

Susitna File # 4.3.3.3

## ALASKA COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE RESEARCH UNIT

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October 10, 1984

Dr. Charles L. Elliott Biologist Harza-Ebasco Susitna Joint Venture 711 "H" Street Anchorage, Alaska 93501

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		CTRIC PROJECT
LARSON	$\bowtie$	BIZER
FOLIVKA	$\mathbf{X}$	FAIRBANKS
VAN PATTEN	$\succ$	ELLIOT
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Dear Dr. Elliott:

Enclosed is a table that provides information about the importance to beaver of the 21 sloughs you listed in your letter of 11 September 1984. We just completed the beaver cache surveys for autumn 1984. The results of this survey and the 1983 cache survey were used to develop the table.

Sloughs listed in your letter were identified on Figues E.3.12 through E.3.17 in Susitna Hydroelectric Project (Volume 6B, Chapter 3, prepared by ACRES for the Alaska Power Authority). I had difficulty locating "side channel MS II" at river mile 115.5 and 115.9, and differentiating between Slough 8A (west) and Slough 8A (east). Also, Slough 22 is not identified on the Figures.

Probably the most significant factor in evaluating the importance of a slough to beaver is whether or not beaver actually overwinter along the slough. The sites where beaver overwinter provide security for the family and serve as natal dens. These overwintering sites are critical for the survival of individual beaver colonies. Sloughs that support overwintering colonies are indicated on the enclosed table.

## \*HARZA EBASUD

Almost all sloughs below Portage Creek are visited by beavers during summer and autumn. Many of the sloughs provide excellent forage and several are 12 OCT 84 4 periodically dammed by beavers. Changing ice and/or overflow conditions probably would have little impact upon foraging use, but relatively stable ice and water levels are needed around overwintering sites through the winter and early spring for beavers to survive.

P.S. I enclosed & Slides that Sincerely, help explain beacers and habitat Philips. Gipso

alsociations

Philip S. Gipson Assistant Unit Leader and Associate Professor

Enclosure

cc: R. Sener R. Fairbanks J. Woolington MARZA-EBASCO SUSITNA JOINT VENTURE

## INTRA-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

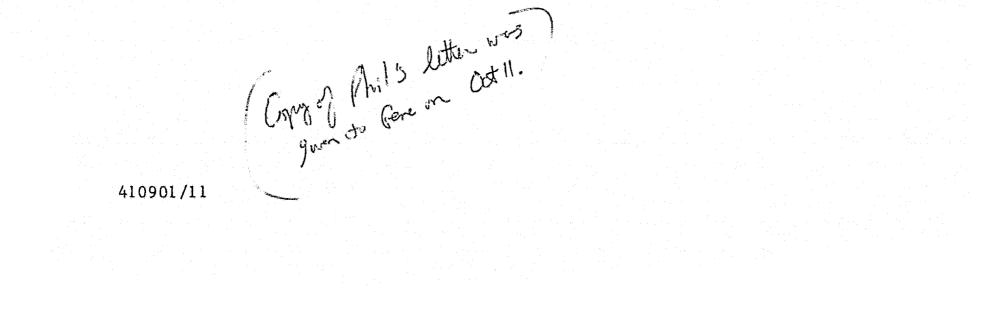
LOCATION	Anchorage		DATE	October 31, 1984	
то	Gene Gemperline		NUMBER _	4.3.3.2	
FROM	Chuck Elliott				

SUBJECT Beaver-Ice Related Questions in the Susitna River

Listed below is a key to explain the slides I received from Phil Gipson concerning beaver and ice problems in the Susitna River. Duplicate slides accompany this memo. Please pass the key and slides on to the same people in Chicago that received a copy of Gipson's Oct. 10, 1984, letter.

SLIDE KEY: Beaver and Ice Related Slides

- A: Excellent overwintering site. Good food source, deep pools safe from ice damage. Steep mud banks for burrows.
- B: Poor overwintering site even though food is abundant. Problem: no steep banks or firm soil for burrows. No deep pools. Area subject to ice damage.
- C: Typical beaver lodge (under red bush) and autumn food cache.
- D: Old lodge and autumn food cache.
- E: Site where beaver family did not survive winter. Lodge/bank den appeared to have been damaged by ice or high water.
- F: Lodge/bank den abandoned after receiving damage during spring breakup.
- G: Cache washed away by high water in late August.
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