133 Park Drive
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Robert Schlentner
2 Mile Goldstream Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Averill Thayer
USFWS
1412 Airport Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Peter C. McRoy
Box 5-939
College, Alaska 99701

Mark Schwan
921 6th St.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Donald Theophilus
Box 80527
College, Alaska 99701

Don Triplehorn
Geology Department
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Gordon Wright
Box 80051
College, Alaska 99701

KFRB
Box 910
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mrs. Julia H. Triplehorn
Library
Institute of Arctic Biology
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

Allyn Yoakum
P. O. Box 81679
College, Alaska 99701

Phil Deischen
KTVF
Northrup Bldg.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Jack Van Hying
Dept. of Wildlife Management
University of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Ruth Zozula
Box 955
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

KTVF TV
Box 590
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Fred Van Wallinga
500 Lincoln
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Alaska Conservation Society
Box 80192
College, Alaska 99701

News-Miner
200 N. Cushman
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Leslie Viereck
Forestry Science Lab
University of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Tanana-Yukon Chapter
Alaska Conservation Society
Dan Wetzel, President
Box 80192
College, Alaska 99701

The Tundra Times, Inc.
Box 1287
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Albert F. Weber
Box 80745
College, Alaska 99701

Fairbanks Sierra Club
c/o Fairbanks Environmental Cent.
529 5th Ave.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mr. Bob Krumm, Area Director
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1150
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dr. Robert Weeden
Box 5-192
College, Alaska 99701

Students for Environmental Action
c/o Lathrop High School
901 Airport Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Rep. Mike Bradner
915 Kellum Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

June Weinstock
Box 81382
College, Alaska 99701

Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Assoc.
Box 669
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Rep. John Holm
Box 1196
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dan Wetzel
Box 80-224
College, Alaska 99701

Resource Associates of Alaska
P. O. Box 80006
College, Alaska 99701

Rep. John Huber
Box 2591
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Mrs. Jane N. Williams
333 Glacier Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

KFAR
Box 910
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Rep. Eugene Miller
912 Barnette
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Ginny Wood
Box D
College, Alaska 99701

KFAR TV
516 Second Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Rep. Edmund Orbeck
1033 Lathrop Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Rep. Dick Randolph
Box 123
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Rep. Andrew Warwick
51 Fulton Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Senator John Butrovich
1039 5th Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Senator Edward Merdes
504 Monroe Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Virginia & David Christen
C-6 Base Trailer Court
Eielson AFB Alaska 99702

Senator Terry Miller
North Pole
Fairbanks, Alaska 99705

Alden Sievers
Box 2212
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Richard Collins
P. O. Box 996
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Claire Fejes
1003 Cushman
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

H. Mattonen
34 Mile, Richardson
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Bob Maguire
Allakaket
Alaska 99720

Rep. Frank R. Ferguson
Box 131
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

Dr. & Mrs. David R. Duncan
P.H.S. Hospital
Tanana, Alaska 99777

Mr. Jack Lentfer
Barrow, Alaska 99723

Senator Willie Hensley
Box 33
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

Dennis Wik
Ambler, Alaska 99786

Dr. Osamu H. Matsutani
PHS, Alaska Native Hospital
Barrow, Alaska 99723

W. A. Cole
Deneki Lakes, Box 6
McKinley Park, Alaska 99755

Douglas Ackley
State Board of Examiners
P. O. Box 469
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Warren Morrison
Box 553
Barrow, Alaska 99723

Gordon Haber
Box 1
McKinley Park, Alaska 99755

Mr. Joel Bennett
234 Gold St.
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Donald M. Schell
c/o Naval Arctic Research Lab.
Barrow, Alaska 99723

John G. Johnson
Mt. McKinley N. P.
McKinley Park, Alaska 99755

Jerold Deppa
P. O. Box 1063
Juneau, Alaska 99801

James W. Deininger
P. O. Box 81249
College, Alaska 99735

Dennis Kogl
Box 1
McKinley Park, Alaska 99755

William Dunn
Rural Route 5, Box 5665
Juneau, Alaska 99801

JUAC
Department of Speech and Radio
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99735

William Nancarrow
Deneki Lakes
McKinley Park, Alaska 99755

Dr. Donald K. Freedman
Box 1427
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Senator Donald Young
Box 119
Fort Yukon, Alaska 99740

Charlie Ott
Deneki Lakes
McKinley Park, Alaska 99755

Richard Gordon
Box 1512
Juneau, Alaska 99801

William Nordmark
Box 20
Healy, Alaska 99743

Rep. Leslie Swanson
Box 3
Nenana, Alaska 99760

Phillip Gray
820 Glacier Avenue #A
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Carl J. Berger
Box 41
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

Mr. & Mrs. Dan Levinson
General Delivery
Nome, Alaska 99762

Elinor B. Harvey, M.D.
Box 1427
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dr. & Mrs. Douglass Stennett
Alaska Native Hospital
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

Rep. Chuck Degnan
Box 844
Nome, Alaska 99762

John Helle
RR #5, Box 5047
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Lee A. Henrickson
213 Seventh Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Ruth Popejoy
620 Seatter Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Alaska Sportsmen's Council
A. W. Boddy, Exec. Dir.
1700 Glacier Ave.
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. Phil R. Holdsworth
1000 Mendenhall Apts.
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Powers
Rt. 4, Box 4628-6
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Alaska Empire
P. O. Box 1991
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Robert Howe
P. O. Box 1089
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dr. Betty Price
680 Douglas Highway
Juneau, Alaska 99801

KINY
231 S. Franklin Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. & Mrs. George K. Jensen
Rt. 3, Box 3109
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Urban C. Nelson
RR 3, Box 3072
Juneau, Alaska 99801

KINY TV
231 S. Franklin Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

James King
Star Rt. 1, Box 517
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. William H. Race
1669 Evergreen Ave.
Juneau, Alaska 99801

KJNO
Box 2231
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Shirley Kohls
911 Calhoun
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Don Schmiede
Institute of Northern Forestry
Box 909
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. Morris Thompsen
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P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Karl E. Lane
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U. S. Bureau of Mines
Library
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Craig Lindh
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Pouch EE
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dr. Torolf R. Torgersen
RR 5, Box 5069
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. W. E. Eckard, Chief
Alaska Field Operation Center
Bureau of Mines; Dept. of Int.
P. O. Box 550
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Vernon D. Logan
Box 515
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Miss Daisy Tunnell
Box 488
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. Harry L. Rietze, Reg. Dir.
National Marine Fisheries Ser.
Nat. Oceanic & Atmospheric Ad.
P. O. Box 1668
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McCabe
426 Gold St.
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wallen
Box 1063
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Rear Admiral J. A. Palmer, Com.
Seventeenth Coast Guard Dist.
U. S. Coast Guard; Dept. of Tra
P. O. Box 3-5000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. & Mrs. Joesph McLean
401 Angus Way
Juneau, Alaska 99801

David Zeller
RR 4, Box 4161
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. Charles Yates, Reg. For.
U.S.F.S.
P. O. Box 1628
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Major General Elmore
Adjutant General
State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Bruce Campbell
Commissioner of Highways
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Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Support Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

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Juneau, Alaska 99801

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Juneau, Alaska 99801

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Juneau, Alaska 99801

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Juneau, Alaska 99801

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State Capitol Building
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Juneau, Alaska 99801

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FOSS Building, Pouch O
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Governor of Alaska
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State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

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Mr. Will Lawson
Press Secretary
Pouch A
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. Frederick McGinnis
Commissioner of Health & Welfare
State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Rep. Mildred H. Banfield
336 Highland Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mr. & Mrs. Lou Barr
Box 361
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Sigurd T. Olson, Jr.
Box 354
Douglas, Alaska 99824

Richard Brennan
Box 142
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Melford A. Bony
Box 122
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Sally Wienke
P. O. Box 323
Douglas, Alaska 99824

Harvey Gilliland
Box 107
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Greenough
Box 113
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Agnes Schlosser
Elfin Cove, Alaska 99825

Gordon Jensen
Box 264
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Keith Hart
Box 235
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Mr. & Mrs. G. Streveler
Glacier Bay Nat'l Monument
Gustavus, Alaska 99826

Norman Johnston
Box 672
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Jackie Landingham
P. O. Box 63
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Kenwood Youmans
Gustavus, Alaska 99826

Polly Lee
Box 251
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Theodore Merell
Bureau of Fish and Wildlife
Box 155
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Bruce Gilbert
Box 39
Haines, Alaska 99827

Adolph Mathisen
Box 335
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Richard T. Myren
Box 191
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Vivian Menaker
Box 118
Haines, Alaska 99827

Harry Merriam
Box 321
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Sanford Sagalkin
Box 381
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Clifford Estabrook
Box 414
Kake, Alaska 99830

Jack O'Donnell
Box 394
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Mr. Ronald H. Welsh
Box 263
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

John Clauson
Box 741
Pelican, Alaska 99832

Dorothy Roundtree
Box 454
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Juneau Chapter, Sierra Club
Dr. David T. Hoopes
Box 132
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Harold Bergman
Box 607
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Hugh Tallent
Box 468
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

John Lell
Box 287
Douglas, Alaska 99824

Paul Bowen
Box 68
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Mark Thompson
Box 323
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Bjarne Wallen
Box 633
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Daniel R. Kuehn
Box 738
Sitka Natl. Monument
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Barbara Kalen
Box 317
Skagway, Alaska 99840

Syd Wright
Box 624
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

George Longenbaugh
Box 377
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Rep. Morgan Reed
Box 493
Skagway, Alaska 99840

Ralph W. Young
Box 627
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Gene E. Phillips
P. O. Box 158
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Mr. & Mrs. Robert T. Baade
Box 2391
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Petersburg Chapter
Alaska Conservation Society
Andy Mathisen, President
Box 316
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Lee Schmidt
Box 130
Mt. Edgecumbe, Alaska 99835

Paul Beck
Box 1644
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Rep. E. J. Haugen
Box 248
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Raymond J. Smith
Box 855
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Ed K. Browne
Cons. Chmn
Box 1314
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Mr. W. C. Christianson
Box 4
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Vern Snider
Box 1466
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Wesley Davidson
Route 1, Box 303
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Mrs. Harry H. Day
Box 246
Mt. Edgecumbe, Alaska 99835

Sitka Conservation Society
Jack Calvin
Box 97
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Orvel & Carmen Holm
730 Park Avenue
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Roger & Patricia DuBrock
Box 523
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Larry Marler, President
Alaska Wildlife Federation and
Sportsmen's Council
Box 383
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Harold Howard
309 Gorge Street
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Gerald Fleming
Box 595
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Sitka Sierra Club
Dr. George Longenbaugh
Box 377
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Earl May
628 Park Ave.
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

E. Hodnett
Box 201
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Rep. H. D. Meland
Box 53
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Margaret H. Piggott
Box 1047
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Johnstone
Box 316
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Senator Howard Bradshaw
Box 56
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Hal Waugh
Rt. 1, Box 985
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Mr. Fred Stone, President
Southeastern Alaska Mountaineering
Association
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Tongass Conservation Society
Alaska Conservation Society
Marjorie Doiron, President
Box 2282
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Mrs. Dixie Baade
Southeast Alaska Mountain. Assoc.
Box 2391
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Paul L. Beck
Recreation and Lands Staff
South Tongass Natl. Forest
Box 2278
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Senator Robert Ziegler
Box 979
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Rep. Richard Whittaker
Box 13
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Rep. Frank Peratrovich
Box 368
Klawock, Alaska 99925

J.W. Huff, Secretary
Ketchikan Branch
Alaska Miners Association
P. O. Box 837
Ward Cove, Alaska 99928

Edward Browne
Box 895
Ward Cove, Alaska 99928

Dr. & Mrs. Jay Quast
Box 245
Auke Bay, Alaska 99821

Louise and Wayne Gehman
Box 474
East Pepperell, Mass. 01437

Mrs. Peter H. Knapp
77 Raymond Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02140

Alfred St. Pierre
524 Berkley Street
Berkley, Mass. 02780

Richmond P. Miller, Jr.
20 Joseph Reed Lane
Acushnet, Mass. 01720

David R. Godine, Publisher
282 D Newton Street
Brookline, Mass. 02146

Audubon Society of Rhode Island
40 Bowen Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Jeremy A. Cushing
22 Temple Street
Boxton, Mass. 02114

Mildred Menard
37 Stanton Road
Brookline, Mass. 02146

F. Roger Bies, Jr.
Governor's Island
R.F.D. 5
Laconia, New Hampshire 03246

Thomas P. Hackett
Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston, Mass. 02114

Elliott Krefetz
106 Shawmut Street
Chelsea, Mass. 02150

Audubon Society of New Hamp.
63 North Main Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Merrill K. Wolf, M.D.
Dept. of Neuropathology
Harvard Medical School
25 Shattuck Street
Boston, Mass. 02115

Mr. & Mrs. Richard C. Adams
36 Woodchester Circle
Waltham, Mass. 02154

Sidney Darlington
8 Fogg Drive
Durham, New Hampshire 03824

John C. Barry
99 F St.
South Boston, Mass. 02127

Marguerite N. Franklyn
51 Allston Street
West Medford, Mass. 02155

Maine Audubon Society
57 Baxter Blvd
Portland, Maine 04101

Ivan Johnson
1738 Commonwealth Avenue
Brighton, Mass. 02135

William S. Emerson
22 Thoreau Road
Lexington, Mass. 02173

Natural Resources Council
20 Willow Street
Augusta, Maine 04330

Harold J. Heggerness
41 Raldne Rd.
Hyde Park, Mass. 02136

S. R. Linscott
47 Judson Street
Braintree, Mass. 02184

Friends of Nature, Inc.
Brooksville, Maine 04617

Roger Marshall
33 Linnaean Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Miss Edith Bradley
130 Randolph Avenue
Milton, Mass. 02187

Mr. & Mrs. Ronald A. Brown
Box 375, Gilman Pond
No. New Portland, Maine 04961

Herbert I Harris
20 Lowell Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Sala
Box S
Wellfleet, Mass. 02667

Green Mountain Audubon Society
143 Spruce Street
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Steffan Plehn
34 R Prentiss St.
Cambridge, Mass 02140

Gladys Blackmer
675 Count St.
New Bedford, Mass. 02740

Tony Bland
Rutland Herald
Rutland, Vermont 05701

Mr. & Mrs. Francis W. Antonelli
Skyline Drive - Salem
R #1
Oakdale, Conn. 06370

Curtis W. Banta
Box 9729, RFD #1
Stockholm, New Jersey 07460

Franklin E. Parker
c/o Patterson Belknap & Webb
1 Wall Street
New York, New York 10005

Connecticut Conservation Soc.
Northrop Street
Bridgewater, Conn. 06752

Neal Munch
6 Barkalow Avenue
Freehold, New Jersey 07728

Lilian Leon
453 East 14 Street
New York, New York 10009

Henry E. Howland
99 Marshall Ridge Rd.
New Canaan, Conn. 06840

Richard Silverton
20 Edgewater Drive
Matawan, New Jersey 07747

George P. Tama
R.A.T.
P.O. Box 375
New York, New York 10009

Morris Gall
186 Fallow Street
Norwalk, Conn. 06850

Upper Raritan Watershed Assoc.
P. O. Box 44
Far Hills, New Jersey 07931

Selma E. Pundyk
235 East 32nd Street
New York, New York 10010

Josephine E. Ciak
405-G Ridge Road
North Arlington, N. J. 07032

Louis E. Hand
Box 146
New Lisbon, New Jersey 08064

Ruth P. Berkeley, MD
36 West 11th Street
New York, New York 10011

Theodore Edison
Llewellyn Park
Weehawken, N. J. 07052

Carl Breuer
79 Parkside Drive
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

Arthur H. Clift
136 Waverly Place
New York, New York 10014

Mr. Stephen Hoogheem
151 Kinnelon Road
Kinnelon, N. J. 07405

Mrs. James F. Graves
268 Stockton Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

Will E. Rae, Editor-in-Chief
Outdoor Life
355 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Mrs. Carlo Rana
30 Fairview Avenue
Butler, New Jersey 07405

South Branch Watershed Assoc.
34 Center St.
Clinton, New Jersey 08809

Clare Conley, Editor
Field and Stream
383 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Fred Ferber
P. O. Box 338
Hewitt, New Jersey 07421

Boy Scouts of America
National Council
New Brunswick, N. J. 08903

Ralph Ginzburg
Editor and Publisher
Moneysworth
110 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018

Joseph Worrall
20 W. Deerhaven Rd.
Mahwah, New Jersey 07430

Richard Nathan
20 East 9th St.
New York, New York 10003

A. S. Forsyth
51 West 51 St.
New York, New York 10019

Mr. and Mrs. Murray D. Spear
711 Ramapo Valley Road
Mahwah, New Jersey 07430

Carol Zucheman
350 E. 17th St.
New York, New York 10003

Alan Wellikoff
250 W. 57th St.
New York, New York 10019

American Conservation
Association, Inc.
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10020

Robert Auerbach, MD
440 East 57th St.
New York, New York 10022

Eric Berger, Science Division
SCHOLASTIC Magazines
50 West 44th Street
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Pat Hunt, Nature Editor
Life Magazine
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Leonard R. Graydon
110 West 71st Street
New York, New York 10023

Scenic Hudson Pres. Conf.
500 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1625
New York, New York 10036

Clara W. Mayer
41 East 72nd Street
New York, New York 10021

Elena K. Hill
One West 72nd St.
New York, New York 10023

Daniel Clancy, Jr.
29 Douglas Ave.
Staten Island, New York 10310

Mrs. Albert H. Clayburgh
105 East 73 Street
New York, New York 10021

Leigh Marlowe
180 West End Avenue
New York, New York 10023

Mrs. James R. Blakley
3147 Valhalla Drive
Bronx, New York 10465

Scientists' Institute for
Public Information
30 East 68th Street
New York, New York 10021

Alfred Meyer, Executive Editor
NATURAL HISTORY Magazine
American Museum of Natural Hist.
Central Park West at 79th St.
New York, New York 10024

Susan Reed
c/o Federated Conservationists
of Westchester County
Box 1306, Marymount College
Tarrytown, N. Y. 10591

The Garden Club of America
598 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

The Conservation League
110 West 71st Street
New York, New York 10023

Lionel Zamore
601 Brightwater Court
Brooklyn, New York 11235

Public Information Department
National Audubon Society
950 Third Ave.
New York, New York 10022

Eric W. Gingold
336 E. 80th Street
New York, New York 10028

Albert Weeks
566 Atlantic Ave.
Cedarhurst, New York 11516

John K. Terres
345 East 57th St.
New York, New York 10022

Dean Rau
Apt. 433, 615 W. 164th
New York, New York 10032

ACTION for Pres. & Conserv. of
North Shore of L.I., Inc.
Box 492
Huntington, L.I., N. Y. 11743

Nancy Matthews
15 East 53rd Street
New York, New York 10022

Michael Platzer
600 West 161 Street
New York, New York 10032

William Deak
5 Tudor Drive
Stony Brook, New York 11790

Mr. James Marshall
430 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Bayard Webster
New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, New York 10036

Philip W. Ham
1504 Keyes Avenue
Schenectady, New York 12309

Richard Edes Harrison
313 East 51st Street
New York, New York 10022

Paul Gallant
20 Magaw Place
New York, New York 10033

Dr. Phyllis S. Busch
Buswick Conklin Hill
Stanfordville, New York 12581

Roger Post
12 Cliffside Mobile Park
Rock Cut Road
Jamesville, N.Y. 13078

James R. Wolf
Audubon Society of Western Pa.
6329 Marchand Street
Pittsburgh, Penna 15206

Philadelphia Conservation Inc.
1518 Packard Building
Philadelphia, Penna 19102

Roger A. Post
Department of Forest Zoology
College of Forestry
State University of New York
Syracuse, New York 13210

Samuel P. Hays
1421 Wightman St.
Pittsburgh, Penna 15217

Daniel R. Sherzer, Esquire
1616 Walnut St., 24th Floor
Philadelphia, Penna 19105

George F. Herben, Jr.
Photography
Big Moose, New York 13307

David L. Marshall
5703 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, Penna 15217

Albert C. Gerould
6923 Greene Street
Philadelphia, Penna 19119

Mr. Sebastian Farda
1813 South Street
Utica, New York 13501

Victor A. Schmidt
National Speleological Society
5336 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, Penna 15232

Delaware Wild Lands, Inc.
1011 Washington Street
Wilmington, Del. 19801

C. A. Petty
RD 4
Canton, New York 13617

I. N. Hagan
Chalk Hill, Penna 15421

Charles E. Mohr, Naturalist
Div. of Parks, Recr. & Forestry
Dover, Del. 19901

Marie C. Peronne
10013 Greiner Road
Clarence, New York 14031

Judd Mechling
107 Grant Street
Greensburg, Penna 15601

J. Sutton Myers
1169 S. State Street
Dover, Delaware 19901

Thomas Horning
415 Mohawk Street
Lewiston, New York 14092

Kimball S. Erdman, Ph.D
Department of Biology
Slippery Rock State College
Slippery Rock, Penna 16057

George Crossette
National Geographic Society
17th and M Streets, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20001

William Hilts
5115 Bear Road - Pen-Rod Acres
Sanborn, New York 14132

Fred M. Coombs
261 Recreation Building
Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Penna 16802

Mr. Peter Borrelli
Eastern Representative
Sierra Club
324 C Street, S. E.
Washington, D. C. 20003

John Bain
Box 94
Palmyra, New York 14522

Miss Joy Hartman
740 N. 25th St.
Lebanon, Penna 17042

Friends of the Earth
620 C Street, S.E.
Washington, D. C. 20003

Tom J. Cade
Division of Biological Sciences
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14850

Jack C. Allen, Jr. Asst. Prof.
Department of Geology
Bucknell University
Lewisburg, Penna 17837

Mr. Stewart M. Brandborg
Executive Director
The Wilderness Society
729 - 15th Street NW
Washington, D. C. 20005

William C. Saunders
317 Warren Road
Ithaca, New York 14850

Dr. & Mrs. Charles I. Hoffman
1001 So. Lincoln Ave.
Lebanon, Penna 17042

Sport Fishing Institute
608 - 13th St. NW (Suite 801)
Washington, D. C. 20005

The Wilderness Society
729 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20005

Russel J. Brahmer
Airspace Department
Aircraft Owners & Pilots Assoc.
Washington, D. C. 20014

Natural Resources Coun. of Am.
Suite 911
1025 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Robert Cahn
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Armin Behr
10681 Weymouth, No. 4
Bethesda, Md. 20014

National Rifle Assoc. of Am.
Hunting & Conservation Dept.
1600 Rhode Island Ave., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Hanna De Vegh
2700 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, D. C. 20007

Mrs. Miriam Frank
5480 Wisconsin Ave., Apt. 427
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015

National Geographic Society
Clipping Service
16th and M Streets, NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

William Smoker
1501 26th St., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20007

Audubon Naturalist Society of
the Central Atlantic States
8940 Jones Mill Road
Washington, D. C. 20015

John Hall
National Forest Products Assoc.
1619 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dean F. Tirador
3040 R St. N.W., Apt. B
Washington, D. C. 20007

Grant Conway
6032 Broad Street - Brookmont
Washington, D. C. 20016

Metropolitan Washington
Coalition for Clean Air
1714 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Morris Assoc., Inc.
2233 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20007

James G. Deane
4200 Cathedral Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Defenders of Wildlife
2000 N Street, NW #201
Washington, D.C. 20036

Arlon Tussing
2233 Q Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20008

Michael L. Hill
6337 Maxwell Drive
Camp Springs, Md. 20023

The Conservation Foundation
Library
1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

National Parks & Conservation
Association
1701 18th Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20009

Mr. Ernest M. Dickerman
1000 Sixth Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20024

Citizens Committee on Natural
Resources
1346 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

John W. Grandy, IV
Administrative Assist. Wildlife
National Parks & Conserv. Assoc.
1701 Eighteenth St. N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20009

Mary R. Bartz
5810 Conway Road
Bethesda, Md. 20034

Central Atlantic Environment
Service
1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Mr. Rob Stitt
Cons. Ch., Nat. Speleo. Soc.
c/o Dennis Seekins
8217 Roanoke Avenue
Towson Park, Maryland 20012

Keith R. Knoblock
American Mining Congress
Ring Building
Washington, D. C. 20036

Frank Wallick
UAW Washington Report
1126 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Ernest S. Griffith
1941 Parkside Drive, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20012

Society of American Foresters
1010 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

American Forestry Association
1319 18th St., NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

Maurice H. Stans Secretary of Commerce U.S. Dept. of Commerce Commerce Building Washington, D.C. 20230	Senator Ted Stevens 317 Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510	Robert F. Mueller 7004 Dolphin Road Lenham, Maryland 20801
Director Bureau of Sport Fish. & Wildlife U.S. Dept. of the Interior Interior Building Washington, D. C. 20240	Senator Mike Gravel 1251 New Senate Office Bldg. Washington, D.C. 20510	Eleanor C. Robbins 7902 Brooklyn Bridge Rd. Laurel, Maryland 20810
Burton L. Silcock, Director Bureau of Land Management U.S. Dept. of the Interior Interior Building Washington, D. C. 20240	Chairman Committee of Commerce Suite 5202, New Sen. Office Bldg. Washington, D.C. 20510	American Shore & Beach Preservation Society Box 1246 Rockville, Maryland 20852
Elburt F. Osborn, Director Bureau of Mines U. S. Dept. of the Interior Interior Building Washington, D. C. 20240	Hon. Henry M. Jackson, Chairman Comm. on Interior & Insular Aff. Suite 3106, New Sen. Office Bldg. Washington, D. C. 20510	Charles A. Horsky 1227 Pinecrest Circle Silver Spring, MD 20910
G. Douglas Hofe, Jr., Director Bureau of Outdoor Recreation U.S. Dept. of the Interior Interior Building Washington, D. C. 20240	Hon. Wayne Aspinall, Chairman Comm. on Interior & Insular Aff. Suite 1324, Longworth House Off. Washington, D. C. 20515	Dr. William J. L. Sladen Johns Hopkins University 615 N. Wolfe Street Baltimore, MD 21205
George B. Hartzog, Jr., Director National Park Service U.S. Dept. of the Interior Washington, D. C. 20240	Chairman Comm. on Merchant Marine & Fish. Suite 1334, Longworth House Off. Washington, D. C. 20515	William P. Sadler 6308 North Charles Street Baltimore, Maryland 21212
Rogers C. B. Morton Secretary Department of the Interior Interior Building Washington, D. C. 20240	Nicholas J. Begich U.S. House of Representatives 1507 Longworth House Office Bldg Washington, D. C. 20515	Malcolm E. King, Mgr. Public Information Fish & Wildlife Admin. State Office Bldg. Annapolis, Maryland 21401
William T. Pecora, Director U.S. Geological Survey U.S. Dept. of the Interior GSA Building Washington, D.C. 20242	Justice William O. Douglas Associate Justice Court of the United States Washington, D. C. 20543	Arthur W. Sherwood Chesapeake Bay Foundation P. O. Box 1709 Annapolis, Maryland 21404
Edward P. Cliff, Chief U.S. Forest Service U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Washington, D.C. 20250	Alice Zahniser 1-K Gardenway Greenbelt, Maryland 20770	Theodor R. Swem 4127 Watkins Trail Annandale, Virginia 22003
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Office of the Chief of Engineers Forrestal Building Washington, D. C. 20314	North Am. Habitat Pres. Society P. O. Box 869 Adelphi, Maryland 20783	Donald Stough 1781 Wainwright Reston, Virginia 22070
Hon. Melvin Laird Secretary of Defense Washington, D.C. 20301	Louise V. Talbert 7407 Parkwood Street Hyattsville, Maryland 20784	Paul H. Oehser 9012 Old Dominion Drive McLean, Virginia 22101

Thurman Trosper
6728 Huntsman Blvd.
Springfield, Va. 22152

Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Ely
1605 Amherst St.
Charlottesville, Va. 22901

John S. Christie, Director
Oglebay Institute Nature Center
Wheeling, W. Virginia 26003

James W. Johnston, Jr.
271 W. Wayne Street
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Matthias E. Kayhoe
1400 Gentry Lane
Charlottesville, Va. 22901

William Van Eck
1505 Woodland Drive
Morgantown, W. Virginia 26505

Ella R. Pfeiffer
2310 N. 9th St., 301
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Jack V. Gwynn
2503 Brunswick Road
Charlottesville, Va. 22903

R. Phillip Hanes, Jr.
P. O. Box 749
Winston-Salem, N. Car. 27102

Alfreda Winnings
116 South Garfield
Arlington, Virginia 22204

Lever F. Stewart, M.D.
1935 Blue Ridge Road
Charlottesville, Va. 22903

Douglas Wilson
N. Carolina Schoonbeck Co.
P. O. Box 110
High Point, N. Car. 27261

Harry B. Crandell
4431 North 15th Street
Arlington, Virginia 22207

Mr. Donald S. Wallace
Box 3094
Charlottesville, Va. 22903

James Mattocks
Box 462
High Point, N. Car. 27261

Virginia Rainey
1593 Colonial Terrace (406)
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Camilla Louise Wills
1601 Grady Avenue
Charlottesville, Va. 22903

George O. Doak
Box 853
Chapel Hill, N. Car. 27514

Louise Springman
1577 Colonial Terrace
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Virginia Conservation Council
200 West Grace St.
Richmond, Va. 23203

T. B. Mitchell
Box 10311
Raleigh, N. Car. 27605

E-an Zen
1400 North 12th Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209

C. B. Woodward
Peck Equipment Corporation
1411 George Washington Highway
Portsmouth, Virginia 23704

Dr. Preston W. Edsall
205 Woodburn Road
Raleigh, N. Car. 27605

The Nature Conservancy
1800 North Kent Street, #800
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Carl J. Holcomb
Professor of Forestry
324 E. Julian, Cheatham Hall
VPI & SU
Blacksburg, Va. 24061

Mrs. E. W. Winkler
509 Gardener Street
Raleigh, N. Car. 27607

Art Wright
213 Commonwealth Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22301

Mrs. George R. Shook
P.O. Box 518
Athena, West Va 24712

Ben W. Smith
701 Runnymede Road
Raleigh, N. Car. 27607

Michael Frome
9426 Forest Haven Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22309

Grover C. Little
1712 Chestnut Street
Kenova, W. Virginia 25530

Joseph R. Bailey
Dept. of Zoology
Duke University
Durham, N. Car. 27706

Turner W. Battle
Box 948
Rocky Mount, N. Car. 27801

Conrad H. Ekdahl
P.O. Box 1246
Daytona Beach, Fla. 32015

Karl Eichhorn, Jr.
911 Bali Road
Cocoa Beach, Fla. 32931

John Stuart Gaul, Jr.
Hawthorne Medical Center
Suite 401, 225 Hawthorne Lane
Charlotte, N. Car. 28204

Mrs. Roger J. Waybright
806 South Shores Road
Jacksonville, Fla. 32207

Pelican Island Audubon Society
P. O. Box 1833
Vero Beach, Fla. 32960

Rabbi Max Selinger
314 Summit Avenue
Kinston, N. Car. 28501

Herman Schreiber, MD
14 West Jordan Street
Pensacola, Fla. 32501

Frank C. Craighead
P. O. Box 825
Homestead, Fla. 33030

Thomas W. Reese
P. O. Box 69
Hickory, N. Car. 28601

Tampa Audubon Society
David W. Pickard, Chairman
Conservation Committee
14502 North 22nd St., Apt. 240
Lutz, Florida 33549

Jerry Ellis
P. O. Box 386
Islamorada, Fla. 33036

Daniel O. Todd
Rte #1
Mountain Rest, S. Car. 28664

Dr. George W. Cornwell
School of Forest Res. & Conserv.
305 Rolfs Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, Fla. 32601

Mrs. Frances I. Allen
1111 30th Street Ocean
Marathon, Florida 33050

Mr. J. Lehman Kapp
Box 522
Braxard, North Car. 28712

J. Richard Gilliland
2211 NW 58th Terrace
Gainesville, Florida 32601

McGregor Smith
P. O. Box 3100
Miami, Fla. 33101

Carolina Mountain Club
P. O. Box 68
Asheville, N. Car. 28802

E. Rune Lindgren
Dept. Eng., Sci. & Mechanics
University of Florida
Gainesville, Fla. 32601

Dade W. Thornton
3226 N.W. 11 Courth
Miami, Fla. 33127

Mrs. Elizabeth H. Gordon
Regency Square, Apt. 204
2050 Beltline Blvd.
Columbia, S. Car. 29204

Frank Philpott
420 N.W. 25th Street
Gainesville, Fla. 32601

Flora E. O'Brien
4440 West Flagler Ave.
Miami, Fla. 33134

Charles W. Aiken
P. O. Box 1904
226 Pendleton Street
Greenville, So. Carolina 29602

Florida Audubon Society
P. O. Drawer 7
Maitland, Florida 32751

Ruth Weiner
Florida International Univ.
Miami, Florida 33144

Carl Masters
Rt. 1, Box 41
Ft. Mill, S. Car. 29715

Mr. Hal Scott
Exec. Director
Florida Audubon Society
P. O. Drawer 7
Maitland, Fla. 32751

Harry W. Hoffmann
570 N.E. 143 Street
Miami, Fla. 33161

Mrs. Wirt A. Jones
4500 Wieuca Rd. N.E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30342

Martin R. Northrup
Drawer 7
Maitland, Fla. 32751

Margaret Johnston
1704 NE First St.
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33301

Virginia R. Forrest
Sunrise Inn Port Sewell
Stuart, Florida 33494

Tennessee Conservation League,
Inc.
1507 College Heights Dr.
Johnson City, Tenn. 37601

Ralph Reinhart, Sr.
1745 Stine Rd.
Peninsula, Ohio 44624

Stanford H. Ross
615 North Owl Drive
Sarasota, Fla. 33577

Stanley A. Murray
Appalachian Trail Conference
P. O. Box 3356
Kingsport, Tennessee 37664

James L. Sowers
208 E. Bruce Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45405

Francis C. Gillett
P.O. Box 1418
1359 Main Street
Sarasota, Fla. 33578

Jack H. Gibbons
Route 5
Concord, Tennessee 37720

ACRES, INC.
1802 Chapman Road
Huntertown, Ind. 46748

Carl C. Radder
5863 Bayou Grande Blvd.
St. Petersburg, Fla. 33703

C. M. Dubois
Rt. 3, Box 64
Kingston, Tennessee 37763

Indiana Audubon Society
RR 6
Connersville, Indiana 47331

John B. Edscorn
Route 3, Box 400
Lakeland, Fla. 33801

Dr. Kerry F. Schell
Department of Forestry
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37901

Cecil Budreau
Rt. 1
Fowler, Indiana 47944

Mrs. Joseph Niswonger
305 W. Beacon Road
Lakeland, Florida 33803

L. Price Wilkins
Super. of Hatcheries & Trout Man.
102 State Office Bldg. Annex
618 W. Church
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

Mark Bus
5430 Sunnycrest
W. Bloomfield, Michigan 48033

Lyle A. Taylor
3115 McDow Ave., NW
Huntsville, Alabama 33805

Mrs. Harvey Broome
5115 Mountain Crest Drive
Knoxville, Tennessee 37918

Keith Kreag
Detroit Zoological Park
Box 39
Royal Oak, Michigan 48060

Kenneth Morrison
RFD 81
Babson Park, Fla. 33827

Dr. Donald L. Batch
Dept. of Biological Sciences
Eastern Kentucky University
Richmond, Kentucky 40475

Mitch Robinson
210 Morrell St.
Yale, Michigan 48097

George A. Blinn
Liberty Nat. Life Insurance Co.
P. O. Box 2612
Birmingham, Alabama 35202

Robert A. Blair, President
Cumberland Falls Preserv. Assoc.
Box 445
Corbin, Kentucky 40701

Doug Fulton
1135 Michigan Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

The Alabama Conservancy
2408 7th Ave., South
Birmingham, Alabama 35233

Case Western Reserve University
Law School Library
11075 East Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Andy Paulick
8000 E. Jefferson
Detroit, Michigan 48214

Edwin S. Gleaves
School of Library Science
George Peabody Coll. for Teach.
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Gerardus C. de Roth
Dept. of Natural Systems
The Defiance College
Defiance, Ohio 43512

Tom Opre
Detroit Free Press
Detroit, Michigan 48231

J. A. D. Crowe
Outdoor Editor, Detroit News
Detroit, Michigan 48231

Nature Way Association
5539 Lansing Road, Route 3
Lansing, Michigan 48917

Willis G. Sullivan
c/o Krause Milling Co.
611 E. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisc. 53202

Gary Schneider
Forestry Department
126 Natural Resources Bldg.
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Mich. 48823

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Holst
1007 Parkway Drive, Apt. 5
Boone, Iowa 50036

Mary F. Donald
6918 N. Belmont Lane
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53217

Walker Roberts
Box 261
East Lansing, Mich. 48823

S. R. Fisher, Chr.
J.N. "Ding" Darling Foundation
c/o Central Nat'l Bank & Trust
Des Moines, Iowa 50304

John L. Diedrich, Curator
Birds and Mammals
Milwaukee Public Museum
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Kevin M. Williams
15 Achre Court
Tiffin, Ohio 44883

Duane E. Dekock
1418 66th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50311

Arnold Jackson
Oak Lane Farm
Dane, Wisconsin 53259

Leonard M. Stuttman
2331 Forest Road
Lansing, Michigan 48910

Iowa Conservation Education Co.
Biology Department
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Wisconsin Park & Recreation
230 Lowell Hall
610 Langdon Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Charles D. Harris
Michigan Dept. of Nat. Resources
Stevens T. Mason Building
Lansing, Michigan 48926

Walter Flesher
501 19 Street
Spirit Lake, Iowa 51360

Hugh H. Iltis
Department of Botany
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Charles Shick
Wildlife Division
Mich. Dept. of Nat. Resources
Lansing, Michigan 48926

David T. Nelson
215 High Street
Deborah, Iowa 52101

Howard Mead
6120 University Ave.
Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Lewis Batts
7000 N. Westnedge
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Robert C. Russell
RR #6, Box 249
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

D. M. Fearing
Co. Rd. Q
Prescott, Wisconsin 54021

Gordon H. Charles
Outdoor Editor
Box 295
Honor, Michigan 49640

David L. Lyon
Cornell College
Mt. Vernon, Iowa 52314

Joe Hoffman
Dept. of Plant & Earth Science
Univ. of Wisconsin
River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

Michigan United Conservation
Clubs
Box 2235
Lansing, Michigan 48911

Carol M. Greig
R#3
Sheboygan Falls, Wisc. 53085

Ron Colbelt
Box 322
Roberts, Wisconsin 54023

John H. Tanton
Route 4, Box 272
Petoskey, Michigan 49770

Michael Bordon
Izaak Walton League of American
740 N. Water Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Chris Millich
2003 So. 29th
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601

Donald R. Ambrosen
414 Tilson Street
West Salem, Wisconsin 54669

Susan K. Anderson
1130 A Central St.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Rita A. Stellmacher
Route 1
Ripon, Wisconsin 54971

Julius J. Dinger, MAI
P. O. Box #1127
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

William R. Behlman
18 Canniff Ct.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Mrs. James H. Miner
8175 - 113 St. So.
Cottage Grove, Minn. 55016

Walter C. Piotrowski
231 1/2 Third St.
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

Janet M. Duschack
838A Jefferson St.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Clifton Christman
16915 Potomac St., NE
Forest Lake, Minn. 55025

Mrs. Eva Hansman
490 Chippewa St.
Chippewa Falls, Wisc. 54729

M. A. Haese
201 Taylor Hall
UW-O
Oshkosh, Wisc. 54901

Bert H. Lund
503 W. 19 Street
Hastings, Minn. 55033

Mrs. David Wiltrout
P. O. Box 123
Chippewa Falls, Wisc. 54729

Lynda Kolodziej
312 Breese Hall
UW - Oshkosh
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Warren D. Stortroer
329 Cimarron
Lake Elmo, Minn. 55042

Mr. & Mrs. Sherman Boucher
Route 1
Dodgeville, Wisconsin 54734

William B. Willers
Biology Department
University of Wisconsin
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Ed Brigham
Rt. 4
Red Wing, Minn. 55066

Jean H. O'Neill
421 Twelfth Street
Menomonie, Wisc. 54751

Nick Wellensteen
911 Wisconsin St.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

John Korneski
Grey Cloud Trail
Cottage Grove, Minn. 55071

John C. Mateju
Rt. 2
Stone Lake, Wisconsin 54876

Nancy Pica
309 Brown St., Apt. A
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Mrs. John McGuiigon
RR 2
Scandia, Minn. 55073

Paul W. Lukens, Jr.
Department of Biology
UW - Superior
Superior, Wisconsin 54880

Loren J. Hebert
1844 Iowa St.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Tom Mueller
1011 - 16th Ave.
So. St. Paul, Minn. 55075

Leland B. Whitney
Whitney Hardware
Webster, Wisc. 54893

Betty Egen
1114 Cherry St.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Jon & Randy Carlson
722 11th Ave., No.
So. St. Paul, Minn. 55075

Mr. & Mrs. Barney Newton
Route 1, Box 72
Webster, Wisc. 54893

Sue Dorv
508 West Irving
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Lynn & L. Mason Benepe
502 Stagecoach Tr.
Stillwater, Minn. 55082

Don Ravinski
Route 3, Box 159A
Stillwater, Minn. 55082

Mrs. Douglas Pedrothy
2070 E. 9th Ave. #101
N. St. Paul, Minn. 55104

Arlie Ferry
1862 E. County Rd.
St. Paul, Minn. 55109

Mrs. Thure Walton
426 E. Rose Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55101

Virginia Plessel
1049 Goodrich Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55105

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Kjellberg
2040 E. Laysentour
St. Paul, Minn. 55109

Mrs. Richard F. Tschida
Administrative Assistant
Minnesota Museum of Art
30 East Tenth Street
St. Paul, Minn. 55101

Mrs. Gayle V. Polister
1889 Goodrich Ave.
St. Paul, Minn 55105

Dr. & Mrs. D. W. Robertson
2985 McKnight Rd.
N. St. Paul, Minn. 55109

Stephen E. Smith
600 Pioneer Building
St. Paul, Minn. 55101

Hazel I Hegland
1017 Linwood Avenue
St. Paul, Minn. 55105

Michael Sutter
1330 Goose Lake Rd.
White Bear, Minn. 55110

Malcolm E. Lein, Director
Minnesota Museum of Art
30 East Tenth Street
St. Paul, Minn. 55101

John Kleinwachter
2260 Summit Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55105

Mrs. F. Seashore
3911 Lakewood Ave.
White Bear Lake, Minn. 55110

Teke, Jean & David Kilmer
408 St. Peter Street
12 Hamm Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 99102

Richard Holtkamp
1468 Fremont
St. Paul, Minn. 55106

J. C. Rawson, Sr.
1844 Orchard Lane
White Bear Lake, Minn. 55110

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Marty
996 Eleanor
St. Paul, Minn. 55102

C. R. Sutherland
1630 Margaret St.
St. Paul, Minn. 55106

Charles W. & Dorothy B. Jarvis
5942 Hobe Lane
White Bear Lake, Minn. 55110

William Daley
1069 Front Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55103

Ruth C. Swanson
753 E. 7th St.
St. Paul, Minn. 55106

Mr. Fred Christopherson
1721 County Rd. H - E
White Bear Lake, Minn. 55110

Warren J. Hoffman
1711 Englewood Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55104

Olga A. Lindquist
508 Humboldt Ave., Apt. 306
St. Paul, Minn. 55107

Peggy J. Hajicek
1700 E. Co. Rd. D
White Bear Lake, Minn. 55110

Grace Hoskins
1072 Hague
St. Paul, Minn. 55104

Mrs. John Barkos
1436 N. Snelling Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55108

Richard L. Schiver
399 So. Pared
St. Paul, Minn. 55112

William J. Patient
1850 Feronia Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55104

Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Bollman
1889 E. Co. Rd. B
St. Paul, Minn. 55109

Lucy Sommer
2324 Orchard Place
St. Paul, Minn. 55112

Michael Ronich
687 9th Ave., N.W.
New Brighton, Minn. 55112

Alma Bannister
1926 Bohland Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55116

Mr. John Faus
4137 Ewing South
Minneapolis, Minn. 55410

Mrs. Wm. Norton
1222 Rose Vista Ct. #1
St. Paul, Minn. 55113

Mary Finkelson
2612 Spruce St.
St. Paul, Minn. 55117

William & Rose DeKeyser
2917 Silver Lake Court
Minneapolis, Minn. 55421

Mary Jeannotte
1687 N. Fry, #15
St. Paul, Minn. 55113

John W. Palthe
3068 South Owasso Blvd.
St. Paul, Minn. 55117

Mrs. John R. Dennis
9601 Xerxes Road
Bloomington, Minn. 55431

M. L. Heinselmann
1783 Lindig Street
St. Paul, Minn. 55113

Emil J. Laborelle
1657 N. Hazel St.
St. Paul, Minn. 55119

Dr. & Mrs. W. J. Breckenridge
8840 West River Road North
Minneapolis, Minn. 55444

Michael Boyd
825 W. Co. Rd. B
St. Paul, Minn. 55113

Ernest A. Bodsberg
2247 Reaney Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55119

Mr. Sigurd F. Olson
106 Wilson East
Ely, Minnesota 55731

Arthur J. Schwautes
1753 Lindig St.
St. Paul, Minn. 55113

R. Braun
Box 523
Hopkins, Minn. 55343

Mrs. Don Miller
Finlayson, Minn. 55735

Mrs. Margaret Syring
1659 Niles Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55116

Leonard Lang
700 Second Ave., S.W.
Hutchinson, Minn. 55350

Adolph Anderson
2408 McKinney Lake Road
Grand Rapids, Minn. 55744

Mary Norris
1765 Bohland Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55116

Hennepin Co. Park Reserve Dist.
Route 1, Box 32
Maple Plain, Minn. 55359

Wayne Kroon
Rt. #3
McGregor, Minn. 55760

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Keene
1622 Beechwood
St. Paul, Minn. 55116

Robley W. Hunt
12410 Mayden Lake Road
Osseo, Minnesota 55369

Northern Environmental Council
Christie Bldg.
Duluth, Minn. 55802

Therese Heck
1926 Bohland Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55116

Clayton G. Rudd
315 Medical Arts Building
Minneapolis, Minn. 55402

C. W. Blumreich
9739 North Shore Drive
Duluth, Minn. 55804

Ruth M. Awsany
1258 Niles Ave.
St. Paul, Minn. 55116

Susan B. Kowalsky
4501 Grand Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minn. 55409

Mr. & Mrs. Kamal Gindy
518 N. 35th Ave., East
Duluth, Minn. 55804

Eunice P. Iverson
RFD
Dakota, Minn. 55925

Nathaniel Whitney
633 S. Berry Pines Road
Rapid City, S. Dak. 57701

Robert W. Saunders
Box 608
Minot, No. Dak. 58701

Pearl Toquam Kroeze
RFD #2
Bemidji, Minn 56014

Dr. George Johnson
1321 - 1st St. W.
Fargo, No. Dak. 58102

Gordon Olson
Minot State College
Minot, No. Dak. 58701

Corliss A. Hammond
260 Elmwood Drive
Le Sueur, Minn. 56058

John Schlanderaff
1523 5th Ave. N.
Grand Forks, No. Dak. 58201

Mrs. Peggy Schaffer
Dude Rancher Assoc.
2822 Third Avenue North
Billings, Montana 59101

Mr. Karl Hansen
Round Lake, Minn. 56167

ENPRO
Box 1036
Jamestown, No. Dak. 58401

J. Nevin Thompson
Box 400
Wolf Point, Montana 59201

Lyle R. Fox
414 East Chestnut
Redwood Falls, Minn. 56283

Harold Kantrud
Chairman, Natural Areas Comm.
North Dakota Nat. Sci. Soc.
P. O. Box 1672
Jamestown, No. Dak. 58401

James Stephenson
1510 Pleasant St.
Miles City, Montana 59301

Arnold Erickson
Rt. 1 - Box 506
Alexandria, Minn. 56308

Geoffrey Rytell
616 - 4th Ave., NW
Jamestown, No. Dak. 58401

Cal Ryder, Consultant
Environmental Ed.
Great Falls Public Schools
Great Falls, Montana 59403

Mrs. Doris Hicks
Isle, Minn. 56542

Gary L. Pearson, DVM
Rt. 2
Jamestown, No. Dak. 58401

Don Merritt
31 W. Poplar
Helena, Montana 59601

John Matisen
1001 Miles
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

Nelius B. Nelson
P. O. Box 1054
Jamestown, No. Dak. 58401

H. Max Stone, Chief
I. & E. Div.
Fish & Game Dept.
Helena, Montana 59601

Dr. Glen Sherwood
Longville Route
Pine River, Minn. 56474

Gilberto Ganzalez, MD.
Quain & Ramstad Clinic
221 North Fifth Street
Bismarck, No. Dak. 58501

United Press International
P. O. Box 1141
Helena, Montana 59601

Martin Weeks
Box 435
National Bank of S. D. Bldg.
Vermillion, So. Dak. 57069

Louis Veigel
Box 466
Dickinson, No. Dak. 58601

Loren L. Bahls
Montana Environ. Quality Coun.
40 North Benton Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Dakota Environmental Council
Box 1
Vermillion, So. Dak. 57069

Vaughn E. Rhodes
822 9th Avenue W
Dickinson State College
Dickinson, No. Dak. 58601

Cecil Garland
Lincoln, Montana 59639

Carlton Shaw, M.D.
Route 2
Bozeman, Montana 59715

William Jellison
504 S. 3rd Street
Hamilton, Montana 59840

A. G. Etter
The Morton Arboretum
Lisle, Ill. 60532

Grace N. Miller
Elkhorn Ranch
Bozeman, Montana 59715

Tom Edwards
Ovando, Montana 59854

Seymour LaRock, Managing Ed.
Spencer & Assoc., Publishers
222 West Adams Street
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Montana Wildlife Federation
410 Woodworth Ave.
Missoula, Montana 59801

R. H. Buff Hultman
33-Bar Ranch
Seeley Lake, Montana 59868

Dr. Peter L. Ames
Editorial Dept.
Encyclopaedia Britannica
425 North Michigan Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60611

George Weisel
Department of Zoology
Montana State University
Missoula, Montana 59801

Malcolm S. McLelland
Box 917
Kalispell, Montana 59901

The Chicago Academy of Sci.
2001 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60614

W. L. Pengelly
School of Forestry
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59801

Loren Kreck
Box 536
Columbia Falls, Montana 59912

Whitney Halstead
2451 N. Orchard
Chicago, Ill. 60614

James Lowe, Assoc. Prof.
School of Forestry
Montana State University
Missoula, Montana 59801

Winton Weydemeyer
Fortine, Montana 59918

George Morse Covinton
2739 North Pine Grove
Chicago, Illinois 60614

Dan A. Jenni
620 Woodworth Avenue
Missoula, Montana 59801

Dr. John T. Kelly, Pres.
Elk Grove Sportsmen's Club
80 E. Devon Avenue
Elk Grove Village, Ill. 60007

Eileen Wasserman
4846 S. Kimbark
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dale A. Jacobson
1024 Stephens Ave.
Missoula, Montana 59801

Roger H. Miller
Six Twenty Ash Street
Winnetka, Ill. 60093

John T. Kelly
Southeast Sportsmen's Club
9037 Kingston Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60617

Robert J. Campbell
501 Western Bank Building
Missoula, Montana 59801

Illinois Prairie Path
P. O. Box 5
Wayne, Illinois 60184

Mrs. Sherman Eugene Wheeler
5527 S. University Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Don Aldrich
410 Woodworth Avenue
Missoula, Montana 59801

Alfred C. Ames
734 Noyes Street
Evanston, Ill. 60201

Blanch Born
5026 South Lockwood
Chicago, Illinois 60638

Leland Schoonover
Box 941
Polson, Montana 59840

C. J. Klaas
520 Park Drive
Glenwood, Illinois 60425

Erma E. Baer
3000 Sheridan Rd.
Chicago, Illinois 60657

Mr. Dale E. Whitesell
Executive Vice-President
Ducks Unlimited
Box 66300
Chicago, Illinois 60666

George C. Hallozan
Ackert Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas 66502

Mrs. Willetta Lueschen
Wisner, Nebraska 68791

George W. Lindquist
Box 345
Dixon, Illinois 61021

Louellen Montgomery
Topeka Gem & Mineral Society
1184 Collins
Topeka, Kansas 66604

Mrs. Eva Tyler
Sandhills General Hospital
Valentine, Nebraska 69201

Citizens Committee for Nature
Conservation
819 N. Main Street
Rockford, Illinois 61103

Karl A. Menninger
1819 Westwood Circle
Topeka, Kansas 66604

Trent James, MD
Box 14507
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

Charles R. Barr
137 W. 5th St.
Coal Valley, Illinois 61240

Larry J. Clough
Box 115
Buffalo, Kansas 66717

W. Ashbrooke Beaird
914 Erie
Shreveport, Louisiana 71106

W. D. Klimstra
Cooperative Wildlife Research
South Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

Art Capper
Capper Jewelry
Iola, Kansas 66749

Calvin R. Simmons, MD
Jefferson Medical Center
1714 West 42nd Avenue
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601

John F. Burger
1329 Rushmore Drive
University City, Mo. 63130

J. C. Johnson, Jr.
Kansas State College
Pittsburgh, Kansas 66762

Dr. Joe Nix
Associate Professor of Chemistry
Ouachita Baptist University
Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71923

Rodney B. Welker
520 S. Kiefner
Perryville, Mo. 63770

Robert J. Foncannon
1101 1/2 Commercial
Emporia, Kansas 66801

Douglas A. James
Department of Zoology
University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

Conservation Federation of
Missouri
312 E. Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

Marjorie E. Marshall
656 South Roosevelt
Wichita, Kansas 67218

Allen P. McCartney
Department of Anthropology
University of Arkansas
College of Arts and Sciences
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

Robert M. Doerr
39 McFarland
Rolla, Missouri 65401

Lawrence J. Taylor
4679 Williams Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68106

The Ozark Society Incorporated
Box 209
Bentonville, Arkansas 72712

E. Raymond Hall
Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Gregg Foote
7144 Orchard Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68505

Robert E. Apple
Route 1, Box 255
Dardanelle, Arkansas 72834

Mrs. A. Dean Cole, Jr.
7327 Brittany, Apt. 106
Shawnee Mission, Kan. 66203

Pete Juve
7921 Vegas Road
Lincoln, Nebraska 68505

Mrs. Paul Updegraff
324 Emelyn
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

Arthur F. Halloran
P. O. Box 5121
Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

Dick Prouty
The Denver Post
P. O. Box 1709
Denver, Colorado 80201

Rocky Mt. Center on Environ-
ment
4260 E. Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

Raymond M. Thompson
Sr. Vice President - Explor.
Inlet Oil Corporation
3rd Floor - 1226 Commerce
Dallas, Texas 75202

The Colorado Mining Assoc.
402 Majestic Building
209 Sixteenth Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

COSC Wilderness Workshop
4260 E. Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

Texas Conservation Council
730 E. Friar Tuck Lane
Houston, Texas 77024

Eric S. Jacobson
500 E. 11th Ave.
Denver, Colorado 80203

Mr. Clifton R. Merritt
Director of Field Services
The Wilderness Society
4260 East Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

Dr. Sankey L. Blanton
Sun Oil Company
4151 Southwest Freeway
Houston, Texas 77027

Denver Public Library
Conservation Library
1357 Broadway
Denver, Colorado 80203

Hugh E. Kingery
Attorney At Law
4040 E. Louisiana
Denver, Colorado 80222

Mr. W. D. Wilson
Sun Oil Company
4151 Southwest Freeway
Houston, Texas 77040

Oliver Osborn
395 St. Paul St.
Denver, Colo. 80206

Dr. Gerald M. Richmond
Environmental Geology Branch
U.S. Geological Survey
Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225

John Miller
141 Magic Oaks, Apt. 26
Spring, Texas 77373

Steve Goodman
1982 A South Columbine
Denver, Colorado 80210

Mr. Stephen Cline
1560 South Queen Street
Lakewood, Colorado 80226

J. W. Akers
2115 Willow Blvd
Pearland, Texas 77581

Stephen B. Goodman
650 S. Corona St.
Denver, Colorado 80212

Beatric Willard
Thorne Ecological Institute
1229 University Avenue
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Welder Wildlife Foundation
P. O. Box 1400
Sinton, Texas 78387

Robert J. Tully
8305 Charlotte Way
Denver, Colorado 80221

Susan C. Brownell
Box 512
Eldora, Colorado 80437

Dr. & Mrs. R. A. Wells
3402 Sirius
El Paso, Texas 79904

Robert F. Cooney
The Wilderness Society
4260 E. Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

William B. Mounsey
Evergreen Park Estates
Route 4, Box 642
Evergreen, Colorado 80439

Denis L. Stratford
3502 Wadsworth
Wheatridge, Colo. 80033

Jean Widman
The Wilderness Society
Western Regional Office
4260 E. Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

Jerry Rudolph
Box 104
Steamboat Springs, Colo. 80477

Bill Schultz
4315 Xenon
Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033

The Wilderness Society
Western Regional Office
4260 E. Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

Edward M. Becker
1600 3rd Avenue
Longmont, Colorado 80501

Russ Palmer
1264 6th Avenue
Longmont, Colorado 80501

Herb Hockstrasser
712 Park St.
Fort Morgan, Colorado 80701

Mr. Robert V. Bailey
P. O. Box 771
Casper, Wyoming 82601

Colorado Coop. Wildlife Res. Unit
Colorado State University
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

Prof. Hans Krimm
The Colorado College
Colorado Springs, Colo. 80903

James W. Fagan
142 North Center Street
Casper, Wyoming 82601

Dr. & Mrs. J.V.K. Wagar
415 East Laurel St.
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

Oren V. Shaw, D.D.S.
1929 Wood
Colorado Springs, Colo. 80907

John J. Wantulok
945 East 21st St.
Casper, Wyoming 82602

Elfrida G. Traynor
1012 Castlerock Drive
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

George W. Kelly
McElmo Route
Cortez, Colorado 81321

Phil Teckel
Hidden Valley Ranch
Big Horn, Wyoming 82833

Dr. & Mrs. Harold Steinhoff
419 South Shields
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

Mrs. Norman Colbert
1311 Dolores Rd.
Cortez, Colorado 81321

Beatrice Gallatin Beuf
Big Horn, Wyoming 82833

Joan D. Sekora
528 Magnolia
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

Mrs. Charles Worth
Box 930
Aspen, Colorado 81611

Mike Leon
Story, Wyoming 82842

Jack R. Grieb
317 W. Prospect
P. O. Box 567
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

Bruce N. Berger
Box 482
Aspen, Colorado 81611

John Borzea
1306 Kimberly Avenue
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Bill Graves
540 Skyline Drive
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80522

Carl & Natasha Boyd
Box 317
New Castle, Colorado 81647

Robert Belous
P. O. Box 848
Jackson, Wyoming 83001

Lois H. Hope
1807 Cameo
Loveland, Colorado 80537

Shirley Aldinger
Box 1601
Vail, Colorado 81657

Environmental Research Institut
Box 156
Moose, Wyoming 83012

Russell J. Steen
3318 Banyon St.
Loveland, Colorado 80537

Mr. & Mrs. Les Shoemaker
CM Ranch
Dubois, Wyoming 82513

Margaret E. Murie
Box 7
Moose, Wyoming 83012

Joy Coombs
2025 5th Ave.
Greeley, Colorado 80631

Wyoming Outdoor Council
Post Office Box K
Lander, Wyoming 82520

Wes Marks
Box 73
Wilson, Wyoming 83014

Kenneth J. Morgan
P. O. Box 632
Big Piney, Wyoming 83113

Phoebe L. Holzinger
1604 Bellaire Dr.
Casper, Wyoming 82601

Everett Hagen
Route 3, Box 271
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Pierre Pulling
Idaho State University
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Lyle Stanford
College of Idaho
Caldwell, Idaho 83605

Maurice Hornocker
Idaho Coop. Wildlife Res. Unit
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Roy Pasley
1035 N. Lincoln
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Ted Trueblood
719 8th Avenue
South Nampa, Idaho 83651

Idaho Environmental Council
P. O. Box 3371
University Station
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Russel Mager
Box 4336
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Burt & Mary Trueblood
Rt. 1
Wilder, Idaho 83676

Robert G. Kalb
422 Antone
Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

Karl E. Holte
765 South 19th Ave.
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

David Llewellyn
Route 1, Hill Road
Boise, Idaho 83702

Hartt Wixom
Environmental Editor
Deseret News
34 E. 1st So.
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

Eugene Grimes, Jr.
314 Circle Drive
Montpelier, Idaho 83254

Franklin Jones
1304 Eastman St.
Boise, Idaho 83702

Stanley B. Mulaik
1144 East 3rd Street, S.
Salt Lake City, Utah 84102

Gerald A. Jayne
1568 Lola St.
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Ernest Day
420 Crestline Drive
Boise, Idaho 83702

Kathryn W. Anderson
315 L Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103

"Doc" Wygant
320 Hillcrest Road
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Bruce Bowler
1111 Shaw Mountain Road
Boise, Idaho 83702

John H. LaGrange, Land & PR Co.
Bear Creek Mining Company
10 East South Temple
1826 Kennecott Building
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Ferris Weddle
3528 - 14th St.
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Bonnars Ferry Ranger Station
U.S. Forest Service
Bonnars Ferry, Idaho 83805

Mr. Earl Anderson
577 N. 1 W.
Logan, Utah 84321

Don Thomas
P. O. Box 252
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Lloyd Deitz
Deitz Photography
1315 N. 7th Street
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814

Allen W. Stokes
Dept. of Wildlife Resources
Utah State University
Logan, Utah 84321

Jack O'Connor
Box 382
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Bob Thomas
P. O. Box 802
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814

D. M. Gaufin
Federal Building
324--25th Street
Odgen, Utah 84401

Ken Sleight
Box 338
Green River, Utah 84525

Wallace Vegors
Assistant Director
Arizona State Parks Board
1000 West Adams
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Peggy Spaw
1505 E. Cherry Lynn Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85014

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph P. Wagner
3315 North 60th Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Devens Gust
4707 E. Porter Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Randil L. Clark
3200 N. 50th Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85031

Thomas R. Wardell, Director
Maricopa Co. Parks & Rec. Dept.
4701 East Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85034

Robert E. Anderson
P. O. Box 744
Florence, Arizona 85232

Eileen M. Manderfield
8334 E. Devonshire
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

Paul W. Van Cleve
6911 E. Paradise Drive
Scottsdale, Arizona 85254

Herbert H. Connor, Jr.
P. O. Box 1024
Yuma, Arizona 85364

Ned B. Mitchell
427 Buckeye
Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521

Jack V. Lorenz, Land Inves.
Phelps Dodge Corporation
Western Exploration Office
Drawer 1217
Douglas, Arizona 85607

Jack J. Jackson
4110 Sweetwater Dr.
Tucson, Arizona 85705

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Kucera
7013 Kingston Drive
Tucson, Arizona 85710

Mr. & Mrs. James M. Gates
3025 E. Second
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Dr. & Mrs. Ray Bock
701 N. Palo Verde Blvd.
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Dr. & Mrs. Charles Coston
301 S. Eastbourne
Tucson, Arizona 85716

John McComb
752 S. Forgeus Avenue
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Ted Steele
35 Calle Primorosa
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Randolph Jenks
2146 E. 4th Street
Tucson, Arizona 85719

Lynferd J. Wickerham
5540 West Bar X Street
Tucson, Arizona 95731

Lyle Sowls
Ariz. Coop. Wildlife Res. Unit
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona 85721

F. G. Wilson
Box 2469, Meadview Rte.
Dolan Springs, Arizona 86441

W. B. Miller
P. O. Box 308
Silver City, New Mexico 88061

Philip R. Robillard
1609 1/2 Menaul Blvd., NW
Albuquerque, New Mex. 87107

Doc H. Burnett
714 LaPablona, N.W.
Albuquerque, New Mex. 87107

John T. Tyson
701 Solano S.E.
Albuquerque, New Mex. 87108

Richard Leonard
3440A Vail SE
Albuquerque, New Mex. 87108

Bert W. Lindsay
2910 Utah, N.E.
Albuquerque, New Mex. 87110

Stan Logan
1108 San Pablo, N.E.
Albuquerque, New Mex. 87110

Four Corners Wilderness Workshop
P. O. Box 998
Shiprock, New Mexico 87420

New Mex. Wildlife & Conservation
Association
Hayden, New Mexico 88425

Mitchell, Mitchell & Alley
P. O. Box 1932
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

M. E. Gildone, D.D.S.
2020 Sierra Sage Lane
Reno, Nevada 89502

Malcolm S. Gordon
Department of Zoology
University of California
Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

Bobby Adee, Pres.
New Mex. Wildlife Conserv. Assoc.
P. O. Box 1542
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Richard C. Sill
720 Brookfield Drive
Reno, Nevada 89503

George Marshall
800 BelAir Road
Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Neely
Rt. 3, Box 76A
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Steven Osborne
234 Maple St.
Reno, Nevada 89503

Sierra Club
2410 Beverly Blvd
Los Angeles, Calif. 90057

Helen G. Blumenschein
Box 244
El Prado, New Mexico 87529

George E. Wheeler
Desert Research Station
University of Nevada
Reno, Nevada 89507

Council For Planning & Conserv.
522 North Foothill Road
Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210

Dana L. Douglass
2059 D 41st St.
Los Alamos, New Mex. 87544

Fred Ryser
Biology Department
University of Nevada
Reno, Nevada 89507

Louis Cantor
4102 N. 30th St.
Tacoma, Washington 90407

Mrs. Patricia H. Douglass
P.O. Box 619
Las Vegas, New Mex. 87701

Reed Secord
Box 13691, Uni. Sta.
Reno, Nevada 89507

Alan Manee
Box 757
Sun Valley, Calif. 91352

United Press International
c/o Las Vegas Sun Bldg.
121 South Highland
Las Vegas, Nevada 89106

Associated Press
State Capitol
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Chris Mueller
1633 N. Naomi Street
Burbank, Calif. 91505

Nevada Open Spaces Council
709 South Mallard Street
Las Vegas, Nevada 89107

Charles S. Watson, Jr., Rep.
Nat. Public Lands Task Force
Nev. Outdoor Rec. Assoc. Inc.
P.O. Box 1245
Carson, City, Nevada 89701

M. B. Stark
581 Castlehill Dr.
Walnut, Calif. 91789

Newell Mills
Rt. 1, Box 153
Fallon, Nevada 89406

Gladwin Hill
New York Times
900 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90017

William P. Elser
P. O. Box 709
La Jolla, Calif. 92037

Joseph S. Rychetnik
1117 Forest Street
Reno, Nevada 89502

Committee for the Preservation
of the Tule Elk
5502 Markland Drive
Los Angeles, Calif. 90022

Virginia W. Merz
Box 86
Pauma Valley, Calif. 92061

Robert W. Swift
330 Carey Hills Dr.
Reno, Nevada 89502

Neal Creamer
10643 Lendamere Drive
Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

Stephen Jon Montgomery
706 Fresca Court
Solana Beach, Calif. 92075

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Alley
3750 El Canto Drive
Spring Valley, Calif. 92077

Gulf Oil Company - U.S.
P.O. Box 1392
Bakersfield, Calif. 93302

Mr. Peter A. Evans, Librarian
California Historical Society
2090 Jackson Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94109

Fred W. Karl
4177 Voltaire Street
San Diego, Calif. 92107

Colin Fletcher
P. O. Box K
Carmel Valley, Calif. 93924

Karl Treffinger
Karl Treffinger and Associates
50 Green Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94111

A. G. Soderlund
4001 Mt. Barnard Avenue
San Diego, Calif. 92111

U. S. Geological Survey
Conservation Division
Regional Mining Supervisor
345 Middlefield Road
Menlo Park, Calif. 94025

Francis Walcott
3500 Fulton St., Apt. 14
San Francisco, Calif. 94118

Jean Morley
4721 Choctaw Drive, Apt. H
San Diego, Calif. 92115

Elizabeth J. Rider
64 Laurel St. #2
San Carlos, Calif. 94070

Bill Morrison
Standard Oil
P. O. Box 3862
San Francisco, Calif. 94119

Roscoe A. Poland
3942 Hughes Court
San Diego, Calif. 92115

Max K. Linn, President
John Muir Institute
1098 Mills Tower
San Francisco, Calif. 94104

Edgar Wayburn, M.D.
30 Sea View Terrace
San Francisco, Calif. 94121

David P. Lawfer
P. O. Box 767
Needles, Calif. 92363

Michael McCloskey
Sierra Club
1050 Mills Tower, 220 Bush St.
San Francisco, Calif. 94104

California Roadside Council
2636 Ocean Avenue
San Francisco, Calif. 94132

Joel M. & Mary Daniel Whitney
31541 Inspiration Drive
P. O. Box 1206
Running Springs, Calif. 92382

Richard M. Leonard
Conservation Law Society
15th Floor Mills Tower
220 Bush Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94104

Mr. & Mrs. Harvey Brown
1651 Olympia St.
Concord, Calif. 94521

Dr. & Mrs. Eric Lindroth
2133-C Via Puerta
Laguna Hills, Calif. 92653

Mrs. Doris F. Leonard
Conservation Associates
220 Bush Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94104

Mr. & Mrs. D. Steinberg
4174 Pomona
Livermore, Calif. 94550

Jeff Gregg
2884 Anza Lane
Costa Mesa, Calif. 92626

California Tomorrow
Monadnock Building, Room 1059
681 Market Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94105

Mr. John Swanson
P. O. Box 922
Berkeley, Calif. 94701

Mrs. Margery W. Horsfall
1037 Oxford Drive
Placentia, Calif. 92670

Hasse Bunnelle
560 Powell, Apt. 602
San Francisco, Calif. 94108

Save the Bay Association
Box 925
Berkeley, Calif. 94701

Anna Laura Myers
515 Carriage Hill
Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105

Mrs. Valeria G. DaCosta
2090 Pacific Avenue
San Francisco, Calif. 94109

D. I. Willits
1 North Gate Avenue
Berkeley, California 94708

Mrs. V. Pierce
612 32nd Street
Richmond, Calif. 94804

Morris L. Merrill
Rt. 1, Box 132
Willows, Calif. 95988

James A. Potter, President
Oregon Division
Izaak Walton League of America
P. O. Box 58
Gladstone, Oregon 97027

John Hart
Box 4181
S. Rafael, Calif. 94903

Muriel Weissberg
3355 Mac's Road
Redding, Calif. 96001

Don Neal
14781 S. W. Rainbow Drive
Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034

Robert H. Martin, Jr.
P. O. Box 382
Valley Springs, Calif. 95252

Dennis K. Cowan
1450 Court St.
P. O. Box 1826
Redding, Calif. 96001

Bret Stafford
1050 Sunningdale Road
Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034

Kurt H. Muncheimer
405 Wildwood Avenue
Rio Dell, Calif. 95562

Henry N. Yamashita
Box 265
Kaunakakai, Hawaii 96748

Robert Matsen
1540A S.E. Bush Street
Hillsboro, Oregon 97123

Mr. & Mrs. James R. Mazzoni
1480 Moody Lane
Geyserville, Calif. 95441

Dr. Otto Degener
68-617 Croziew Drive
Waialua, Oahu, Hawaii 96791

Bob Mann
116 N.W. Grant
Hillsboro, Oregon 97123

Amy Mazza
911 Pennsylvania Place, #18
Davis, Calif. 95616

Conservation Coun. for Hawaii
P.O. Box 2923
Honolulu, Hawaii 96802

Mr. B. A. McPhillips
P. O. Box 571
McMinnville, Oregon 97128

Alison Binder
Box 756
Davis, California 95616

Tony Hodges
Life of the Land
899 Waimanu St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

William B. Morse
Wildlife Management Institute
Field Representative
1617 N.E. Brazee Street
Portland, Oregon 97201

Jim Eaton
P. O. Box 601
Davis, Calif. 95616

President
Hawaii Audubon Society
P.O. Box 5032
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Lawrence F. Williams
Executive Director
Oregon Environmental Council
4315 S.W. Corbett Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97201

The Planning & Conservation Lea.
909 Twelfth Street
Sacramento, Calif. 95814

Robert Wenkam
1372 Kapiolani Blvd.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Associated Press
1320 S.W. Broadway
Portland, Oregon 97201

Ronald M. Jurek
2617 G Street, Apt. 17
Sacramento, Calif. 95816

Scott D. Hamilton, Jr.
Waikiki P. O. Box 8803
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

Tom McAllister
The Oregon Journal
Portland, Oregon 97201

Mr. Paul Howard, Jr.
Box 4446
555 Audubon Place
Sacramento, Calif. 95825

Alison Kay
2642 Halelena Pl.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Steven R. Schell
Black Helterline Beck & Rappley
Attorneys
Bank of California Tower
Portland, Oregon 97208

Jim O'Neal, Program Director
Northwest Environmental Defense
c/o Northwest School of Law
Lewis & Clark College
Portland, Oregon 97219

Peter Rimbey
Physics Department
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Whitey Bloom
Cove, Oregon 97824

Elsie G. Caldwell
9670 S.W. Frewing Street
Tillamook, Oregon 97223

Dr. & Mrs. Richard Noyes
2014 Elk Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Lois Winchester
Heppner, Oregon 97836

Mr. P. W. Schneider
Northwestern Field Rep.
National Wildlife Federation
8755 S.W. Woodside Dr.
Portland, Oregon 97225

Don Hunter
University of Oregon
Audiovisual Media Center
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Jim Zanelli
P. O. Box 145
Oxbow, Oregon 97840

Charles Rouse
1240 N.E. 196th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97230

Mr. Frank Barry
2085 University Street
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Ida & Roberta Gatlin
Box 63
Imbler, Oregon 97841

J. H. Titcomb
11911 S.E. Division, Sp. 62
Portland, Oregon 97266

Mr. James Anderson
Box 277
Sunriver, Oregon 97701

V. Wayne Hams
Box 112
Ione, Oregon 97843

Rev. Thomas McCamant
3869 Dakota Road SE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Bill Ellis
718 East Eighth Street
Bend, Oregon 97701

John E. Barry
P. O. Box 566
La Grande, Oregon 97850

Jim Van Loan
1161 N.W. Grant
Corvallis, Oregon 97330

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gail
P. O. Box 162
Burns, Oregon 97720

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Brown
Box 226
La Grande, Oregon 97850

Dr. Thomas G. Scott, Head
Dept. of Fisheries & Wildlife
Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon 97331

Walter L. & Rebecca M. Anderson
P. O. Box 113
Burns, Oregon 97720

Howard Fisk
1203 L. Avenue
LaGrande, Oregon 97850

Sanford Tepfer
Department of Biology
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97401

Garvan P. Bucaria
P. O. Box 194
Terrebonne, Oregon 97760

D. Vince Matott
2007 Q
La Grande, Oregon 97850

Mr. Fred V. Koehler
Oregon Wildlife Federation
835 Park Street East
Eugene, Oregon 97401

H. B. Rudolph
3515 S.W. Kirk
Pendleton, Oregon 97801

Bill Watson
Rt. 3, Box 54
Milton Free Water, Ore. 97862

Joe Walicki
2924 Stark
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Wade Hall
3190 Third Street
Baker, Oregon 97814

Carmelita Holland
Rt. 1
Richland Oregon 97870

David W. Faith
Bellevue Public Schools
310 102nd Ave. NE
Bellevue, Washington 98004

Brock Evans
4534 1/2 University Way, N.E.
Seattle, Washington 98105

Dr. Knute Berger
2856 32nd Avenue South
Seattle, Washington 98144

George B. Yount
21625 92nd Ave., W
Edmonds, Washington 98020

North Cascades Conservation
Council
P.O. Box 156, University Sta.
Seattle, Washington 98105

Mr. Harold Johnson
Box 95
Richmond Beach, Wash. 98160

George Frye
Route 1, Box 161
Enumclaw, Wash. 98022

Gordon Orians
Professor of Zoology
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington 98105

Ferd Nist
753 SW 201st St.
Seattle, Washington 98166

Kenneth Laufer
4206 - 182nd SE
Issaquah, Wash. 98027

Chemithon Corporation
5430 W. Marginal Way, S.W.
Seattle, Washington 98106

John Osseward
12730 9th Avenue, N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98177

Robert G. Pettie
3909 Serene Drive
Alder Wood Manor, Wash. 98036

Wolf Bauer
5622 Seaview, N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98107

Dr. Richard Taber
Forest Resources AR-10
Univeristy of Washington
Seattle, Washington 98195

Donald R. Mech
3311 NE 11th Place
Renton, Wash. 98055

Wilbur Mills
5209 Russell Ave., N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98107

Philip Zalesky
2433 Del Campo Drive
Everett, Washington 98204

Patricia Coburn
Northwest Volunteer Field Rep.
Friends of the Earth
1624 East McGraw
Seattle, Wash. 98102

United Press International
6th and Wall Streets
Post-Intelligencer Building
Seattle, Washington 98111

Dexter Lall
Rt. 5, Box 69
Arlington, Wash. 98223

Bradley Collins
713-A Summit Avenue East
Seattle, Wash. 98102

Associated Press
P. O. Box 2144
Seattle, Washington 98111

Henry S. Vanderwarker
P. O. Box X
Steilacoom, Wash. 98388

Dr. William R. Halliday
1117 36th Avenue East
Seattle, Wash. 98102

Karl Kenyon
San Point, NAS Bldg. 192
Seattle, Washington 98115

Hollis Day
Box 1117
Tacoma, Washington 98401

Anthony J. Rotell
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
1002 2nd Avenue
Seattle, Wash. 98104

Paul P. Cook, Jr.
Dept. of Biology
Seattle University
Seattle, Washington 98122

James F. Henriot
1100 Puget Sound
Bank Building
Tacoma, Washington 98402

Peter Pan Seafoods, Inc.
1220 Dexter Horton Bldg.
710 2nd Ave.
Seattle, Wash. 98104

Pauline Dyer
13245 40th Street, N.E.
Seattle, Washington 98125

Gordon D. Alcorn
Department of Biology
University of Puget Sound
Tacoma, Washington 98416

Ruth Kirk
1420 Mountain View South
Tacoma, Washington 98465

Mr. & Mrs. Jack E. Davis
P. O. Box 767
Olympia, Washington 98507

Camas-Washougal Wildlife Club
Earl Miller
1822 NE Franklin
Camas, Washington 98607

W S S C
Howard Nelson, Secretary
P. O. Box 569
Vancouver, Washington 98660

Assoc. of Northwest Steelheaders
P. O. Box 2223
Vancouver, Washington 98661

Sheldon A. Jacobson
6413 Buena Vista Drive
Vancouver, Washington 98661

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Werkena
101 East 38th
Vancouver, Washington 98663

Kenneth R. Muller
HHC USAG
Box 933
APO Seattle 98731

Jon M. Igelman
21-346 Orange Ave., Apt. A
APO Seattle, Wash. 98742

Mrs. Henry Lagergren
Yakima Audubon Society
208 N. 27th Ave.
Yakima, Washington 98902

Katheryn Kershaw
Double K Ranch
Goose Prarie, Wash. 98929

Mrs. Lee Rosenkranz
Rt. 2, Box 2066A
Wapato, Wash. 98951

W. K. Steele
Route 1, Box 114
Spangle, Washington 99031

Albert D. Angove, Park Director
Spokane County
Dept. of Parks & Recreation
N. 811 Jefferson
Spokane, Washington 99201

M. C. Haggin
Rt. #5
Spokane, Washington 99215

Philip Fikkan
Box 8, Dishman
Spokane, Washington 99213

S. Thatcher Hubbard, M.D.
10525 College Circle
Spokane, Washington 99218

Ron And Audrey Marvin
602 W. 16th Avenue
Kennewick, Washington 99336

Dale R. Edwards, President
S. E. Wash. Sports Council
602 E. Sumach St.
Walla Walla, Wash. 99362

Bill Fullen, President
S. E. Wash. Jr. Sports Council
830 Alvarado Terrace
Walla Walla, Wash. 99362

Vance Orchard, Outdoors Editor
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin
First and Poplar Streets
Walla Walla, Wash. 99362

S. E. Wash. Jr. Sports Council
2004 Lark Drive
Walla Walla, Wash. 99362

Harold J. Coolidge
International Union for Conservation
of Nature & Natural Resources
2101 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20418

Douglas K. Bingham
Dept. of Physics
University of Alberta
Edmonton 7, Alberta
CANADA

Mr. Richard Bocking, Producer
Canadian Broadcasting Corp.
747 Bute Street
Vancouver 5, B. C.
CANADA

Dr. Ant. B. Bubenik
Research Branch
Dpt. Lands and Forests
Maple, Ontario
CANADA

Conservation Council of Ontario
Suite 604, Board of Trade Bldg.
11 Adelaide St. West
Toronto 1, Ontario
CANADA

Miss Jule Hrapko
11816 135 Street
Edmonton, 41, Alberta
CANADA

Internation Union for Conservation
of Nature and
Natural Resources, 1110
Morges, SWITZERLAND

Bryan Sage
13 Dugdale Hill Lane
Potters Bar
Hertfordshire, ENGLAND

Van Tienhoven Library
I U C N
1110 Morges
SWITZERLAND

Gordon C. Haber
Dept. of Zoology
Univ. of British Columbia
Vancouver 8, CANADA

Mr. Stephen Herrero
Assistant Professor
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta, CANADA
T2N 1N4

Susquehanna Environmental Educa-
tion Association
616 Pheasant Lane
Endwell, New York 13760

A. W. Balvin, District Geologist
Department of Highways
2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Broome County Environmental
Management Council
c/o Loring Bixler
Green Hill Road
Vestal, New York 13850

American Forest Institute
9711 S. W. Corbett St.
Portland, Oregon 97219

Zellie Earnest
2348 Inglewood Drive
Kingsport, Tennessee 37664

Larry D. Sowden
565 E. School St.
Owatonna, Minnesota 55060

John W. Ragsdale
1321 Elati Street
Denver, Colorado 80204

Mrs. Vee Weggel
Sierra Club
National Wildlife Committee
5307 Nevada Avenue, NW
Washington, D. C. 20015

National Wildlife Federation
Western Regional Office
1107 Ninth Street, Suite 1037
Sacramento, Calif. 95814

Mary Ann Eriksen
450 University Circle
Claremont, California 91711

Mr. Olas Lunt, Chm.
Arizona Conservation Council
7302 No. 10th St.
Phoenix, Arizona 85021

Joe Birckhead
Outdoor Writer
P. O. Box 372
Charlottesville, Va. 22902

Mr. Brian Massumi
8132 E. Arlington
Scottsdale, Arizona 85253

Ms. Emma Hartzler
202 South Sixth Street
Goshen, Indiana 46256

Frank D. Craighead Jr.
Environmental Research Institute
Box 156
Moose, Wyoming 83012

Don Kellett
3251 Poudre Canyon
Bellvue, Colorado 80512

Wildlife Restoration, Inc.
Box 45
Armonk, N. Y. 10504

John Tuteur
1393 Green Valley Road
Napa, Calif. 94558

O. K. Gilbreth
3001 Porcupine Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

SECTION VIII. PUBLIC HEARING
HANDOUT MATERIALS

SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL

PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENT

BY

BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE REPRESENTATIVE

GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I AM GORDON WATSON, ALASKA AREA DIRECTOR FOR THE BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE. I WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION FOR YOUR INTEREST IN COMING TO THIS HEARING ON THE SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL.

THE WILDERNESS ACT, PASSED BY CONGRESS IN 1964, DIRECTED THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO REVIEW ALL ROADLESS AREAS OF 5,000 OR MORE ACRES, AND EVERY ROADLESS ISLAND, WITHIN THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM, TO DETERMINE THEIR SUITABILITY OR NONSUITABILITY AS WILDERNESS. FURTHER, REGULATIONS OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR PUBLISHED ON FEBRUARY 22, 1966, REQUIRE THIS BUREAU TO REVIEW THOSE AREAS QUALIFYING FOR STUDY UNDER THE WILDERNESS ACT THAT

- (1) POSSESS THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WILDERNESS
- (2) ARE REASONABLY COMPACT
- (3) ARE UNDEVELOPED
- (4) ARE WITHOUT IMPROVED ROADS SUITABLE FOR PUBLIC TRAVEL BY CONVENTIONAL AUTOMOBILE.

THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM IS COMPRISED OF MORE THAN 300 UNITS CONTAINING NEARLY 30 MILLION ACRES. UNITS OF THE SYSTEM ARE LOCATED ON LANDS EXTENDING FROM THE ARCTIC OCEAN SHORES TO ISLANDS OF THE CENTRAL

PACIFIC OCEAN, AND FROM THE FLORIDA KEYS TO MAINE. ONE OR MORE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES IS LOCATED IN EACH OF THE 17 MAJOR LIFE ZONES OF NORTH AMERICA. THE ECOLOGY OF EACH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE DIFFERS FROM THAT OF ANY OTHER REFUGE, ALTHOUGH SOME ARE SIMILAR. BECAUSE OF THESE ECOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES, MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES OF INDIVIDUAL REFUGES ARE OFTEN QUITE VARIED.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REVEALS THAT ABOUT 90 WILDLIFE REFUGES IN 32 STATES, CONTAINING NEARLY 25 MILLION ACRES, QUALIFY FOR STUDY AS WILDERNESS. THE WILDERNESS REVIEW PROGRAM OF THE BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE, OF WHICH THIS PROPOSAL IS A PART, ENCOMPASSES A WIDE SPECTRUM OF LANDS WITHIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. ONLY THROUGH CAREFUL STUDY AND ANALYSIS CAN A PROPER DETERMINATION BE MADE REGARDING WHETHER A NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE OR A PORTION OF IT QUALIFIES FOR CONSIDERATION AS WILDERNESS BY THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

TODAY, WE ARE PUBLICLY PRESENTING THE RESULTS OF OUR STUDY OF THE SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. AN INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE SUMMARIZING THE STUDY AND EXPLAINING THE WILDERNESS PROPOSAL IS AVAILABLE IN THE HEARING ROOM IF YOU DO NOT YET HAVE A COPY. THE COMPLETE STUDY REPORT IS ALSO AVAILABLE HERE FOR YOUR EXAMINATION. PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE IT, FOR THE NUMBER OF COPIES IS VERY LIMITED. COPIES OF THE STATEMENT THAT I AM MAKING TODAY ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR YOUR USE.

COPIES OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO

INTERESTED FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL ENTITIES FOR THEIR VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS PRIOR TO THIS HEARING. THIS ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT IS REQUIRED BY THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT OF 1969 (PUBLIC LAW 90-190). IT CONSIDERS POSSIBLE IMPACTS OF WILDERNESS DESIGNATION ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION. A COPY OF THIS STATEMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN THE REAR OF THE ROOM FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE INTERESTED IN EXAMINING ITS CONTENTS.

IT SHOULD BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE PROPOSAL WE ARE PRESENTING IS PRELIMINARY. ONLY AFTER YOUR EXPRESSED VIEWS HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY STUDIED WILL OUR FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS BE MADE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR. IT WILL THEN BE NECESSARY FOR THE CONGRESS TO ENACT LEGISLATION THAT WILL OFFICIALLY DESIGNATE ALL OR PORTIONS OF THE SEMIDI ISLANDS AS WILDERNESS, AND INCLUDE THEM IN THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRESERVATION SYSTEM.

THE SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WAS ESTABLISHED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER 5858 IN 1932, PRIMARILY TO PRESERVE THE UNIQUE MARINE BIRD BREEDING GROUNDS. THE SEMIDI ISLANDS ARE EXTREMELY REMOTE, RARELY VISITED BY MAN, AND ESSENTIALLY DE FACTO WILDERNESS. THERE IS NO ASSURANCE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS CONDITION WILL ALWAYS REMAIN. WITHOUT LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION AS AFFORDED THROUGH OFFICIAL WILDERNESS DESIGNATION, THE ISLANDS' WILDERNESS QUALITIES COULD EVENTUALLY BE LOST AS THE NATION'S POPULATION GROWS AND MAN'S TECHNOLOGY HAS EVEN MORE WIDESPREAD INFLUENCE ON SUCH WILD AREAS.

THE REFUGE CONSISTS OF NINE SMALL ISLANDS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED SMALL ROCKS AND ISLETS, CONTAINING 8,422 ACRES, AND APPROXIMATELY 600,000 ACRES

OF SURROUNDING SUBMERGED LANDS. AGHIYUK IS THE LARGEST ISLAND, BEING 6 MILES LONG BY 2 MILES WIDE. THE SHORELINES OF THE ISLANDS ARE EXTREMELY PRECIPITOUS WITH MANY ROCK LEDGES RISING 100 TO 200 FEET ABOVE THE SEA. THERE ARE ONLY A FEW SMALL BEACHES. ACCESS TO INTERIOR PORTIONS OF THE ISLANDS IS LIMITED. GOOD HARBORS ARE NON-EXISTENT AND FRESHWATER SOURCES ARE ALSO VERY LIMITED.

THE EXCEEDINGLY STEEP ROCK CLIFFS PROVIDE IDEAL NESTING HABITAT FOR GREAT NUMBERS OF PELAGIC BIRDS SUCH AS MURRES, KITTIWAKES, FULMARS, AND PUFFINS. IN CRUISING THE SHORELINE BY BOAT, THERE APPEARS NO END TO THE NUMBER OF BIRDS AS THEY CROWD THE ROCK LEDGES AND WHEEL ABOUT OVERHEAD. IN PLACES THE WATERS ARE LITERALLY ALIVE WITH FEEDING MURRES, KITTIWAKES AND FULMARS. BIRD POPULATIONS ACTUALLY NUMBER IN THE MILLIONS, AND THE SEMIDI ISLANDS' FULMAR COLONY IS ONE OF THE LARGEST IN ALASKA. MANY SCIENTISTS CONSIDER SUCH SEABIRD COLONIES PART OF A VERY FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM AND RECOMMEND THAT, AS SUCH, THEY ARE BEST MANAGED IN THEIR NATURAL STATE.

BALD EAGLES, PEREGRINE FALCONS, CORMORANTS, GULLS, GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROWS, LONGSPURS, AND A VARIETY OF OTHER BIRDS ALSO UTILIZE THE ISLAND DURING NESTING PERIODS. A TOTAL OF 43 SPECIES OF BIRDS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.

WATERS SURROUNDING THE ISLANDS ARE RICH IN FISHERY AND MARINE MAMMAL RESOURCES. COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN HARVEST SEVERAL MILLION POUNDS OF HALIBUT EACH YEAR, PROVIDING A SUBSTANTIAL BENEFIT TO THE ECONOMIES OF ALASKA AND THE NATION.

SEA LIONS AND HARBOR SEALS FREQUENTLY HAUL OUT ON THE ROCKY SHORELINES OR OFFSHORE ISLETS, AND A FEW SEA OTTERS UTILIZE THE SHALLOW BAYS. VARIOUS SPECIES OF WHALES TRAVERSE THE OFFSHORE WATERS. THE WATERS ARE VERY PRODUCTIVE OF SMALL MARINE LIFE WHICH PROVIDES FOOD FOR THE THOUSANDS OF BIRDS THAT UTILIZE THE ISLANDS FOR NESTING PURPOSES. ANY ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE TO THESE SURROUNDING WATERS WOULD GREATLY JEOPARDIZE THE TREMENDOUS BIRD COLONIES THAT ARE PRESENT TODAY.

THE U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORTS THAT THERE ARE NO KNOWN MINERALS OF COMMERCIAL VALUE. THE ISLANDS ARE RARELY VISITED AND APPEAR IN ESSENTIALLY THE SAME CONDITION AS WHEN FIRST DISCOVERED BY BERING IN 1741 AND REDISCOVERED BY CAPTAIN COOK ON JUNE 16, 1778.

SINCE OUR STUDIES INDICATE THAT ALL LANDS WITHIN THE REFUGE APPEAR TO QUALIFY AS WILDERNESS, ACCORDING TO CRITERIA PRESCRIBED BY THE WILDERNESS ACT OF 1964, WE PROPOSE THAT THE ENTIRE 256,000-ACRE SEMIDI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BE INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRESERVATION SYSTEM FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL GENERATIONS OF AMERICANS.

THE BUREAU DOES NOT ANTICIPATE ANY MANAGEMENT OR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD CONFLICT WITH WILDERNESS. THE WILDERNESS ACT PROVIDES FOR THE USE OF MOTORIZED BOATS IN WILDERNESS AREAS WHERE SUCH USE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, AND DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH REFUGE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES. WE PROPOSE, THEREFORE, TO PERMIT FISHING TO CONTINUE IN THE PROPOSED SEMIDI WILDERNESS ESSENTIALLY AS AT PRESENT. IF CONGRESS SHOULD PREFER TO PRECLUDE SUCH

USE, THEN WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THE SURROUNDING SUBMERGED LANDS AND THE WATERS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE WILDERNESS PROPOSAL.

I THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THIS HEARING AND FOR EXPRESSING AN INTEREST IN THE SEMIDI WILDERNESS PROPOSAL. I ASSURE YOU THAT ALL VIEWS, WHETHER EXPRESSED ORALLY OR IN WRITING, WILL BE CAREFULLY STUDIED BEFORE THE BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE SUBMITS ITS FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

SECTION IX. PUBLIC HEARING
ATTENDANCE LIST

PUBLIC HEARING ATTENDANCE RECORD

Please print
Name

Mailing address

(street, post office box or route)

(city and state)

Representing (check one)

(check one)

- Governor
- U.S. Senator or
Congressman
- State official
- State agency
- County official
- City official
- Association, organi-
zation or business

- Civic groups
- Federal agency
- Individual

- I want to make a state-
ment.
- I will hand in a state-
ment.
- I do not plan to make
a statement.

Name of official, agency, association, organization, business, firm or
group you represent:

SECTION IX

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF PERSONS IN ATTENDANCE AT PUBLIC HEARING

ANCHORAGE

Name and Address	Representing	Type of Testimony
Edgar Bailey Pouch 2 Cold Bay, Alaska	Self	None
Mary Bailey P.O. Box 4-040 Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
Alma Best 3137 Raspberry Rd. Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
C.H. Brown Box 4-1579 Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
Pollin F. dal Piaz 320 E. 68th Ave. Anchorage, Alaska	Self	Oral
Virginia dal Piaz USAF Hosp. PSC-4 B-9436 Anchorage, Alaska	Upper Cook Inlet Chapter, Alaska Conserv. Soc.	Oral and Written
E.A. Gillett 2804 Wesleyan Dr. Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
Jack Hession 2400 Barrow St. #204 Anchorage, Alaska 99503	Sierra Club	Oral
Nathan P. Johnson 333 Raspberry St. Anchorage, Alaska	Alaska Dept. Fish and Game	None
Charles Konigsberg SRA, Box 91 Anchorage, Alaska	Self	Oral

Name and Address	Representing	Type of Testimony
J. Logan P.O. Box 1853 Anchorage, Alaska	Lloyds of London	Oral
Pete K. Martin SRA Box 1629 Anchorage, Alaska	Wilderness Society	Oral and Written
Herman A. Schmidt 2072 Arlington Dr. N. Anchorage, Alaska	B.P. Alaska, Inc.	None
Janet L. Smith P.O. Box 531 Anchorage, Alaska	Self	Written NONE
Mary E. Smith 4120 Dorothy Dr. Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
Roger B. Smith P.O. Box 531 Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
Tracey Steele 10 Jewel Terrace Anchorage, Alaska	Self	None
Deborah Vogt Box 1796 Fairbanks, Alaska	Fairbanks Environmental Center	Oral and Written
Barbara Winkley SRA Box 402-E Anchorage, Alaska	Mountaineering Club of Alaska	Oral and Written

SECTION X. PUBLIC HEARING
TRANSCRIPT

1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
2 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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22 FEBRUARY 20, 1973
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24 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
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P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 The Public Hearing on the Semidi Wilderness Proposal
4 convened at the hour of 7:20 p.m., at the Loussac Library,
5 Anchorage, Alaska.
6

7 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

8 Ladies and gentlemen, I think we can begin the
9 Wilderness Hearing at this time. There was some question
10 whether it was going to be at 7:00 or 7:30, but it is close
11 enough to 7:30 to give the benefit of the doubt for those
12 who might be late.

13 First, I would like to introduce myself, I am Robert
14 Price, the Regional Solicitor, Department of the Interior,
15 Anchorage. I have been designated by the Secretary of the
16 Interior to conduct this hearing. Most of you undoubtedly
17 filled out an attendance card as you entered the door. If
18 you have not done so, I would like to ask that you complete
19 one. If those of you who have not filled out cards will
20 please raise your hands, we will distribute them to you.

21 At this time I should like to thank the City of
22 Anchorage for their assistance in making this place available
23 to us today. This evening rather.

24 As announced in the Notice of Public Hearing issued on
25 January 10, 1973, this hearing is being held to obtain

1 information relating to the desirability of establishing a
2 unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System on the
3 Semidi National Wildlife Refuge. As background information,
4 I should like to explain that, in arranging this hearing,
5 notices were sent to the United States Senators and
6 Congressmen, the Governor the State of Alaska, and other
7 elected officials. Replies which have been received from
8 them will be read later and incorporated into the transcript
9 of this hearing. We also sent notices to Federal and State
10 agencies and organizations and individuals known to be
11 interested in the matter.

12 Now for a few words about procedure. This hearing is
13 not a debate, a trial, or a question and answer assembly,
14 but an advisory hearing whereby all interested persons may
15 present statements, written or oral, or other information
16 pertinent to the wilderness proposal we are considering
17 today. If anyone fails to understand the statement of any
18 person, appropriate questions may be asked for the purpose
19 of clarifying such a statement. All questions will be
20 directed to me, and I shall determine whether they are
21 pertinent. This may seem a little technical or strict, but
22 it is intended to facilitate an orderly presentation of
23 views and assure a fair and reasonable opportunity for all
24 to be heard.

25 The Wilderness Act, Public Law 88-577, provided the

1 authority and outlined the procedure by which a national
2 wildlife refuge, or a portion of a national wildlife
3 refuge, meeting the necessary requirements, is to be
4 considered for inclusion in the National Wilderness
5 Preservation System. This law directed the study and review
6 within 10 years after September 3, 1964, of every roadless
7 island and every roadless area of 5,000 acres or more within
8 the National Wildlife Refuge System.

9 I wish to point out that eventual inclusion of a wildlife
10 refuge, or a portion of a wildlife refuge, within the
11 National Wilderness Preservation System does not remove the
12 area from the wildlife refuge status. The area we are
13 considering today, if classified as wilderness, still will be
14 administered as an integral part of the Wildlife Refuge.
15 The intent of the Wilderness Act along these lines is clear.
16 The provisions of Sections 4(a) and 4(b) of the Act state
17 that the purposes of the Wilderness Act are to be within and
18 supplemental to the purpose for which wildlife refuges are
19 established and administered. Also, each agency
20 administering any area designated as wilderness shall be
21 responsible for preserving the wilderness character of the
22 area and for such other purposes for which it may have been
23 established as also to preserve its wilderness character.
24 Therefore, the Semidi Islands will still be a part of the
25 National Wildlife Refuge System but with the added feature

1 of a national wilderness area.

2 After this public hearing, a thorough review will be
3 made of this wilderness proposal, but this is not the last
4 opportunity for public expression. The record of this public
5 hearing and all other information on the proposal will be
6 transmitted to the Secretary of the Interior. After study
7 and consultation, the Secretary will transmit his
8 recommendations regarding the proposal to the President.
9 The President will transmit his recommendations to the
10 Congress. After appropriate consideration, which will
11 include hearings, the Congress will accept, reject, or
12 modify the proposal as a unit of the National Wilderness
13 Preservation System. When after hearings and study, the
14 proposal is accepted by the Congress, appropriate legislation
15 is transmitted to the President. When signed by the
16 President, the wilderness area becomes a part of the
17 National Wilderness Preservation System. As you can see,
18 there is a comprehensive review process of each Wilderness
19 proposal of which public hearings and your views are a most
20 important part.

21 Now, I ask Gordon Watson, Alaska Area Director of the
22 Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of the
23 Interior, to explain the wilderness proposal to you. Before
24 Mr. Watson presents his statement, however, I should like to
25 explain again that this is not an adversary proceeding. If

1 you want to ask a question in order to clarify a certain
2 point, please feel free to do so. All questions, however,
3 will be directed to me, and I shall determine whether they
4 are pertinent.

5 MR. GORDON WATSON:

6 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am Gordon
7 Watson, Alaska Area Director for the U. S. Bureau of Sport
8 Fisheries and Wildlife. I want to express my appreciation
9 for your interest in coming to this hearing on the Semidi
10 Wilderness Proposal.

11 The Wilderness Act, passed by Congress in 1964,
12 directed the Secretary of the Interior to review all roadless
13 areas of 5,000 or more acres, and every roadless island,
14 within the National Wildlife Refuge System, to determine
15 their suitability or nonsuitability as wilderness. Further,
16 regulations of the Secretary of the Interior published on
17 February 22, 1966, require this Bureau to review those areas
18 qualifying for study under the Wilderness Act that (1)
19 possess the general characteristics of wilderness; (2) are
20 reasonably compact; (3) are undeveloped; (4) are without
21 improved roads suitable for public travel by conventional
22 automobile.

23 The National Wildlife Refuge System is comprised of
24 more than 300 units containing nearly 30 million acres.
25 Units of the system are located on lands extending from the

1 Arctic Ocean shores to islands of the Central Pacific Ocean,
2 and from the Florida Keys to Maine. One or more national
3 wildlife refuges is located in each of the 17 major life
4 zones of North America. The ecology of each national wildlife
5 refuge differs from that of any other refuge, although some
6 are similar. Because of these ecological differences,
7 management objectives of individual refuges are often quite
8 varied.

9 Preliminary examination reveals that about 90 wildlife
10 refuges in 32 states, containing nearly 25 million acres,
11 qualify for study as wilderness. The Wilderness Review
12 Program of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, of
13 which this proposal is a part, encompasses a wide spectrum of
14 lands within national wildlife refuges throughout the
15 country. Only through careful study and analysis can a
16 proper determination be made regarding whether a national
17 wildlife refuge or a portion of it qualifies for
18 consideration as wilderness by the Secretary of the Interior.

19 Today, we are publicly presenting the results of our
20 study of the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge. An
21 informational brochure summarizing the study and explaining
22 the wilderness proposal is available in the hearing room
23 if you do not yet have a copy. The complete study report is
24 also available here for your examination. Please do not
25 remove it, for the number of copies is very limited. Copies

1 of the statement that I am making today are also available
2 for your use.

3 Copies of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement were
4 made available to interested Federal, State and local
5 entities for their views and suggestions prior to this
6 hearing. This environmental statement is required by the
7 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 90-190)
8 It considers possible impacts of wilderness designation on
9 the human environment and reasonable alternatives to the
10 proposed action. A copy of this statement is also available
11 in the rear of the room for those of you who are interested
12 in examining its contents.

14 It should be clearly understood that the proposal we
15 are presenting is preliminary. Only after your expressed
16 views have been thoroughly studied will our final
17 recommendations be made to the Secretary of the Interior.
18 It will then be necessary for the Congress to enact
19 legislation that will officially designate all or portions of
20 the Semidi Islands as wilderness, and include them in the
21 National Wilderness Preservation System.

22 The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge was established by
23 Executive Order 5858 in 1932, primarily to preserve the
24 unique marine bird breeding grounds. The Semidi Islands
25 are extremely remote, rarely visited by man, and essentially
de facto wilderness. There is no assurance, however, that

1 this condition will always remain. Without legislative
2 protection as afforded through official wilderness
3 designation, the islands' wilderness qualities could
4 eventually be lost as the nation's population grows and
5 man's technology has even more widespread influence on such
6 wild areas.

7 The refuge consists of nine small islands and their
8 associated small rocks and islets, containing 8,422 acres
9 and approximately 248,000 acres of surrounding submerged
10 lands. Aghiyuk is the largest island, being 6 miles long by
11 2 miles wide. The shorelines of the islands are extremely
12 precipitous with many rock ledges rising 100 to 200 feet
13 above the sea. There are only a few small beaches. Access
14 to interior portions of the islands is limited. Good harbors
15 are nonexistent and freshwater sources are also very limited.

16 The exceedingly steep rock cliffs provide ideal nesting
17 habitat for great numbers of pelagic birds such as Murres,
18 Kittiwakes, Fulmars, and Puffins. In cruising the shoreline
19 by boat, there appears no end to the number of birds as they
20 crowd the rock ledges and wheel about overhead. In places
21 the waters are literally alive with feeding Murres,
22 Kittiwakes and Fulmars. Bird populations actually number in
23 the millions, and the Semidi Islands' Fulmar colony is one
24 of the largest in Alaska. Many scientists consider such
25 seabird colonies part of a very fragile ecosystem and

1 recommend that, as such, they are best managed in their
2 natural state.

3 Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Cormorants, Gulls,
4 Golden-Crowned Sparrows, Longspurs, and a variety of other
5 birds also utilize the island during nesting periods. A
6 total of 43 species of birds have been identified.

7 Waters surrounding the islands are rich in fishery and
8 marine mammal resources. Commercial fishermen harvest
9 several million pounds of halibut each year, providing a
10 substantial benefit to the economies of Alaska and the
11 nation. Sea Lions and Harbor Seals frequently haul out on
12 the rocky shorelines or offshore islets, and a few Sea
13 Otters utilize the shallow bays. Various species of whales
14 traverse the offshore waters. The waters are very
15 productive of small marine life which provides food for the
16 thousands of birds that utilize the islands for nesting
17 purposes. Any ecological damage to these surrounding waters
18 would greatly jeopardize the tremendous bird colonies that
19 are present today.

20 The U. S. Geological Survey reports that there are no
21 known minerals of commercial value. The islands are rarely
22 visited and appear in essentially the same condition as
23 when first discovered by Bering in 1741 and rediscovered by
24 Captain Cook on June 16, 1778.

25 Since our studies indicate that all lands within the

1 refuge appear to qualify as wilderness, according to criteria
2 prescribed by the Wilderness Act of 1964, we propose that the
3 entire 256,000-acre Semidi National Wildlife Refuge be
4 included in the National Wilderness Preservation System for
5 the benefit of all generations of Americans.

6 The Bureau does not anticipate any management or develop-
7 ment which would conflict with wilderness. The Wilderness
8 Act provides for the use of motorized boats in wilderness
9 areas where such use has been established, and does not
10 conflict with refuge management objectives. We propose,
11 therefore, to permit fishing to continue in the proposed
12 Semidi Wilderness essentially as at present. If Congress
13 should prefer to preclude such use, then we would recommend
14 that the surrounding submerged lands and the waters be
15 excluded from the wilderness proposal.

16 I thank you for attending this hearing and for
17 expressing an interest in the Semidi Wilderness Proposal.
18 I assure you that all views, whether expressed orally or in
19 writing, will be carefully studied before the Bureau of
20 Sport Fisheries and Wildlife submits its final
21 recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior.

22 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

23 Thank you, Mr. Watson. In opening this meeting for
24 public discussion, I ask that all pertinent information be
25 presented as completely as possible. If anyone wishes to

1 summarize their statement for the benefit of those present
2 and submit a written statement for the record, you may do
3 so. In the event time becomes a factor, I may have to
4 request that you limit your oral remarks.

5 I shall now call on certain persons in order of
6 priority to expedite and clarify the proposal. After they
7 have completed their statements, the meeting will be open
8 to the public. Anyone present who desires to make a
9 statement may do so. I wish to remind you again that
10 statements will not be made under oath and since this is not
11 an adversary proceeding, there will be no cross examination.

12 In order to permit the conduct of the meeting and oral
13 comments to become a matter of record, I ask that all
14 speakers come to the microphone to make their statements.
15 I ask you to give your name and address and the interest
16 which you represent. You may, of course, represent
17 yourself. I ask you to speak slowly and distinctly. In the
18 following order of priority, is there a representative of
19 the Governor of the State of Alaska? Is there a
20 representative of Senator Stevens? Is there a
21 representative of Senator Gravel? Is there a representative
22 of a member of the State Legislature?

23 I shall now call on representatives of different
24 organizations to testify, and I call upon them in the order
25 in which the cards were given me, and I understand the cards

1 were given me in the order in which people signed them.

2 Virginia dal Piaz.

3 VIRGINIA DAL PIAZ:

4 My name is Virginia dal Piaz. I am representing the
5 Upper Cook Inlet Chapter of the Alaska Conservation Society.
6 And I have a brief statement to go over and then I will
7 submit it also in writing.

8 The Upper Cook Inlet Chapter of the Alaska
9 Conservation Society fully supports the Semidi Wilderness
10 proposal. The preservation of this relatively untouched
11 group of islands falls within the general aim of our group,
12 which is to work toward preservation and wise use of
13 Alaska's renewable and nonrenewable resources.

14 The main inhabitants of these islands seem to be many
15 species of birds who make their homes there during various
16 parts of the year. Upper Cook Inlet Chapter feels it is
17 very important to preserve places such as the Semidi Islands
18 for breeding and nesting habitat, where these very beautiful
19 animals can live unmolested and undisturbed in their natural
20 environment. Due to their isolated location, the islands
21 are not likely to get much use by man, the less the better.
22 This area could provide a living workshop for scientists to
23 observe bird behavior and movements and for photographers who
24 are interested in wildlife pictures.

25 One thing that is particularly striking when one reads

1 the brochure put out by Sport Fisheries and Wildlife is the
2 singular lack of conflict with other uses for this land.
3 There are no known oil and mineral deposits and it is not
4 included in the Native Land Claims areas. There is an
5 established use of fisheries which the Upper Cook Inlet
6 Chapter would not object to, as long as there was no attempt
7 or future plans to build permanent fishery support structures
8 on the islands. A small cabin, maintained by the refuge
9 manager, might be appropriate as there seems to be no
10 natural cover for camping and it would serve as a base of
11 operations for scientific and photographic expeditions. Too
12 bad other areas of Alaska, just as worthy of consideration
as wilderness have so few conflicts.

14 Personally, my husband and I have traveled many miles
15 by sea along the Kenai coast and in southeast Alaska. One of
16 our biggest and continuing joys is the observation of the
17 many and varied species of birds we see on our trips. The
18 birds represent a degree of freedom and beauty that man can
19 never experience, just observe and appreciate. Many of the
20 birds we love to watch probably have been on the Semidi
21 Islands at one time or another. We therefore believe it is
22 very important to include these islands in the national
23 wilderness system.

24 Lastly, we would like to thank you for the opportunity
25 for the Upper Cook Inlet Chapter, Alaska Conservation

1 Society to make its feelings known through this public
2 hearing. I would also like to commend Sport Fisheries and
3 Wildlife on the conduct of the hearing, the public
4 announcements -- was all put out way in advance to give us
5 an adequate opportunity to study this proposal, and we feel
6 it was very well done.

7 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

8 Thank you very much. Barbara Winkley.

9 BARBARA WINKLEY:

10 Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Barbara
11 Winkley. I am a resident of Anchorage and tonight I am
12 representing the Mountaineering Club of Alaska.

13 The Mountaineering Club of Alaska would like to go on
14 record as being in full support of the proposed Semidi
15 Wilderness in the Semidi National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska.
16 These remote and stormy islands are a haven for millions of
17 seabirds and other wildlife associated with Alaska's
18 productive marine waters. Scientists consider colonies such
19 as this, some of the most fragile of natural ecosystems and
20 best managed in their natural state. It is only with these
21 invaluable reference points protected from human
22 interference that man-made change can be measured with
23 accuracy. So then, these extensive pelagic bird colonies have
24 significance in the lives of people who may never see them
25 and constitute a heritage of beauty in which every

1 American should find inspiration.

2 This is one wilderness proposal that should be
3 noncontroversial; for the islands are remote and treeless,
4 grazing and mineral potential is practically nil, and boat
5 anchorages poor. Wilderness designation should in no way
6 conflict with ongoing commercial fishing activities in
7 refuge waters, but would provide great protection to the
8 nearby waters in which fishing takes place. It is
9 disappointing, however, to learn that Governor Egan and his
10 administration are again unilaterally opposed to this
11 wilderness proposal, as they have been opposed to all such
12 proposals in the recent past. We understand that one of the
13 primary reasons for this opposition is the State's concern
14 that comprehensive land-use planning be accomplished before
15 any such wilderness protection is allowed. Whilst we are
16 wholeheartedly in favor of wise land-use planning, we believe
17 it should apply to the entire State. But in reality we find
18 the State Administration, whilst opposing protection of some
19 of our outstanding de facto wilderness areas, is promoting
20 new highways, pipelines, mining ventures, and massive timber
21 sales to Japan. At the present time wealthy developers from
22 both within and outside our wonderful state are grabbing large
23 blocks of land in the Natanuska and Susitna Valleys for
24 unplanned real estate development. Obviously, there are some
25 gross inconsistencies in our State government's approach to

1 land use planning. Under these circumstances, we feel it is
2 even more urgent that permanent Congressional protection be
3 provided. Some of our state's outstanding wilderness areas
4 including the Semidi Islands as provided for in the Wilderness
5 Act of 1964.

6 Thank you very much for the opportunity to express our
7 views on this important wilderness proposal.

8 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

9 Thank you. B. J. Logan.

10 ROBERT LOGAN:

11 My name is Bob Logan, and I do not have any written
12 paper on this matter because I just found out about it
13 tonight, so I didn't know the rules.

14 My interest in this is that fishing and commercial
15 vessels will not be denied the rights of shelter. Now, this
16 is very important in this area. There is a great deal of
17 crab fishing through here, there is halibut fishing
18 through here. And, as time goes on, there can be bottom
19 fishing in the area, in this area.

20 I am very well acquainted with these islands. I have
21 used them many times as shelter, especially during the war
22 when we were supplying Chirikof Island. In another
23 instance we made a complete scouting of these particular
24 islands looking for Japanese weather stations during the
25 war. We found what looked like the remains of one. But

1 this is my whole point, is the right of innocent entry.
2 Vessels can come in and use the shelter of the islands and
3 anchor in the bights. Now, there are two good bights in
4 Chowiet Island, especially good for southeasterly weather
5 which are the worst gales we get out there. I can't
6 conceive where the fishermen will do any harm and they
7 might go ashore or something like that, but all they're
8 looking for is to get out of the blow. Now, these islands
9 from Chirikof Island are 37 miles, from Observation Cove to
10 Chowiet Island is 37 miles. From Chowiet Island to Castle
11 Cape the entrance to Chignik Bay is 54 miles. I'm going by
12 my memory on these. So you can see they are right in the
13 center of the offshore fishing and a great number of the
14 halibut boats use these islands as shelter. Also the crab
15 boats. We already had one problem and that concerned
16 Shiminoski Island where a halibut boat in trouble went in
17 there and there happened to be a Fish and Game man down
18 there and he ran them out. He was going to run them out.
19 They couldn't leave because of their engine. But the
20 fishermen off the coast have to, in the interest of saving
21 life and equipment, you've got to have shelter. And these
22 are known shelters. Chowiet Island especially. Both the
23 inner coves, that is both the north and west coves are very
24 good in southeasterly weather and we get southeasterly gales
25 in there that would -- I can't imagine anybody but birds

1 living in the Semidis and I can look back an over 30 years
2 of seeing them at various times. I think a better research
3 will show that at one time these islands were leased by
4 the Pacific Whaling and Livestock Company. Chirikof Island
5 and the Semidis were leased by this company, this was about
6 the turn of the century and they were planted with cattle,
7 the remains of the cattle are still on Chirikof; and they
8 were to be used for fresh meat for the whaling industry.

9 But I would like to see a paragraph inserted in this
10 that fishing vessels and commercial vessels in this area
11 have the right of innocent entry.

12 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

13 Do you have any comments to make on that statement, Mr.
14 Watson?

15 MR. GORDON WATSON:

16 Yes, Mr. Logan, I think the record should appropriately
17 reflect that there is no intention to deny the use of
18 anchorage of the Semidis, and I believe that your
19 recommendation and request for an appropriate notation of
20 this in the report is well taken.

21 MR. ROBERT LOGAN:

22 If the phrase the "right of innocent entry" can be put
23 in -- this is understood world wide -- if that is inserted,
24 the "right of innocent entry", it takes care of everything,
25 it's an international phrase.

1 MR. GORDON WATSON:

2 Mr. Logan, would you apply this also to the
3 international fishing fleets of other nations?

4 MR. ROBERT LOGAN:

5 Well, I don't want to see any offshore international
6 fishing fleet encouraged, but we have a ship in trouble and
7 no matter what color you are, you've still got feelings and
8 nobody likes to get too wet.

9 MR. GORDON WATSON:

10 Because we just were able to have this area eliminated
11 as a loading zone by the Japanese.

12 MR. ROBERT LOGAN:

13 I don't think -- There's so much current, if you look
14 at the position of those islands where they sit right there
15 at the mouth of Shelikof Strait, the currents, the ebb tides
16 out of Cook Inlet -- you get a really bad one with the wind
17 behind it coming down Shelikof Strait it tends to make it
18 into a whirlpool. We lost four ships in there during the
19 war. The Pittsburgh broke in front of No. 1 gun turret
20 right straight across the deck, 12 feet down to the armor
21 belt on either side, and this was -- we always call this the
22 pothole out there for the reason the Japanese current comes
23 up by Chirikof Island and almost touches Chirikof Island
24 and then sets up the big eddy in the Gulf of Alaska, and the
25 very heavy ebb coming down Shelikof Strait -- you can see the

1 current there, if you've got the wind just right. You'd have
2 to be out there to believe it. You've got no rhyme nor
3 reason to your seas. At one time they used to run the
4 convoys between Kateekuk Island and Shelikof Island, come
5 through there going to the westward, this was in 1942. And
6 we lost the John Peter Gaines in there, and -- what the
7 heck was that other Liberty -- the White and the Pheling.
8 The Pheling didn't break up but she had -- if I remember
9 my figures right -- she had 34 cracks in her hull by the
10 time she got out of there. So if you hit that area under
11 just the right conditions, it's no place to take any ship.
It's just bad medicine.

13 And I think your move to turn there into a wildlife
14 refuge is excellent, a very good thing. But I just want to
15 be sure that commercial vessels, fishing vessels -- I don't
16 think anybody would ever take a yacht out there. If they
17 did, why they'd be looking for trouble. But fishing vessels
18 can use them as shelter and anchorage. Now, you can get
19 anchorage in both the bights on Chowiet Island, the inward
20 bights. It isn't particularly good, you have to use a lot of
21 chain. As I remember, it was something around 10 fathoms
22 before you could fetch up anywhere. But halibut fishermen
23 or crab fishermen will bless your souls if you will let
24 them -- Because when you're in trouble out there, you're a
25 a long way from home. That's all I have.

1 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

2 Thank you, Mr. Logan

3 MR. KONISBERG:

4 Mr. Price, or Mr. Logan could you respond to this?
5 Isn't the right of innocent entry for a vessel in distress
6 a universal right on the seas anywhere? It may be
7 appropriately included in the proposal, but is that not
8 true?

9 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

10 I frankly couldn't comment, unless Mr. Watson could.

11 MR. GORDON WATSON:

12 I didn't hear that question completely.

13 MR. KONISBERG:

14 For a vessel in distress, isn't this one of the --
15 of maritime commerce that they have the right of innocent
16 entry anywhere?

17 MR. ROBERT LOGAN:

18 That is correct, no matter what your nationality is.

19 MR. KONISBERG:

20 Then it really doesn't matter, although I am really
21 not objecting, whether or not the language is in the
22 proposal.

23 MR. ROBERT LOGAN:

24 Well, we just had a sad experience on this report that
25 came back to us on the Sea Otter Island out there northwest-

1 ward of the Shumagin group, where there was some game warden
2 down there, perhaps he didn't like the color of the boat or
3 something, and he ran them out, or was going to run them out
4 of there; fortunately, the vessel couldn't go. But we just
5 wanted to be sure.

6 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

7 Thank you for your point of information. Deborah Vogt.

8 DEBORAH VOGT:

9 I have two statements. One is my own and one I would
10 like to read, if I may, from a person who was unable to
11 attend.

12 My name is Deborah Vogt, and I am executive
13 secretary of the Fairbanks Environmental Center. The
14 Fairbanks Environmental Center is a locally supported,
15 private conservation organization in Fairbanks with a
16 stated goal "to preserve the quality of the Alaskan
17 environment through education and action". The Center has
18 a board of directors of 12, mostly in the Fairbanks area
19 and a membership of about 150 around the state.

20 The Fairbanks Environmental Center fully supports this
21 proposal for including the Semidi Islands and surrounding
22 submerged lands in the National Wilderness System. We
23 believe that wilderness status will give the best protection
24 available to these lands.

25 Those of us who are loosely termed conservationists or

1 environmentalists are often characterized as just another
2 interest group with designs on the wild lands of the nation.
3 Supposedly, we do not personally like to mine, to cut trees,
4 or to build roads, so we are opposed road building, tree
5 cutting and mining. We do like to hike, to backpack, to
6 observe wildlife, to fish and sometimes to hunt, so we want
7 to lock up vast areas and make them available for just those
8 uses. And all this for a tiny minority of physically fit
9 people who like to wander around in the wilderness.

10 I have never been to the Semidi Islands, nor do I ever
11 intend to go there. To my knowledge, none of the members
12 of the Center have ever visited these islands or will visit
13 them in the future. Yet, we fully support the designation
14 of this area as wilderness. Wilderness classification does
15 not lock up land, in fact, it does the opposite. By
16 Congressional action, it provides protection against
17 single, consumptive use. Congressional actions can be
18 changed by Congressional action; the designation simply
19 insures that some real thought will go into the decision-
20 making process. Wilderness status is, in fact, the best
21 insurance that all the options of possible use will be left
22 open.

23 The Semidi Islands are, according to the Wilderness
24 Proposal and the environmental impact statement, remote,
25 inaccessible, foggy, stormy, uninhabited, and contain no
marketable resources. On the positive side, they provide

1 habitat for millions of birds of 43 species. Of particular
2 national interest are the bald eagle, considered common, and
3 a few of the endangered peregrine falcon. A variety of
4 marine mammals can be found offshore. On land there are
5 ground squirrels and one tree. There are no present or
6 immediately foreseeable conflicting uses, although it is
7 possible that some may develop -- particularly offshore oil
8 location. The impact of the bird life on the intertidal
9 marine life systems is not fully understood, but it is certain
10 that some interaction takes place, and the submerged lands
11 should be protected.

12 The Semidi Islands can provide solitude and the true
13 wilderness experience to the visitor. They are a paradise
14 for birdwatchers. The birds which spend a part of their
15 lives on these islands can be viewed, as they migrate, by
16 thousands of people the world over. The entire ecosystem,
17 the islands and the waters around can provide an excellent
18 scientific study area. The Islands are of the highest
19 wilderness quality and should be included in the National
20 Wilderness System.

21 Jim Kowalsky, who is the Arctic Field Representative for
22 Friends of the Earth in Alaska has asked me to read this
23 statement:

24 Friends of the Earth is a national conservation
25 organization of 27,000 members. It has sister organizations

1 in a number of countries in western Europe. The principal
2 offices for Friends of the Earth are located in Washington,
3 D.C. and San Francisco. It publishes a monthly tabloid
4 newspaper title NOT MAN APART which circulates to its
5 membership and to the general public through newstand
6 distribution. In Alaska Friends of the Earth has a
7 statewide membership of 180. The office of its Arctic Field
8 Representative for Alaska is located at 719 7th Avenue,
9 Fairbanks, Alaska.

10 The purpose of Friends of the Earth is to build broad
11 grass roots support for the common goal among citizens of other
12 and all nations to preserve, restore and rationally use the
13 earth, which is our single and only life support system.

14 It is significant in our view that, according to current
15 management objectives, as indicated in the draft
16 environmental impact statement for this proposal, are
17 "directed primarily toward preserving the insular ecosystem
18 in its natural state so as to protect breeding and feeding
19 habitats for the vast number of pelagic birds and other wildlife
20 found in the refuge." This statement suggests that wilderness
21 can have value by virtue of the protection of conditions it
22 offers on the islands which make the production of wildbirds
23 and wildlife possible. We often tend to place value on a
24 wilderness environment only in terms of how it may directly
25 be used by humans. And, although human enjoyment and

1 and enrichment are direct benefits of our wildlands, it
2 appears that we may often tend to obscure the value of
3 wilderness protection to habitat. Protection of habitat may
4 actually be the principal benefit of wilderness protection
5 depending upon the particular situation. This protection
6 afforded such habitat is in the final, long view, to be
7 considered of great benefit to humans, in our view.
8 We agree that designation of the Semidi Islands as
9 wilderness is entirely within and supplemental to the
10 purposes for which the refuge was established. The future
11 of this area holds many uncertainties as regards the type
12 of conflicting pressures which may be placed upon it in the
13 future. We see wilderness protection as the only ironclad
14 statutory mandate which would assure us that this place will
15 be protected, and thus retain its values as a refuge. It is
16 the best assurance we have that a good habitat situation will
17 be maintained without all the creeping encroachments we see
18 in so many other areas of similar significance, These
19 encroachments come from commercial developments, and
20 sometimes even from the agencies which manage these lands.
21 if such agency encroachments aren't obvious now as we believe
22 that they are not within the Fish and Wildlife Service, we
23 also caution that this situation is entirely possible in the
24 future. To put it in simpler terms, a wellknown
25 conservationist in Alaska once commented on protection of

1 national park lands in this case by asking, "Who will
2 protect the parks from the National Park Service?" This
3 gentleman feels that the National Park Service is development
4 oriented and has made damaging inroads into valuable wildlands
5 as a result. We use the example here only to stress a basic
6 point.

7 We also believe that it is important that the
8 submerged lands and tidelands located within the refuge and
9 which are being proposed to be a part of the Semidi
10 Wilderness Area are critical and of much importance to the
11 proposal and to the wilderness. Inasmuch as wilderness areas
12 in these United States offer some of the few places which
13 remain which may provide good research opportunities to
14 science, these submerged lands in the Semidi refuge are just
15 such a place. In this case these lands provide a good
16 opportunity to research the impact which guano has upon
17 marine environment. Wilderness protection of tidelands and
18 submerged lands will offer that opportunity to science and
19 will, in fact, enhance that opportunity as the years speed
20 by and our abilities grow to develop and radically alter our
21 marine environments.

22 We note that mineral resources and mineral potential
23 of this area are poor, thus making this potential and
24 conflicting use unlikely. We also note that rather adverse
25 climatic conditions generally make human activity there

1 unlikely.

2 Friends of the Earth consider the islands to be of
3 particular interest generally because of the millions of
4 sea birds attracted to its cliffs for nesting purposes.
5 There are major, very large colonies of such birds on the
6 precipitous cliffs of all nine main islands according to the
7 impact statement. We note as well that many species are
8 considered in great abundance on the islands. This
9 underscores the importance of providing statutory protection
10 to this area by the U. S. Congress under the enabling
11 Wilderness Act of 1964.

12 The peregrine falcon and bald eagle are birds which have
13 a special national significance. These would benefit from
14 the added protection for the Semidi refuge which we are
15 hereby considering.

16 We note that commercial fishing in the area is a prior
17 established use and, under the Wilderness Act, would,
18 therefore, not be affected by designation of this refuge as a
19 wilderness.

20 The present State Administration under Governor William
21 A. Egan has opposed wilderness proposals on federal lands
22 in the past for a variety of reasons. Although we respect
23 the Governor's views and realize that he must consider many
24 situations when he makes his decisions, we also are of the
25 opinion that opposition to wilderness areas in the State of

1 Alaska has become a matter of procedure without due
2 consideration of the individual case. One view we hear
3 often is that no wilderness should be designated until a
4 comprehensive land use policy can be formulated for our
5 state which determines, among other things, what wilderness
6 needs really are in Alaska. This is, of course, an extremely
7 worthy objective, this expressed need for the long,
8 comprehensive view. Should wilderness proposals such as the
9 Semidi proposal be made a part of this long-range planning,
10 then we think it is important that all proposals to classify
11 and dedicate lands in Alaska come under this single process.
12 This is not now the case as we all know, and there are
13 countless examples of commitment of lands within Alaska
14 currently or recently made which are part of no
15 comprehensive planning process whatsoever. To name a few:
16 proposed highways, the oil pipeline corridor, the gas line
17 corridor, and open to entry state land. It would appear that
18 little, if any, adverse impact from enactment of wilderness
19 classification for this refuge would result, depending upon
20 one's point of view. Mechanized vehicles or other means of
21 travel within this or any national wilderness area would
22 not be permitted, thereby creating an adverse impact upon the
23 user of such modes of transportation. On the other hand, the
24 purpose of the designation of wilderness would be to protect
25 the area from the adverse impact of mechanized intrusions upon

1 the habitat of the islands. In the same sense one would say
2 that the removal of a tried and proven thief from society
3 by restraining him in prison would have an adverse impact
4 upon the individual's actions as a thief. We feel we are
5 best off with wilderness designation of Semidi National
6 Wildlife Refuge. Friends of the Earth feel that to allow an
7 area of significance for its natural values to fall into the
8 hands of a commercial or industrial developer is really the
9 way to lock it up. For, with the establishment of a clearly
10 conflicting use such as heavy or even light industry in a
11 wildlife refuge, one has rather effectively locked that area
12 up to other uses by destroying or significantly altering the
13 life system upon which that use depended. Put an oil well
14 in the middle of a high school football field, for example,
15 and you have rather altered or destroyed the intended use
16 and this has actually happened in Burkburnett, Texas, another
17 oil state in our United States. To put it better in the
18 words of another who testified at the Kenai Moose Range
19 wilderness hearings, " we aren't trying to lock up anything .
20 Wilderness is the only use that preserves intact the
21 possibility of all other uses". Another told the hearing,
22 "State government, in its objections to wilderness based upon
23 a need to include it within the planning process, is a two-
24 headed dragon with one lamenting the need for planning while
25 the other foresees resources development regardless". We

1 are not proposing basic alternations to an area which is
2 being proposed for wilderness protection. We are simply
3 leaving it as it is. In itself this action in no way locks
4 an area up or preempts the other range of possibilities here.
5 It is rather the gradual whittling away, or even the sudden
6 massive development of a wildlife refuge, national park or
7 other de facto wilderness under a multiple use type of
8 concept which is the beginning of the foreclosure of other
9 opportunities in that area. What lands are more locked up,
10 we ask, than those in private ownership, or committed to a
11 single industrial or real estate type of use? It is always
12 possible to withdraw the wilderness status through another
13 action of Congress. It would be more difficult to cancel
14 out the kinds of development which refuge lands could be
15 opened to in the future if there were no tools such as
16 wilderness designation with which to protect an area and
17 continue to make it open and available to the general public.

18 The future of bird populations which are of significance
19 to the nation and even other nations of the world, as well
20 as to our own residents, should hinge as it does upon the
21 protection of this area under the Wilderness Act. It is a
22 continuous breeding and nesting habitat for millions of
23 birds, and its offshore waters provide habitat for sea
24 lions, harbor seals and sea otters. A sea lion rookery of
25 approximately 500 animals is located on the southern Chowiet

1 Island. To those who oppose this specific wilderness
2 proposal, or such proposals generally, I would ask what then
3 would you offer as an ironclad means of protection for these
4 valuable features? There may be other answers, but Friends
5 of the Earth believes, as do the majority of other
6 conservation organizations and memberships, that the
7 enabling legislation, the Wilderness Act of 1964, which
8 provides statutory protection for a wilderness area, is a
9 superb tool for the protection of these productive wildlands
10 in Alaska, and in the few little places left in our nation.

11 Mr. Chairman, we believe that there is a poor
12 understanding of the Wilderness Act in our state. It is a
13 misunderstanding which has been purposely portrayed to the
14 general public who are being forced to believe that
15 wilderness designation locks an area up. The media and the
16 Governor are partly responsible for these distortions. We
17 also believe, from the performance at past wilderness hearings,
18 that Alaskans who love this state in all its splendor and are
19 living here because of it overwhelmingly favor the
20 protection of this great land through designations such as
21 wilderness areas. If the outdoorsmen, the hunters, guides,
22 hikers, outdoor recreation industry, Native subsistence users,
23 tourist industry and that ordinary Alaskan who loves being
24 here want anything at all left of this place, then they had
25 best get on with the job of protecting it, or there won't be

1 any such places left to use and enjoy.

2 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

3 Thank you very much. Jack Hession.

4 MR. JACK HESSION:

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Watson. I am Jack Hession
6 representing the Sierra Club nationally and the Alaska
7 Chapter of the Sierra Club. I appreciate the opportunity to
8 appear here tonight in support of wilderness system
9 protection for the Semidi Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

10 Inclusion of the refuge in the National Wilderness
11 Preservation system will insure that this important habitat
12 for pelagic birds will remain in its present de facto
13 wilderness condition. At first glance, it may seem
14 superfluous to give such protection to this tiny remote,
15 seldom visited group of islands. There are probably no
16 commercially valuable minerals or other extractable resources
17 that could give rise to conflict over the present proposal.
18 However, it is, of course, impossible to predict what the
19 future may bring. Wilderness preservation designation can
20 insure the strongest possible protection for the island
21 group and its wildlife in perpetuity.

22 The Sierra Club congratulates the Bureau of Sport
23 Fisheries and Wildlife for its Semidi Islands wilderness
24 proposal and looks forward to similar proposals for the
25 other Alaska refuges to be considered under the Wilderness

1 Act of 1964. Thank you.

2 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

3 Thank you, Mr. Hession. Pete Martin.

4 MR. PETE MARTIN:

5 Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is
6 Pete Martin and I have a statement of the Wilderness Society
7 that I would like to read to your group.

8 The Wilderness Society, a national conservation
9 organization, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., wishes
10 to go on record in strong support of the conclusion of the
11 Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife that all of the
12 Semidi National Wildlife Refuge is fully qualified for
13 admission into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

14 The Wilderness Society with a national membership of
15 some 80,000 members feel that it is exceedingly appropriate
16 that the 256,000 acre wildlife refuge encompassing nine
17 rocky islands be placed in the National Wilderness
18 Preservation System. The Semidis are one of the spectacular
19 wild wilderness islands and are one of the very few
20 wilderness areas in the nation that include the surrounding
21 submerged lands, thus encompassing in its entirety a viable
22 marine ecosystem of national importance. The area contains
23 about 8,122 acres with the balance consisting of submerged
24 lands surrounding the islands.

25 Many forms of wildlife require a wilderness condition

1 in order to survive. The extensive pelagic bird colonies
2 of Semidi National Wildlife Refuge are an excellent example.
3 Millions of seabirds crowd its rock ledges, while thousands
4 of others whirl overhead. Offshore waters teem with feeding
5 birds. The black-legged kittiwakes, the Pacific fulmars, the
6 horned puffins, the common and thick-billed murres are
7 dominant species, numbering in the millions during the
8 breeding and nesting seasons. The American bald eagle is
9 common on the refuge and the endangered peregrine falcon
10 also finds haven here. All of the islands are used by
11 nesting birds. The surrounding waters, rich in marine life,
12 provide the food necessary to sustain such a massive
13 concentration of wildlife.

14 Created by administrative action, an Executive Order,
15 the wildlife refuge can be abolished by the same means.
16 Wilderness designation would provide legal protection for
17 this wilderness island sanctuary, assuring the preservation
18 of its natural qualities.

19 In the past, the Alaska State Administration has
20 repeatedly opposed all formal wilderness designation of any
21 areas in Alaska, stating that they are opposed to such
22 designation until there is an overall land-use plan for
23 Alaska. Not only are they asking the Department of Interior
24 to disregard a mandate by the U. S. Congress that the
25 studies be completed before September 1974, but they are

1 unwilling to stop or delay development which is rapidly
2 shrinking the present de facto wilderness lands of Alaska.
3 We, therefore, strongly urge the Department of Interior and
4 Congress to ignore such rhetoric.

5 The Semidi National Wildlife Refuge highly qualifies
6 for wilderness and it should be so designated without delay.
7 Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you.

8 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

9 Thank you, Mr. Martin. I do not have the names of any
10 more organization representatives that have left cards and,
11 therefore, I will now go to the individual testimony.

12 Roland dal Piaz.

13 MR. ROLAND DAL PIAZ:

14 My name is Roland dal Piaz. I am an Anchorage resident,
15 I live at 2820 68th Avenue here in Anchorage.

16 The point raised by the gal from the Fairbanks
17 Environmental Center is well taken about protecting the sea-
18 shore around the Semidi Islands. I am interested in marine
19 biology and after I got into the subject a little bit, I
20 discovered that we are rapidly losing untouched lateral and
21 shoreline waters around these United States -- around the
22 world actually. And so from a very personal and perhaps
23 selfish point of view, I would like to see at least some
24 untouched waters preserved to study when I achieve the state
25 of training that it takes. Anyway, as far as the proposal

1 goes, and I have read it, I can conclude that the Semidi
2 Islands are for the birds. And, recognizing that, I can
3 only say that a wilderness proposal for the Semidi Islands --
4 let's do it. It sounds good to me. Thank you.

5 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

6 Thank you, Mr. dal Piaz. Charles Konisberg. Do you
7 wish to make a statement?

8 MR. CHARLES KONISBERG:

9 My name is Charles Konisberg. I speak for myself as a
10 resident of Anchorage.

11 I fully support the proposal and I think most of what
12 can be said has been said. I respond to your invitation to
13 speak only to ask one question of Mr. Watson, if I may,
14 with respect to his introductory remark relative to if the
15 Congress should decide that it wants to exclude the waters
16 from fishing at a subsequent date, you would recommend that
17 the adjacent waters be excluded from the wilderness area
18 proposal. And I would want a little clarification; at any
19 rate, a suggestion, Mr. Watson. Given the fact of
20 increasing populations around the world, given the fact that
21 fisheries is one of the areas in which a greater and greater
22 degree of exploitation can be expected, does this make sense?
23 If the proposal is for the -- essentially for the protection
24 of the birds and for the human pleasure in knowing and seeing
25 that the birds are there and you allow, subsequently, an

1 increased degree of fishing, then, of course, you imperil the
2 birds. I am not arguing -- I want to make it most clear that
3 I am not arguing for a cancelation of the fishing at
4 obviously a level that presently it is being done, there's
5 no conflict. But it's not hard to look not too far down the
6 road and see the potential for a considerable conflict
7 between the degree of fishing and the existence of birds.

8 MR. GORDON WATSON:

9 Well, I think that the only way to respond to this is
10 that I believe what we have got here is an either/or
11 proposition. That either Congress buys the wilderness
12 proposal with the proviso that fishing can continue, or they
13 will give us a choice of permitting fishing and excluding
14 wilderness; or creating wilderness and excluding fishing.
15 And then we don't know how Congress would react. I think
16 that our position at this point is that, if Congress gave us
17 that choice, then we would probably delete the surrounding
18 lands. The surrounding waters, submerged lands.

19 MR. CHARLES KONISBERG:

20 I would simply like to reemphasize that this is kind of
21 a future problem and conflict that will have to be more
22 directly addressed. Perhaps not in this proposal, but surely
23 in the not too distance future.

24 MR. GORDON WATSON:

25 Again, there is an alternative by regulation of take.

1 MR. CHARLES KONISBERG:

2 Yes, exactly. And that would be what I, you know, or
3 if I could, I would recommend. Thank you.

4 MR. ROBERT PRICE:

5 Is there anyone else who desires to make a statement at
6 this hearing. There being none, it now becomes my duty to
7 close the hearing. Before doing so, let me remind you that
8 the hearing record will be kept open for 45 days after the
9 date of today's hearing for the filing of written statements
10 or other material. While the Department of Interior invites
11 written expression on this wilderness proposal at any time,
12 in order to be made a part of the official hearing record,
13 all written expressions must be in the office of the Alaska
14 Area Director, Anchorage, Alaska, in 45 days. After that
15 date, written advice should be sent to the Secretary of the
16 Interior, Washington, D. C., or the Director of Sport
17 Fisheries and Wildlife, Washington, D.C. Anyone wishing a
18 copy of the transcript should make personal arrangements
19 with the reporter.

20 I wish to thank everyone for your cooperation given
21 during this hearing, and since there is nothing further in
22 connection with the hearing and no more testimony or
23 evidence to be offered, the hearing stands adjourned. Thank
24 you.

25 HEARING ADJOURNED AT 9:30 P.M.

1 CERTIFICATE

2
3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
4 STATE OF ALASKA) ss.
5)
6)

7 I, Patricia Kling, Notary Public in and for the State of
8 Alaska, residing at Anchorage, Alaska, do hereby certify:

9 That the annexed and foregoing transcript of the public
10 hearing on the Semidi Wilderness Proposal was taken before me on
11 the 20th day of February, 1973, at the Loussac Library,
12 Anchorage, Alaska.

13 That this transcript, as heretofore annexed, is a true and
14 correct transcription of the proceedings.

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed
16 my seal this 5th day of March, 1973.

17
18 (SEAL)

19
20 *Patricia Kling*
21 Notary Public in and for Alaska
22 My commission expires: 8-1-74

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