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2 DENALI NATIONAL PARK
3 AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHTS ADVISORY COUNCIL
4 _____

5 December 1, 2009
6 9:00 a.m.
7 Campbell Creek Science Center
8 Anchorage, Alaska

9 Advisory Council present:

- 10 Sally Gibert, Chair
11 Charlie Sassara
12 Erika Bennett
13 Lt. Col. Scott Babos
14 Joan Frankevich
15 Suzanne Rust
16 Tom George
17 Jim Edwards
18 Brian Okonek
19 Nancy Bale (When noted)

20 National Park Service:

- 21 Miriam Valentine
22 Elwood Lynn
23 John Leonard
24 Jared Withers
25 Davyd Betchkal

Audience Members:

- Eric Denkewalter
Kelly Bay
Mike Weller
Lois Wirtz
Amanda Smith
Sandra Loomis
Bill Post
Susan Olsen

Reporter: Sandra M. Mierop, CSR, CRR, CCP, CBC

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PROCEEDINGS

MIRIAM VALENTINE: If I could ask the members of the council, if we could start with Jim and go around and share your name and who you're representing, the stakeholder group you're representing, that would be great.

JIM EDWARDS: I'm Jim Edwards. I'm representing the Federal Aviation Administration.

BRIAN OKONEK: I'm Brian Okonek. I represent private property owners.

LT. COL. SCOTT BABOS: Lt. Colonel Scott Babos. I represent the DOD in Alaska.

SUZANNE RUST: Suzanne Rust, I represent the scenic tour operators.

ERIKA BENNETT: Erika Bennett. I represent all commercial aviation that fly around.

CHARLIE SASSARA: Charlie Sassara, representing the climbing community.

SALLY GIBERT: Sally Gibert, representing the State of Alaska.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Miriam Valentine, National Parks Service.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: Sally Gibert,
2 representing the State of Alaska. We need to
3 keep our voices up so that she can hear us.

4 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I'm Joan
5 Frankevich, and I represent the statewide and
6 national environmental community.

7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm Miriam
8 Valentine, I work for the Denali National Park
9 & Preserve.

10 ELWOOD LYNN: Elwood Lynn,
11 assistant superintendent.

12 TOM GEORGE: I'm Tom George,
13 representing general aviation users.

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So the fan is
15 going to go off, and it will get hot, but we'll
16 crack the window.

17 (Discussion off the record.)

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So, Tim Cudney
19 will not be with us today. Nan Eagleson will
20 not be with us.

21 Nancy Bale will be with us maybe
22 about 2:30. She was unable to get a sub for
23 her position.

24 So, we are set to go. We'll work
25 on the sound piece.

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1 ELWOOD LYNN: It's going to take

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2 a few minutes for the fan to go off.

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So we usually
4 take this opportunity, then, for members of the
5 audience to introduce themselves.

6 ERIC DENKEWALTER: Eric
7 Denkewalter.

8 KELLY BAY: I'm Kelly Bay.
9 Wrangell mountaineer. I live in McCarthy.

10 JARED WITHERS: I'm Jared
11 Withers. I manage the Denali sound monitoring
12 program.

13 DAVYD BETCHKAL: Davyd Betchkal,
14 and I'm a technician for the sound program.

15 LOIS WIRTZ: Lois Wirtz.

16 JOHN LEONARD: John Leonard,
17 ranger, Denali National Park.

18 AMANDA SMITH: Amanda Smith,
19 backcountry user, Denali.

20 MIKE WELLER: My name is Mike
21 Weller. I work for the Mat-Su Borough in the
22 planning department, transportation.

23 SANDRA LOOMIS: Sandra Loomis,
24 Talkeetna Air Taxi.

25 BILL POST: Bill Post, Talkeetna

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1 Air Taxi.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Thank you.

3 Thank you all for attending today.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: I'd just like to
5 say welcome to everybody. Hope everybody had a
6 good Thanksgiving. And we appreciate everybody
7 coming down on a dark, wet winter day.

8 It's a challenge to drive the
9 roads, but it's -- I think it's a worthwhile
10 effort. And I look forward to having -- you
11 know, sharing successes of the group and learn
12 what went on this summer, since I hadn't been
13 to one of these meetings for close to a year
14 now.

15 So, welcome.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. The -- we
17 haven't met since April of last year -- this
18 year, '09. So it's been kind of a long time
19 since we had a meeting. There was kind of a
20 subgroup that met. We did some testing of
21 overflights and how they sounded. And there
22 were a bunch of actions that were taken by
23 various air taxi operators. And so one of the
24 things we're going to do at this meeting is to
25 find out what happened this summer, get some

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1 reports for those of us that missed some of
2 that stuff, and kind of see where we're at and
3 look toward going next summer. I also missed
4 everything since last April. And so I'm also

5 interested in hearing how the summer went and
6 where we're at.

7 One thing we need to do is kind
8 of identify who has -- in terms of moving the
9 agenda, who has reports that they want to make
10 from this summer.

11 Tom, you've got one.

12 Suzanne.

13 Anybody else?

14 And the agency reports.

15 JARED WITHERS: Uh-huh.

16 SALLY GIBERT: So, I'm assuming
17 that we add those two -- is there anything else
18 that we need to do with this agenda that we
19 have to -- do we have public comment
20 opportunities here?

21 JIM EDWARDS: The gentleman that
22 represents Era is not here. Weren't they some
23 of the ones that started the activity this
24 summer and canceled it because of some
25 issues --

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1 SALLY GIBERT: Safety.

2 JIM EDWARDS: Suzanne, are you
3 prepared to talk about that?

4 SUZANNE RUST: Well, what I have
5 is I've spoken with Tim, and I can tell you why
6 they said -- I'm not as familiar with the North
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7 side, so I'm going to do my best. And Eric is
8 going to help me out, if I need help.

9 ERIC DENKEWALTER: You have to
10 speak up. Deeper, louder, slower.

11 SUZANNE RUST: I'll do my best to
12 do that. I wish Tim were going to be here.

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: For planning
14 clarification, I have an e-mail that Tim sent
15 that kind of gave a brief summary of that North
16 side experience this summer.

17 SUZANNE RUST: That's what I've
18 got.

19 JIM EDWARDS: And can you share
20 that?

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah. The
22 changes in commercial activity on the agenda.
23 That might be an appropriate place.

24 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. So with
25 that, I think we've got our agenda set. So, we

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1 should just move into the first member report.

2 Tom.

3 TOM GEORGE: Okay. Okay.

4 Again, my name is Tom George.

5 I'm representing the general aviation

6 interests; and I also am the Alaska regional

7 representative known as the Pilots Association.

8 I want to report on a sound
9 perception activity that we did on July 17th.
10 As a little background, for those
11 people that were around in September of '08,
12 when we were in Denali for one of our meetings,
13 we did a -- an active listening -- is that the
14 right term? -- exercise which was a very
15 interesting exercise where we all sat silently
16 and logged various sounds and their
17 frequency -- the frequency of occurrence or
18 duration of occurrence.

19 This exercise was kind of
20 designed to be the inverse of that. That is, a
21 group of people getting together to do
22 something. Now the extent to -- what extent do
23 you perceive this one dimension of sound while
24 you're there? So the goals, at least that we
25 kind of started out with, is, first of all,

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1 just to kind of get a better understanding of
2 aircraft sounds from a person-on-the-ground
3 perspective, especially those of us that spend
4 time behind a cockpit, behind noise-canceling
5 headsets. This was an opportunity to be a
6 visitor on the ground and see what aircraft
7 sounded like.

8 So the entire council was
9 invited. Unfortunately, the entire council

10 wasn't able to make it. We had a pretty good
11 time.

12 Goals. No. 2 was to quantify
13 those perceptions in some way. I'll describe
14 that in a minute.

15 Finally, compare those
16 perceptions to the soundscape standards that
17 were adopted by -- in the Denali National Park
18 Backcountry Plan in 2006.

19 So, the scenario is we're
20 creating a picnic atmosphere. We had a
21 controlled set of overflights. It was
22 controlled from two ways. One, we had
23 identified some aircraft to participate. Two,
24 the weather was bad enough that there weren't
25 any other aircraft around.

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1 (Chuckles.)

2 Can you still hear me?

3 All right.

4 we asked during those overflights
5 for each participant to rate the overflight on
6 a scale of 1 to 5. I'll give you the details
7 of that scale a little further down.

8 The airplanes that were involved:
9 Super Cub, Cessna 182, Cessna 185, a Beaver and
10 an Otter. We planned to have a Navajo in the

11 mix, but we didn't have time, and the weather
12 wasn't kind.
13 The aircraft flew the same flight
14 path at different altitudes. We actually know.
15 The venue, we were not on the
16 Parks Highway. We were ten miles off the Parks
17 Highway at a B & B Gate Creek Cabin off the
18 Petersville Road. And K2 was kind enough to
19 bring their little, tiny barbecue seen here in
20 the foreground; so we grilled pizza. And
21 people pretty much visited with one another and
22 ate pizza.
23 And, again, for perspective,
24 here's where we were on the ground, Gate Creek
25 Cabin, Petersville Road; the edge of the Parks

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1 Highway over here (indicating).
2 We had a flight track defined by
3 two GPS points. All the airplanes flew, again,
4 with one exception. The nearest track was one
5 mile from this location. This was not an air
6 show; this was a listening exercise.
7 Now, in the data collection
8 front, while the party's going on over here,
9 Jared has a handheld sound meter, Randy
10 Kilbourne, K2 Aviation, is talking to the
11 different participating aircraft. So we know
12 which aircraft is coming by at what altitude.

13 out of the picture, what, 50, 60 yards the
14 other direction is the actual sound-monitoring
15 equipment that Jared uses in the park for the
16 soundscape measurements that we've heard about
17 in the past. We'll get back to the data there.

18 But at the time of each
19 overflight, he actually made an approximate
20 measurement with his handheld measurer so we
21 not only knew what airplane was going by, but
22 also a decibel level of that. A maximum
23 decibel level of that overflight. And as each
24 airplane passed the midpoint and was headed
25 away from us, at that point, only at that

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1 point, Randy walked over away and said, "Folks,
2 that's overflight 5. Mark your sheet." We
3 were listening to a descending sound rather
4 than stopping to listen to an approaching
5 aircraft. This is the perception rating sheet.

6 Everybody had a clipboard. I
7 apologize, one is barely notable -- in other
8 words, it's background -- up to distinctly
9 notable, commands your attention, dominates
10 your attention, you have to raise your voice to
11 be heard, or interrupts activity, can't carry
12 on conversation. That was the somewhat
13 arbitrary scale that we used.

14 Of course, with the NA category,
15 we didn't hear that at all, or I was inside the
16 cabin, I missed that one.

17 So, here's the first look at
18 results. Again, on this side is the perception
19 rating; 1, again, being barely noticeable; 3,
20 commands attention; 5, interrupts activity.
21 The bars correspond to the airplane and the
22 activity, 185 is 500 feet. Same craft at 1200.
23 Super Cub, 500 and 1200 feet. We wanted them
24 all to be the same. The clouds were
25 interfering. These were what we could do.

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1 Beaver made the same flight,
2 1,000, and 4500. The Cessna 182, the Otter,
3 1,000 feet, because that was the last flight of
4 the day. It was overflight. The actual flight
5 was not on the flight line. We wanted to
6 really hear that airplane, and we did.

7 Questions as we go?

8 Yes, sir.

9 BILL POST: Did you modify the
10 horsepower of these various -- whether they had
11 two- or three-bladed props and the power
12 settings?

13 TOM GEORGE: Some of that. We
14 got the blades of the props. We got some of
15 the power settings. We're not trying to do

16 this as a published phase; this is a
17 perception.

18 It makes a difference, we can
19 tell you. We have a data sheet -- a
20 spreadsheet with all the data that was recorded
21 in this that was distributed to the entire
22 council afterward and would be happy to get you
23 a copy of that.

24 CHARLIE SASSARA: How far off
25 your flight line -- how far from off the flight

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1 line were you guys listening from?

2 TOM GEORGE: One mile. The
3 closest approach of the aircraft, with the
4 exception of the Otter on the last flight was
5 one mile, okay?

6 SUZANNE RUST: I just want to
7 point out that what I was surprised at, that as
8 the altitude increased, the decibels didn't go
9 down, they actually -- because that's one of
10 the things that we've talked about, let's stay
11 higher. But what seemed to make the biggest
12 difference is the distance, I guess --

13 TOM GEORGE: Hold that for a
14 minute. We'll actually hold that a second.
15 Let's hold questions, unless there's something
16 that we'll have then. I'd like to have a

18 That's the same data with the
19 decibels added in. What seems to be true, just
20 from a casual inspection, yeah, the lower
21 flights -- the higher flights, in almost all
22 cases got a higher decibel rating, and that
23 pretty much tracked the perception rating was
24 higher on the 185, the 17 feet over 500 feet,
25 that was a higher decibel rating. That pattern

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1 seems to be persistent. These are decibel
2 logarithmic scales. Even though there's not
3 much difference here in decibels, that doesn't
4 mean that there isn't a significant sound
5 level.

6 BILL POST: Maybe you'd be
7 getting to it. Did the perception match the
8 readings of the instruments? Are these --

9 TOM GEORGE: You're seeing it
10 right here.

11 BILL POST: What I did not
12 understand, I thought these were the perception
13 ratings by the human ear --

14 TOM GEORGE: This is the
15 perception rated by the people on the scale I
16 defined. And this is the actual decibel rating
17 that was captured by the Park Service sound
18 recording equipment. This is the real reading

19 from after the fact, as opposed to the
20 temporary reading you gave us at the time.

21 SALLY GIBERT: Was there any --
22 kind of a funny situation where the Cub at 500
23 feet is the sound perception went up a little
24 bit, but the decibels actually went down? Is
25 there any speculation about that?

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1 TOM GEORGE: No. This is at 500
2 feet, a decibel rating, at 1700 feet, a higher
3 decibel rating.

4 SALLY GIBERT: Next one.

5 TOM GEORGE: Next one is the Cub
6 at 500 feet, had a higher decibel rating than
7 the 185, which is interesting. If you look at
8 the Cub at 500 feet and 1200 feet, the higher
9 altitude had both the higher perception rating
10 and the higher decibel level. Again, that
11 pattern is pretty persistent through this.
12 Again, bear in mind this was a crude
13 approximation; this is not a publishable
14 scientific result. This was more for us to get
15 a feel for things than anything else.

16 So, let's move on, then, to -- as
17 I mentioned earlier, in parallel the Park
18 Service was recording this with their normal
19 recording equipment they used to get the

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20 background sound measurements in the park.
21 This is a spectrogram which -- we've seen these
22 before. But, again, it's a measure of time.
23 This is 1400 hours, 2:00 o'clock in the
24 afternoon. Time is moving across here, to 1500
25 or 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, to 4:00

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1 o'clock. We started a little before 2:00 and
2 ran a little after 4:00. We ran two hours and
3 ten minutes. In that time, this is the --
4 these are the acoustic signatures, again, with
5 frequency going from low to high. And then the
6 brightness being the amount of sound pressure,
7 and that's the scale here at the bottom.

8 And I apologize. It's a little
9 hard to see in this slide, but let me make this
10 a little easier. We went through, again, with
11 our log from the data collected, so here's
12 these signatures that you can see here, here,
13 here. These are the aircraft signatures.
14 Notice that it's not the only thing going on.
15 These high-frequency things were a set of
16 ravens in the trees off a little ways away that
17 were having quite a conversation. Love to know
18 what they thought about the whole exercise.
19 This was the B & B, there was a generator off
20 in the distance, 60 cycle line, and some
21 harmonics of that. It's not an absolutely

22 quiet environment. And, like in all places,
23 the sound monitoring is getting all of it.

24 But from this it allowed the Park
25 Service to compute some of the other metrics

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1 that are in the soundscape parameters for
2 Denali National Park. So, again, let's look at
3 how we compare with the soundscape standards in
4 the park.

5 A review. Again, there are four
6 different zones defined in the backcountry plan
7 from low to very high. There are three
8 different measures that we're looking at.
9 There's what percent of any hour is what
10 human-caused sound audible? Is that the
11 definition on that one?

12 JARED WITHERS: Mechanized.

13 TOM GEORGE: So, from 5 percent,
14 up to 50 percent. The number of events per
15 day, from 1 in the low areas up to 50 in the
16 high areas, the maximum decibel -- actually, 40
17 decibels is the threshold for the low and
18 medium, and 60 for the high and very high --
19 those are the parameters that we've looked at
20 for some time now.

21 And Jared was able to do this
22 analysis. I cut and pasted this out of an

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23 e-mail that he sent me following the
24 spectrogram analysis. He was able to come up
25 with a time audible for the whole two hours and

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1 ten minutes, 16.6 percent of time. The number
2 of events per hour was five. The sound, again,
3 the quietest overflight, 45.9. The loudest on
4 the flight path, again, was 56. That was the
5 Beaver. And, overall, of course, the Otter
6 went directly overhead. It was quite loud;
7 almost 70 decibels. With a mean of all the
8 overflights of 53.5.

9 Let's, again, kind of put those
10 in perspective with the standards. So we're
11 just about the boundary for medium. We're in
12 the high category, percent per hour. Five
13 events in the medium category for number of
14 events audible per day. There was our average
15 decibel level on the decibel scale. So there's
16 kind of how the sounds that we experienced at
17 that event tagged to these standards.

18 Yes, sir.

19 BRIAN OKONEK: On the scale
20 there, it's the number of audible times per
21 day. Yours was number of audible times per
22 hour.

23 TOM GEORGE: Well, this was --
24 yeah, you're right. It's five events per hour.

25 You're right. I apologize. That's a mistake.

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1 I'll have to change that. Good catch. It's
2 what I get for doing this at 10:00 o'clock last
3 night.

4 Any other observations or --
5 Okay. Now, again, putting this
6 in the context of the soundscape, these are the
7 different zones in the park that are labeled,
8 again, have assigned these different soundscape
9 values, purple being the quietest, and then the
10 medium, high and very high, I believe, are the
11 different categories.

12 So, again, the thing that jumps
13 out at me is purple as the highest, is, like,
14 73 percent of the entire 6 million acres as a
15 point of reference. Coming back, here the 40
16 decibels and 60 decibels added to that chart.
17 In all cases, we were above the dB threshold
18 for both the low and the medium sound. And,
19 actually, we got above high with that direct
20 overflight, which is what you would kind of
21 expect standing off -- effectively standing off
22 the end of a runway.

23 Where are we today?

24 These results, I would be the
25 first to say, are not directly transferable to

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1 the backcountry. We were not in the
2 backcountry. We had generators running, and
3 had people running. In fact, from my
4 perspective, we need to be doing more work to
5 evaluate the impact of aircraft sound on park
6 users. I'd like to do this with a design in
7 different areas of the park under different
8 conditions to really start to have some measure
9 to understand what the impacts of aircraft
10 sound are on park users.

11 In spite of that, I think, at
12 least what comes to my mind, is that we need to
13 do educational work for all stakeholders. We
14 need to do work on educating the aviation
15 community about being sensitive to surface
16 users. I think, in parallel to that, it's very
17 important that park visitors understand the
18 role that aviation plays in operations of the
19 park.

20 With that point, I'll quit, and I
21 would like to, if it's all right with the
22 Chair, turn it over for discussion a little
23 bit.

24 So, comments? Questions?
25 Complaints?

1 SALLY GIBERT: Are you going to
2 turn this off or leave it up?
3 TOM GEORGE: I can do that.
4 Yes, Suzanne.
5 SUZANNE RUST: Back to what was
6 surprising to me, I think, was as we did our --
7 actually, we talked about what we were going to
8 do as concessionaires. The importance was how
9 we were going to do this. I realized in this
10 study that wasn't the important factor, being
11 offset and realizing that that seemed to have
12 the biggest impact on both the perception and
13 on the decibel level. But that was good for
14 me. And it also gave us -- the people who
15 participated in this, gave us an understanding
16 of what something sounded like. You know, the
17 decibel levels. I think that that's something
18 that's hard to grasp on paper. It's different
19 when you're listening to it and trying to
20 evaluate and see how it affects that.
21 TOM GEORGE: My only regret is
22 that we didn't do this out in the Ruth Gorge.
23 But maybe next time.
24 Jim, I think you had a question.
25 JIM EDWARDS: Yeah. I guess I'm

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1 interested in somebody that understands the
2 physics of sound. Is there any insight as to
3 why a lateral offset of one mile is more
4 effective than a vertical offset of one mile?
5 5,000 feet of altitude, where some of those
6 airplanes are flying is a mile, for all
7 practical purposes, just as a lateral. What's
8 happening? Are the trees or something
9 deflecting the sound waves? Or what's going
10 on?

11 TOM GEORGE: You want to talk
12 about the ground?

13 JARED WITHERS: In a way they
14 are. What the phenomenon is called is ground
15 attenuation, and what we had in this exercise
16 was, you know, aircraft 50 to 100 feet away and
17 500 feet up in the extreme low cases. So, if
18 you -- that sound wave is traveling essentially
19 parallel to the ground, very close to the
20 parallel that sound travels to the ground.
21 Pressure between the wave and pressure in the
22 ground tends to bend in the ground as well,
23 which absorbs the sound or statics the sound,
24 depending on what it hits. Generally, sounds
25 traveling over a surface are attenuating over

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1 the surface.

2 JIM EDWARDS: If we follow the
3 logic, what you're saying, then, one way of
4 minimizing the perpetual impact of sound on
5 users of the park is to generate low-altitude
6 routes for airplanes to transit through the
7 park at low altitudes?

8 JARED WITHERS: I think -- I
9 mean, that's logical as long as there's no
10 sensitive areas underneath those low-altitude
11 routes.

12 JIM EDWARDS: Obviously, yes.
13 That, to me, is entirely anti-logical to
14 everything I know about sound and airplanes.
15 So maybe we are on to something.

16 ERIC DENKEWALTER: The other
17 thing you have when you go up higher is the
18 duration of the noise is longer. So, I know
19 it's hard to measure all those variables,
20 because that would be another thing in there,
21 not just how many events during the day; how
22 long was that particular event. So you could
23 have a plane going slow into the wind in the
24 air for ten minutes -- okay. So, again, the
25 lower altitude blip and you're gone.

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1 JARED WITHERS: Sometimes it's

2 dependent on some other things like the level
3 of the ambient. If you're dealing with a very
4 quiet site, that's true, it's grounded by this
5 ground effect attenuating.

6 ERIC DENKEWALTER: The 40 dB is a
7 pretty low threshold. It doesn't take much to
8 bust a 30.

9 JARED WITHERS: Duration is how
10 long you hear it, not how loud you hear it.
11 For a quiet, say, that's true, the flying
12 lower, the ground attenuation will reduce the
13 attenuation that you get in an airplane. In
14 real sites that have other sounds going on,
15 those others -- the masking effect of those
16 other sounds tends to be the limiting effecter
17 of how long is your flight.

18 BILL POST: We're talking about
19 the entire park here. You picked a specific
20 setting. Forested, open, that sort of thing.
21 Most of our activity is over glacial and
22 mountainous, and then what we run into there,
23 as far as either attenuation or reflection off
24 a mountain -- I mean, attenuation with the snow
25 versus typical ground cover that you had or

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1 reflection off a mountainside.

2 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. And that's
3 exactly where I make the comment that I don't

4 consider the results here immediately
5 extensible into these other areas, and that's
6 why I guess I'd like to see some work done in
7 some of these other settings to make sure we
8 are really looking apples to apples rather than
9 apples to oranges.

10 BILL POST: Just on a technical
11 basis, we can't make a direct comparison about
12 what findings were drawn here cannot be
13 extended to a different environment knowing the
14 variables?

15 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, I mean, I
16 think there's some general patterns here that
17 probably would follow, but, again, the point I
18 want to make is that, yeah, there is a
19 different -- I mean, several things different.
20 Depending on where you are in the park, you can
21 be in glacier areas, high ridges around you
22 that might be reflecting the sound all over the
23 place. Also, I think a solo hiker or a couple
24 people backpacking are much more sensitive to
25 sound than a group of people stuffing their

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1 faces with pizza. We didn't have any music
2 playing in the background, it's a different
3 setting, and I think your perceptions are
4 different accordingly. So there are some

5 significant differences. I want to be careful
6 that we're not trying to take these results
7 from a one-time, short duration thing and make
8 grand and sweeping conclusions.

9 BILL POST: I think it's also
10 different whether you're out there exerting or
11 something like that, I don't think it's as
12 noticable as if you were -- you were on a break
13 or interlude or something where you are
14 relaxing or just conversing or enjoying
15 whatever.

16 TOM GEORGE: It could go either
17 way.

18 Up here, and then back.

19 BRIAN OKONEK: I was going to
20 comment on something, basically, Bill said,
21 that the Park isn't all boreal forest on a flat
22 floodplain, you know. There's a lot of
23 topography. So with very, very, you know,
24 restrictions and ridge lines and stuff, you
25 can't always fly low with the glacier, you have

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1 to go across the grain, over ridges and stuff.
2 It's very hard to spread this study to the
3 whole park.

4 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely.

5 SANDRA LOOMIS: I'm curious about
6 when the backcountry management plan was

7 written and these dBA levels were put in
8 particular areas of the park, was there
9 realization -- there wasn't by me, obviously,
10 at the time -- that it was setting up a
11 situation where those would be busted
12 consistently and continuously and change the --
13 what may be allowed in the future? I mean,
14 were people at the park aware that that was
15 setting up a problem with current activity and
16 historical activity?

17 BILL POST: What was the basis
18 for setting those 40/60 guidelines?

19 ELWOOD LYNN: I think that was
20 the research that Charlie and others did at the
21 time. They knew that it was -- these were good
22 goals, good targets, but didn't have years and
23 years of research behind it to say that, you
24 know, this on average is what visitors expect
25 to see everywhere. It was more general. It

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1 was going to stretch us --

2 JARED WITHERS: I can comment on
3 that. I wasn't around at the time, but it
4 seems like -- seems to me that they drew from
5 knowledge -- a knowledge base that's been
6 around since the '70s from airport design as it
7 affects humans physiologically. The 40 decibel

8 break point is significant because it aligns
9 with world Health Organization and scientific
10 findings that shows that sounds occurring
11 louder than that cause a rise in blood pressure
12 and heart rate in sleeping humans. So they're
13 making the assumption in backcountry people
14 that are camping and sleeping, that's a
15 measurable impact. And then a 60-decibel is --
16 tends to be a break point for speech
17 interruption in park settings in the
18 interpretive programs. And then 70 decibels is
19 a pretty well-known point, you have to be
20 shouting to the person that's standing next to
21 you to be heard. You typically have a hard
22 time carrying on a conversation.

23 TOM GEORGE: I'm going to add two
24 comments to that. No. 1, a number of us
25 planned that and commented on the time, that

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1 eight-year period of time. The Park Service
2 did respond in the plan. Our position was we
3 think we should get more of this baseline data
4 and see where we really are today and look at
5 some of these other factors before setting
6 them. The Park Service said, we take your
7 point, we're going to set them anyway, we'll
8 come back in five years and review them. I
9 think we need to continue what we're doing here

10 now, which is understand how we are doing and
11 we'll hear later today, I presume, on kind of
12 how some of the monitoring in different parts
13 of the park is going just to get a better sense
14 there. But there's quite a bit of background
15 that's led up to this. There's a five-year
16 review period, so keep that in your mind.

17 JIM EDWARDS: It's obvious to me,
18 reading the report -- the backcountry report
19 and looking at that data, that there was some
20 effort made to get numbers, but they were
21 arbitrarily selected. Even so, there isn't any
22 science that says if we go beyond this, this
23 will be the effect; if we stay below it, this
24 will be the effect. That was one of the very
25 first things that we came to when we started

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1 this committee is that -- and I believe
2 sincerely that -- that the numbers that have
3 been set are unattainable given the aviation
4 activity that's going on. So I think that's
5 one of the things that needs to be recognized.

6 CHARLIE SASSARA: It's also not
7 part of the scope of this committee. So why
8 don't we stay on task?

9 JIM EDWARDS: And the task, as I
10 understand it, in this committee, is to try to

11 understand what voluntary measures we can
12 recommend to reduce noise impact. And, you
13 know, I think that's a wonderful goal and
14 objective. Arguing about what the noise levels
15 should be and those things is not the job of
16 this committee.

17 SALLY GIBERT: It isn't the job
18 of the committee, but since our voluntary
19 measures are to help attain them, we certainly
20 need to be familiar with them and how they
21 work. And Park Service is -- understands that
22 they are sort of the best shot at the time it
23 was published, recognized that they were likely
24 going to need to be fine-tuned. So, you know,
25 we're not responsible for forcing the pressures

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1 to meet them or forcing the pressures to change
2 them. But we do have a relationship to them.
3 So we need to understand what they are. And,
4 you know, I can easily imagine us recommending
5 that they do some work, you know, to help
6 fine-tune those standards, and maybe come up
7 with some research ideas. But to try and
8 purposely say we think they should be changed
9 to X, Y, Z, that's not what we're here for.

10 JIM EDWARDS: Agreed. It's
11 helpful to know that maybe a lateral offset is
12 more useful than altitude, but safe operation

13 of aircraft is going to dictate the use of
14 altitude in the operation of the airplane,
15 regardless of the noise effect.

16 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely.

17 BILL POST: Of course, Denali is
18 our focus. But for the basis or sake of
19 comparison, do we have any similar findings for
20 other park areas as far as a general sound
21 level? Areas where there are concentrations of
22 people or activity or anything, just to know
23 what we are trying -- what we're striving for?
24 Is this -- does this relate in any way to any
25 other park areas that have had other type

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1 studies or perhaps contentions between activity
2 levels, noise levels, that sort of thing?
3 Activities and noise levels, I should say.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: Can you talk to
5 that, Jared?

6 JARED WITHERS: There certainly
7 has been a fair bit of work that's taken place
8 in other parks. I don't know that any of
9 them -- well, I can't comment specifically on
10 numbers from other parks, I don't have those
11 off the top of my head. But it seems like
12 every park has its own set of issues, and
13 there's studies that are designed to adjust

14 those issues and not necessarily transferable
15 directly to Denali. I'd say maybe Grand Canyon
16 would be --

17 BILL POST: That's an extreme --

18 JARED WITHERS: We're not there.

19 BILL POST: I was -- snowmachine
20 activities, 70, I know that's been a bone of
21 contention. I don't know enough about other
22 parks to know where this has been an issue.

23 JARED WITHERS: Snowmachine
24 activities in Tetons. Yosemite deals a lot
25 with high-altitude jets, not as much with small

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1 aircraft.

2 TOM GEORGE: The Park Service
3 does have a national soundscape program. They
4 are doing work in other parks. I'm told
5 they're starting to think of standards.

6 Is there any other work going on
7 in Alaska on soundscape monitoring or anything
8 like that?

9 JARED WITHERS: Not aircraft
10 based. There's a soundscape program in Kenai
11 that I think is focused on snowmachine-type
12 use, and there's a history of aircraft noise
13 strategies in Yukon Charlie having to do with
14 military operations. But I don't think
15 anything is going on currently.

16 JIM EDWARDS: There are, in other
17 parks around the country, noise studies, but as
18 was suggested here, many of those are very
19 specific to the park. I think one
20 generalization you can make about all of that
21 is the issues are as much perceptual and
22 political as they are scientific. Depending on
23 who you are and what your interests are,
24 changes your viewpoints of how the air space is
25 used and what the standards should be. And our

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1 job is not to determine which group is going to
2 prevail in that argument. That's a political
3 issue. This is not a political group. Our
4 group is to try to look at what can we do in
5 this specific set of circumstances to reduce
6 the noise impact on the users of this park.
7 And that we -- I think means we need to know
8 where people are and see if we can avoid
9 overflying them, where we can't overfly them,
10 certainly, altitude helps if it's not the best
11 answer, it's the second-best answer, and I
12 think there are people here who are
13 intelligent, both the user groups and the
14 operator groups -- I mean, the people who climb
15 and the people who use the park and the people
16 who fly over both are interested in getting

17 along with each other, and I think we could do
18 that. I think that's the focus we need to
19 maintain.

20 TOM GEORGE: That sounds, Madam
21 Chair, like a great segue to our next
22 presentation.

23 SALLY GIBERT: Yes. Perhaps
24 after a five-minute break.

25 (Break.)

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1 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. We're going
2 to get back together. One of the first things
3 we want to do is figure out about lunch. This
4 is kind of a remote location, and so Miriam has
5 contacted a place -- they will deliver pizza.
6 And so if you don't -- we have an hour for
7 lunch. If you want to take off, you can. If
8 you want to stay here, we can do a chip into
9 the pot, like, 5 or \$7 each and order pizza.
10 Does that sound good?

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Just for
12 logistics.

13 SALLY GIBERT: That will be --
14 hopefully, it will arrive here at noon. So
15 when it arrives -- so next up, we've got
16 Suzanne.

17 SUZANNE RUST: Okay. Can people
18 hear me?

19 TOM GEORGE: Yeah.

20 SUZANNE RUST: Excellent, okay.

21 well, where we were last spring,
22 we had met -- I'm trying to remember, because
23 it's been a while. But we had decided that we
24 needed to have a work group put together that
25 was outside of this group, it's called a work

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1 group, whatever the additional name is, so we
2 could meet and have discussions about how we
3 would make some change for the summer. And
4 that I was not comfortable speaking or
5 making -- you know, committing all the
6 operators or some of the operators to certain
7 things.

8 SALLY GIBERT: To clarify, for
9 those of you that are new to this, a work group
10 is a more informal subset of the council
11 members. Plus, other people that could get --
12 that could get involved with that work group.
13 So it's less structured and involves other
14 entities -- other people besides just the
15 council.

16 SUZANNE RUST: And that proved to
17 be really good, I think. So last spring we got
18 folks together, Joan attended, I think, Scott,
19 did you attend, I think?

20 LT. COL. SCOTT BALBOS: Yeah, I

21 did.

22 SUZANNE RUST: Scott, Tom, Tim,

23 myself, Nancy, and north and south side

24 operators. So it was good conversation.

25 We met for several hours, and

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1 what was really helpful was Nancy and Joan put
2 together a map and talked about areas that were
3 areas of concern, I guess, how would you --

4 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Sound-sensitive
5 areas. Tried to highlight where people were on
6 the ground and where we were hearing that there
7 were problems.

8 SUZANNE RUST: What we were
9 trying to do is come up with a practical
10 solution. We're talking about lots of sound
11 standards and a lot of different things. But
12 what happened, which was really great, was Joan
13 and Nancy getting together with different user
14 groups, identifying the sound-sensitive areas,
15 and then the operators sitting down and saying,
16 okay, this is an area -- this is an area where
17 we can do something in this area to make
18 improvements.

19 So, from that came the best
20 practices document. And I think that that was
21 sent around to folks.

22 And then that was distributed in
23 probably middle of May or so. Everybody had
24 committed as a group to engage in this best
25 practices. And then it was distributed and

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1 implemented this summer.

2 So, what I have to do today is
3 I'm going to kind of walk you through the
4 different best practices and remind folks that
5 that would be helpful, of what they were, and
6 then tell you who I had spoken with or what
7 they were able to do.

8 So, what we can do -- Joan, if
9 you want to chime in, or Tom, someone, you
10 know, if I don't get something quite correct.

11 We started with the Triple Lakes
12 area. Triple Lakes departures and arrivals.
13 So that was an area identified as a
14 sound-sensitive area. And so we started with
15 the nature of the surface activity, and the
16 Triple Lakes area is heavily used by day hikers
17 during the summer months between the Parks
18 Highway and Triple Lakes. And what was
19 recommended was a procedure, operators
20 departing from the Denali private airstrip to
21 the north will extend their climbing on Triple
22 Lakes when practical before turning west.

NL09-369 - DNP Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council - 1Dec09
23 Aircraft arriving from the west will plan to
24 approach and use minimum power settings to
25 reduce sound impacts on this area.

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1 So I talked to Ron Russo, and
2 they're really the ones that operate out of
3 Denali private. Ron said that they were
4 currently extending to the north of Triple
5 Lakes area this summer, that that really wasn't
6 a problem. He said Denali air flight paths
7 for -- will be swinging north of the Triple
8 Lakes area; pilots will make their best attempt
9 to stay at the highest possible altitudes in
10 the vicinity of the lakes between 32 and 3500
11 on climb-out and descent.

12 Arrivals to private -- to the
13 private strip from the west, their aircraft
14 will reduce power to about 15 inches when
15 they're coming in, so using minimum allowable
16 power settings to make things quieter on the
17 ground. He said they had no problem doing
18 this. So -- and I will continue, if there's
19 not any questions.

20 JOAN FRANKEVICH: So Denali --
21 this I wasn't too aware of. So they
22 implemented that this summer just taking off --
23 when they take off will fly further north
24 before they turn, before taking Triple Lakes.

25 They didn't encounter problems somewhere else

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1 from landowners?

2 SUZANNE RUST: Not that he spoke
3 to. When I spoke with Ron, he didn't say they
4 would have a problem with this.

5 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Is Ron RD?

6 SUZANNE RUST: Yes, RD, Ron
7 Russo.

8 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Do we have --
9 were we able to get any reports from the
10 ground? Especially from the elder hostel
11 groups that use the Triple Lakes trail a lot.
12 Do we get any feedback on changes?

13 ELWOOD LYNN: well, it's
14 interesting because I didn't know this had gone
15 on, and I had several groups this summer
16 comment to me that, you know, what's changed?
17 The hiking on Triple Lakes trail is so much
18 better than it was. Can you tell me what's
19 going on? I said I don't know, but I'll ask.
20 And I had Collin checking with RD, and he said,
21 yeah, they changed their path. So, you know, I
22 was completely naive, oblivious to what was
23 going on. And people are coming -- hunting me
24 down and making comments.

25 CHARLIE SASSARA: Raging success.

□

1 TOM GEORGE: Great success.
2 would you please give Paul three
3 lashes with a wet noodle when you see him for
4 not sharing the document? We purposely
5 distributed our form distribution to the Park
6 Service.
7 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Too bad Nan
8 isn't here. This is her backyard, and her area
9 of concern.
10 Did you get a chance to speak
11 with her?
12 SUZANNE RUST: No. I just
13 focused on talking to the operators. So I've
14 not collected feedback from user groups.
15 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I understand.
16 I'll give her a call and see if I can find out
17 from her perspective. She -- that's her area
18 of concern.
19 SUZANNE RUST: That's great
20 feedback, though. It is just great.
21 Okay. Should I continue?
22 Okay. So, Park Road corridor and
23 entrance. In the best practices we defined the
24 nature of the activity as during the summer,
25 June 1st through September, the Park Road

1 visitors and backpackers will be subject to
2 aircraft noise and flight-seeing operation.
3 The procedure will be operators conducting air
4 taxi and flight-seeing operations in the point
5 will avoid flying over the park road when
6 conditions allow. Operators will shift their
7 flights to the north of the park road corridor
8 as conditions allow. Arrival and departure
9 procedures will make use of the Healy Canyon
10 when possible. The goal is to minimize impact
11 for those backcountry users -- those in
12 backcountry and traveling by bus into the park.

13 So, I did get some feedback from
14 Talkeetna Air, and from Ron, as well, and then
15 also from Tim. I think maybe let's start with
16 what Tim has to say.

17 So Tim actually sent us an e-mail
18 earlier in the spring indicating that they
19 wouldn't be able to use this -- they would not
20 be able to engage in this best practice. And
21 his reasoning was is he feels that it
22 compromises the safety -- their safety. And
23 this is what he wrote: The current departure
24 path directly over the park headquarters would
25 have us flying over the final approach path or

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1 takeoff path from the park strip, not to
2 mention it has us crossing a general
3 thoroughfare for major traffic to and from
4 Anchorage. Most transient pilots do know the
5 Triple Lakes is a heavily used area for the
6 park supplement.

7 So I guess what he's saying is
8 that there's conflicting traffic for them. The
9 thing to add about Era is that they have --
10 they've reduced their flights into the park,
11 and they only have three departures a day into
12 the park. So, three outbound and then three
13 inbound.

14 Ron indicated that they were
15 going to be able to shift to the south of the
16 Park Road. They stay up as close to the
17 mountains as possible, and they do this when
18 weather permits. I think Ron expressed concern
19 about this recommendation. He feels that there
20 are only so many ways to get in the park and so
21 many ways to get out. And as you start
22 reducing -- asking people to fly in certain
23 areas, what happens is you're consolidating
24 traffic. So that's his feedback about -- yes,
25 they were able to do it some. They shifted

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1 more south. But he's just -- he's concerned
2 about conflicting traffic.

3 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I'm confused.
4 He shifted where?

5 SUZANNE RUST: My understanding
6 is he shifted to the south --

7 JOAN FRANKEVICH: South of the
8 Park Road. That's where the problem areas are?

9 SUZANNE RUST: He said he shifted
10 farther south --

11 TOM GEORGE: Farther south.

12 SUZANNE RUST: Further south.

13 JOAN FRANKEVICH: To get to the
14 south of Preston.

15 SUZANNE RUST: Actually, Eric
16 knows where he's coming down. He's coming down
17 near -- did you say -- over the spine, Eric,
18 or -- Eric?

19 Is he coming down through the
20 spine?

21 ERIC DENKEWALTER: Yeah.

22 SUZANNE RUST: He's coming down
23 over the spine.

24 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Okay. Instead
25 of right over the backcountry areas, which is

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1 the conflict area, he went over to the top of

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2 the peaks when he could?

3 SUZANNE RUST: When he could.

4 That's what I understand.

5 Okay. And then for Eric -- Eric,
6 who is here -- indicated that on both the north
7 and south side they were able to use best
8 practices, that it -- shifting for them was not
9 a problem at all, and stayed -- Eric, you were
10 staying, let's see --

11 ERIC DENKEWALTER: You were
12 staying south and east of Fang Mountain out of
13 Refuge Valley and cut down towards Foggy, and
14 then head, basically, from there coming
15 straight to the route. So stays south of the
16 trench at that point. I don't know if there's
17 really anybody out in the area. I suppose
18 occasionally there are.

19 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Very little. I
20 think that's a great way to go.

21 ERIC DENKEWALTER: When I talked
22 to -- is there a Katherine that works at the
23 backcountry? Not quite Katherine, some odd
24 spelling. She commented -- she and her buddy
25 were up there in Refuge Valley and they didn't

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1 hear any at all. And they went to Foggy Pass.
2 That's where all the airplanes are. Uh-huh,
3 you're right. Of the places to go, I don't

4 think there's too many people over there. So
5 people come up from Cantwell up windy Creek
6 area to go over into Refuge Valley.

7 My brother had the pack-rats and
8 went down that way. He didn't mention that.
9 One person. He could have gone on a cloudy
10 day, and there wasn't anybody there. It seems
11 like there are areas over there that if we kind
12 of set aside, we could make a huge impact. Not
13 perfect, but you can make a big impact if you
14 do it.

15 I didn't hear any complaints from
16 my people about who wanted to see Calico
17 Glaciers or something like that. My feeling on
18 that is just tell me where the areas are and we
19 can keep looking.

20 JOAN FRANKEVICH: That sounds
21 great, even though it says that particular
22 person says he did hear you. In general,
23 that's not a common place to go. Where Foggy
24 is, where Refuge is a common area.

25 ERIC DENKEWALTER: I don't have

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1 any comments. It would be interesting to kind
2 of collect those at the end of the season and
3 see what the comments are and solicit comments
4 from people. Hey, you up in there? Tell me.

5 I don't mind people telling me, saying I heard
6 this or I didn't hear that.

7 SUZANNE RUST: Okay. Moving on,
8 McKinley Summit Flights -- and this is moving
9 to the south side. So we've just discussed
10 kind of north side operations. Now we're
11 moving to the south side.

12 During climbing season, late
13 April to early June, climbers are at the high
14 camps, at 14 and 17, and en route to the
15 summit. So the procedure that was recommended
16 was operators conducting summit flights will
17 avoid -- or requested to avoid the 17 and 14
18 camps. Make their approaches east of the south
19 summit and north of the north summit. And
20 avoid flying real close to the -- trying to not
21 fly real close to these areas.

22 This was done.

23 I know, Eric and I spoke, and
24 then as K2, this was something that we were
25 able to fairly easily implement. It wasn't an

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1 issue for us. The only thing that could be
2 issues would be winds or weather, and so that
3 was fine. It will be interesting to hear if
4 somebody knows that they've made a difference
5 because I haven't gotten a lot of feedback. I
6 think maybe John might have some feedback about

7 the summit.

8 CHARLIE SASSARA: I think -- I
9 really applaud this effort. And I think that
10 the only information you really get back is
11 meaningful, other than when you got solicited
12 there is when there's an incident. The bad
13 stuff. So last night I was talking to Colby,
14 and he specifically talked about his summit day
15 with the Navajo on top of him. So -- and so
16 it -- what I think -- there's -- one of the
17 things that I'm noticing in both the way that
18 you guys advertise the experience and having
19 been in the flight business is that the pilots
20 are going for tips, and they may not be getting
21 the compliance with your pilot even though you
22 corporately are supportive of this policy.

23 And so that's -- and then there
24 was an example of a new pilot coming in and
25 having -- landing in the Eldridge without

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1 letting people know he was there, and landing
2 in the middle of the route. So, that's a
3 management issue, you know, with the
4 organization. So --

5 ERIC DENKEWALTER: What about 14
6 camp, 17 camp?

7 CHARLIE SASSARA: I got mixed

8 reports, actually. Some people were more --
9 said it was better, but you only really get --
10 when someone is complaining. If the person has
11 only been up there once, they don't have a
12 reference point of whether it's better or less.
13 So, I applaud the approaches that you guys have
14 taken. I encourage you to keep doing it. But
15 I think there will be another discussion about
16 how do you implement it within the
17 organization. Because you guys are advertising
18 looking at climbers, and it was an interesting
19 comment. So if we treated climbers like we
20 treat hunters, we wouldn't be on top of them.
21 And -- because just for -- I mean, there's a
22 quote from the web site on the McKinley Summit:
23 McKinley climbing and summit tour. This is
24 from one of the -- your clients says: when I
25 was on the strip last summer, I actually saw

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1 the footprints from the climbers who made the
2 top of Denali.

3 So, you're soliciting that
4 experience. And everyone is doing it to a
5 lesser or greater degree in their advertising.
6 But that's what you're selling.

7 SUZANNE RUST: I think that
8 that's easy for folks to change. I mean,
9 that's not a big deal. It's not a real selling

10 point -- I mean, it really -- it's there, but
11 it's --

12 CHARLIE SASSARA: I know. It
13 goes to the --

14 SUZANNE RUST: I completely -- I
15 understand. I think it's just awareness.

16 CHARLIE SASSARA: Right.

17 SUZANNE RUST: I think it's a
18 great point and something that we can certainly
19 work on.

20 CHARLIE SASSARA: I appreciate
21 that very much.

22 SUZANNE RUST: Yeah, that's not a
23 big deal.

24 SALLY GIBERT: Expectations have
25 a lot to do with it?

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1 CHARLIE SASSARA: Are we going to
2 go see a bear? Are we going to see a climber?
3 Are we going to go see McKinley? Whatever it
4 is. You're making -- you're competing with the
5 other flight operators for the experience.
6 You're saying -- everyone is saying I'm the
7 best, here's how I'm distinctive and such. But
8 I think -- I would hope you would revisit this
9 advertising in terms of how it changes
10 perceptions, because there was a big

11 conversation earlier about trying to educate
12 people on the ground. There's the other part
13 of the conversation.

14 SUZANNE RUST: I think just
15 bringing it up, it's good. It brings awareness
16 to it.

17 JIM EDWARDS: That brings up an
18 issue from a regulatory standpoint. There is a
19 limit as to how close you can operate an
20 aircraft to even a climber. The law says you
21 can't operate an airplane closer than 500 feet
22 above or 2,000 feet horizontal to personal
23 property. So -- including individuals who
24 possess that personal property. Now, do you
25 see aircraft getting closer than that?

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1 CHARLIE SASSARA: Routinely.

2 JIM EDWARDS: I need to know
3 that, because that's not legal. We need to
4 probably get some educational material out to
5 these pilots saying we're going to start
6 watching this. And there are some things we
7 can do in that sense to -- you know, I'm not
8 interested in getting heavy-handed, but on the
9 other hand, just getting people aware of what
10 the law says.

11 SALLY GIBERT: What were the
12 numbers again?

13 JIM EDWARDS: 500 feet above, or
14 2,000 feet horizontal, except for takeoff and
15 landing. So now when you're landing at camps,
16 you will be closer, and you would expect that.
17 But if you're out there going off the cliff
18 face looking at somebody hanging from a rope,
19 you've got to be 2,000 feet lateral, which is
20 not quite --

21 CHARLIE SASSARA: If I may, one
22 other piece of this advertising, which is what
23 I notice, is that -- that commercial operators
24 value the experience on the glacier as you
25 would expect a lot of other people to value

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1 them. But the language around the advertising
2 is interesting in that they enjoy the stillness
3 of the mountain broken only by the far-off
4 rumble of distant rock and ice slides. Hear
5 the silence of the ice age world and breathe
6 fresh mountain air. It's that thematically
7 we're selling the experience of being silent,
8 and it's -- it's a paradox. We've got to get
9 there. We have this problem. I mean -- but
10 when we're talking about perceptions and what
11 we're selling -- anyway, it's one of those
12 unfortunate sort of examples of perhaps not
13 doing what your intentions are.

14 Sorry, that's a little harsh.
15 TOM GEORGE: 2,000 feet. Is it
16 500 feet above or around? I don't think
17 there's a 2,000 foot horizontal. I think it's
18 only 500 feet. We'll look it up on the --
19 JIM EDWARDS: Please do.
20 ERIKA BENNETT: That's un- --
21 TOM GEORGE: Remote area 500
22 feet.
23 JIM EDWARDS: Or 2,000 feet
24 horizontal.
25 TOM GEORGE: Maybe it's changed.

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1 We need to make sure we've got the right
2 number.
3 JIM EDWARDS: Except takeoffs and
4 landings.
5 BRIAN OKONEK: I think the meat
6 of this whole thing is just what we're talking
7 about right now. It's understanding what the
8 perception of the problem is, and then coming
9 up with ways like these have been some
10 excellent things. Coming up with ways to
11 alleviate a problem area, and then complying
12 with it. And that's going to take education on
13 the operators' parts and in making sure that
14 the pilots understand why these things are
15 being asked for, and making sure they stick to

16 it. I mean, it can make a huge difference if
17 planes are staying a couple miles off the
18 summit, off to the east, and the climbers are
19 on the west side, makes a huge, huge difference
20 to your experience of the high camps, and
21 you're climbing on the mountain and it can
22 solve lots and lots of the -- lots of the
23 problems, yes. It's great, but it's going to
24 take a lot, I think, more education and
25 perseverance on the operators' parts to make

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1 sure that the pilots stick to that, and I --
2 again, Denali is a huge mass, and you don't
3 need to be up close to it to appreciate it. In
4 fact, being further away you really get the
5 perception of its magnitude above everything
6 else. So getting up close, I don't think,
7 needs to be a selling point for the flights.

8 ERIC DENKEWALTER: So you should
9 just stay at base camp, then?

10 BRIAN OKONEK: No, I'm not saying
11 that.

12 ERIC DENKEWALTER: We're going to
13 the summit -- the same reason we're going to
14 the summit.

15 SALLY GIBERT: Kelly, where were
16 you --

17 SUZANNE RUST: Should I continue?

18 SALLY GIBERT: Let her finish the
19 opinion. We'll take a break and allow the
20 audience -- whatever you want to call
21 yourselves -- the opportunity to talk.

22 SUZANNE RUST: I want to speak to
23 one of the things that Charlie was talking
24 about, just the compliance. We can work -- I
25 know in our ground school we present it, you

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1 know, try to give pilots the scope of what
2 we're doing in the overflights, talking about
3 that, and then we talked about our best
4 practices and -- but we can work harder on
5 that. All of us can.

6 CHARLIE SASSARA: It's hard.

7 SUZANNE RUST: It is. It's a
8 challenge. But it does start with -- we spent
9 a good bit of time in the last -- at least two
10 ground schools going over what's happening here
11 so that people understand kind of what's at
12 stake, having an idea of the big picture. Not
13 just our little part of the world. So, okay,
14 so I'm going to -- let's see --

15 Okay. So Kahiltna Pass Crossing.
16 So during climbing season, climbers traveling
17 Kahiltna Glacier located at the 11,000 foot
18 camp are subject to aircraft noise at Kahiltna

19 Pass, near Kahiltna Pass.

20 So the procedure is for operators
21 to plan to fly through Kahiltna Pass at a safe
22 altitude, and that should be well established
23 before arriving at the pass. They're to avoid
24 orbiting at climb power in or south of the pass
25 to minimize impact, the sound impact from

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1 climbers. So, Talkeetna Air Taxi, K2 and
2 Talkeetna Air -- I wasn't able to talk with
3 Hudson, but we all found that this was
4 something we were working to achieve this
5 summer, and wasn't a problem for us. It wasn't
6 something difficult to do.

7 So that's really it.

8 BRIAN OKONEK: At what point on
9 the Kahiltna were you -- add to your altitude
10 for crossing Kahiltna Pass? The northeast
11 fork? East fork?

12 SUZANNE RUST: I'm not sure.

13 TOM GEORGE: He didn't specify.

14 SUZANNE RUST: I know we were
15 arriving -- Eric.

16 ERIC DENKEWALTER: Here's what
17 was happening: People were flying up at a --
18 you know, pretty good altitude going over base
19 camp and finding that, oh, get up to an

20 altitude, I can't quite get over the pass. So
21 they start doing the circle like an eagle
22 business here trying to get over. What we
23 basically said, when you go over base camp, you
24 need to be at 11,000 feet. So start your climb
25 earlier in the whole program so that when you

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1 get there you don't have to orbit to get that
2 last little bit of altitude. That seemed to
3 make a significant difference. Especially the
4 planes that struggled to get over there anyway.
5 And then if you could, preferably, you would
6 come from the north side, throttle back and
7 down the Kahiltna, if you're going to go that
8 way. Again, perception on the ground. But
9 anytime you're doing this business, trying to
10 circle, one more try to get enough altitude,
11 obviously that doesn't work. To tell people be
12 at altitude over base camp helps out.

13 BILL POST: I'd just like to add,
14 depending on the load, the temperatures, and
15 the performance of the aircraft, there's times
16 you're climbing from Kahiltna Pass -- you're
17 asking that aircraft to climb continuously, to
18 make 11,000 feet by base camp just doesn't
19 happen. So you're continuing to climb the
20 whole time. Then you're typically trying to
21 use the ridges to find a little lift or

22 something like that. But, no, I think it's
23 very rare to have people circling at the pass
24 itself. Then you're committing yourself to
25 closer terrain and you're just eking over.

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1 You're trying to make a decision before then
2 whether or not you're going to be able to make
3 it.

4 BRIAN OKONEK: My experience from
5 being on the ground is many of the aircraft
6 were pulling a lot of power all the way up --
7 all the way up the Kahiltna where they seemed
8 to me it would have been much better for a user
9 on the ground if the pilots did their big
10 circle out there by base camp and then weren't
11 pulling so much power. Because by the time you
12 get to the pass, you're not far above the
13 climbers.

14 BILL POST: It's the closest
15 proximity you're going to have.

16 BRIAN OKONEK: The Kahiltna from
17 the northeast is noisy.

18 BILL POST: You can appreciate,
19 depending on the aircraft conditions and
20 positions, I'm at climbing power from the time
21 I leave Talkeetna, if you can believe that. To
22 be the most efficient, you hope to arrive at

23 your altitude close to when you get to the
24 pass, not having to circle either at base camp
25 or anywhere else, you're nearly working with

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1 shaving minutes everywhere trying to give them
2 a complete tour in the most efficient manner
3 possible. It is -- it's a compromise. And I
4 can certainly appreciate the people there at
5 the pass because you can well be at climbing
6 power as you approach Kahiltna Pass, and that's
7 an unfortunate reality.

8 CHARLIE SASSARA: It doesn't have
9 to be a reality.

10 BILL POST: If I had the luxury
11 of being 11 or 12 at base camp, I certainly
12 would. Believe me, I'd like to have all that
13 clearance. If I can do it legally and
14 efficiently to arrive at that altitude shortly
15 before I get there, well, then that's what I'm
16 going to do rather than making a big turn prior
17 to that. Which I may not need. You can get to
18 the pass with an excess of altitude and then
19 fly in all kinds of sink or descending area,
20 suddenly you're at climbing power and circling
21 when you never intended to and you had no
22 desire to. You don't know until you get there
23 and it's not the same every time on the same
24 day. So it's an unfortunate reality of just

25 the terrain and airflow and how close you are

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1 to terrain if you're flying lift or sink, and
2 it's not something that you can see until
3 you're there. Other pilots can warn you of it,
4 you can try to avoid the same situation if they
5 ran into it. But, I mean, it's easy for you
6 guys to say, just circle over base camp. You
7 don't know how hard I work to hit my one hour,
8 hour and a half every time. I mean, it's --
9 clock is ticking, I've got to get back to camp.
10 Every delay that is made in a flight plan from
11 the first flight of the day, it means you're
12 delayed that much more throughout the day, you
13 fall that much farther off schedule. I'm not
14 ignorant, believe me. I've been on the ground,
15 too. I'm not insensitive to the situation of
16 the people on the ground. Nor do I think my
17 passengers or the people on the ground know how
18 hard I'm working to get the job done safely,
19 and give them what they're paying for.

20 SALLY GIBERT: That's a really
21 good point. And I think this might be a good
22 time to do a little mini public participation
23 opportunity.

24 Are you done with your
25 presentation?

1 Do you have anything more to say
2 back there?

3 BILL POST: No. Just another
4 thing. Of course, it's never apparent to
5 somebody on the ground. Part of our flight
6 paths are picked trying to find lift and/or
7 smooth air. And the people on the ground, of
8 course, would have no indication or realization
9 of that. And so -- yeah, because of the
10 aircraft we fly, our -- for Talkeetna Air Taxi,
11 Kahiltna Pass is the main -- the other
12 sensitive areas, basically, we're not a part of
13 that. But there's -- yes, that thing of
14 Kahiltna Pass is one of the very few areas
15 where there is the focus of both aircraft and
16 climbers, and the nearest proximity of which I
17 can think of rather than landing and taking off
18 at base camp, that sort of thing.

19 If we're doing the same thing
20 with climbers in the gorge, it's an unfortunate
21 thing where everything comes together. We're
22 asking everything we can of the aircraft at
23 times, and we are in the closest proximity to
24 those that are on the ground. And it's just
25 reality that -- all during the route, which

1 sometimes I will do. Not even use the pass.

2 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Question. Was
3 it Bill?

4 BILL POST: Yes.

5 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Thanks, Bill.
6 It's good to have that perspective.

7 So, are you saying that these --
8 the suggestions never work for your aircraft,
9 or just sometimes?

10 BILL POST: Absolutely. If I can
11 be higher sooner, I will, believe me. I'd
12 rather sail through there high and comfortable
13 as can be. I don't like --

14 JOAN FRANKEVICH: It's not that
15 these recommendations are impossible. It's
16 just under some conditions you can't do it for
17 safety reasons?

18 BILL POST: It's forced on us,
19 what the load is doing, temperatures, yeah,
20 exactly. Given our druthers, I think any pilot
21 would go comfortably high. Altitude is your
22 friend in an airplane. Not thinking about the
23 people on the ground, I'd like to have as much
24 straight clearance as I can have when I hit an
25 area like that.

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Great. I think
2 we recognize that these are voluntary. They're
3 not always going to work. There's different
4 conditions. And then you might also think, if
5 you have any ideas now or in the future,
6 that -- this is a problem area. If you see
7 other ideas that might also work or work
8 better, we'd love to hear them.

9 BILL POST: Only one other place
10 to cross to the north side, and that's tighter
11 and more likelihood of some sinking air there.

12 ERIKA BENNETT: Turbulent there.
13 A different pass, a little above and across
14 from base camp. We can cross there at times.
15 Yeah, you don't have as much room to maneuver,
16 it's an even smaller, tighter pass. Kahiltna
17 is the pass of choice.

18 JOAN FRANKEVICH: You can use
19 that as an alternate to Kahiltna, but only when
20 conditions are perfect?

21 BILL POST: Correct.

22 SALLY GIBERT: Eric and Kelly, if
23 you had something.

24 ERIK DENKEWALTER: So, who was at
25 14 camp this year?

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1 ELWOOD LYNN: All the staff.
2 Pretty much the entire staff.

3 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I was
4 thinking, rather than just a couple here and
5 there, it would be nice if we had somebody at
6 14 Camp say -- kind of the feedback I got was,
7 yeah, it's okay. Now I'm hearing, no, it
8 wasn't. We stayed away from 14 Camp and 17
9 Camp. Not perfectly, but almost the entire
10 season. I'm not hearing anything like, oh,
11 yeah, it made a difference. I don't know how
12 that's --

13 ELWOOD LYNN: Whoa, now, you're
14 live.

15 I don't know if what Charlie was
16 referring to was okay or not. The comments I
17 got was improvement.

18 ERIK DENKEWALTER: That's what I
19 kind of want to hear. If there's not -- I had
20 two guys that flew for me in 2008 that I didn't
21 invite back. They were good pilots, but they
22 were just -- I couldn't depend on them to kind
23 of do what they were told. You can only tell
24 people so many times.

25 So, I want to know if there's --

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1 I'd like to know if somebody does fly by there.

2 I know one big issue was the Rudolph Giuliani
3 guy flying around -- he wasn't an OAS guy at
4 the time, but the same guy doing the search.
5 He buzzed the camps up there. He thought it
6 was loads of fun. You kind of go okay, you're
7 out. I don't have control over him. We need
8 to know, was there a guy flying by? Making
9 noise? Looking at people? If that's the case,
10 I just need to know. I can't wait until a year
11 later to find out. I want to know.

12 Pretty simple cure here. They
13 kind of know what the rules are. I saw a guy
14 fly between the peaks, I said, "where the hell
15 are you going?"

16 "Oh, yeah."

17 So some of these people need to
18 be told more than once, not too many times more
19 than once. We can make this work. I've got to
20 have faster feedback than at the end of the
21 season or someone saying, "Oh, yeah, I didn't
22 see much improvement." I'm not tasking you.
23 I'm asking if it's possible if whoever's up
24 there, they can make note if airplanes are
25 going by. There aren't too many singles going

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1 on. It has to be twins. Most of them are
2 mine. I need to be able to recognize the
3 issue. We have meetings about this. We should

4 make some effort here.

5 The other thing is the -- I'm not
6 in the 185 business, and everything I've got
7 now, I shouldn't have to struggle to get to
8 Kahiltna Pass. I'm not the only one. People
9 have gone from the slower powered ones to
10 turbines. So I think, regardless, you're going
11 to see improvements in Kahiltna Pass, you're
12 going to have less airplanes struggling to make
13 it. There's -- when the piston Beavers get
14 phased out, we move into something else, then I
15 think -- some of these problems won't quite go
16 away. But there's going to be a lot less noise
17 involved. They'll be through there faster.
18 There won't be quite the power climb through
19 there.

20 The turbines have the capability
21 of going a lot higher and a lot faster climb.
22 So you're not going to have that same
23 situation. I think within a couple years, I
24 think that's the case, maybe three or four
25 years, and we've moved into, must be two, four,

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1 six, seven, eight turbines now on the airport.
2 Ten years ago there were none -- all 185s --
3 that don't make a lot of noise.

4 SALLY GIBERT: Kelly, did you

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5 have something?

6 KELLY BAY: Yeah. I was going to
7 ask Charlie. You were talking about the summit
8 flights, people complaining of the Navajo being
9 on top of them.

10 CHARLIE SASSARA: Just once.
11 This is Colby Kuhns.

12 KELLY BAY: well, is there -- can
13 you define what an acceptable distance is so an
14 operator can go, "You need to stay this far
15 away from the peak"?

16 CHARLIE SASSARA: Sure. When I
17 can see the guy's sunglasses, that's too close.

18 KELLY BAY: That's too close.

19 CHARLIE SASSARA: So -- Brian,
20 you might want to step in here on what the
21 distance is, I'll bet you 2,000 feet is what
22 the minimum is, and the summit is how -- how
23 wide is the summit area? A mile? Three
24 quarters of a mile?

25 BRIAN OKONEK: Uh-huh. About

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1 half, three quarters of a mile.

2 CHARLIE SASSARA: So that would
3 mean that they would be circling right on the
4 edge at 500 feet.

5 ERIK DENKEWALTER: what's that?

6 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Laterally.

7 CHARLIE SASSARA: Vertically
8 would be about 21, and then circling around the
9 edge of it. That would be pretty tight.

10 ERIKA BENNETT: Isn't it from
11 about Denali Pass to the summit is a mile and a
12 half? From Denali Pass to the summit is about
13 a mile and a half horizontally, not on the
14 ground?

15 ELWOOD LYNN: I would have
16 guessed more than that, but it could be.

17 ERIKA BENNETT: Whenever I would
18 circle over the summit, I'd hit Denali Pass
19 high and then keep that same raw radius all the
20 way around the summit. It would give me a
21 really great view. And I know I was pretty far
22 away.

23 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I'm going to
24 pass this around. You can look at a picture
25 here. See how far away these people are. Look

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1 at who signed it, who thought it was a great
2 idea to get his picture taken. Nobody else on
3 this. Give you a hint. It says "Strummit on
4 the Summit." we get people coming down can't
5 speak English, recognize the airplane, "Will
6 you take a picture of us?"

7 "Yeah."

10 they found this year; they said no. It was
11 notable improvement.

12 Of course, it's a perception
13 issue. Everybody has different perceptions.
14 But I didn't get any reports of that type of
15 noise. You know, the high camps, 14,000 foot
16 camp and 17,000 foot camp are natural
17 amphitheatres; any noise that gets close in the
18 area it bounces back and forth at you. But
19 what I got consistently from every member of
20 the staff when we talked after -- I think it
21 was mid-May when a couple of air taxi operators
22 came over and said, "We made these voluntary
23 changes." After that point, everybody said it
24 improved. Not quantifying how much
25 improvement, but it was notable improvement,

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1 and no complaints.

2 TOM GEORGE: Okay. Thank you.

3 CHARLIE SASSARA: It would be the
4 most consistent with your staff because they're
5 the people that are there on the year-by-year
6 basis, they would have a reference point. That
7 would be more reliable than one person saying,
8 "I had a bad experience."

9 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I want you to
10 understand, I will make this work. We'll stop

11 advertising. And I will stay away, like we
12 have. And I'll make sure that if I've got a
13 pilot who doesn't understand that and I find
14 out about it early, I can take care of it. I
15 want this to work for everybody. We're tossing
16 out some different viewpoints here. We can
17 make this work without my annoying your people
18 and whatnot. If people get a great view --
19 some of these pilots get bored, not tips. They
20 get bored. There you go. You find that all
21 the time.

22 I'm not looking at you, Scott.
23 All the time. When I see a couple of 810s
24 below me in Moose's Tooth, aha, I know the
25 consequences for those guys. I'm careful.

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1 They get their wings yanked.
2 But pilots get bored. All they
3 need to know is somebody is watching. If they
4 can't control themselves, then something is
5 going to happen. This is a very serious
6 business, and your personal discipline in doing
7 this is important. No different in climbing,
8 when you're in a situation here when you don't
9 have people that are not predictable and not do
10 what they're told. I will work on this. I
11 need faster feedback. I don't want to hear
12 secondhand, Colby was there and somebody flew

13 out.

14 CHARLIE SASSARA: You could find
15 out. You need to have a date?

16 ERIK DENKEWALTER: He needs to
17 call me and I'll blame it on K2, and we'll be
18 on it. I -- I'm not trying to make light of
19 it. I'll do something about it.

20 CHARLIE SASSARA: It's inherent.
21 This is going to be kind of mushy in terms of
22 feedback. But the guys on the Parks Service
23 can actually provide a great help in this
24 because they're consistently there, right, and
25 they have communications.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: They're often the
2 people that those complaints would be directed
3 at.

4 CHARLIE SASSARA: That's right.
5 That's the place where most of the people are.

6 SALLY GIBERT: Tom. And we'll go
7 around.

8 TOM GEORGE: Again, I think we
9 need to bear in mind, this is a process. And
10 what we tried to take this last year was the
11 first increment of it. I would hope that we'll
12 get the aviation working group back together
13 with whatever feedback we can get and not only

14 take -- revisit these and see if they need to
15 be tweaked, scrapped, altered, and maybe
16 consider some other things we haven't gotten to
17 yet. But for that to work, we really do need
18 to have to do better on the feedback side.

19 At one time we would have thought
20 that Jared in the sound monitoring -- the
21 monitoring is a very limited, very
22 site-specific kind of thing. We have got to
23 scratch our heads and think about how -- not
24 only inside the agency. You know, again, when
25 you have staff at various places that we know

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1 are noise sensitive, to, you know, looking at
2 how we're capturing that information, getting
3 that feedback even on the Triple Lakes Trail to
4 maybe take a look at how things are working. I
5 think there's two components of it. We do need
6 the immediate feedback, as Eric says, when
7 there is a specific problem, when an event is
8 fresh enough that people can take a look and
9 see why a certain thing happened. I know if
10 Tim Cudney were here, he would tell us, years
11 ago, they put some procedures into place,
12 here's what they're trying to do. Anytime they
13 can't do that, they call the Parks Service and
14 let them know. So before there is a complaint
15 the Parks Service has been put on notice,

16 here's what they did with their helicopter and
17 here's the reason why. Again, there's a way to
18 kind of match these things up. Safety at the
19 top of the pecking order here, there are going
20 to be times when these best practices get flown
21 out the window and maybe a few things along
22 with it. I think, as user groups, we need to
23 get back to where we can get feedback so we can
24 get things back to the table. It may take, in
25 my mind, a couple of seasons' worth of tweaking

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1 before we actually get something that is as
2 workable as we think we can for now. In fact,
3 this process at some level will probably go on
4 forever as things change. Right now,
5 particularly, it's dynamic when we're trying to
6 actually get these systems in place. We've got
7 to work as equally hard on getting the feedback
8 as we do at making whatever adjustments we're
9 trying to make. We also know that the
10 potential for making a change here may actually
11 cause or spring up a problem another place. We
12 may just be displacing problems. That's
13 another reason we need to be getting feedback
14 in, so that our zest and desire to make one
15 element of the user community happy doesn't
16 create a problem with some other party.

17 CHARLIE SASSARA: If I may.
18 SALLY GIBERT: A little segue,
19 and I'll go to you.
20 CHARLIE SASSARA: On the
21 feedback, I think that --
22 BILL POST: Could you speak up a
23 little bit here?
24 CHARLIE SASSARA: I'm sorry.
25 TOM GEORGE: Give him the

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1 microphone.
2 CHARLIE SASSARA: I think we need
3 to be careful about the feedback, because we
4 would be -- we may be selecting the wrong
5 information --
6 TOM GEORGE: Two mics now.
7 Should be no problem hearing.
8 CHARLIE SASSARA: Hello. It's
9 better the way you had gotten information, and
10 that was it came to him without any filter.
11 Someone was coming in and said, "This is what
12 happened." But if you have everyone out there
13 listening for aircraft, you're going to get
14 people reporting aircraft. So, it's a bit of a
15 conflict. I mean, we almost have to do this
16 surreptitiously and see if it works.
17 TOM GEORGE: I would agree that
18 it needs to be designed, but what I'm saying is

19 we need to put some energy into that work as
20 well. We can't expect that all the work is
21 going to go on on the part of the air tour
22 operators tweaking if we don't actually do a
23 similar amount of work in other areas -- this
24 is a two-way, very dynamic kind of
25 relationship. And we've got to work to make

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1 that work.

2 SALLY GIBERT: Right there and
3 then --

4 SANDRA LOOMIS: Were there any
5 complaints this year about aircraft noise from
6 climbers? Were there any?

7 Just a comment. I know at
8 Talkeetna Air Taxi we're conscious of climbers
9 and their experience. We want to work, like
10 Eric, to make this work and the things we're
11 doing, our pilots are aware of and we're trying
12 to do. I know there's other things that we're
13 doing. We're not always selling strongly into
14 the mountain experience, but still having it
15 there as an offer, but maybe, you know, like --
16 I work with staff to try and sell more of the
17 southside experience, which is away from the
18 climber thing, at least during climbing season.
19 That's something internally we've done. You

20 know, maybe makes a difference. But were there
21 any complaints?

22 JOHN LEONARD: Miriam can
23 probably help me. We have -- McKinley -- we
24 debrief at least one member from all the groups
25 that come up. If we -- come off, excuse me, if

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1 we did have complaints when we looked at the
2 database. Very few, less than three, I
3 thought.

4 SALLY GIBERT: What would be a
5 typical -- like before this year, how many
6 complaints would you have gotten?

7 JOHN LEONARD: I can't tell you,
8 exactly. But we did go back a number of years,
9 and there were not a lot of complaints.

10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It addresses
11 what Charlie is speaking to. We do not ask
12 specifically: "were you affected in any way by
13 aircraft?" The questions that are being asked
14 of people as they come back in do not address
15 overflights. "How was your experience?" Very
16 broad: "How was your experience? Is there
17 anything you would like us to do that" -- you
18 know, sorry, I'm winging it here -- "to improve
19 the experience?" We are specifically
20 interested in did you find trash or those
21 things that are a direct impact on the resource

22 and kind of climber health and safety. So
23 they're broad enough that the people who do
24 probably comment about aircraft noise are what
25 Charlie also finds. Those people who really --

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1 it affected their experience because they
2 remember it enough. Now that they're back into
3 Talkeetna, had their shower and all the really
4 great food, to tell us about it. So, I would
5 agree that there needs to be energy put into
6 the design of how we're capturing that, even if
7 internally Parks Service is going to be part of
8 that monitoring effort. We really need it to
9 be objective.

10 ELWOOD LYNN: I think you have
11 that, but then, also, if there's some gross
12 violations, then we should be ready to report
13 them immediately so that we get timely feedback
14 and we can deal with a problem pilot or
15 whatever.

16 JIM EDWARDS: How do you report
17 gross violations, and to whom?

18 ELWOOD LYNN: That's what we need
19 to design.

20 JIM EDWARDS: Well, because there
21 are regulatory agencies sitting at this
22 table -- two, mine and the military -- that

23 need that information when it reaches certain
24 tolerances. Up to that point, it's none of our
25 damn business, and it becomes the operators.

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1 My question is -- I really have great faith in
2 the operators sitting here in this room. I've
3 heard a lot of concern and a lot of willingness
4 to try to make adjustments to get the needs of
5 the user groups in the front of their pilots
6 and how they can evaluate it.

7 The group I'm concerned about
8 that we haven't heard about is the pilot who is
9 not a commercial operator but is up there, hey,
10 wouldn't that be neat to go up to take a look
11 at these climbers on Mount Denali? And we get
12 this gee-whiz airplane. I'm here from the
13 States or I'm up here from Homer, and I'm going
14 to go up and take a look at all this. I'm more
15 worried about that individual doing something
16 dumb and creating a problem for the user groups
17 than I am the operators.

18 Now, my question is: And what I
19 heard said here just recently, you're talking
20 about three or four reports of gross problems a
21 year. Is that about what you've experienced?
22 Is that what I'm hearing?

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Jim, you're
24 saying that in the course of a season, a summer

25 season that people only officially report to

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1 the National Park Service three or four times?

2 I would say that is incorrect.

3 JIM EDWARDS: That's my question.

4 what's a good ballpark guess?

5 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So this is a
6 situation that we've had in the South district,
7 aircrafts flying too low. It was a problem.
8 We contacted the operator. They resolved it.
9 That, I think, is the perfect way to resolve
10 it.

11 JIM EDWARDS: Sure. But how do
12 you know which outfit?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Because they
14 were low enough.

15 ERIKA BENNETT: We get that a
16 lot. Suzanne is not here. We have part of the
17 history is one person always assumed that the
18 person was a specific operator and would call
19 and complain. It didn't matter what it was or
20 who it was. We didn't have a flight that day,
21 but it was our airplane, and it was too low.
22 And -- yeah.

23 JIM EDWARDS: Now, you're getting
24 where I'm trying to go. First, I'm trying to
25 get some sort of a picture in my mind of how

1 many of these do you have a year, total number?
2 Just a wild guess. And, second, how do we know
3 who it was? Was it an operator or was it
4 somebody who came by who is not an operator who
5 is just out for an experience in the Park? How
6 many of those do you have?

7 SALLY GIBERT: I'm not sure --
8 maybe I'm pre-empting your answer. I'm not
9 sure how important it is to get some kind of a
10 number.

11 JIM EDWARDS: Sally, it's very
12 important. I want to know, is the issue with
13 the operators? Is the issue with these other
14 people coming up here and flying? We call them
15 quote, general aviation. Now, if they're
16 military, I think we've got a pretty good
17 handle on it. General aviation versus
18 commercial aviation, I don't know which one
19 we're dealing with.

20 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah, in terms of
21 the number of complaints, I think a lot of
22 people would like to see less noise. Since our
23 general goal is to have less noise, it doesn't
24 matter if it's five or seven.

25 JIM EDWARDS: It would help me to

1 know to have an idea of what size of a base --
2 database we're talking about, so I'll have some
3 idea how to go about to sift it.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: On the south side
5 we have a small group of users and we have a
6 systematic checkout procedure, and it sounds
7 like we had three of them out of however many
8 climbers -- 1,000? -- that voiced a concern
9 about the aircraft noise.

10 That's a pretty -- a systematic
11 approach that we have.

12 On the north side, we just have
13 visitor comment cards that people fill out if
14 something annoys them or if something really
15 struck their fancy. And I would say that we
16 get between one and two dozen complaints a year
17 about overflight noise.

18 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I'm sorry.
19 How many?

20 ELWOOD LYNN: Between one and two
21 dozen. I don't have a database that I can turn
22 to and say. But that's just from my reading
23 visitor comments. That's my gut feeling. And
24 those ranged from -- they're primarily
25 backcountry users that have gone out and spent

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1 several nights out and just were bothered
2 enough to come in and fill out the form. And
3 my gut feeling would be that those are more
4 commercial overflights than recreational planes
5 just buzzing around.

6 BRIAN OKONEK: I believe the ones
7 that you're talking about on the south side are
8 just for Foraker and Denali. That doesn't
9 include the little --

10 ELWOOD LYNN: Only people that
11 have permits for the closeout.

12 BRIAN OKONEK: The other thing
13 is, it's not necessarily, you know, gross
14 negligence, you know. A lot of these are
15 perception complaints, people whose wilderness
16 experience, you know, has been altered by it.
17 But their safety wasn't altered by it. It
18 wasn't necessarily somebody buzzing their camp
19 or flying recklessly or something like this.
20 So, it is -- your list is going to be quite
21 short because, even myself, I've been on trips
22 where an airplane has changed part of my day,
23 but I didn't go to the agency whose land I was
24 on when I got home and complain about it. It
25 was just, like, oh, bummer, I just got buzzed

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1 by two helicopters, and then it goes on.
2 But -- so there's a lot of people out there who
3 probably had some kind of experience like that,
4 but it's not part of an official comment
5 anywhere. It's gone.

6 JIM EDWARDS: The reason I'm
7 belaboring all this is in the other elements of
8 aviation, the agency is moving towards
9 voluntary disclosure programs where we allow
10 people who maybe commit a violation or get
11 involved in a safety issue to come forward and
12 talk about it, and we excuse them so that we
13 can get to the information, so that we can get
14 to understanding what's causing these things
15 and try to come to some solutions. It sounds
16 to me that we have the beginnings of that from
17 what we've been talking about between the
18 operators and the user groups here around this
19 table. That this feedback, we need to
20 encourage. And we need to encourage it in the
21 sense that we're not going to punish the pilot
22 or anybody else, the operator. We're going to
23 look for cause and effect and cure.

24 I also want to see if there is
25 this other -- you call them recreational

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1 pilots, that may be a good distinction between

2 the commercial group and the others. I would
3 like to have some understanding how much that's
4 an issue to us. Because this is not going to
5 work for that group. We need a different kind
6 of approach. And if it's not a problem, we
7 don't need to deal with it. If one guy comes
8 by a year, it's hardly worth trying to fix.

9 But if it's significant, then
10 after we're done with the commercial thing, we
11 need to shift our focus to this other group.

12 I would strongly suggest to this
13 group that voluntary disclosure would be
14 something to look at for our voluntary efforts
15 to reduce noise input.

16 SALLY GIBERT: You're suggesting
17 that once this -- the voluntary measures that
18 are sort of air tested or whatever with the
19 commercial pilots, that if those seem to be
20 working, to make an effort to get that
21 information out to other pilots? Is that --
22 through the FAA friendly advisories?

23 JIM EDWARDS: Or through the
24 AOPA, because they have a big general aviation
25 audience, and run an article about flying to

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1 Alaska and, oh, by the way, while you're up
2 here, here's how to be a good neighbor and
3 enjoy the Denali National Park.

4 TOM GEORGE: If I can speak to
5 that for a moment. Some of this came up in
6 some of the meetings that you had missed
7 earlier with your other duties as assigned, but
8 the Park actually has published a revised
9 version of their aviation information map,
10 which I have a copy of here. And what I'm
11 hoping is -- I mean, we started specifically
12 with the air tour operators just because they
13 have the highest frequency of operations in the
14 area. But as we identify, again,
15 noise-sensitive areas and maybe -- we'll have
16 to look and see whether -- some of these
17 protocols certainly -- or best practices
18 certainly apply there, too. One of the perhaps
19 next steps is to consider adding some
20 noise-sensitive information content onto this
21 map and maybe even some of the best practices
22 as well as soon as we kind of firm them up a
23 little better and believe they're achieving
24 what we're trying to accomplish. So, I think
25 that is kind of the plan in the queue is to get

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1 to that step, but using the highest frequency
2 of operations as the place to start since we're
3 going to get the most feedback, most experience
4 from that. I'm not personally aware of any

5 good way to measure what the -- you know, what
6 the level of GA versus air tour operations are.
7 We scratched our head a little bit about that.

8 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Very few.

9 TOM GEORGE: Percentagewise, I
10 don't think there are many.

11 ERIK DENKEWALTER: So strange.
12 It's like there's a stranger in town. Many not
13 very often go up there.

14 TOM GEORGE: I don't want to
15 ignore them, but I think we're taking it in
16 what appears to be a very logical process of
17 starting with the highest frequency of use and
18 mostly working with people in this environment.
19 And distill out level of information, perhaps
20 using this and other mechanisms we can start
21 and try to reach that audience as well. I'm
22 certainly already putting into presentations
23 about flight to Alaska sound-sensitive
24 material. But, again, we need to have concrete
25 information on what are areas to avoid. If we

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1 wave our arms in the air and say, no, stay out
2 of the parks, I don't want to do that. But to
3 indicate what are sensitive areas and encourage
4 people to fly friendly, I think, is a very
5 reasonable thing for us to do.

6 And, to me, the unfortunate thing
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7 is we just published a whole mess of these
8 before we got to that step, but there's an
9 on-line version of this, maybe within the next
10 year we can prototype adding information to,
11 and having it on-line for some time before
12 we're ready to print some other maps. I think
13 we've got ways to move forward that will start
14 to bring in that element of the aviation
15 community along with the efforts that are going
16 on here.

17 SALLY GIBERT: Who prints those
18 maps?

19 TOM GEORGE: This was printed --
20 I believe -- it's printed as both an FAA and
21 Parks Service product, and I think the FAA --
22 I'm sorry, the Parks Service generated the map,
23 and FAA paid for the printing of it, is my
24 understanding.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. We'll be

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1 happy to get copies.

2 JIM EDWARDS: We need to use them
3 up.

4 TOM GEORGE: Please take multiple
5 copies and use them so we can print more after
6 we get more information.

7 JIM EDWARDS: That's what they're

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8 for, to get distributed.

9 BILL POST: I'd like to suggest
10 the best practice that we've adopted. It's met
11 with tremendous success. We call as many
12 climbers as -- anyway, whenever we drop
13 climbers off, we let them know if we heard a
14 single comment out of them, they're going to
15 walk home. Our approval rating has gone 100
16 percent. I put that out for others, and I
17 think that could solve the problem. We
18 wouldn't have to go any further.

19 (Chuckles.)

20 SALLY GIBERT: Noted.

21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I've got an
22 undated study here, aircraft encounters,
23 et cetera. They make a comment in here,
24 knowledge of aircraft prior to the trip had a
25 significant influence on respondents reactions

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1 to aircraft they encountered. It made negative
2 reactions more likely from about 60 percent
3 that knew about the overflights to 40 percent
4 that didn't know. I don't want to -- that --
5 I'd be willing to say if we solicit comments,
6 that's fine. We have to put that in
7 perspective. If we solicit them, we get more
8 feedback. I'd rather have us do that. If
9 you're part of it, we need to ask them

10 point-blank, say what about it. Knowing --

11 ERIKA BENNETT: Were they
12 soliciting comments before their trip or
13 after --

14 ERIK DENKEWALTER: They told them
15 ahead of time. Knowledge of the aircraft prior
16 to the trip had significant impact on
17 respondents' reactions. We factor that in.
18 I'd rather hear that so we've got something out
19 there. Look of all the comments we've got
20 here. Maybe it was better or worse. We don't
21 seem to have that. Are we making progress on
22 what we're doing? Anecdotal information. I
23 heard a complaint or I didn't. One point.

24 The other point that was brought
25 up was this -- who is doing it? All right.

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1 This is back on June 11th, 2006. While we were
2 backpacking in the Moose Creek Unit 34 area,
3 white helicopter with a black mark on its tail
4 circled the area several times. The helicopter
5 sounded very close to the ground, 20 or 30
6 foot. Went up again, circled back, and once
7 again descended. We saw a caribou running
8 around in an attempt to flee. The helicopter
9 remained for about ten seconds before ascending
10 to continue tour of the area. I believe this

11 was unnecessary harassment of wildlife, et
12 cetera, et cetera.

13 It turns out, this was a
14 survey -- guy was doing a survey of caribou and
15 whatnot, game survey. People's perception at
16 that point, wow, that was terrible.

17 Another one back in here, too,
18 boy, scattered a whole herd of them that were
19 running around. You know, animal counting is
20 tough. I did this for a few years, and you try
21 not to alter the animals' behavior to get an
22 accurate count. Sometimes you're getting in
23 close. Guys give them some fancy names and
24 actually tackle the caribou after they dart
25 them. Sometimes they need to get in pretty

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1 close. People's perceptions sometimes of
2 what's going on may not necessarily be the
3 reality of the whole thing. Maybe had they
4 known this was an animal count, they wouldn't
5 have written this up. Sometimes things are
6 happening. People going back and forth, back
7 and forth. I wonder what he's doing? Maybe
8 he's searching for somebody.

9 We have to take that into account
10 when we read these things. That's all. Thank
11 you.

12 SANDRA LOOMIS: A comment. AS
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13 far as time and feedback and getting more data
14 and working all the pilots here and the
15 operators, all the operators want to work, of
16 course, with all the user groups. It does take
17 time to change those things in that circle of
18 feedback, and I think I'm appreciating that you
19 are doing that.

20 SALLY GIBERT: Any other --

21 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Just a quick
22 question, Elwood. On the North side, when you
23 get one to two dozen comment cards, you think,
24 those are unsolicited? Those are people that
25 come back and want to tell people some of this.

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1 They request it, they're given the card, and
2 write it in?

3 ELWOOD LYNN: Yeah. They have to
4 go to one of our contact stations and ask for a
5 comment card.

6 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Okay.

7 BRIAN OKONEK: Miriam, have you
8 had any input from anybody in the public
9 writing to your e-mail address on any issues on
10 aviation?

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You know, I've
12 been sharing that, like, at each meeting. I
13 didn't receive -- between April and this

14 meeting, there was nothing that came to me
15 specific to aircraft. In the past I have been
16 sharing things. Whatever I received, we have
17 it on the record here.

18 BRIAN OKONEK: Since April?

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I didn't
20 receive anything.

21 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Jared, were you
22 able to do any monitoring in the Triple Lakes
23 area or up in the high McKinley/Kahiltna area?

24 JARED WITHERS: Uh-huh.

25 JOAN FRANKEVICH: You're going to

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1 talk about that later?

2 JARED WITHERS: Uh-huh.

3 BRIAN OKONEK: We were talking
4 about the summit flights. At one point we're
5 talking about how far. Is it a good distance
6 to stay away? I don't feel qualified to say a
7 specific distance, but I would think if the
8 summit flights stayed to the east of the summit
9 that doesn't put them over either the 14 Camp
10 or the 17 high camp, the most commonly climbed
11 route on the mountain. If they stayed east and
12 stayed, like, Denali Pass, approximately mile
13 and a half away, that's possibly a pretty good
14 goal to shoot for. What you don't want the
15 airplane to be is super notable when you're up

16 there. You don't want to be climbing along the
17 summit ridge and have the airplane go by
18 looking pretty big. If it's circling around a
19 half mile off to the east, it's not going to be
20 the dominating presence while you're on the
21 top. And having been on summit flights myself,
22 I know it's still a very impressive sight to
23 see Denali from a mile and a half away. And
24 maybe that's too close. You have to get up
25 there and be standing on top when a Navajo is

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1 circling around a half mile away.

2 TOM GEORGE: Flight standards and
3 Scott put an agent up at the top of the
4 mountain for a little while. At least a third
5 of the season.

6 BRIAN OKONEK: Talk about the
7 climbing season. There's quite a bit of the
8 summer when there's tourists around when
9 there's not climbers on the Denali. There's
10 other times when you can go a whole lot closer.
11 When I was in New Zealand, the ski plane made
12 ski tracks on the snow of Mount Cook. There
13 you go. You can have fun after the climbing
14 season.

15 SALLY GIBERT: For my own
16 edification, after the climbing season, were

17 the pilots still using these best practices, or
18 was that not an issue?

19 ERIK DENKEWALTER: We wait for
20 the climbers to get out of there. As long as
21 we're not bothering anybody, we'll go around
22 the whole thing or whatever. We do really make
23 an attempt to make sure they're cleaned out of
24 the camps before we go up there. I know for
25 sure we'll have a couple of Russian climbers

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1 climb from mid July to September this year.
2 And that is kind of the point. We're talking
3 the difference between sound and noise. Huge
4 difference right there. And I am for avoiding
5 noise as much as possible. And that's people,
6 animals, whatever, being affected by what I'm
7 doing. But once they're all gone, then we're
8 not going to hurt the ice and snow and rocks.
9 Safe practices, people have a great time. And
10 I hope that's kind of what we're looking at
11 here.

12 SALLY GIBERT: Let's see, where
13 are we at timewise?

14 JOHN LEONARD: I was going to
15 say, you know, the work groups about sound, I
16 think we do get a fair amount of feedback on
17 just distance and what you see. They're
18 bothersome. Sometimes they're not creating the

19 sound. In my experience being on the ground,
20 you can have a plane going down one time going
21 indicating -- virtually silent. If they're
22 climbing around the 17 bowl, that's where we
23 get the noise. They might affect people in
24 different ways. As far as sound quality, it's
25 completely different.

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1 CHARLIE SASSARA: I wanted to say
2 thank you, Suzanne, for championing this. It
3 looks like we're actually making some progress.
4 I mean, the point is that it's voluntary,
5 right, and that -- and if you're successful at
6 it and, you know, can do more, I'm very
7 appreciative of what -- Eric, what you guys are
8 doing already. I think that it's the right
9 step, and, you know, it's just getting -- like
10 any organization, it's getting it deeper
11 enculturated into the rest of the organization
12 that's how we operate. It's not perfect, so,
13 thank you.

14 SUZANNE RUST: Thanks to
15 everyone. Everyone worked particularly hard
16 that day to come up with things. I think
17 everybody is willing to continue.

18 SALLY GIBERT: I think it's a
19 good way. It's good having the stakeholders

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20 working together and seeing everybody's
21 constraints and not pigeonholing people. It's
22 good in that respect.
23 So why don't we use the rest of
24 our time before lunch? He haven't had the
25 agency reports yet. What do you think?

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I just want to
2 say I notice a new person has just arrived. On
3 our schedule, we did say public comment. We
4 should take a check to make sure to have people
5 to speak to that.

6 SUSAN OLSEN: My name is Susan
7 Olsen. I'm president of the Statewide Quiet
8 Rights nonprofit. Our mission is dedicated to
9 the rights of Alaskans for the benefit of
10 public land users, home and cabin users,
11 communities, businesses, wildlife and future
12 generations. We believe natural sounds and
13 natural quiet are valuable resources of the
14 public lands and need to be protected by land
15 managers like other important resources. We
16 believe you have a right to quiet, meaning that
17 you're entitled to have a quiet outdoor
18 experience. This includes an ability to
19 recreate free from the sight, sound, odor and
20 other evidence of motorized recreation, and to
21 be able to hear, see and smell only natural

22 sounds, surroundings and odors.

23 Our objective is a fair and
24 balanced allocation of Alaska's public lands,
25 both federal and state, for both nonmotorized

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1 and motorized users.

2 As you can tell from what I've
3 just said, we've spent most of our time working
4 on the motorized/nonmotorized recreational
5 issues, but we do also have broader concerns.
6 And so I'd like to speak to that and quite
7 generally, if I may, and before I do, I want to
8 say I have done flight seeing around Denali,
9 I've used air taxis for years getting out to
10 and from a cabin, and I must say I'm thrilled
11 to hear the faint sound of a plane coming in at
12 the designated place and time for pickup.

13 (Chuckles.)

14 SUSAN OLSEN: No question. But
15 I'd like to speak broadly.

16 The air is a commons, it's
17 another commons, and what that raises is the
18 issues of allocation between the users. And it
19 means that we all have a right to say how it
20 is -- should be used. And it also means that
21 users can't overwhelm that common to the
22 detriment of the rest of us who have rights to

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23 it.

24 How do we, for example -- how do
25 we balance the right of an air taxi service or

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1 services to make a living versus the rights of
2 the cabin owner who is underneath the flight
3 path for flight-seeing who built the cabin
4 there for its solitude, for its natural quiet,
5 and for his ability to hear the birds in the
6 spring? Or how do we balance the right of
7 tourists to go flight-seeing on a marvelous,
8 marvelous trip that they'll never have again --
9 an experience they'll never have again, against
10 the backpacker on the ground who is seeking a
11 wilderness experience which means solitude and
12 means being without sight or sound of any
13 manmade noise?

14 And the point of putting those
15 out is simply to say that we all have rights to
16 make decisions about the air space, about this
17 commons. It is not, in my view -- and I think
18 AQRC's view, it is not just the right of FAA,
19 and it's not just the right of the people using
20 the air space for either business or for
21 getting there. It's for the -- everybody,
22 because we're all affected by how that space is
23 used.

24 So, I guess that's what brings me
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25 to speak for Alaska Quiet Rights to this group.

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1 And then, finally, what I'd like
2 to -- I'd just like to leave you with, I'd
3 first like to comment to you about a book
4 called "One Square Inch of Silence" by Gordon
5 Hempton, which just came out last year --

6 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Fan just came
7 on.

8 SUSAN OLSEN: All right. The
9 book that I was mentioning is One Square Inch
10 of Silence by Gordon Hempton, and if you're not
11 familiar with this, this is a person who was
12 anxious -- who is a sound person who has
13 recorded sounds and is well recognized in that
14 field, but he wanted to come up with one square
15 inch of silence, and if you could find that,
16 that would then mean, like the surrounding
17 miles and miles and miles that also had to be
18 silent in order for him to stand on this one
19 spot and have that silence. And he found a
20 place in Olympia National Park, and -- but it's
21 an interesting book, and there are two thoughts
22 and one quote that I want to leave you with.
23 The quote is: Silence is not the absence of
24 something, but the presence of everything. You
25 think of natural sounds in that way. It's not

1 just the absence of noise, but it's in the
2 absence of noise you have the greater universe
3 around you.

4 And particularly for this group,
5 because you're dealing with Denali National
6 Park, and the observation he makes is that we
7 have -- because we are people of sight and
8 visual, we have tended to make natural quiet
9 and natural sounds second-class citizens in
10 comparison to our natural scenery. So, I think
11 that's well worth thinking about that when we
12 protect natural surroundings in order to
13 protect the scenery, we also need to protect
14 natural quiet so that you can hear natural
15 silence and you can be at one with nature.

16 Thank you. And I'd like to leave
17 you all a brochure, if I may.

18 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Give me
19 something specific to bite onto here. What
20 would you do different?

21 SUSAN OLSEN: I don't know. I
22 haven't been participating in this. I know
23 you're trying to work out things. The only
24 point that I would make is that we all have a
25 voice in this, so it's not just the air people

1 versus the park people. It's all of us are
2 affected.

3 SALLY GIBERT: Anyone else?

4 That makes me think -- one of the
5 things we've been kind of looking at is maybe
6 how to take some of the worst noise --

7 BILL POST: The fans are coming
8 back on.

9 ERIK DENKEWALTER: The noise
10 level here is too high.

11 SALLY GIBERT: Is this on?

12 And one of the things we've been
13 kind of focusing on is taking the -- kind of
14 how to eliminate some of the worst noise
15 conflicts, getting some of the -- look --
16 that's a natural place to start, speaking of
17 natural, to look at where you get the most bang
18 for the buck and taking off some of the worst
19 noise and places with the most conflicts.

20 Another way to look at it -- I've heard about
21 this book, and the Denali is a big place -- is
22 to maybe look at the other end of the spectrum,
23 the low end, to see if there are places in the
24 park where literally people just don't fly very
25 much, where planes don't fly very much, and I'm

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1 just thinking off the top of my head here.
2 Places -- if your objective in Denali is to
3 have a truly quiet experience, where that is
4 more important than the view, for example, that
5 there are places that they can be kind of
6 directed to say, okay, if quiet is important,
7 over here is a good place, and obviously, you
8 know, the Ruth Amphitheater is not going to be
9 a place where you'd want to choose for that.
10 It's a consequence of you're not going to get
11 the best scenery, necessarily, and absolute
12 quiet, but are there other places where you
13 could go where it would be a different balance
14 of -- a little bit less first-class scenery --
15 in Alaska, in Denali, you can have second- and
16 third-string scenery and it's still going to
17 knock most people's socks off -- and get more
18 quiet. I don't think we've talked about that
19 from -- sort of from the bottom up. It's just
20 something to toss out there.

21 BRIAN OKONEK: I'd just like to
22 step backwards for a minute. We were talking
23 about flights over Kahiltna Pass. One thing
24 Bill was saying is quite often he's beginning
25 his climb as soon as he takes off from

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1 Talkeetna to get off to Kahiltna Pass and make
2 it over. And because of time constraints,
3 needs to be climbing the whole time. I
4 understand that there are weather conditions
5 where sometimes you get to the pass with enough
6 altitude, but conditions are such that you've
7 got to climb some more to enable to get over
8 it. And different weather conditions and
9 stuff, but one thing that may solve some
10 problems here is for circumnavigation flights
11 to be scheduled with more time so that --

12 BILL POST: Scheduled with what,
13 Brian?

14 BRIAN OKONEK: Scheduled with
15 more time, so that you don't necessarily have
16 to climb the whole way. You can make -- have a
17 longer route getting there so that you're at
18 good elevation by the time you get to base camp
19 to where you can pretty much throttle back and
20 keep your altitude and go over the pass. And
21 that doesn't necessarily mean circling over the
22 Kahiltna. You can go -- you know, work your
23 way over Kahiltna Lake or something and gain
24 enough altitude, again, during the climbing
25 season, so that the majority of those

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1 circumnavigation scenic flights are going up

2 the Kahiltna Glacier with enough altitude that
3 you're not climbing that upper park there.

4 BILL POST: That's a great
5 solution, except for the minor factor that time
6 is money. The problem is already I feel for
7 families, especially that come to fly with us,
8 what it costs a family, of, say, four to take a
9 flight is a huge hit. And yet, thankfully,
10 there's still many people that do that. We
11 just had -- it broke my heart to charge him.
12 One person had to fly so badly, they paid for
13 the entire plane. I couldn't believe it. She
14 wanted to do it so badly, she wanted to do
15 this.

16 For most people, it's a choice,
17 I'd like to do this, I'd like to do that. It's
18 typically either/or. I would love to fly a
19 customer that says show me the best you have,
20 and time is not a factor. Almost it's always a
21 compromise, how much can we show them in a
22 given amount of time. For most of us, it is
23 amounting to an hour flight, hour 15, hour and
24 a half. To get people to pay -- be willing to
25 pay more, there certainly are some out there,

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1 but I would say it is not the general populace.
2 So we struck a compromise, and it is
3 unfortunate. And then that also focuses us

4 into a more set pattern, which is also the
5 noise thing. I mean, I've done things where
6 I've been given a free rein, and areas you
7 generally don't -- you show some things that
8 may be like a private thing. This is one of my
9 favorite areas, we never get over here, and all
10 that. Yes, it's how do we get this balance
11 between what we can do in a given amount of
12 time, what are people willing to pay, and
13 that's where I see the crux of the matter.

14 SUZANNE RUST: I would have to
15 agree. That is a challenge. I mean, it would
16 be wonderful if we could add more time to the
17 flights, but, I mean, I think that especially
18 this season, I mean -- the way the economy is,
19 it was hard to just get people to buy our
20 flights. And I think there was a lot of
21 discounting. People are very price-resistant,
22 and it was certainly a challenge for us just to
23 try to get our regular price, much less to get
24 anything else.

25 That doesn't mean that that's

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1 out. It's just -- the price constraints are
2 certainly something to consider.

3 BRIAN OKONEK: It used to be that
4 circumnavigating Denali was not a common flight

5 for the air taxi scenic flights, and that --
6 that particular flight has really changed the
7 experience on the West Buttress route because
8 of the number of flights on the Kahiltna. It's
9 not that it's one airplane. There's days when
10 there literally isn't a quiet period free of
11 aircraft noise on the Kahiltna. As soon as one
12 disappears, there's another one that you pick
13 it up, it's climbing up Kahiltna, and it's
14 just -- it's different than it used to be.

15 BILL POST: I know. I've seen
16 the page. You hear it on the ground. I don't
17 hear it, but, I, of course, am always talking
18 to the pilot. I'm talking to pilots in front
19 of me. I'm talking to the pilots behind me. I
20 know the stream that you're talking about.
21 Very real. That thing about crossing the pass,
22 it's narrower, it's tighter. On the other side
23 of the ridge it would eliminate a tremendous
24 amount. Yeah, especially if there's turbulence
25 up there. We're operating within a greater or

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1 smaller confine. It's not a place to be at all
2 times, not in all aircraft.

3 BRIAN OKONEK: I can understand
4 that. I appreciate that, too.

5 CHARLIE SASSARA: which means you
6 don't have to go.

7 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I'm sympathetic
8 to time is money, you guys. This is a
9 difficult business to make a living in; you
10 have to consider the time.

11 BILL POST: Difficult and getting
12 more so, yes.

13 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Let's not mix
14 that with a family of four who can't quite
15 afford flights around the mountain as a
16 struggling family. I mean --

17 BILL POST: No. But it is our
18 customer.

19 JOAN FRANKEVICH: It was an
20 implication.

21 BILL POST: It is our customer
22 base. It's who we draw. There are people who
23 can't afford what we do.

24 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Absolutely.
25 Isn't there -- I mean, and my experience living

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1 and flying around Denali was more than 20 years
2 ago, but at that time it was common, you took
3 an hour flight, you didn't go around the
4 mountain; you stayed on the south side. Is
5 that still not an option? Is that
6 significantly less cost than flying the
7 mountain?

8 BILL POST: It's what you see.
9 Do you want to read a short story or full book?
10 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Short story is
11 pretty darn nice. I'm saying, the family that
12 can't afford going around, you have to raise
13 the price to do it under best practices, then
14 have a lower cost option.
15 BILL POST: They have a choice of
16 whether or not they do a glacier landing.
17 Additional cost, but a unique part of the
18 flight for most people.
19 JIM EDWARDS: I'd like to point
20 out that the charter of this group is not to
21 debate the environmental policy or whether
22 we're trying to have silence or who -- which
23 group in the United States' view of the
24 utilization of natural resources is going to
25 prevail. That is taking place somewhere else.

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1 This group is specifically chartered to look at
2 what voluntary issues or voluntary actions we
3 can take to assist the Denali National Park
4 management in reducing noise impact.

5 Now, it would be nice if we could
6 have a perfectly pristine quiet. That isn't
7 going to happen. Population pressure on the
8 use of this land is increasing and will, I
9 understand, for another 50 years. Possibly at

10 some point it would go down after that. I
11 don't know.

12 what we can address and what we
13 can sink our teeth into is these voluntary
14 measures. So when we get off talking about the
15 operators have a right to operate over the
16 park, the park has a right to regulate who
17 lands in the park, it's not this group's
18 business to tell the operators where they can
19 fly and where they can't over the park. It's
20 our business to see if we can figure out ways
21 to get them to voluntarily help us restrict
22 their flights. There are weather days when
23 they're all going to fly on the south side.
24 They can't conduct always through-the-pass
25 operation. That happens because of cloud

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1 cover. That happens because of turbulence.
2 That happens because of downdraft issues.
3 There are all kinds of extremely difficult
4 restraints on these operators. We, as a
5 committee, need to understand that.

6 Your suggestion, I think, is very
7 good, but I think it's also one that if you'll
8 discuss it with them, you'll find they've been
9 thinking about it for a long time.

10 They don't want to cross that,

11 having to circle, and even sometimes when they
12 start through it, downdraft conditions they
13 have to go into a climb to maintain an altitude
14 that they didn't anticipate, as he discussed.
15 None of the operators are going to go through
16 there under those conditions if they're too bad
17 or if they anticipate they're going to be bad.

18 So, I think we need to try to
19 keep this group on track.

20 Our group is not to solve
21 political problems. Our mandate is not to do
22 that. We have one mandate, and one mandate
23 only, and that is to see what we can do to
24 voluntarily reduce the noise impact.

25 SALLY GIBERT: I think our

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1 discussions have been focusing on that.

2 JIM EDWARDS: I don't. I think
3 they're going way afield, Madam Chairman.

4 SALLY GIBERT: I think Brian's
5 suggestion is there's nothing wrong with
6 raising that idea. It's a viable idea. There
7 may be problems with it, it may not be picked
8 up on, it may not work, but I don't want to
9 squash ideas. I think it's okay to bring up
10 ideas and discuss them. It doesn't mean that
11 every idea that comes up has to pass some kind
12 of advanced test. That's why we have the

13 group. So, I think -- if that was -- if that
14 was viable, we could say, voluntarily, we
15 could -- around the mountain flight should be
16 longer, that's still a voluntary measure. It
17 doesn't mean it's a good answer. There's
18 nothing wrong with talking about it.

19 SUZANNE RUST: I wanted to just
20 contribute that, for us, one thing we found is
21 the most popular tour is the south side tour
22 because it's the one we can do the most often.
23 It's the one that seems to propose the best
24 budget choice, the weather allows us to do it
25 most, and that's one we choose to presell to

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1 tour companies. That's the one we choose.
2 Having said that, though, we do do a fair
3 number of the circle flights, and then we try
4 to do them -- we try to choose the turbine
5 otters to do those in, just to make it more
6 efficient and quieter. But they are -- I mean,
7 on a spectacular day when it is clear and
8 beautiful and it's smooth air, it's hard to
9 beat that experience for folks to get over and
10 to see how the landscape changes from the south
11 side to the north side. And it gives people a
12 whole appreciation for how vast and beautiful
13 this park is.

14 So, it's a very valuable
15 experience. So that's just what I wanted to
16 contribute. I do think -- if I were going to
17 say, the south side tours are things we really
18 push, because we can do it with consistency.
19 Probably, I would say, that on the day of
20 trips, if it's a beautiful day, we say you
21 should do a grand tour, today's the day. Maybe
22 that helps give a perspective. And it is
23 hard -- those flight times are hard. We're
24 always watching -- especially, what was it, not
25 this past year, but the year before, when fuel

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1 was so expensive, every little bit made a huge
2 difference. Our fuel bills, I can tell you, I
3 don't know -- speak for the other air taxis,
4 but they were astonishingly large. And,
5 really, you know, took a bite out of, you know,
6 just --

7 BRIAN OKONEK: I'm sure.

8 SUZANNE RUST: So, we are -- we
9 try to be thoughtful of time for both clients
10 and for our livelihood.

11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Thanks.

12 TOM GEORGE: Suzanne, do you have
13 a thought, yet, about a time to try to get
14 another meeting of the working group where we
15 could actually have some more detailed

16 discussions about specifics than we're probably
17 going to do much good with discussing here?

18 SUZANNE RUST: When is the next
19 meeting of this group?

20 SALLY GIBERT: That's something
21 that we have to do.

22 SUZANNE RUST: I have something
23 that's a personal issue, that I'm not going to
24 have a date on until I make this trip to
25 Seattle. I'm going to be -- I'm up in the air

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1 until -- I'll be gone until January. So I hate
2 to set something without knowing when I'm going
3 to have some other stuff happening.

4 TOM GEORGE: Sure.

5 SUZANNE RUST: I would imagine, I
6 guess it would be nice to know when we would be
7 thinking about this next group meeting, and I
8 could work toward a goal.

9 SALLY GIBERT: Could be scheduled
10 much more flexibly.

11 Before today is over, we
12 definitely need to schedule our next meeting.
13 Maybe we should do it sooner than later, before
14 leaving before the end of the day. So, it's
15 noon. Should we take a break until 1:00?

16 ERIK DENKEWALTER: One thing

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17 that's been bothering me since Susan's
18 presentation: what is barbecue pizza?
19 JOAN FRANKEVICH: You had to have
20 been there.
21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: what is
22 barbecue pizza with a big grill there?
23 TOM GEORGE: You had to have been
24 there.
25 JOAN FRANKEVICH: It was good.

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1 (Lunch break.)
2 SALLY GIBERT: We're going to get
3 back to business here. Miriam pointed out we
4 have to be physically out of this building at
5 5:00. We need to adjourn before 5:00. Like,
6 quarter of.
7 And we -- let's not do -- next
8 we've got superintendent and Park Service
9 reports. Did you have a report, or just Jared?
10 ELWOOD LYNN: Just Jared.
11 SALLY GIBERT: You've got things,
12 so I need to move again?
13 JARED WITHERS: Yeah.
14 while it's warming up. Jared
15 withers, for anybody who didn't get an
16 introduction earlier. Glad we're all back
17 together begin.
18 So, I'm going to do a quick
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19 little overview of the program. Most people
20 have heard it. I'm sure there's a few in the
21 room that haven't. And I'll show you some
22 upgraded or updated parkwide maps, the type
23 you've seen before, exceedance maps that better
24 tie back into the backcountry standards. And
25 we'll do a little sneak peek of 2009 data

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1 collected this year. It's still being crunched
2 and all that, but I've got some preliminary
3 findings for you. And then I'll fill you in on
4 a couple happenings on the national level on
5 sound monitoring in other parts of the Park
6 Service.

7 So, for our sound monitoring
8 program in Denali, the motivation is a
9 backcountry management plan, which we're all
10 here for, which sets out soundscaping
11 indicators, long-term monitoring, working with
12 an advisory group. NP directors Order 47 which
13 calls for sound conditions as sound is a
14 resource area and protection. Most parks have
15 done that. All parks want to; not all parks
16 have found money to do that.

17 JOAN FRANKEVICH: How common is
18 it to have a soundscape plan like Denali?

19 JARED WITHERS: It's pretty rare,

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20 Denali, Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Grand
21 Tetons, I think, are the only parks that have a
22 program that's centered on that park. There's
23 a national office in Fort Collins that has a
24 pretty -- it's pretty well staffed, and they
25 are available -- well staffed to do smaller

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1 inventory projects at parks that request their
2 assistance. As far as large-scale inventories
3 over the types of areas that we're dealing with
4 here, there's not many in the country.

5 ELWOOD LYNN: Do any of the parks
6 have a a plan like our backcountry plan, or
7 we're sort of out front?

8 JARED WITHERS: I'm not sure if
9 people have the Air Tour Management Act. I
10 think, in the Lower 48 parks, they're required
11 to work with the FAA to come up with a plan for
12 managing aviation over those parks. Alaska was
13 exempted from that Act, and so we are planning
14 our own way with backcountry management plans
15 and advisory groups. So, there are some Air
16 Tour Management Plans that have been completed
17 for Lower 48 parks and those -- they don't
18 attempt to set, like, regulatory standards from
19 what I've seen, but they do have desired future
20 conditions very similar to what our backcountry
21 management plan has.

22 So, this is the systematic grid
23 that we are inventorying the soundscapes of the
24 park on. Each little green dot is a sampling
25 site. There are 60 sampling sites in all. We

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1 sample six of them per year, and then we also
2 do two additional sites of administrative
3 interest that may not fall on the grid plan.
4 we do two wintertime sites, generally limited
5 by access, so we generally only monitor sites
6 in the winter that we can get to over land. So
7 it's a little bit of sampling there, centering
8 on areas of high snowmachining use. We've done
9 37 sites to date and are continuing to do more
10 every year. The data that's collected at each
11 one of these sampling sites are spectral sound
12 sampling levels, which are essentially loudness
13 by frequency, measured once a second
14 continuously 24 hours a day, a new level this
15 year. We purchased equipment to transition to
16 continuous audio recordings, which some of you
17 remember previously we were doing every 35
18 minutes. I know you were down there. Now
19 we're collecting continuous audio which is good
20 for -- we're still not going to be able to
21 listen to continuous audio. We'll still be
22 listening to five seconds every five minutes to

23 do the acoustic inventory. But having a
24 continuous audio recording will allow us to --
25 will allow us to not miss anything as far as

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1 extraneous events and things like that that we
2 want to keep track of.

3 Collect data at each site for a
4 month. We attempt to, anyway. There's two
5 types of analyses that yield the types of data
6 that I'll be sharing with you: One is a
7 spectrogram analysis, which is a visual
8 analysis, the way of plotting the sound
9 graphically and then analyzing it by visual
10 method; and then an audibility analysis which
11 uses the audio recordings to be played back,
12 listen to them and annotate what you hear.

13 BILL POST: How about
14 meteorological? What are you capturing there?

15 JARED WITHERS: Wind speed.
16 Temperature is recorded, because of the wind
17 speed the microphones are only effective up to
18 a certain wind speed. In really high wind
19 conditions, the values of their recording will
20 be inflated, so those have to be kind of
21 quarantined off.

22 Okay. So these are exceedance
23 maps for -- each one of these bubbles here is a
24 site that we've inventoried. These are

25 familiar to most of you, I think. What's

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1 different is that there's a lot more bubbles on
2 these than the last ones you saw.

3 This is 2005 to 2008 data. This
4 map is for the backcountry management plan
5 standard, the first standard, the first
6 indicator which is the portion of any hour
7 which motorized noise is audible. The
8 percentages noted are the percentages of
9 samples recorded that exceeded the backcountry
10 management plan standard which varies by zone;
11 and the standards and zones are noted here.

12 BILL POST: Those numbers aren't
13 visible from back here. Could you give us a
14 quick idea of the range?

15 JARED WITHERS: The color of the
16 date indicates the range, a site exceeding less
17 than 1 percent of the time would be green.
18 Zero to 25 is olive. 25 to 50 is orange. And
19 50 to 100 percent is red. My indication of
20 this, for this standard, compared to the other
21 standards, these exceedances are lowest, which
22 you'll see in the next maps I'll show you. And
23 I'm seeing in this high-use corridor fairly low
24 amounts of exceedance, and, you know, generally
25 mild exceedance in the medium -- these blue

□

1 areas. Actually, generally, you know, moderate
2 exceedance over the entire area of the park.
3 This blue area up here is being -- is very low
4 levels of exceedance, 0 percent exceedance, 1
5 percent. These kinds of maps are intended for
6 you to draw back to the backcountry management
7 plan and maybe use them to define areas that
8 may be of higher priority for action than
9 others.

10 Do you have a question, Tom?

11 TOM GEORGE: In your overlapping
12 circles, are those the same sites on two
13 occasions or two different sites close
14 together?

15 JARED WITHERS: Yes, these --
16 this is actually the exact same location
17 measured two different years.

18 TOM GEORGE: It would go from 0
19 to 3 or 3200.

20 JARED WITHERS: I'd have to check
21 on that.

22 TOM GEORGE: Same thing there
23 along the Park Road.

24 JARED WITHERS: These up here?

25 TOM GEORGE: Yeah.

1 JARED WITHERS: These are two
2 sites, probably four to five miles straight
3 line, so they're independent.

4 TOM GEORGE: Is the 32 percent in
5 the corridor or --

6 JARED WITHERS: It is about a
7 quarter mile off the road. It is within
8 earshot of the road. But these aren't
9 aircraft-only occurrences, so that 32 percent
10 does include buses.

11 BILL POST: If you have to do
12 only six per year, how come you're sampling the
13 same area twice?

14 JARED WITHERS: That's not a
15 group line. We have to do eight per year.
16 We're sampling the same place multiple times to
17 provide an earlier indication of trend.
18 Otherwise, it takes ten years to get to each
19 site twice; and we want it faster than that.

20 So the second map is for the
21 second standard. This is the number of events
22 per day greater than natural ambient. I'll
23 qualify this again, because I think it needs to
24 be emphasized. This standard is number of
25 events per day greater than natural ambient,

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1 not number of events per day. That's an
2 important distinction, because we -- you can
3 perceive an event that is quieter than the
4 natural ambient. And those events don't count
5 as one, as part of this indicator. So, just
6 keep -- just keep that in mind. I know people
7 toss around numbers of events per day as the
8 label for this standard. But just keep in mind
9 that it's not literally number of events per
10 day; it's number of events over natural
11 ambient. So this standard is -- and this
12 indicator is being exceeded the most often.
13 And what I'm seeing here, and it's open to your
14 interpretation as well, is that, again, the
15 very high-use corridor is largely within the
16 standards of the backcountry management plan
17 not being exceeded very often. The low-impact
18 zones are largely being exceeded, and a fair
19 number of mediums are also being exceeded a
20 fair percentage of the time.

21 So, these are meant to be kind of
22 quick-look parkwide maps. Answer the question:
23 what does it look like over the entire area of
24 the park? We'll dive into really detailed
25 information of specific sites later, but one of

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□

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1 the first questions that comes into people's
2 minds is: How does that compare to everywhere
3 else you've measured?

4 Then the final backcountry
5 management indicator is the motorized pressure
6 level. Of those events that occur, how loud
7 can they be, or how loud should they be?

8 Distribution --

9 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Sound pressure
10 level?

11 JARED WITHERS: Yes, sometimes
12 abbreviated SPL.

13 Yes, sir.

14 JIM EDWARDS: I believe I
15 remember you stating early on that these levels
16 were not created by any sort of scientific
17 standard, but by judgment of how you thought
18 they ought to be laid out. Have you given any
19 thought about revising them upward, because
20 it's pretty obvious we're never going to meet
21 them?

22 JARED WITHERS: I haven't done
23 that. That would be a planning effort.

24 I think -- my opinion is that
25 this indicated -- this sound pressure level

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1 indicator, of the three, is the best rooted in

2 good science, even though it is being exceeded
3 quite frequently.

4 JIM EDWARDS: My point is I don't
5 think aviation technology is going to change
6 markedly in the next 50 or 100 years.
7 Possibly, but I don't think so. So I think
8 you're probably going to see exactly the same
9 kind of results.

10 JARED WITHERS: Well, I can tell
11 you that there are methods that would reduce
12 the maximum sound pressure level of aircraft.
13 Like you stated earlier, the purpose of this
14 group is to achieve a reduction. I think
15 that's possible.

16 JIM EDWARDS: Voluntarily?

17 JARED WITHERS: Yes.

18 JIM EDWARDS: I agree that there
19 are specific sites over the park, but the park
20 is generally such a large mass, land mass, and
21 aviation is taking place for different purposes
22 over it. I don't think we could make -- I
23 think we could make specific impacts in
24 specific locations. But I don't think
25 overall -- I see red dots pretty much

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1 everywhere you measured. And I don't think
2 overall there's anything much we can do about
3 it, or you can do about it.

4 SALLY GIBERT: If I can say,
5 Jared's job is just to give us the numbers,
6 so --

7 JIM EDWARDS: I agree. But I've
8 been pointing out all along it's irrelevant to
9 this group, because the only thing we're here
10 to do is trying to figure out what we can do
11 through specific voluntary actions. This is
12 nice-to-know information, but it's not really
13 germane to our task.

14 TOM GEORGE: well --

15 ERIKA BENNETT: It is nice to
16 know where the most traffic is we are pretty
17 close to meeting the standard. So that's a
18 positive thing. We know that now because of
19 these maps.

20 CHARLIE SASSARA: Sort of.

21 ERIKA BENNETT: I'm just saying
22 where they expected it to be an impact, it is
23 an impact; but it's not being outrageously
24 above what they thought it would be.

25 TOM GEORGE: Let's keep it going.

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1 JARED WITHERS: All right. So
2 that's the parkwide 2005 to 2008 summary.

3 Sneak peek of 2009. These are
4 the sites we measured this summer. I think --

5 so this is Triple Lakes. I'm not going to show
6 you all of these, for everyone's sake, but I
7 chose three that I thought you guys would most
8 be interested in. Hopefully I chose right.

9 It's kind hard to see, but the
10 three that I'm going to share detailed
11 information on are Triple Lakes, 14 Camp, and
12 this site here, which is upper west branch
13 Toklat.

14 So, this is in your high-use
15 backcountry overnight camping corridor, Triple
16 Lakes. So these are essentially speaking to
17 the best practices document that we put out.

18 And then these other sites -- I
19 wanted to mention this because someone earlier
20 mentioned them, about knowing places in the
21 park where you could go that would be quiet
22 even if the scenery might not be the best
23 available. And the answer -- the broad answer
24 is anywhere in the Minchumina Basin. Lots of
25 mosquitoes. That's the quietest. I'm sure

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1 there are pockets that are more accessible, you
2 have to fly to get to the Minchumina Basin.
3 But I should probably share some of these
4 measurements for you from the Minchumina Basin
5 area as an example of the low-use area in the
6 park. I'm not going to, but -- there are

7 avenues -- I can show you that through
8 different means; not right now.

9 Those three that I chose, does
10 that sound good to everybody?

11 Okay. So this is data coming out
12 at you. 14 Camp. I have to qualify 14 Camp
13 with we didn't get as long a duration data at
14 this site that everyone wanted. We had a
15 failure of the batteries. And since this site
16 was such -- took her own measures, we went, set
17 it up, and actually it sat up on the mountain
18 for a couple of months until all the base camp
19 stuff came out. It was only good for two days.
20 It's not a good representative average for the
21 site. What it is, it was a beautiful day when
22 I flew up there to set it up, and it continued
23 to be good weather for the next couple of days
24 when this thing was collecting data. This
25 could be what the level could be on a good

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1 flying day. I think that's the value of what
2 this sampling point is going to bring to the
3 group. This is an average day. It doesn't
4 mean too much since it's only two days. It's
5 an average of two days with the percentage of
6 time audible of aircraft by hour. You can see
7 over the 24-hour day, this is the basic

9 Camp. Pretty self-explanatory.

10 SALLY GIBERT: By audible, you
11 can hear it at all or above ambient?

12 JARED WITHERS: At all. The
13 audibility standard is just can you hear it.
14 The number of events per day standard requires
15 it to be above ambient.

16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: So the desired
17 conditions under the backcountry plan is 5
18 percent. 14,000 Camp is in the low?

19 JARED WITHERS: Uh-huh.

20 ERIK DENKEWALTER: So, I'm trying
21 to figure out, we need to point out where were
22 these airplanes that you heard them? I mean,
23 were they just people on the -- I'm surprised
24 that it's that high. I have had people tell me
25 in those camps that you're just sitting and

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1 waiting you can hear them. I didn't realize
2 that they could -- it can't be that many 25
3 percent of the time. Really taken a lot of air
4 traffic over that, so I --

5 BILL POST: Or does it show, say,
6 if we're just using north Hunter, are they
7 hearing it from there?

8 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I don't know.
9 I'm thinking, 25 percent, it says at noon or
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10 1300, 1:00 o'clock. 25 percent of the time
11 they could hear aircraft, you kind of go,
12 "Huh?" where are they hearing it from? I'm
13 trying to figure it out here. I know you don't
14 have that answer.

15 JARED WITHERS: I don't have that
16 answer. John might be able to comment on that.
17 I'd say that tall bars don't indicate loudness,
18 first of all. I want you to understand that.
19 So I think at this site these are mostly on --
20 they aren't direct overflights. These are more
21 distant sounds of aircraft that are more
22 audible, but probably not really loud.

23 BILL POST: It matters a lot,
24 because, say, Kahiltna, we would be, what, 5, 6
25 miles, less than that. But for North Hunter

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1 where we go around frequently, I'll bet you
2 that's 10 miles away.

3 JARED WITHERS: This is
4 interesting information for those of you that
5 that don't spend a lot of time on the ground:
6 Even though you might be ten miles away, it's
7 still audible up there. And I think I propose
8 that some of the reasons that that's true is
9 because out there in free space hanging off the
10 side of a mountain, you don't have things to

11 help you like ground effect attenuation like we
12 mentioned earlier. So sounds will travel
13 pretty long distances.

14 ERIK DENKEWALTER: 14 Camp to
15 Kahiltna Pass is two-and-a-half miles, okay.
16 So, what you were doing before with your
17 one-mile-away thing, I can see -- if you're
18 12,000 feet, you can just about see the camp up
19 there. Not quite. I've had people telling me
20 that sitting in the camps is like an echo
21 chamber. So I could imagine it would be
22 amplified sitting there. So that's
23 interesting. That's noteworthy.

24 TOM GEORGE: Let's look at
25 others. There might be more instances.

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1 JARED WITHERS: That's the
2 percentage of time audible. This probably
3 should not be a long graph since it only has
4 two points; don't take this as a trend. But
5 this is, of the two days of data, the number of
6 events per day over natural ambient, 25 and 28
7 or so, what was measured on these days, and
8 then this is a scatter plot for every event
9 identified. So we've got a little over 50
10 events. Each event has its own dot showing
11 what the maximum sound pressure level was of
12 its overflight.

13 JOAN FRANKEVICH: What's dBA
14 compared to DBL?
15 JARED WITHERS: SPL.
16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: SPL. dBS.
17 JARED WITHERS: dBS are the
18 decibels. SPL is sound pressure levels. You
19 can see a lot of -- half the flights that were
20 measured -- that were identified, those are
21 very quiet. 30 decibels is quieter than this
22 room when I'm not talking. So they're audible,
23 but quiet. That's the type of thing you take
24 away from these plots.
25 SANDRA LOOMIS: I'm a little

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1 confused. Does each event have a little arc to
2 it, and that's why you plotted the maximum
3 point?
4 JARED WITHERS: Each event as it
5 passes by has an onset and tail off. As the
6 backcountry management plan speaks to it, it
7 speaks to maximum pressure. This is the
8 maximum. This is as loud as it got for each
9 event. It's not an average or anything like
10 that.
11 BILL POST: I'd sure like to know
12 what would drive that one to over 80 decibels.
13 JARED WITHERS: I'll tell you,

14 it's the A Star rescue helicopter.

15 SANDRA LOOMIS: Do you know how
16 many of those were the helicopter?

17 JARED WITHERS: Yeah. I don't
18 have that in the presentation, but that's
19 known. You have to work the numbers to record
20 it.

21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Can you go
22 back one slide to the time of day -- I'm sorry,
23 two slides.

24 Okay. Thanks. I just want to
25 see about -- we don't have airplanes flying

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1 before 8:00 or after 9:00 at night. That's
2 interesting.

3 JARED WITHERS: So, then, upper
4 west branch. Toklat site. This is probably 8
5 miles or so up the Toklat River from the Toklat
6 Road Camp. Kind of -- it's essentially Refuge
7 Valley, but one drainage over. These values
8 are probably very similar to what Refuge valley
9 was experiencing last summer.

10 Same plot as before, similar
11 distribution. You can see these middle of the
12 night, those are almost certainly high-altitude
13 jets, Alaska Airlines flights. Of course, this
14 is an average over -- this one is a month or so
15 of data.

16 So this is a good representative
17 average of what the site and sound make -- or
18 what the distribution of percentage of time
19 audible would be.

20 This plot was not in the Kahiltna
21 Pass -- not in the 14 Camp one. This is a time
22 series plot. We compute these percentage of
23 time audible statistics by hour. So this is
24 just a time series plot of all the hours
25 between August 12th and September 5th. So you

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1 can see that, you know, peak hours are getting
2 up, and the previous slide shows your averages.

3 This is number of events per day
4 over the same time period. Quite a bit of
5 variation probably due to weather at an average
6 of 20 or so.

7 These are the maximum sound
8 pressure levels for each overflight.

9 TOM GEORGE: Again, you've got
10 one that's significantly above 70. Any idea
11 what that was?

12 JARED WITHERS: No, not
13 specifically. But I don't know that that --
14 there's a lot up here around 70. So that one
15 doesn't seem like such an outlier to me. It
16 sounds like there's some loud traffic on a

NL09-369 - DNP Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council - 1Dec09
17 regular basis.

18 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Where is this
19 exactly? And then you said Refuge Valley.

20 JARED WITHERS: Sorry. This is
21 on the headwaters of the Toklat River.

22 ERIK DENKEWALTER: There's a
23 couple of branches to that.

24 JARED WITHERS: Right before you
25 get to the Toklat River, a branch to the east.

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1 It's in that branch.

2 Any questions on this site?

3 SANDRA LOOMIS: Is that a site
4 that people travel?

5 JARED WITHERS: This is a very
6 highly used backcountry unit. It's full most
7 nights all season long. I think they allow six
8 people a night to stay in that unit.

9 So Triple Lakes. This one
10 surprised me. Let me know if it surprises you.

11 So we're seeing similar daily
12 distributions at all these sites. Definitely a
13 spike of activity between 8:00 and 10:00
14 o'clock in the morning.

15 This is a percentage of time
16 audible by hour. So this is -- this is
17 beginning of July to beginning of August. And
18 you're seeing some spikes that get up there as

19 far as percentage time audible goes.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: Suzanne, when will
21 your -- when were your best practices
22 implemented?

23 SUZANNE RUST: I would say -- I
24 have to look back, but I think middle of May?

25 ELWOOD LYNN: So this would have

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1 been after -- they should be showing the
2 improved conditions?

3 SUZANNE RUST: Yes.

4 JARED WITHERS: Suzanne, you had
5 commented on sharing that with the operator of
6 Denali private -- I don't know his name. You
7 made it sound like he was already doing that,
8 or did he really change his operations?

9 SUZANNE RUST: He said he did.
10 He said he changed it in the way that I
11 presented.

12 JARED WITHERS: I was unsure
13 whether or not he -- you presented and he made
14 a change, or you presented and he said, "I'm
15 already doing that."

16 SUZANNE RUST: No, he made a
17 change.

18 JARED WITHERS: He made a change.
19 I'll have to look at this data set. I don't

20 think this station was established prior to
21 that May timeline, so it's unlikely that we'll
22 be able to do a before/after-type comparison
23 without more of a communicated effort between
24 the Denali private operators in the park.

25 ELWOOD LYNN: We don't have the

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1 previous year?

2 JARED WITHERS: No. This was the
3 one that was going to -- we were in contact
4 with Tim, and we were going to do kind of a
5 controlled experiment with the air helicopters,
6 and that got scrapped, so we did a standing
7 sampling.

8 Number of runs per day. That
9 month.

10 TOM GEORGE: Interesting to
11 correlate that with weather.

12 JARED WITHERS: Yeah.

13 SUZANNE RUST: Are we going to be
14 able to get copies of these?

15 JARED WITHERS: Yes.

16 SANDRA LOOMIS: Are they going to
17 be posted on the Internet?

18 JARED WITHERS: This 2009 data
19 hasn't been written in a report yet. You'll be
20 welcome to take my PowerPoint home with you.
21 The full report with all this data and analysis

22 and commentary will probably be available early
23 next year on the web site.

24 I wanted to also add the 2008
25 report with all of last year's sites, and the

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1 same types of plots that go along with those.
2 It's been submitted to the webmaster for
3 posting on the Central Alaska server, which I
4 shared last meeting. And it hadn't been posted
5 there as of this morning, but it should be very
6 soon. If you're interested in 2008 data
7 analysis, that's available.

8 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Did you answer
9 this and I didn't hear it? Can you tell what
10 type of aircraft made that noise? Did you
11 answer that question a minute ago, and I
12 misunderstood?

13 JARED WITHERS: You can tell
14 between helicopter, jet and prop.

15 ERIK DENKEWALTER: You can't see
16 a twin versus a single?

17 JARED WITHERS: No.

18 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I'm trying to
19 figure out, boy, that's an awful lot of events
20 per day.

21 JARED WITHERS: It is. That's
22 what surprised me.

23 ERIK DENKEWALTER: The earlier
24 anecdotal, people weren't complaining much. I
25 wasn't there very long, an awful lot of planes

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1 flying over. There are float planes and people
2 flying down that valley.

3 JARED WITHERS: For this analysis
4 by aircraft time, just between jets and props
5 especially might shed some light. I know this
6 site is under that Fairbanks/Anchorage
7 corridor, FAA.

8 ERIK DENKEWALTER: There's no jet
9 traffic that low.

10 TOM GEORGE: It's not that low.
11 It's that his sound equipment is that good.

12 JARED WITHERS: It doesn't go --
13 jet at 30,000 feet. This is a quiet site.
14 Pretty low.

15 ERIK DENKEWALTER: The jets over
16 on 438 and then above, which is well to the
17 east of that area. 436 is to the west, people
18 who are flying down that road corridor in that
19 area, high or low, are going to be, you know,
20 unpressurized prop planes and a few Army
21 helicopters. So, you might pick up an
22 airliner, but it's kind of doubtful. So, it's
23 kind of down in a valley even, I think that's
24 where you had -- if you had it near the lakes,

25 you wouldn't pick up anything from the east

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1 just because I think it would be shadowed by
2 the hill there, more from the west. So, I
3 would take a guess here that what you're seeing
4 is just GA aircraft, whether it's commercial,
5 you know, from one of us or from just plane
6 flying back and forth. It's an awful lot of
7 traffic, though. When you said 60 or 70 events
8 per day, kind of yikes. That's only ten an
9 hour, or seven an hour --

10 TOM GEORGE: Again, this is the
11 major VFR flyway between the two biggest cities
12 in the state. There's probably a lot of
13 traffic which largely doesn't have any direct
14 effect on the park at all.

15 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Yeah. I'd
16 like to sit there on a nice day and kind of see
17 what they are, note what they are.

18 JARED WITHERS: That would be a
19 good one for a field trip if you guys are in
20 the market.

21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: That could be
22 the most popular trail here, as soon as they
23 get that bridge finished. There will be a lot
24 of people on the trail every day. I mean,
25 we'll get a lot of discussion about this in the

1 future.

2 JARED WITHERS: So these -- step
3 back a little bit, I guess, for the group here.
4 Are these type of plots and data display
5 informative to you as far as letting you know
6 what the conditions on the ground are, you
7 know? I'm very open to suggestions. This was
8 a first stab at kind of presenting all this
9 data or packaging it in a way that you can look
10 at it and kind of understand what's going on.
11 So it would be interesting now or in the
12 future, if you have any comments.

13 TOM GEORGE: I think they are
14 helpful to us, again, as we're gaining our
15 understanding of just what's going on. I think
16 this would be a good one, like I say, to do
17 your jet versus prop analysis, and color code,
18 so we can show if there are jets going to show
19 up. My guess is they're going to be below the
20 40-decibel line. I don't know. The other
21 thing is, some of those slides, I think it's
22 very important to put the dates, especially the
23 ones that are only two days, so somebody
24 doesn't interpret average. Just kind of get
25 the meta data going along for your own

1 protection.

2 JARED WITHERS: Okay. That's a
3 good point.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: What do you
5 think -- I'm sorry.

6 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Go ahead.

7 ELWOOD LYNN: What do you think
8 is registering 60 and above?

9 JARED WITHERS: Well, from being
10 out there to set up the equipment -- I haven't
11 spent long days out there, but we hiked up
12 on -- since it was so accessible on the hiking
13 trail, we visited the site a lot to make sure
14 it was up and running, and the -- it seems like
15 the -- should I point -- the twins with the
16 orange tails, I don't know what company that
17 is, I'd say they're probably loud enough to be
18 in that range.

19 TOM GEORGE: That was a
20 fortuitous timing. The loudest, which is not
21 recorded actually, because we had the equipment
22 shut down for a calibration when we were
23 actually at the site, the loudest possibly
24 overflight I ever heard in the park was a Huey,
25 really old helicopter came flying over when we

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1 were out there. It was amazing. It sounded
2 like it landed up on top of us, and it wasn't
3 even really close.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: Just one?

5 JARED WITHERS: Just one. I
6 think -- it didn't seem -- they were on that
7 Fairbanks to Anchorage corridor. They weren't
8 sightseeing. They flew by.

9 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Jared, now, how
10 did you interpret previously? Is there a
11 comparison to other areas?

12 JARED WITHERS: Triple Lakes was
13 last year, but there was an equipment failure
14 that didn't yield data.

15 TOM GEORGE: We need to roll back
16 the procedural change for next year, record
17 again -- this is the improved condition is what
18 you were looking at.

19 JARED WITHERS: The data seems to
20 reinforce that this site is worthy of the
21 discussion we're giving it.

22 Any other questions on this?

23 I'll move on. I'll do a quick
24 plug for what's going on at the national level
25 in the sound world. Or in the National Parks

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1 Service sound world.
2 We all got together this summer,
3 a group of sound people from Grand Canyon,
4 Grand Tetons, Yellowstone, Zion, the Natural
5 Sounds Office in Fort Collins, Denali, and
6 there were also FAA air representatives there.
7 We got to chat about all the different issues
8 and things going on in all these different
9 parks. Grand Canyon was pretty well known.
10 They're doing the big FAA joint plan. A lot of
11 litigation it seems like. Grand Teton and
12 Yellowstone are mostly dealing with
13 over-the-snow vehicle issues. Grand Tetons had
14 an airport project happening near Jackson;
15 that's why the FAA people were there. They
16 have interesting things going on. They've
17 installed a -- what sounds like a pretty
18 expensive radar system there, and are modifying
19 flight routes into and out of the airport based
20 on noise impacts in that Grand Tetons area.
21 The Natural Sounds Office spends
22 most of their time doing small-scale
23 inventories at smaller parks to oversee these
24 air tour management plans that are mandated by
25 the Air Tour Management Act.

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2 other parks, there are some forming of
3 committees for peer review and quality-type
4 issues, data sharing, and kind of a web
5 discussion of how to get all this data fast,
6 and how to get it all out there in a usable
7 format for groups like this to be able to play
8 with and to learn from.

9 And the formation of a long-term
10 acoustic resource advisory group, not quite as
11 formal as this group, but more of a central
12 group of people that are able to advise other
13 parks that are wanting to do this type of work,
14 to get programs started, writing of protocols
15 and stuff like that to help set up programs and
16 have them out -- not have to do everything over
17 again.

18 That's what's going on on the
19 national front. And that's what I have for you
20 today.

21 If anybody has any questions?

22 ERIK DENKEWALTER: What are you
23 going to do next year? Where are you going to
24 put these things?

25 JARED WITHERS: I don't know yet.

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1 we normally do site selection in the spring.

2 ERIK DENKEWALTER: The one at 14
3 Camp only lasted two days. Tell me about that.

4 why didn't that last a month?

5 JARED WITHERS: It would have
6 been awesome if it lasted a month. The problem
7 with that was a miscommunication, I suppose, in
8 the specifications of the battery packs we
9 used.

10 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I guess I'd
11 like to see you put one there again, because
12 that was, obviously, an issue here for --
13 middle of May, middle of June, something
14 wherever you do it, maybe have somebody there
15 to see if it's still working, and try to get a
16 little better feel. That was -- that helped me
17 a lot. I didn't realize it was anywhere close
18 to that many percentages of where they can hear
19 it. If we can figure that out a little bit,
20 kind of decide what's making the noise and
21 where it's coming from, that would help us a
22 lot for us to mitigate the issue up there. So,
23 if you're taking votes or suggestions, that
24 would be nice. Even for just that one month,
25 more towards June rather than earlier in the

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1 season. Because the scenics don't start up
2 until the June time frame. That would be good.

3 JARED WITHERS: Okay.

4 BRIAN OKONEK: That's an ideal

5 place because you've got rangers there all
6 summer, and you can teach them how to check the
7 equipment, keep it operating, you have a power
8 source and the easiest place imaginable to do
9 it, I would think. Just because you've got
10 people there all the time.

11 JARED WITHERS: That might be the
12 way it goes if there's a next time up there.
13 This time I had attempted to make it very
14 self-contained so that the -- initially, the
15 rangers were going to haul it up there and
16 press go for me. And so I was trying to make
17 it super simple, very easy to assemble so it
18 wouldn't require a babysitter. And that proved
19 not to be so sustainable in that environment.
20 So, yeah, I might have to try and utilize those
21 resources next time, make things more reliable.

22 SALLY GIBERT: So, are you going
23 to be looking for recommendations from us for
24 where to place any of your -- your one or two
25 optional sites? We had an opportunity to do

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1 that last year. I'm not sure if we did that.

2 JARED WITHERS: That would be the
3 call of park management.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: I think that would
5 be great. Make recommendations.

6 SANDRA LOOMIS: I was thinking,
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7 too, at 14, if you do decide to do that again,
8 along with the rangers being able to make sure
9 it's working. Do some anecdotal checks. Maybe
10 pick a nice day or so, they can notate what
11 planes they see going on, what kind they are,
12 to go along with the data.

13 JARED WITHERS: There seems to be
14 some discussion happening today of actually
15 ranger observations and trying to do some kind
16 of a standard recording of those types of
17 things. Seems like people are thinking about
18 that.

19 Yes.

20 A SPEAKER: How does your
21 equipment distinguish between the sounds, could
22 it be possible that something is near your
23 recorder for the sounds?

24 JARED WITHERS: We're pretty
25 confident in the equipment. The equipment

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1 doesn't differentiate between the different
2 sounds to operate the data and different sound
3 sources. For -- in a quiet environment,
4 aircraft are really easy to pick out with
5 confidence what methods were used. We're
6 pretty confident that there aren't very many
7 false detections.

8 ELWOOD LYNN: Can you describe
9 the methods you use?
10 JARED WITHERS: The methods for
11 this analysis, these figures were generated by
12 the spectrogram analysis. From Tom's
13 presentation, he showed the slide that had kind
14 of the tie-dye hot spots of when there were
15 overflights and based on what those overflight
16 events looked like spectrally, you could tell
17 if they were a prop, a jet or a helicopter, and
18 mostly because those three different things
19 have kind of key spectral uniquenesses that you
20 can pick out. You know, a prop has -- a prop
21 aircraft has very strong fundamental frequency
22 at the speed the prop is spinning, so you get a
23 real nice, solid yellow line in the middle of
24 the event. Jets don't have that. They have --
25 and you can tell -- the telltale sign of a jet

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1 is that they emit most of their sound energy to
2 the rear, and so when you have a jet fly over,
3 the onset of the sound is very quick. As it's
4 coming toward you, you can't hear it until it's
5 almost above you, and then as it flies away
6 from you, it's throwing all that acoustic
7 energy off, so the tail off is very slow.
8 There's ways that you can identify things based
9 on those methods.

10 ELWOOD LYNN: You're doing that
11 manually?
12 JARED WITHERS: Yes.
13 ELWOOD LYNN: So it's not a
14 computer telling you that. You're looking at
15 it and listening to it and making a
16 determination?
17 JARED WITHERS: Yes, uh-huh.
18 BRIAN OKONEK: Do you guys use a
19 generator up at 14? You're all on solar?
20 TOM GEORGE: This isn't the
21 climbers' stomachs growling?
22 BRIAN OKONEK: Hundreds of MSR
23 stoves.
24 (Chuckles.)
25 TOM GEORGE: I do think that this

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1 notion of thinking about and for some periods
2 of time actually doing some kind of inventory
3 where somebody is actually sitting there and
4 recording what kind of airplane. I know you
5 couldn't do that for huge amounts of time. I
6 think especially when you look at some of these
7 plots, we really need a little bit of that to
8 be able to, again, give physical meaning to
9 what otherwise are kind of some numbers
10 floating in space.

11 ERIK DENKEWALTER: On a nice day,
12 have someone sitting there and saying what does
13 it. Even if it's not a perfectly scientific
14 analysis. At least we'd have a better feeling
15 for it. Because I would have guessed
16 completely wrong on those. But that would
17 help.

18 JARED WITHERS: Okay. I think it
19 would be helpful as far as suggestions for
20 sites for next year. I don't know if you guys
21 have another meeting before next summer.

22 SALLY GIBERT: I hope so.

23 TOM GEORGE: I'm sure we will.

24 JARED WITHERS: If you guys could
25 put your heads together and come up with a -- a

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1 list of suggested sites written down and submit
2 those, then it will be easier for us to take
3 those suggestions into our decision process.

4 That's it. Thanks, everyone.

5 SALLY GIBERT: Thank you.

6 TOM GEORGE: Thank you.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Let's actually do
8 a five-minute break.

9 (Break.)

10 SALLY GIBERT: So next on the
11 agenda is Miriam is going to talk about
12 membership, charter issues.

13 TOM GEORGE: Uh-oh.
14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It's all good.
15 It's all good. So the charter was up for
16 renewal, and it was renewed last week, which is
17 a great thing.
18 ERIKA BENNETT: This is all for
19 naught.
20 (Chuckles.)
21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We have a
22 slight change. Ruth had requested, and the
23 park management went forward with renewing all
24 of those seats coming up. That was Nancy and
25 Nan, Scott and Joan and Tom, and I'm sorry --

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1 anyway, I received an e-mail yesterday from Nan
2 saying that she's going to be resigning from
3 the council, so --
4 SALLY GIBERT: Was that for sure?
5 I didn't get the sense that it was for sure.
6 It was kind of --
7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You know what,
8 we will follow up on that.
9 SALLY GIBERT: It sounded like
10 that was the direction it was going.
11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: To her credit,
12 she sent somebody she thought would be a good
13 person to fill in for her, but -- to represent

14 backcountry stakeholders, so Amanda was here
15 this morning, but could only be here this
16 morning, but seemed very interested. She gave
17 the impression that, yeah, Nan was stepping
18 down. So I will follow up with her directly,
19 but that was the first communication I had. So
20 we'll need to fill that spot.

21 SALLY GIBERT: So, the charter
22 was renewed for two more years?

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Two more
24 years. That's how it goes in those segments,
25 two-year segments.

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: All of those
2 with two-year seats, we were renewed?

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: For four.

4 TOM GEORGE: That's okay.
5 Because the charter is only renewed for two.

6 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Okay.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Question in the
8 back.

9 SANDRA LOOMIS: Just a point on
10 that topic, I still feel -- I think I've
11 stated, for the record, just to be sure, I
12 still think there's a missing element in the
13 group and representation on the board, and that
14 is for a pilot with a depth of glacier,
15 knowledge, glacier landing. I know Erika has

16 flown in the park for a short time, Suzanne,
17 and I appreciate their work and representation,
18 they're both fabulous and wonderful. I still
19 feel like it's a missing element on this
20 committee, for the record.

21 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah, for the
22 record, I think we've -- we've tried to do a
23 good job of compensating for it, to have it
24 more participatory than we're supposed to be.

25 SANDRA LOOMIS: That's

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1 appreciated, too.

2 SALLY GIBERT: That's a good
3 point.

4 CHARLIE SASSARA: We've got Eric.

5 SALLY GIBERT: He's always here.

6 Okay. So that's it on that.

7 Is there anything more we need to
8 do? Now we're just set.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So we should
10 have those -- so, of the five of the six who
11 are up for renewal, that's still in White House
12 approval level. So we should have that maybe
13 by the end of the year. Our charter allows
14 people to continue with it. And so we'll work
15 on the filling of Nan's seat.

16 ERIK DENKEWALTER: How long does

17 it take to do that? How long does it take now?

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Months.

19 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Months?

20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Months.

21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: There was a
22 recommendation that you have people waiting in
23 the wings that a bus doesn't hit somebody, that
24 you're not missing representation. I think all
25 these groups have interest in this. Is there

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1 any possibility you're putting names in, like
2 Amanda -- is that her name? -- and asking some
3 of these other groups and asking if they -- if
4 AOPA fires Tom.

5 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So we went
6 through the renewal process, we had queried
7 people who would -- we literally got word
8 yesterday that Nan is not planning to continue,
9 so we do have -- and I appreciate her sending
10 Amanda, so somebody who might be interested
11 actually kind of knows what they're stepping
12 into. There's a pool of other names that have
13 been brought forward to us to represent
14 backcountry users in the park that we will
15 pursue. The process -- if I got a letter off
16 to D.C. by the end of this week, the process
17 for it to go through D.C., because it routes
18 through the Department of Interior and

19 Secretary's level through the white House and
20 kind of comes back to us, yes, you get to
21 have -- that person is taking us about six
22 months. That -- and you know what, people feel
23 pretty good about it moving along at that pace.
24 So, you know, it's not -- it's not just a
25 random decision. It's thoughtful. There's all

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1 kinds of background checks that are done.
2 It's -- you know. It is the process.

3 CHARLIE SASSARA: They did not
4 check. They did not check Tom.

5 (Chuckles.)

6 TOM GEORGE: I feel my pilot's
7 license dissolving in that.

8 ERIK DENKEWALTER: We talked
9 about having alternates looked at --

10 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah, we did look
11 at that, and we were kind of going in that
12 direction for a while. Then we realized if we
13 did that, that we would be letting ourselves
14 off the hook, and sending alternates if we were
15 too busy. We decided that, no, we are here and
16 we needed to be here every time and not relying
17 on alternates. Then it gets disconnected. We
18 kind of started going in that way. We decided
19 no, we need to be here because we're the

20 appointees and we need to take responsibility.
21 Plus, we can't -- there wasn't a mechanism to
22 have formal alternates, but there is the
23 allowance for if somebody can't make it to a
24 meeting to send somebody -- like Amanda came
25 today to sit out there, you know, listen for

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1 that stakeholder's interest and report back or
2 offer up something during the public comment.
3 So it's an informal kind of backup plan. In
4 terms of formal alternates, we decided that we
5 needed to stay with it as the formal
6 appointees.

7 TOM GEORGE: But, that said,
8 probably the best way to get people queued up
9 to move into some of these seats when the
10 people that are in them today go away, for
11 whatever reason, is to come participate, you
12 know, in the meeting. These are all public
13 meetings. There's your best bet right there of
14 getting the next-generation folks. And trust
15 me, I'm constantly talking to people and
16 encouraging them to come participate. So far,
17 not many of them are. But there's the
18 guaranteed step forward, at least, of
19 generating people that have the track record
20 that then could easily step in and take over
21 without too much loss of continuity. So I

22 encourage you to twist arms for any one of
23 these seats to do exactly that. Just like
24 you're doing yourself.

25 SALLY GIBERT: And did you want

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1 any feedback or recommendations from us in
2 terms of what to do with Nan's slot?

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If anybody has
4 a recommendation, even in the public, if
5 somebody has a recommendation to fill -- the
6 person would be representing the interests of
7 the backcountry users of the park, that would
8 be great, if you would just contact me
9 directly.

10 SALLY GIBERT: We wouldn't do
11 that formally?

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: No.

13 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. Okay.

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That catches
15 us up on your reports. Do we want to talk
16 about your next meeting -- the next meeting
17 next?

18 SALLY GIBERT: It takes you at
19 least three months or so --

20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We need
21 something to be put in the Federal Register. I
22 need that much time.

23 SALLY GIBERT: If there's going
24 to be another work group meeting, it sounds
25 like it might be. Suzanne needs a couple

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1 months of flexibility to make sure she can
2 schedule that when she's available. I'm
3 thinking that early March or something might be
4 a good time. Does that sound good? Early
5 March?

6 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Early March?

7 TOM GEORGE: For the council,
8 right?

9 SALLY GIBERT: For the full
10 council.

11 we could schedule two meetings.
12 So we can get the work done before the season
13 starts, which would be implemented early March
14 and early May.

15 ERIKA BENNETT: May 15th is when
16 things start cranking. We could have a meeting
17 in early May, operators going on.

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If you can
19 choose the dates for those two meetings. If
20 you choose one in early March and you want to
21 do -- you know, have part of it, a listening
22 exercise on Triple Lakes trail, that would be
23 great. I would just notice when that would be,
24 too, for the next one. If that meeting was in

25 Denali and we included that exercise with it,

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1 that's something to consider, too. If you
2 could give me two dates now.

3 ELWOOD LYNN: If you do it too
4 early in May --

5 SALLY GIBERT: I don't think we
6 need a formal meeting to do an informal Triple
7 Lakes thing.

8 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I'm out of town
9 March 2nd through 12th. So if late February
10 works, which still gives us more than 60 days
11 out.

12 SALLY GIBERT: You're out when?

13 JOAN FRANKEVICH: March 2nd
14 through 12th.

15 Conceivably, I could do it
16 Monday, the 1st. The week would before would
17 be better.

18 SALLY GIBERT: I think that would
19 work for Suzanne. Do you think that would be
20 enough time for her to --

21 JOAN FRANKEVICH: We want to
22 keep -- we'll try to get a work group meeting.
23 That doesn't mean there aren't things we do.

24 SALLY GIBERT: I know. What --
25 it would be, like, the previous Thursday?

1 CHARLIE SASSARA: 25th?
2 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Before we make
3 it in stone, can we give us a few days -- if
4 somebody could send us a note on the tentative
5 dates and we can all get back to you.
6 Tentatively, Thursday the 25th?
7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Where is the
8 location?
9 JOAN FRANKEVICH: We were trying
10 to have it in Talkeetna. We're aiming for the
11 Talkeetna/Wasilla area --
12 SALLY GIBERT: We were going to
13 alternate -- we did our run around the state
14 more or less. Then we were going to alternate
15 between Talkeetna and Anchorage.
16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Is that what
17 you said?
18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I can't think
19 of a place --
20 JOAN FRANKEVICH: What about
21 Wasilla?
22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Wasilla could
23 work. Okay.
24 SALLY GIBERT: February 25th in
25 Wasilla. And then another meeting at the end

1 of April or --

2 ERIKA BENNETT: End of April work
3 better for you, Eric?

4 ERIK DENKEWALTER: End of
5 April -- I missed the first one. You're saying
6 end of February.

7 SALLY GIBERT: February 25th for
8 the next one in Wasilla. What's the last
9 Thursday in April?

10 KELLY BAY: 29 April.

11 SALLY GIBERT: That one, we can
12 do in Talkeenta?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah.

14 SALLY GIBERT: I'll send an
15 e-mail around to the council members tomorrow.
16 Everybody can check their calendars.

17 JIM EDWARDS: I'd like to go
18 ahead and establish the rest of the dates for
19 the calendar year. I work for a federal agency
20 that tells me when and where I go. If I get
21 this on the calendar now, I can tell them no.

22 JOAN FRANKEVICH: At least
23 tentative dates. If they have to change --

24 JIM EDWARDS: Don't tell them
25 they're tentative. Let's tell them the

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1 dates --

2 SALLY GIBERT: We were going to
3 have one in September of this year. What was
4 that date?

5 JOAN FRANKEVICH: October 2nd.
6 That's kind of the earliest that we could have
7 had it this year. We had to cancel it because
8 our charter was not good yet.

9 BRIAN OKONEK: October was a good
10 time. Busy season is winding down.

11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: April to
12 October is sure a long time. I feel like I've
13 lost a lot of mental thought process.

14 SALLY GIBERT: The other things
15 we can do, we haven't finished your discussion
16 in terms of what we're going to be doing. One
17 of the things I'd like to see is have some
18 summer field visits of some sort or another,
19 maybe more than one, to kind of keep us working
20 on the subject matter over the course of the
21 summer, which would kind of keep us on the
22 task --

23 CHARLIE SASSARA: Task.

24 TOM GEORGE: -- like a Triple
25 Lakes listening.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: Triple Lakes. I'm
2 curious to see the difference between the
3 boreal forest versus the mountain setting, what
4 the differences are, how that would be
5 different with sound perception. But have a
6 couple things like that go on over the course
7 of the summer which wouldn't necessarily need
8 to be formal meetings. That would keep us,
9 like I say, on task.

10 JIM EDWARDS: I would also like
11 some informal activity. I'd like to go around
12 to the south side and to the north side and get
13 a briefing on how each operator is conducting
14 operations and where they're going, the routes
15 they're flying, and what they're doing as they
16 start cranking up operations this spring.

17 SALLY GIBERT: Is that different
18 from, like, a best practices -- an updated best
19 practices update?

20 JIM EDWARDS: It might lead to
21 best practices. I would like to understand the
22 operations from the various locations and the
23 needs of the various operators and how they
24 differ. And the services they're providing.
25 Because, as I understand what we heard here

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1 today, the majority of the activity has to do

NL09-369 - DNP Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council - 1Dec09
2 with commercial operations, not general

3 aviation, not military. So I think that's
4 where I think we ought to be focusing our
5 efforts to understand what the issues are and
6 what we might do in terms of developing best
7 practices.

8 SALLY GIBERT: I know at one of
9 our very early meetings Suzanne did some of
10 that. She gave a presentation.

11 JIM EDWARDS: I remember that.
12 But I want more detail. And I want some
13 hands-on, feet-on-the-ground --

14 TOM GEORGE: But the question,
15 then, is: Is that something that the whole
16 group needs to do? Or something that you and a
17 couple of us might do that are more focused on
18 some of those details?

19 JIM EDWARDS: That's a good
20 question. I know I'd like to do it. I'd like
21 to offer the operators, the people that feel
22 they have something to educate me on to do just
23 that. And if that means you join me and Sally
24 doesn't, that's fine. But if Sally wants to
25 come along, I'd like to have her come, too.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: I'm trying to get
2 a sense of -- what the purpose of that is to
3 know what --

4 JIM EDWARDS: I'd like to talk to
5 the pilots. I'd like to look at the charts he
6 used, where they go. What decisions they make
7 in flight. When they say this isn't going to
8 work, I have something else.

9 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I have an idea.
10 Half -- the idea, half the operators are in
11 Talkeenta. We could have an optional field day
12 for those -- you want to go on site, talk to
13 the pilots, talk to the business owners, say
14 these are my issues, this is what I -- we could
15 hit several, four of those, possibly, in
16 Talkeenta. I don't know if we want to take
17 part of our meeting, or do it as an optional
18 add-on. Something like that work?

19 JIM EDWARDS: Sounds good to me.

20 JOAN FRANKEVICH: If we do Triple
21 Lakes, we can do one or two up there.

22 JIM EDWARDS: Sounds good to me.

23 SALLY GIBERT: The other ways
24 that information could come out would be in the
25 working group meeting while issues are being

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1 discussed in terms of, you know, looking at --
2 improving on these things with best practices,
3 or whatever, in the course of looking at best
4 practices. To have the relevant considerations

5 come up in that informal working group context
6 would be the other scenario for getting useful
7 information out of that. That's a little bit
8 different, though, I realize.

9 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Jim, a more
10 efficient way, if it would still serve your
11 purpose, if at some of our meetings we have --
12 you know, every meeting have two or three --
13 invite operators or pilots to come and present
14 their view of things and what their issues are,
15 what works and doesn't work.

16 JIM EDWARDS: I like that idea,
17 too. Even if we did do that, I'm still going
18 to go out and do these things.

19 JOAN FRANKEVICH: That doesn't
20 get --

21 JIM EDWARDS: No, I like what you
22 just said. I think that's a wonderful idea. I
23 think we ought to do it. But I might spend
24 some government money to go look by myself.

25 CHARLIE SASSARA: He's got a

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1 really good point about being, you know, right
2 there with them. Because it's a little less
3 scripted, and --

4 JIM EDWARDS: You've got to
5 remember, I didn't grow up flying this
6 mountain. I grew up flying big airplanes

7 across great big oceans, and I -- I think I
8 understand a lot of what goes on up there, but
9 I'm not sure I've got a real detailed
10 understanding.

11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Have you flown
12 up there much? Maybe some of the operators.

13 JIM EDWARDS: I've flown my own
14 airplane up there, to some extent, yeah. I
15 intend to do that some more, too. And I don't
16 really want to start displacing paying
17 passengers, but I would like to go out and talk
18 to some of the people that are doing it.

19 TOM GEORGE: They'll accept your
20 money, I'm quite sure.

21 JIM EDWARDS: I'm sure they
22 would.

23 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I think they'd
24 be happy to take you if they have an empty
25 seat, too.

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1 TOM GEORGE: To add to this.
2 When AOPA sent an entourage to Alaska for the
3 aviation trade show, the day after that, I took
4 my boss up to Talkeetna, and we signed up as
5 paying passengers, and we went up, and made a
6 stop on the glacier and stuff. That was very
7 enlightening. And it wasn't a day when it

8 wasn't good to circumnavigate the mountain, the
9 plane, got no end of good from that, not only
10 in terms of direct information, when I talk
11 about the things at headquarters, there are
12 people that at least have a concept of what
13 we're talking about. I think, actually, as
14 individual council members we need to get out
15 and do some of that thing.

16 JIM EDWARDS: Tom, that's an
17 excellent point. My -- probably my term with
18 this council and my career in government are
19 going to end just about the same time, and
20 somebody has got to replace me, and people that
21 are in the Federal Aviation Administration even
22 higher levels get a briefing from me, but they
23 need to understand what this is all about, too.
24 And that's one of the reasons I feel the need
25 to go do some research, and maybe drag some of

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1 them along later on.

2 SALLY GIBERT: I kind -- of all
3 the ideas, your idea of going up a day early on
4 kind of an optional basis and just kind of hang
5 out up there and talking to the pilots, maybe
6 doing some flying, I would love -- I'd love to
7 get up and do a glacier landing. I've never
8 done that myself, and get a sense of how that
9 works, and --

10 CHARLIE SASSARA: You can do
11 it -- it would be really quite an experience if
12 we all went to Sheldon Hut and had lunch.

13 ERIKA BENNETT: And then got
14 snowed in.

15 CHARLIE SASSARA: Being there for
16 a couple of hours while the operations are
17 going on. It would put you in the know.

18 SALLY GIBERT: I've done a lot of
19 flight-seeing; I've never landed. I'm sure
20 it's a different experience. Especially in
21 that environment.

22 CHARLIE SASSARA: Yeah.

23 TOM GEORGE: That's not a
24 February trip.

25 CHARLIE SASSARA: That's not a

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1 February trip; that's a May trip.

2 TOM GEORGE: That's a May trip.

3 SALLY GIBERT: If we had a
4 meeting April 29th, would that be too soon?

5 ERIK DENKEWALTER: No, that's
6 good.

7 BRIAN OKONEK: It's beautiful.
8 It's not a full representation of the summer
9 flight seeing, but --

10 CHARLIE SASSARA: It's like --

11 BRIAN OKONEK: It's way
12 different. Most people at that time of year
13 are going to Kahiltna by airplane for
14 transportation, rope climbing and skiing.
15 ERIKA BENNETT: Same thing with
16 the Ruth. They're just establishing camps
17 there and establishing the summer runways and
18 stuff.
19 BRIAN OKONEK: Yeah.
20 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Should we
21 consider maybe putting the Talkeenta meeting
22 one week later?
23 ERIKA BENNETT: It's the trade
24 show. Aviation trade show.
25 TOM GEORGE: First weekend in May

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1 is booked.
2 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Okay. We
3 better stick with what we have.
4 BRIAN OKONEK: But the April
5 timing would be, you know, for those air taxis
6 who are, you know, willing to, you know,
7 present to us what their operations are doing,
8 that April time, I'm sure, would be a good time
9 for them. They're gearing up for their whole
10 season. Their staff is on board.
11 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. So that
12 would be, like -- if the meeting would be on
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13 Thursday, would we go a day earlier or doing it
14 afterwards?

15 ERIKA BENNETT: Later would be
16 better for me.

17 CHARLIE SASSARA: Just thinking
18 about what the work would be, and that's -- you
19 know, we have these voluntary measures, we
20 really don't know exactly how we are successful
21 or not. We'll have some anecdotal information,
22 and we'll come together in February, have
23 another discussion, and maybe add something or
24 subtract. But then in May, it would be
25 preparation for implementation of those things.

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1 And so that would give us a -- you know, a
2 framework for talking to them about how is it
3 actually going to work, you know.

4 SALLY GIBERT: I'm thinking maybe
5 we should do the -- sort of the informal flying
6 fieldwork on a Friday and meet on Saturday.

7 TOM GEORGE: That could work. I
8 do think if you're going to do something, do it
9 before the meeting instead of after. So you
10 have the benefit of doing it before the
11 meeting. To do it afterward is not taking
12 advantage of the full opportunity. Either
13 Friday, Saturday or Thursday, Friday. Whatever

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14 works.

15 ERIK DENKEWALTER: It doesn't
16 take a whole day to do a trip up there. You
17 can leave first thing in the morning, and be
18 back in time for a 10:00 o'clock meeting.

19 SALLY GIBERT: They were
20 interested in flying, but also going around and
21 meeting with the different air taxis.

22 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Yeah, yeah.

23 SALLY GIBERT: Both of those
24 things.

25 JOAN FRANKEVICH: That would give

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1 us more time frame to adapt to changing
2 weather, so we do get to fly.

3 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

4 BRIAN OKONEK: That would be
5 April 30th with air taxis, and May 1st the
6 meeting, then. Is that what you're --

7 TOM GEORGE: 29th and 30th,
8 Friday and --

9 KELLY BAY: 29th and -- Thursday.

10 TOM GEORGE: I'm a year ahead.
11 Let's get back to 2010.

12 JOAN FRANKEVICH: First of all,
13 is it better for Thursday, Friday or Friday --

14 ERIKA BENNETT: Thursday, Friday
15 for me.

16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Thursday,
17 Friday for me.
18 JIM EDWARDS: All government
19 employees would rather do Thursday and Friday.
20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: There are
21 people like Nancy that doesn't work. She's
22 still in school.
23 SALLY GIBERT: I'm a government
24 employee --
25 JIM EDWARDS: It's not

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1 impossible. It's easier to do.
2 (Nancy Bale enters the room.)
3 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Your ears must
4 have been burning. Huh?
5 JIM EDWARDS: I might also
6 suggest, as well as the operators, I'd like to
7 have some understanding -- not only the
8 operators, but I'd like to have some
9 understanding of the mountaineering community,
10 what they do and where they go.
11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Brian gave an
12 excellent presentation at the Denali meeting
13 that you weren't able to attend, and he was
14 talking about doing that again.
15 JIM EDWARDS: would love --
16 CHARLIE SASSARA: You forgot an

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17 obligation --

18 JIM EDWARDS: I don't intend to
19 climb a mountain with you, but I would like to
20 know where and what it's about and what the
21 issues are.

22 CHARLIE SASSARA: I'll fill the
23 commitment I made for this one in February.

24 JIM EDWARDS: Have we missed any
25 group that we really ought to go learn about?

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1 Brian, do you want to do your
2 individual presentation?

3 BRIAN OKONEK: Sure. If you want
4 to take the time do it again, I'm happy to do
5 it.

6 SALLY GIBERT: I think that will
7 be good.

8 BRIAN OKONEK: Okay.

9 KELLY BAY: Do you want to go the
10 1st -- 29th and 30th? That's -- six or seven
11 of us are going to be at the trade show.

12 TOM GEORGE: That means the
13 Friday isn't going. I was thinking it was the
14 following weekend.

15 ERIKA BENNETT: I can barely do
16 the Thursday, Friday.

17 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Maybe -- how
18 long is the trade show? What about the week

19 after? It's the weekend.

20 SALLY GIBERT: Like the 5, 6 or
21 whatever it is.

22 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Or Friday,
23 Saturday.

24 TOM GEORGE: I think the
25 following week.

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1 ERIKA BENNETT: Unfortunately,
2 May is booked for me. Every weekend --

3 BRIAN OKONEK: A week earlier.

4 JOAN FRANKEVICH: weekends are --
5 you can do Thursday, Friday the next weekend.

6 KELLY BAY: 22nd, 23rd the
7 previous week. Thursday and Friday, April 22nd
8 and 23rd.

9 NANCY BALE: Sorry I'm late,
10 everyone.

11 SALLY GIBERT: We're thinking
12 about doing the February 25 meeting in Wasilla,
13 and trying to figure out --

14 (Discussion off the record.)

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: When -- what's
16 the last week of April?

17 KELLY BAY: Monday, the 26th.

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: 26th, 27th,
19 28th -- you know, I probably won't be able to

20 attend anytime in that, which means we won't be
21 able to hold the meeting. And so I was waiting
22 to hear, you know, the week in May, Thursday or
23 Friday, or the week previous. We're bringing a
24 whole group of people from Denver. We haven't
25 solidified it, but there's been a lot of

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1 comment about that final week in April.

2 BRIAN OKONEK: April 22, 23,
3 would that work?

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That works.

5 TOM GEORGE: Or the first week of
6 May.

7 ERIK DENKEWALTER: If you want to
8 experience the most air traffic into May, the
9 first cruise ship is May 8th or 10th. Or
10 something like that. Later in May is better to
11 experience the air traffic.

12 NANCY BALE: June is better
13 than --

14 SALLY GIBERT: We want to get out
15 there and see -- see what's happening out there
16 with some sound, but also do it early enough so
17 we can still have a meeting that would perhaps
18 influence the season, too.

19 JOHN LEONARD: In April, April
20 22nd, you'll be lucky for a couple of planes.

21 BRIAN OKONEK: I don't think we
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22 can do both, have it early enough but late
23 enough to get the traffic. We're just going to
24 have -- those that want to go, that need to go
25 up into the park and see what it's like during

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1 the height of the season are going to have to
2 get together and do that in July or something.
3 It doesn't really get to rolling that early.

4 JIM EDWARDS: When is the best
5 flying weather that's going to give you a
6 chance on going up there and having a pretty
7 good chance of getting to see what you want to
8 see and get back?

9 CHARLIE SASSARA: May 15th
10 through July 30th.

11 NANCY BALE: September.

12 CHARLIE SASSARA: June 30th
13 through July.

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: How does that
15 first week in May look?

16 CHARLIE SASSARA: Good.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Can we start
18 with that?

19 SALLY GIBERT: Is that that --
20 the problem with the trade show.

21 TOM GEORGE: 6, 7 May.

22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It's not on a

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23 weekend. Nancy, unfortunately, it is not on a
24 weekend. Are you almost out of school by then?
25 NANCY BALE: No, lately there's

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1 been the shot clinics which have taken every
2 available sub, plus most volunteers. I'm
3 hoping I can get a sub in February. I cannot
4 leave my school if I cannot get a sub. I'm
5 sorry.

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Can the
7 February meeting be on a Saturday, then?

8 SALLY GIBERT: I can do it.

9 NANCY BALE: It's hard for
10 people --

11 SUZANNE RUST: I prefer not to.

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Nancy, are you
13 booked on every in-service day?

14 NANCY BALE: Most in-service days
15 are on Fridays. I know we have a couple coming
16 up in spring. I can go on my computer. I'm
17 comfortable enough with February 25th. I can
18 ask for my sub tomorrow and hope I can get one
19 on February 25th. It's that bad. All of your
20 children, tell them to go into nursing. It's
21 not affected by the economic downturn.

22 So, yeah, Fridays might be a good
23 type of day to shoot for. That's when we tend
24 to have in-services. We all are busy people.

25

MIRIAM VALENTINE: You're going

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1 to send a note back out to everybody.

2 SALLY GIBERT: I want to figure

3 out --

4 KELLY BAY: February is still

5 good.

6 TOM GEORGE: Let's look at May 6,

7 7.

8 SALLY GIBERT: I'm looking at May

9 6, 7.

10 TOM GEORGE: Thursday, Friday.

11 SALLY GIBERT: In Talkeenta.

12 BRIAN OKONEK: One of those two

13 meetings, we can talk more about our summer

14 field trips.

15 SALLY GIBERT: Right. The May 6,

16 7, the formal meeting will be on the 7th, and

17 then whoever wanted to do any advanced

18 discussions with local air taxis and air tour

19 operators in Talkeenta, that would be on the

20 6th.

21 BRIAN OKONEK: You're good.

22 SALLY GIBERT: Okay.

23 TOM GEORGE: We'll design an

24 agenda or something for that.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

1 TOM GEORGE: There's some
2 structure to it.
3 SALLY GIBERT: I'm thinking
4 that's something that the working group could
5 work on. Or something.
6 TOM GEORGE: A couple of us. It
7 will happen.
8 SALLY GIBERT: It will happen.
9 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Suzanne, you
10 might have missed the beginning of the
11 conversation. Sally said she'd never done a
12 glacier landing. Jim was saying where the
13 operators go around, meet with the offices, the
14 pilots on the ground, meet about what their
15 issues are.
16 SALLY GIBERT: What they do.
17 JOAN FRANKEVICH: We were talking
18 about an optional group, on the ground, visit
19 the operators, some people, especially those
20 who haven't had a lot of flights, never been on
21 the ground, take a flight out, possibly.
22 SUZANNE RUST: I think that's a
23 good idea.
24 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Two days. The
25 first day was kind of the optional extra field

1 trips.

2 SUZANNE RUST: That's helpful.

3 Thank you.

4 SALLY GIBERT: So I will send
5 around an e-mail tomorrow with a summary.
6 Everybody can check your schedules and see if
7 that works.

8 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Do we want to
9 pick an October date?

10 SALLY GIBERT: Yes.

11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Triple Lakes
12 field trip in the summer, and then October
13 meeting. Is that what we were saying?

14 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

15 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Okay.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Do you have any
17 in-service days in October?

18 NANCY BALE: I don't have the
19 calendar for next year -- if we schedule a
20 Friday, say, around the 16th, we usually have a
21 mid- to late-October in-service day. I see
22 there's five Fridays in October -- I'm on '09.

23 TOM GEORGE: 14, 15, 16 October
24 is the aviation conference in Fairbanks.

25 NANCY BALE: Not going to be soon

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1 enough. It would have to be 15 or 22 for me.
2 SALLY GIBERT: 15 -- so 22.
3 TOM GEORGE: 22. I'll be
4 recovered by then.
5 JIM EDWARDS: Depends on how bad
6 we beat you up.
7 SUZANNE RUST: October.
8 SALLY GIBERT: Probably be back
9 here. Anchorage.
10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Anchorage.
11 NANCY BALE: Next meeting is in
12 wasilla; is that correct?
13 SALLY GIBERT: 25th, 26th.
14 NANCY BALE: And then Talkeenta.
15 SALLY GIBERT: In May.
16 NANCY BALE: Somewhere in the
17 summer --
18 SALLY GIBERT: Somewhere during
19 the summer do another optional field trip at
20 Triple Lakes. Sort of like the barbecue pizza
21 thing at Triple Lakes.
22 TOM GEORGE: I'm not guaranteeing
23 anybody will carry a barbecue in there.
24 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Triple Lakes.
25 NANCY BALE: I know Paul Anderson

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1 offered his porch.

2 TOM GEORGE: We can catch that.

3 JIM EDWARDS: How about somewhere
4 where there's a runway we'll fly in?

5 TOM GEORGE: If I understand
6 Paul's place, it's runway big time. Denali
7 private strip.

8 JIM EDWARDS: If we can get
9 permission, I'll bring my airplane.

10 ERIK DENKEWALTER: You can go to
11 the Triple Lakes, go into the McKinley strip.

12 TOM GEORGE: The park strip.

13 SALLY GIBERT: Should we talk
14 about more specifics about Triple Lakes and how
15 that would work? would the purpose be to go
16 out, park ourselves somewhere and all kind of
17 collectively take notes about what we're
18 hearing and seeing? will there be a sound
19 monitoring out there?

20 JARED WITHERS: I'm sure, for
21 that type of exercise, we could bring stuff
22 out. It may not be a long-term station out
23 there. We can do like what we did at
24 Petersville in the summer.

25 BRIAN OKONEK: We can do it for

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1 that section?

2 JARED WITHERS: Yeah.

3 SALLY GIBERT: I've never been on
4 the trail system.

5 ELWOOD LYNN: On the north end,
6 closest to the park strip, then you would catch
7 the Era operation and the park traffic. If
8 you're at the south end McKinley Village, then
9 you pick up Denali private aircraft.

10 TOM GEORGE: Where was the sound
11 monitoring? That was from the south end?

12 JARED WITHERS: That's where the
13 lakes are.

14 TOM GEORGE: Based on the data we
15 looked at a minute ago, I think the worthwhile
16 things would be to go there with the clipboards
17 and log for as much time as we can stand it.
18 Just, again, to get a better sense of what the
19 nature of that traffic is, hoping it's a decent
20 enough day.

21 ELWOOD LYNN: Depending on how
22 ambitious the people are, you could walk the
23 length of the trail and take a shuttle back.

24 SALLY GIBERT: How long?

25 ELWOOD LYNN: Eight miles, eight,

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1 nine miles.

2 ERIK DENKEWALTER: When is this
3 scheduled to go?

4 TOM GEORGE: We didn't --

5 ERIK DENKEWALTER: That bridge
6 isn't in on the north end.

7 ELWOOD LYNN: We're trying to
8 construct it this spring. It should be usable
9 by then.

10 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I talked to
11 those guys, and they were back on one of their
12 last things in there. They weren't too sure
13 how soon they were going to get it done. But
14 you could coach the project.

15 JOAN FRANKEVICH: If we're unable
16 to be do the whole trail, the focus should be
17 on the south end. I get the impression from
18 Nan, that's the area she was concerned about.

19 ELWOOD LYNN: That's where you
20 have the most users, the -- walking out to the
21 hostel.

22 JOAN FRANKEVICH: At a minimum,
23 we go look at that.

24 TOM GEORGE: Wherever the sound
25 data is, that's where we should be.

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I have an
2 agenda suggestion for a future meeting. I was
3 noticing in the backcountry plan and talking
4 with Miriam about it where it says the Parks

5 Service will look at -- after the backcountry
6 plan they will look at their own helicopter and
7 flight use in the park, and look at ways to
8 minimize their own use. I asked Miriam about
9 that. She said it's actively working on that.
10 And we might be able to get a presentation at
11 one of those meetings, perhaps, we can have Guy
12 present on Parks Service use.

13 JIM EDWARDS: Why would we want
14 to get into it? That's the Parks Service's
15 internal business.

16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I think they're
17 part of the problem. They should look at
18 use --

19 JIM EDWARDS: That's up to them.
20 That's not part of our charter.

21 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I think they're
22 happy to do it.

23 JIM EDWARDS: They may be. I
24 encourage them to do it. But I don't know that
25 that's our business.

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1 CHARLIE SASSARA: This is
2 voluntary, isn't it?

3 JIM EDWARDS: We're looking at
4 voluntary ways that we can get the aviation
5 community, not the Parks Service.

6 CHARLIE SASSARA: They're part of
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7 the aviation community.

8 SALLY GIBERT: We could ask them
9 what voluntary measures they themselves are
10 taking. There's no --

11 JIM EDWARDS: To what end?

12 TOM GEORGE: To this end, at a
13 meeting earlier, we saw at least the start of
14 them actually putting in GPS and tracking their
15 own airplanes and a distribution of where those
16 are going. I'd certainly like an update on
17 that so we understand what component of the
18 traffic that we're looking at overall they
19 represent. And I think that is something we
20 need to know about. We're not necessarily
21 telling them how to do their business. We need
22 to understand, since they are a major user in
23 that area, what the nature and distribution of
24 their use is.

25 JOAN FRANKEVICH: If it ends up

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1 they're doing a big research project in
2 Kantishna, and all the complaints are from Park
3 Service research, not from Kantishna Air, I
4 think that's useful.

5 JIM EDWARDS: It may be useful
6 information, but I think it's outside our
7 charter to be suggesting to the Parks Service

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8 how they manage their business.

9 CHARLIE SASSARA: I think that's
10 a really good point, but we can ask the
11 question, and if they choose to display on a
12 voluntary basis --

13 JIM EDWARDS: I'm concerned about
14 the amount of time that this whole process is
15 taking. And I'm wondering why we're getting
16 into things that are outside of our charter
17 when we've got plenty to do within the charter.

18 CHARLIE SASSARA: Actually,
19 that's a good point. Can I take a little segue
20 on that? And that is, when I was thinking
21 about what are we going to accomplish between
22 now and February and have some sort of a work
23 plan that would be rolled out -- what Suzanne
24 and the working group presented last year, we
25 haven't found if it worked or not. Then we're

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1 going to do something, hopefully, and make
2 suggestions and go forward for next year. So,
3 what would be the work that we could accomplish
4 that would get us in a position of implementing
5 in May, you know. And so that we're actively
6 moving towards that position. You know, maybe
7 it goes to your point about Parks Service, too
8 much extra time spent.

9 JIM EDWARDS: Thank you. Your
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10 point is the segue into the next one I was
11 going to make. We've had some really good
12 suggestions of standard operating procedures
13 that this group has worked up. We have no way
14 of now measuring whether they're going to be
15 effective or not. No matter how we measure
16 them, we're not going to get an effective
17 answer as to whether this change made any
18 difference, this didn't. What I would rather
19 have the Parks Service talk to us about is
20 these operators are going to be motivated when
21 they see positive effects. We need a way of
22 measuring the perception of the people using
23 the park on whether these suggestions that
24 we're implementing are working or not. And
25 that was, I think, a better place for us to use

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1 our time with the Parks Service is seeing if we
2 couldn't come up with a thoughtful design of a
3 way to try to generate information about the --
4 you're already doing some things about your
5 customers' appreciation of the experience. Is
6 there something more we can do on that specific
7 target to these areas where we're likely to
8 make these changes and where they are going
9 to -- if we do implement some, we've got some
10 sort of before and after measure?

11 ELWOOD LYNN: Do you want to talk
12 about the -- where are we on the survey?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah, we can
14 talk about that.

15 You know, Jim, I think you're
16 right. I think what we've heard this morning
17 is people are interested in an effective
18 feedback loop. Is what people are doing really
19 making any positive difference or notable
20 difference or tangible difference? whatever.
21 And you spoke this morning about there's an
22 internal component that it seems like the Park
23 Service could help manage, whether we have
24 rangers at 14, or we're doing something in the
25 backcountry, or we have folks stationed on the

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1 Triple Lakes trail. There is a method design
2 that we can do next summer and the summer after
3 that. We kind of put a process in place. That
4 kind of sounds like it was -- if I heard people
5 correctly, it sounded like something that might
6 be recommended to the Parks Service as an
7 action for the Parks Service to take. And then
8 it struck me that there was another feedback
9 piece that wasn't so specific to the Parks
10 Service and it -- you know, that it wouldn't be
11 up to us to implement that piece, whether it
12 was amongst the operators or -- I have to go

13 back to my notes and see how I saw that
14 happening. So the whole -- this whole
15 thoughtful design, I think your terminology
16 is -- there's almost like two pieces and,
17 really, what it comes back to is what is the
18 question we want to answer? And then, you
19 know, what are the pieces that will be part of
20 that. I will tell you, as soon as it comes
21 into the Parks Service realm, we're going to
22 get very scientific about it. So I know that
23 there had been some requests earlier to assist
24 us with language and surveys. We've talked
25 today about having objective language, and you

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1 will have some level of input into that. But
2 then there will be a point where that will stop
3 because it will even go outside of our control.
4 It will go through the process by which it's
5 peer-reviewed and all of that, the survey
6 process. There's the part when it comes to
7 Parks Service. It's going to get pretty
8 formal. I don't know, we just started -- we
9 had a survey that we had hoped to implement
10 last season. One of them came out of the
11 backcountry plan in 2006, we said we want to
12 monitor the experience of the backcountry, and
13 we had an issue with the sister federal agency

14 who stopped all surveys -- I don't quite
15 remember -- they're trying to figure out a
16 better process. In the process of figuring out
17 a better process, everybody got stalled. We
18 just got word that we will be able to run a
19 backcountry survey this year.

20 Now, you will not have the
21 opportunity to weigh in on these questions.
22 It's already gone back through the whole peer
23 review process, back to D.C., and it's going to
24 come back to us. We're going to implement that
25 survey. We can certainly show you what that's

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1 going to look like at the February meeting or
2 May meeting.

3 SALLY GIBERT: February.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That is for a
5 very specific purpose in relating to
6 backcountry use patterns. What I hear you kind
7 of asking for is you specifically want
8 information on overflights, and the impact of
9 overflights potentially -- I mean, this is
10 where you need to answer the question, and I
11 would say on the work program, the first thing
12 and hopefully before the February meeting, is
13 that there's a group of people, whether it's
14 the aviation working group or it's a subset of
15 that that comes together and says: So what is
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16 it we really want to know? And if it's an
17 element you think the Parks Service is going to
18 implement, we bring Parks Service staff to the
19 table to help us with the components of that.
20 Does that sound -- that's a long-winded answer,
21 yeah. Sorry about that.

22 TOM GEORGE: I think you're
23 getting somewhere, though.

24 CHARLIE SASSARA: If we had what
25 we wanted to know in February, would that be

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1 implementable in May?

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Oh, if you
3 would have gone through a working group and the
4 council agreed in February as a group that you
5 wanted to make -- if I had Parks Service staff
6 at the table with us to help with the working
7 group, yeah, we'd be kind of fast-tracking --

8 CHARLIE SASSARA: We could get
9 something --

10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Even if it's
11 working with John Leonard and what could happen
12 in terms of anecdotal to match what Jared is
13 kind of thinking about doing at 14. Those kind
14 of pieces. That's a little bit different than
15 the survey instrument where you ran them a
16 random sample. That takes us into a different

18 SALLY GIBERT: That sounds like a
19 good --

20 CHARLIE SASSARA: We could get it
21 done. It would be something that would be a
22 measurement tool that we could have in by May.

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I would think.
24 I'm saying, yes. I don't make these up.

25 JOHN LEONARD: We didn't do it as

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1 a survey. We collected -- the staff collected
2 information, we wouldn't have to go through the
3 process.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right.

5 JOHN LEONARD: That's something
6 that our staff would be willing to do.

7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: John is
8 thinking it's realistic. Jared would help us
9 with how that would mesh with sound monitoring.
10 You've made an assumption that the 14 K camp is
11 going to be on the list. The six sites, two
12 admin sites. One of your recommendations will
13 have to -- he already kind of prompted that:
14 what do you want on the list? Get us your
15 prioritized list. It's all like, February,
16 great. We'll meet again.

17 SALLY GIBERT: I can see that as
18 another separate working group could tackle

19 that before the February meeting to kind of
20 iron out some of the bugs and maybe bring it to
21 the table so it could be finalized at the
22 February meeting.

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Perfect.

24 TOM GEORGE: That's what I was
25 hoping is if we can get an aviation working

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1 group, again, and coordinate to get the right
2 people from the Parks Service to come talk
3 specific, let's call it anecdotal information
4 so we don't run afoul with the survey with the
5 capital "S" problem. Then, hopefully --
6 because, again, before we sit down and throw
7 down some rash recommendations, I think we need
8 to talk to the right group of people to
9 understand what you can and can't do, and
10 figure out what it does or doesn't mean to us.
11 And then come back, hopefully, at the February
12 meeting with -- maybe more than half-baked --
13 maybe not fully baked -- something to talk
14 about. That's what I was hoping if we
15 scheduled the user group meeting, somewhere,
16 maybe in the early February time frame.

17 SALLY GIBERT: I would say that
18 this data-gathering thing might not be
19 dependent on the aviation working group. That

NL09-369 - DNP Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council - 1Dec09
20 could be a different -- could be a different
21 set of people.

22 TOM GEORGE: It could be. But,
23 actually, I'd put it ahead of reviewing routes.
24 It's, like, until we figure out how we're going
25 to collect some feedback, even to evaluate what

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1 we've done so far. Why bother to make any
2 changes? In my mind, it would be at the top of
3 the list of things to work on there. I think
4 it's a little bit broader than that group.
5 It's 100 percent overlap. I can't see having
6 that without having all the people that
7 participated in the aviation working group.
8 Administratively, it seemed to me it was easier
9 to swell that group and carve off and have the
10 two groups that you try to track. Whatever
11 mechanism you like, I'm happy to work.

12 SUZANNE RUST: I'm sure if I
13 can't be there, if I can't lead it, Tom would
14 be glad to.

15 TOM GEORGE: Ouch, I felt that.

16 SUZANNE RUST: If I can't be
17 there in February, Tom, I'm sure, we can work
18 together.

19 TOM GEORGE: We'll make something
20 happen.

21 JIM EDWARDS: Can I just go back
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22 over the ground rules and decide a couple of
23 points? Hopefully, we will be able to make a
24 series of recommendations, perhaps, over a
25 period of years. It would be nice to have a

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1 means to measure each one of these things as it
2 comes along, already in place so that when we
3 do initiate the proposed change, we have a
4 ready-made measurement tool that will carry us
5 through and let us have a before and after
6 look. I hope that -- that was my definition of
7 what I had in mind.

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So you have to
9 then know what it is you're trying to answer --
10 so is the -- are you going to say when we
11 implement aspects of the best -- best
12 practices --

13 TOM GEORGE: Best practices.

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: -- you're
15 going to have a very finite, there's six things
16 on this list. Because what you're ultimately,
17 I would assume, coming to the Parks Service and
18 saying is we need a way to measure these six
19 things over a period of X amount of time. And
20 each thing might require -- you might have to
21 do something different to measure it.

22 JIM EDWARDS: That's a

23 possibility. I don't think that's always
24 practical. But, let's say, for example, we
25 decide to extend -- before we turn to the west

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1 we are going to pass this point, okay. There
2 are going to be places in the park that we are
3 hoping to improve people's perception of their
4 experience. Hopefully, there will be a way of
5 measuring that the year before, the year we
6 implement the change, and maybe in the future.
7 I don't think we are going to be able to change
8 and put a specific measurement device in place
9 for every change we make every year.

10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You're going
11 to need the indicator. So what indicates --
12 so, Jared got up and said, you know -- I'm not
13 going to do it as well as what Jared did --
14 here are the standards by which we're doing
15 good things for the soundscape in the park. So
16 what are the indicators that are going to -- I
17 guess that's what I'm saying, with these best
18 practices --

19 JIM EDWARDS: That's exactly
20 where we need to do some work.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay. Then
22 you -- then your first step is defining what
23 the indicators will be, not the measurement
24 piece, not your standard piece.

25

TOM GEORGE: Can you give an

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1 example?

2 JIM EDWARDS: I understand.

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I can give you
4 one from my vehicle management plan. You're
5 trying to reach a desired condition.

6 JIM EDWARDS: All we're trying to
7 do is include the perception of the customer of
8 the experience of being in the park.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That is your
10 desired condition. When people come to the
11 park, they have a great experience in the park.
12 Desired condition. You need some way to
13 measure -- something to measure. Those are the
14 indicators.

15 JIM EDWARDS: And a way of
16 collecting that data.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That is your
18 standard.

19 JIM EDWARDS: Somewhere to store
20 it and keep it.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay. Truly,
22 Jim, what you've just described you've wanted
23 is more than a day-long conversation. It is
24 probably more -- I only say -- we're in
25 process --

1 JIM EDWARDS: A full-year course
2 in graduate research methods.

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That's not to
4 say it's worthy to take on. It's a recognition
5 that it's going to take a little bit of work.
6 It's more than a working group's thing. If
7 that's something you really want to get into,
8 it's going to take a lot of work.

9 JIM EDWARDS: How serious are we
10 about the work? If we're serious about making
11 a positive impact, we have to make a change
12 that will work. I personally would like to
13 encourage everybody to take the measurement
14 piece very seriously.

15 NANCY BALE: I have a question.
16 You know, I think we're getting back to stuff
17 we talked about, Jim, frankly, at meetings you
18 weren't present. Basically, we're not here to
19 rewrite the backcountry plan. The backcountry
20 plan has standards in it, and conditions based
21 on sound measurement. To protect the
22 soundscape. The backcountry plan is not so
23 much talking about people's perceptions as it
24 is talking about soundscape measurements. So,
25 if we want to base what we do on people's

1 perceptions, that's basically a rewrite of the
2 backcountry plan. And I know Paul Anderson has
3 stood here more than once and said that we're
4 not here to rewrite the plan. That's -- I'm
5 offering that out. I think the plan is based
6 on something more objectively measurable than
7 people's perceptions. We all know how slippery
8 people's perceptions are. Now, some of the
9 standards that were developed in the
10 backcountry plan were developed because people
11 had complained on comment cards. But the
12 standards were developed, according to
13 measurements that you make objectively. And
14 those were the only standards that were given
15 us for protecting the soundscape in the plan.
16 We didn't have people perception standards
17 given to us.

18 JIM EDWARDS: Well, you raise an
19 issue that perhaps we ought to address here
20 before we go any further. What is the purpose
21 of this committee? I thought it was to try to
22 develop voluntary means by which we could
23 reduce noise impact. I have no knowledge of
24 having to do that to the point we need the
25 standards of the backcountry plan.

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1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm sorry, I
2 thought I heard Jim say, when we take these
3 best practices, when things are implemented,
4 how will we know we're successful?

5 NANCY BALE: The data from the
6 soundscape stations will tell us.

7 JIM EDWARDS: No, they won't.

8 SALLY GIBERT: They won't?

9 TOM GEORGE: Actually, Nancy, to
10 catch you up, we actually did discuss some of
11 this this morning before you were here. The
12 discussion right now is not trying to change
13 the standards to the plan.

14 Jared's got -- you'll want to
15 look at the results from this last summer and
16 some very specific things. I think we actually
17 have a measurement tool in place that tells you
18 what you're doing relative to the standards in
19 the plan. Nobody is disputing that. This is a
20 slightly different thing. This is saying we
21 are committed as a group to try to make changes
22 to improve the situation. But we need to know,
23 again, is it improving it for the visitors?
24 This is a different thing from soundscape
25 standards. Soundscape standard is still there;

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1 the measurements are going on. I don't think
2 there's any concern or anybody trying to undo
3 that.

4 what we are talking about, I
5 think, is something different. That is, if we
6 are making changes in some of the things the
7 air tour operators and eventually the whole
8 aviation community hopefully is doing, is that
9 making a difference? That is a different
10 question. I think that's what we're trying to
11 focus on.

12 NANCY BALE: I don't see it as a
13 different question, frankly.

14 ERIKA BENNETT: There is no solid
15 proof, if you want to call it proof, that
16 there's a problem right now. There is no
17 saying --

18 CHARLIE SASSARA: That's not
19 true. No, it's not. Don't go there.

20 TOM GEORGE: Let's see where
21 she's going. I don't know --

22 ERIKA BENNETT: We're getting
23 complaints and there are noise -- there are
24 areas where noise is making an impact, but
25 there seems to be a direction that we're trying

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1 to reduce what we've got right now. whereas,

2 we could also be trying to keep what we have
3 right now so that 20 years from now it's not
4 worse. I'm just throwing that out. In other
5 words --

6 CHARLIE SASSARA: To hold it
7 here.

8 ERIKA BENNETT: Hold it here.
9 Try to make it better, but make sure that it
10 doesn't get any worse.

11 ELWOOD LYNN: Triple Lakes, we
12 made some changes, and we had people make
13 comments, unsolicited comments that it was
14 better. But then we've seen with the
15 measurements that Jared took that the number of
16 overflights is off the chart compared to what
17 people think is going on commercially. So, it
18 would be a good measurement to get out there on
19 several occasions and see if we can quantify
20 which aircraft are doing these overflights.
21 Because it doesn't make any sense to continue
22 to try to fine-tune these best practices if
23 we're not controlling the problem. It's a
24 different user group.

25 SUZANNE RUST: It doesn't make a

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1 difference --

2 JIM EDWARDS: Any one change we
3 make may introduce unintended adverse

4 consequences, and it would be nice to know
5 that.

6 JARED WITHERS: Nancy, I wanted
7 to address something you said earlier. I think
8 what Jim and others are more talking about is
9 kind of a controlled experiment to quantify
10 what changes, suggestions that this committee
11 is making in the short-term and get feedback
12 and direct the committee. You had said that
13 the sound monitoring stations will measure what
14 the improvements are, and I think that might be
15 asking too much of the long-term monitoring
16 structure. There's too many other variables.
17 It needs to be a controlled experiment to
18 measure the types of things that you guys are
19 after.

20 NANCY BALE: Yeah, I don't have
21 any problem with developing surveys. I just
22 think that that as a tool to measure outcomes
23 wasn't given to us in this plan, and the
24 outcomes would be different depending upon the
25 area in the park in question. Like, for

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1 instance, red areas, there may be a lot of
2 people in a red area who are complaining about
3 the sound, mountaineers, for instance, these
4 red areas, this is the snowmachine area. This

5 is the mountaineering area. This is the area
6 that was given to us in the plan. There could
7 be a lot of people that complain about the
8 noise in the area. But the Parks Service gave
9 noisy recreation a bye in these areas by
10 ratcheting up the standards. So if we just
11 simply use a people perception standard, you
12 know, and conversely there may be a lot of
13 people who these are the quiet, the more
14 quieter natural sound areas in the park, there
15 might be a lot of people who come from New York
16 who wouldn't be bothered by the sounds a lot
17 noisier in here. But the standard is ratcheted
18 down. I'm saying this is what the plan gave
19 us. If we're relying on people perception as a
20 matrix, as a perception -- it's kind of
21 different. It's several degrees of separation
22 from what the plan gave us.

23 I want to let everyone know, we
24 have to interpret the missive. Aviation is
25 part of interpreting the noise. We know it

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1 doesn't go through these. It goes down here.
2 The plan may not have taken into account that
3 there may have been some sound into the quieter
4 part. I think it's okay to pay attention to
5 the red zones and mountaineering. They may not
6 be violating sound standards as much as well as

7 the areas in the pink and blue areas. Jared
8 would know. See what I mean when I say
9 people's perception as a metric for the success
10 of our venture? They may not give us a
11 measurement we really want.

12 JIM EDWARDS: Okay. In your
13 opinion, what is the measurement we really
14 want?

15 NANCY BALE: well, it would be
16 really nice if the Parks Service had the money
17 for more soundscape stations and more
18 monitoring activities.

19 JIM EDWARDS: How would that
20 affect --

21 NANCY BALE: The plan is based on
22 that as the metric.

23 JIM EDWARDS: How would that
24 affect voluntary measures that we can help
25 generate to reduce sound?

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1 NANCY BALE: The plan says when
2 standards are being approached or exceeded
3 there's a toolbox of interventions. I can't
4 remember what page that we have. It's from
5 that toolbox that we were to select our
6 recommendations.

7 JIM EDWARDS: We have no

8 authority to affect any management of the park.
9 what we have is the ability to deal with the
10 aviation community, not the park, to try to get
11 them to adopt voluntary measures to reduce
12 noise impact from the park and the people on
13 the surface in the park. We have no obligation
14 to achieve the backcountry plan; that's park
15 management's job. Our job --

16 NANCY BALE: I disagree.

17 SALLY GIBERT: I think what
18 everybody is saying is that we are trying to
19 reduce noise impacts which to the extent that
20 that's successful gets the Parks Service closer
21 to meeting their soundscape standards, and that
22 is what we're doing. So we are getting closer
23 to the standards. But the standards themselves
24 are still somewhat arbitrary, and all we can do
25 is the best voluntary measures we can to reduce

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1 that sound and -- by without worrying about
2 whether it's exactly in or out or, you know, 5
3 decibels over or under, that's not as important
4 to us. It's just doing what we can on a
5 voluntary basis to bring that noise impact
6 down. So I -- I said this before, I don't get
7 too hung up about the exact standards other
8 than knowing that we're just trying to make the
9 whole situation --

10 CHARLIE SASSARA: And we're
11 trying to find out whether or not the voluntary
12 measures that we are suggesting have made an
13 improvement.

14 TOM GEORGE: -- improvement or
15 not.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Just the pure
17 monitoring doesn't do that.

18 JIM EDWARDS: Pure monitoring is
19 going to take ten years to come back to the
20 same spot a second time. We can't wait that
21 long to see if a one-mile change in flight path
22 accomplished it and how would we separate it
23 from all the other changes we've made.

24 CHARLIE SASSARA: And we want to
25 get to this something on top of what we've

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1 accomplished this year for next year.

2 ERIKA BENNETT: And we use Triple
3 Lakes, then the sound monitoring and the
4 supposed improvement divert. The sound
5 monitoring is off the charts, but they got
6 positive feedback.

7 JOAN FRANKEVICH: It could have
8 been more off the charts the year before.

9 ERIKA BENNETT: It's the only
10 representation we have.

11 TOM GEORGE: If we're only
12 relying on those plots on the screen, we don't
13 really have the tools we need to figure out
14 whether the changes we're making are helping.
15 we're looking in a slightly different
16 direction. It's not a disallowance of the
17 soundscape standards. It's to give us some
18 tools in near time, to evaluate what we're
19 doing, whether that's helping, hindering or
20 displacing the same place the other things
21 we're doing.

22 NANCY BALE: I apologize if I
23 wasn't around for discussion that might have
24 illuminated my thinking. I just am feeling
25 very unsure about people perceptions as being

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1 the basis of soundscape protection. I think
2 people perception is not a good basis. It's a
3 slippery basis.

4 SALLY GIBERT: It doesn't work
5 for a regulatory approach. But that's not --

6 NANCY BALE: Maybe for very
7 isolated specific projects, yeah.

8 BRIAN OKONEK: I think this is a
9 perfect opportunity for some very important
10 monitoring would be John and his mountaineering
11 rangers on the West Buttress, because they've
12 got people on the mountain leaving from base

13 camp from all over the mountain all summer
14 long. If they had a logbook that had specific
15 questions on it, if they can fill out daily, it
16 could give some really good information. And
17 it could be tweaked anytime. We can look at
18 the information midsummer and say, you know,
19 the best practices seems to not be working
20 because the Upper Guild was incredibly noisy,
21 maybe we should try doing this. And you can --
22 you could change your procedures a little bit,
23 and the rest of the season they might show that
24 the situation changed. It improved. And this
25 is -- this is one of the problem areas, and it

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1 seems like it would be -- you could monitor it
2 specifically with this group of people that's
3 on the mountain all summer long, the summit
4 flights, Kahiltna Pass flights. And they're up
5 there long enough that, sure, there's going to
6 be days when there's bad weather and no planes
7 at all. There's going to be days when it's
8 good weather and lots of flights. They'll be
9 on the spot and give us some good information.
10 Otherwise, we don't know.

11 CHARLIE SASSARA: It's the
12 highest number of people that are most
13 concentrated right there for a short period of

14 time, and so it -- there would be a lot of
15 leverage around that mean -- measuring that
16 experience. The other outlying areas would be
17 more difficult to quantify. It would at least
18 give us something tangible to go after.

19 BRIAN OKONEK: I think it would
20 be -- if Parks Service thinks it's a doable
21 thing, their rangers are busy on the mountain.
22 It's a full-time, 24-hour-a-day deal. But if
23 they think they can handle that much more
24 during the day, I think it would be excellent
25 information to have available.

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1 ELWOOD LYNN: I think that's
2 important for the working group to meet with
3 John and establish, you know, how much they can
4 contribute towards this effort and what types
5 of questions he feels comfortable with them
6 answering. And then be ready for the season.

7 JIM EDWARDS: Yeah.

8 JOAN FRANKEVICH: John, do you
9 think that's a realistic idea? Expectation?

10 JOHN LEONARD: I do.

11 CHARLIE SASSARA: Would we come
12 in February with sort of having got a metric or
13 something together by then? Or it would be
14 between February and May? What do you think?

15 JOHN LEONARD: Earlier the
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16 better, but, you know, by May 1st, April 15th
17 would probably be the time we need it.

18 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Somebody needs
19 to work on it now, so that we can have it at
20 the February meeting.

21 CHARLIE SASSARA: Yeah.

22 JOHN LEONARD: I don't think it
23 would be -- what you're looking for would be
24 difficult. Probably be numbers of planes, some
25 sort of way to quantify decibels in the field,

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1 something like that. I mean, it is a
2 perception issue, of course, but I think being
3 that we have a consistent staff, you can take
4 away some of the subjectiveness and biases
5 potentially.

6 SALLY GIBERT: Use the same
7 measures, not noticeable, noticeable but
8 disruptive --

9 JIM EDWARDS: You kind of have a
10 ready-made skill there. Yes, there is going to
11 be some error in it. We need to understand
12 that going in. We need to get comparison
13 measures, some error here and some error here,
14 but the comparisons are going to be filled out.

15 TOM GEORGE: I think we try to
16 get a working group meeting together, to

17 coordinate it, just to talk about it in more
18 detail.

19 CHARLIE SASSARA: That would be a
20 work product that would be ready to go with
21 that main working group in February?

22 TOM GEORGE: In February,
23 exactly. I think we're going to get better
24 participation in our working group meeting.
25 The whole council will get invited.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: Everybody will get
2 invited.

3 CHARLIE SASSARA: That's
4 productive.

5 NANCY BALE: I have a question
6 for John in relation to that. In the north
7 side or the core park backcountry patrols, how
8 many are ongoing in the core wilderness at any
9 given time? How many backcountry patrols?

10 JOHN LEONARD: You know, I don't
11 know. I'm not as informed on that as the south
12 side. On the south side, we're consistent.
13 From April 28th to July 15th, we have a
14 presence pretty much from top to bottom.

15 NANCY BALE: who in the park
16 would be in charge of the backcountry patrols
17 in the core?

18 JOHN LEONARD: Probably the
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19 person who would have the best idea is JoAnne
20 Horn.

21 NANCY BALE: If we were going to
22 ask you to have your rangers do those kinds of
23 data gathering, it would make sense to have
24 backcountry rangers have access to that kind
25 of -- even though they're fewer and far between

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1 those patrols, your mountaineering patrols are
2 concentrated in a relatively small part of the
3 park, but it is also that part of the park that
4 has the most relaxed desired future conditions
5 for soundscape so that if we as a group are
6 concerned about the backcountry experience in
7 the core, then we'd want to get surveys from
8 the rangers, that could be the same instrument?
9 Don't you all agree?

10 SALLY GIBERT: Possibly.
11 Ideally.

12 BRIAN OKONEK: Exactly the same.

13 JOHN LEONARD: I don't think it's
14 asking too much. If there's a product that
15 you'd like, we can design what we do and try to
16 accommodate that as much as possible. So it's
17 a big -- something of importance. It's the
18 reason why we're out there doing what we do.
19 So --

20 TOM GEORGE: To go step one place

21 further, does the Parks Service have any kind
22 of a routine presence on the Triple Lakes area,
23 knowing that's one of our hot spots?

24 ELWOOD LYNN: One thing we'll
25 have is the trail crew working on the trail.

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1 otherwise, I don't believe we have routine
2 patrols.

3 TOM GEORGE: we'll think about
4 that some more. That does seem like another
5 area. Again, we might have to do different
6 things in different places based on the nature
7 of what's going on.

8 NANCY BALE: Does the education
9 center, MSLC, take trips on Triple Lakes?

10 ELWOOD LYNN: I don't believe so.
11 I think they're waiting for the trails to come
12 through.

13 NANCY BALE: If we can bring in
14 some of the nonprofits, ask them to have their
15 people trained a little bit.

16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: How about
17 Denali Education Center, don't they use the
18 trail a lot?

19 ELWOOD LYNN: They might be --

20 JOAN FRANKEVICH: would it be
21 useful to have the base camp manager do

22 something? Is there too many landings --

23 BRIAN OKONEK: It's an airport.

24 It's going to be noisy because airplanes have

25 to take off.

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1 NANCY BALE: It's a portal, and
2 it's got very relaxed standards. We're not
3 going to find violations there, I don't think.

4 CHARLIE SASSARA: We're looking
5 forward to hearing it there.

6 TOM GEORGE: Get this guy in or
7 get this guy out of here.

8 BRIAN OKONEK: Even Triple Lakes
9 for me is kind of a conundrum. It's right on
10 the edge of the park. It's right on the major
11 flyway. Lots of major activity that doesn't
12 have anything to do with the park where the
13 Ruth Glacier, Little Switzerland, the Eldridge,
14 the flights in there are -- for the most part,
15 have something to do with the park, either a
16 person is on a flight seeing trip to see the
17 park or they're flying into the park to ski or
18 climb. And so those areas are directly
19 affected by park activities. Where Triple
20 Lakes is affected by, you know, all activity.

21 TOM GEORGE: We have to live in a
22 messy world. We have to deal with the messy

23 places as well as the clean. I don't think we
24 can ignore it. We have to realize it's a
25 different change. Maybe the answer is to move

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1 the park boundary west. I don't know. Having
2 moved -- from the history of the park it moved
3 the boundary over.

4 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Move the GA
5 corridor east.

6 TOM GEORGE: If you drill a hole
7 in the department, we'll be glad --

8 CHARLIE SASSARA: Come back in
9 February, and we'll have some sort of measuring
10 tool.

11 TOM GEORGE: Or plan to talk
12 about, at least.

13 CHARLIE SASSARA: We'll push on
14 the working group to have a product, right?

15 And then the next place would be
16 what are we going to do with the next year?
17 The voluntary measures, the analysis of them as
18 best we can, right, and then what other things
19 might come up that we could input for next
20 year. Is that --

21 TOM GEORGE: Developing products
22 for the GA community, education communities, a
23 bunch of stuff to do here. I think we are
24 looking on the highest priority basis and area

25 that makes sense. The unfortunate thing is

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1 that last year we didn't do what we were
2 talking about now. So we didn't have the right
3 tool in place before we started dinking with
4 things.

5 CHARLIE SASSARA: To everyone's
6 credit, it took a while to get there, and then
7 when it happened, these guys really stepped
8 forward and were reduced to some meaningful
9 steps. So we weren't ready with the measuring
10 tool, but I think they stepped up.

11 JIM EDWARDS: I have no -- I have
12 no concern about anybody's good will. I think
13 everybody's trying. Sometimes we're not smart
14 enough and get the cart behind the horse
15 instead of in front. That's just the nature of
16 it. And -- but, really, to make this an
17 effective process, we need a measurement tool
18 that we can use over and over again most of the
19 year, and, you know, we may need two
20 measurement tools.

21 Now that I've got this first one
22 resolved, let me compound it. We need one to
23 measure stasis or change. We need another one
24 to detect crisis points or hot spots. Because
25 how are we going to know where to put our

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1 attention if we don't know where -- in
2 developing hot spots? And I know I'm not
3 necessarily convinced that one tool will do
4 that. Hopefully, maybe the survey that Miriam
5 was talking about first, you know, the big one
6 they sent up -- I don't know how it's designed
7 or anything, but if we get to concentrating on
8 certain areas, we may be missing something very
9 significant, and --

10 SALLY GIBERT: I think our
11 collective judgments are getting that. I don't
12 think -- I doubt there's any big conflict areas
13 that we aren't collectively aware of giving all
14 the expertise and experience in the room. I'm
15 not too worried about that. I think almost by
16 definition, whenever a measure of best
17 practices is suggested, that there needs to be
18 a corresponding discussion of how we're going
19 to measure there or how we're going to figure
20 out whether it's worth doing, those two things
21 kind of go together.

22 DAVYD BETCHKAL: I was just going
23 to say that I think the monitoring program is
24 pretty good at taking a look at the general
25 park, why the hot spot areas -- as a monitoring

1 tool, that's probably what it's best at.

2 BRIAN OKONEK: The rangers,
3 they're not only on Denali. We talk about the
4 backcountry rangers on the north side use this
5 same sort of pressure. When you have patrols
6 on the south side, even on the Ruth, even on
7 the hunting patrols, they can be keeping tabs
8 on the same thing and might learn some
9 interesting things on, you know, change of
10 seasons when we go from the flight -- tourist
11 season to hunting season, different activity
12 out there.

13 SALLY GIBERT: I've got a
14 question: Are there any backpacking guides in
15 Denali like on the north side, or is it just
16 mostly individuals?

17 JOAN FRANKEVICH: No commercial
18 use of that.

19 SALLY GIBERT: Oh, okay.

20 TOM GEORGE: There's none that
21 they know of.

22 JOAN FRANKEVICH: The
23 interpretive rangers, do they still do
24 discovery hikes? Those go out, right?

25 ELWOOD LYNN: We have the

1 discovery hikes and the Kantishna businesses.

2 JOAN FRANKEVICH: The day
3 hikes --

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: The discovery
5 camps, the ones where the kids are in the park
6 with the ranger group, you know, that's a
7 different type of activity.

8 JOAN FRANKEVICH: who does that?
9 MSLC?

10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I think NPS
11 does it. I'm going to caution about capacity,
12 because, you know, I'm not sure that you should
13 rely on Parks Service rangers -- I mean -- I'm
14 going to hope that John is going to be a
15 reality check to how big this can be. If you
16 want it done consistently, regardless of where
17 you are in the park. Let's have the rangers
18 doing it, you're asking for a change in
19 workload, you're reprioritizing it. If it's
20 something you want year after year after year,
21 so you can see any kind of trending in that.
22 The simpler the better.

23 BRIAN OKONEK: Absolutely. I
24 think that's a very important point. I've
25 worked in the field and juggled a lot of hats

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1 in the field with different duties that were
2 put on us. Yeah, you've got your -- your
3 plate's full. But, also, I think what's going
4 to be most important about this is the
5 longevity. The more -- the longer, the more
6 years this can go on with your ranger patrols
7 out there, the bigger -- the better the picture
8 is going to be with what's going on. Quite a
9 simple questionnaire, doesn't take much time,
10 but can be done year after year after year,
11 could be a very important tool to have for
12 managing the backcountry of the park. It would
13 be very, very helpful.

14 TOM GEORGE: Can we introduce a
15 new topic?

16 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Just to follow
17 up. Is someone going to take this up and bring
18 a draft?

19 TOM GEORGE: We've got that on
20 the --

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Charlie's got
22 it.

23 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Sorry, I'm
24 spacing out.

25 TOM GEORGE: So the new topic,

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1 just, again, to get a clear separation so

2 nobody thinks we're broadening this, are there
3 efforts to do sociological studies in the park
4 coming up that might pertain to soundscape and
5 stuff? I'm not talking about the summer
6 survey. Beyond that.

7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: There's two
8 social surveys set for this survey. The
9 backcountry is the one we discussed, as well as
10 the one we're doing for the vehicle management
11 plan. That has to do with mainly people that
12 are experiencing the park by bus. After that,
13 I don't know where we're lined up in the queue
14 to redo the backcountry survey. I don't know
15 what schedule we're on. I don't know if we're
16 on a three-year schedule or six-year schedule
17 on that one. I have to check.

18 TOM GEORGE: The one used this
19 summer.

20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right, for the
21 backcountry user, there's an intention, we're
22 going to go survey, X amount of years we'll
23 survey again. I don't know what that time
24 frame is. There's a general survey that we do
25 to make sure that we're hitting -- we're

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1 expected to hit a certain percentage of the
2 visitors coming to the park who are satisfied
3 with their experience in the park. I don't

4 know where we are in that. Does it
5 specifically ask about soundscape? No. Are
6 you happy with your trip to the park? It's far
7 broader.

8 TOM GEORGE: Very broad.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If the council
10 would like to get creative and think about a
11 way that you would want to ask about soundscape
12 questions, we could certainly entertain that
13 and see how that would fit into either -- like,
14 John was explaining this morning, how they do a
15 checkout of all the registered climbers. You
16 could ask the Parks Service to consider a
17 question there that would be, you know,
18 relevant to soundscape. There might be other
19 ways that we could incorporate it.

20 SALLY GIBERT: Do these
21 debriefing kind of questions for climbers, do
22 they have to go through the whole OMB thing?

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: No. Because
24 it's part of that registration process, check
25 in, check out.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: Okay.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm not saying
3 you could have a list of 20 soundscape
4 questions. But you could probably have one to

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5 be added.

6 TOM GEORGE: Table that for
7 later. We don't want to get too many balls in
8 the air.

9 JOHN LEONARD: That would be the
10 easiest thing to put right in place. It goes
11 on the list of five questions already asked.

12 TOM GEORGE: And could we -- I
13 mean, just to educate the group, whenever we do
14 get the chance to meet, if we could get a list
15 of whatever questions you're asking today in
16 that survey, just so we have a chance to digest
17 them, I think that would be very helpful. As
18 well as soon as you could release whatever the
19 questions in the survey, the general survey for
20 the summer that's been held up back east.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I can bring it
22 in February to people.

23 TOM GEORGE: Can you e-mail?

24 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I can ask.

25 TOM GEORGE: As soon as you can.

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1 If you give it to us and let us think about it
2 rather than see it for the first time in the
3 meeting, I think you'll get more value out of
4 us.

5 SALLY GIBERT: We could be
6 thinking about how additional questions and in
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7 other contexts may relate to that.

8 I think we've done a good job of
9 talking about the data gathering and feedback
10 loop topics.

11 Does anybody else have anything
12 else to contribute to that topic other than the
13 fact that we know that the working group's
14 going to delve into that in more detail for the
15 next meeting?

16 Okay.

17 NANCY BALE: If I can request for
18 those meetings, if we can make them late
19 afternoon, evening meetings, get a pizza and
20 have dinner together, I could probably come.

21 SUZANNE RUST: For the work
22 group?

23 NANCY BALE: Yes, Saturdays. If
24 I start asking for too many days off, it gets
25 dicey.

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1 SALLY GIBERT: We need to see how
2 to get this into your job description.

3 NANCY BALE: I know. They're so
4 distracted now by H1N1.

5 TOM GEORGE: Tell them we're a
6 high-risk group.

7 NANCY BALE: A lot of you here

8 qualify. The younger ladies, too. The older
9 ones, we don't qualify.

10 JIM EDWARDS: I'm looking at -- I
11 took some notes earlier today, kind of halfway
12 through to see what topics that we had brought
13 up. The work group, aviation work group is
14 going to -- when you guys do meet, whenever
15 that is, the idea is to kind of self-evaluate
16 and see what kinds of approved tweaked best
17 practices --

18 SUZANNE RUST: The February
19 meeting, wouldn't we be working --

20 TOM GEORGE: The evaluation tool
21 is on the top of the agenda. If there's time
22 left over, we can talk about tweaks.

23 SALLY GIBERT: So don't worry so
24 much about the tweaks.

25 TOM GEORGE: Right now we need

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1 the tool.

2 JIM EDWARDS: I think we'll be
3 doing good to get the tool built and employed
4 in time to measure the summer's activity with
5 the simple changes that the group has already
6 identified and proposed, and if we can have
7 anything to show that -- unfortunately, we
8 don't have a before. But maybe the after will
9 show us some things. Then we've got time to

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10 start working on where we're going from there.

11 SALLY GIBERT: Then there was
12 discussion on working on an FAA/Park Service
13 map. I realize we're not ready to do that
14 right now.

15 Are we talking about maybe
16 looking for some maybe web site improvements to
17 that before this season, or is that premature?

18 TOM GEORGE: I think our plate's
19 full right now. I carried that as something in
20 the future. If I can make any progress talking
21 to Colin Malone Brothers, I'll certainly do
22 that. I'm not signing up to tackle that right
23 now.

24 SALLY GIBERT: That's what I
25 thought. I wanted to get all these things --

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I would say,
2 before we make any changes to the general
3 public, we have to be tested and be sure. I
4 don't think we're there yet. We don't want to
5 send messages.

6 SALLY GIBERT: That's good.

7 JIM EDWARDS: This is already in
8 the public domain.

9 TOM GEORGE: Distributing that is
10 a good thing for us all to do.

11 JIM EDWARDS: I would like to ask
12 the group, if we get you the web site if you
13 would start talking up to anyone in the
14 aviation community, "Hey, go get one and see if
15 it doesn't help you in your transition through
16 the park air space and stay away from the
17 sensitive areas."

18 SALLY GIBERT: Can we link that
19 site to the Air Flight Overflights Council?

20 TOM GEORGE: You can. The
21 council has a web site.

22 SALLY GIBERT: Can we stick an
23 extra link on our web site just to kind of
24 double-mark it?

25 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Sure.

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1 TOM GEORGE: She said it. Before
2 she said that.

3 JIM EDWARDS: FAA has the web
4 site.

5 TOM GEORGE: You should check the
6 web site and see if it takes it back to the
7 Park Service. Maybe you can talk with the
8 FAA's team to make sure the outlets --

9 JIM EDWARDS: I will take that
10 on, because I can do that. I'll find out where
11 they come from, all of them.

12 TOM GEORGE: Sounds good.

13 BRIAN OKONEK: I've got a
14 question for Eric. How far was that picture
15 taken from the summit?

16 ERIK DENKEWALTER: How would you
17 figure that out?

18 BRIAN OKONEK: Depends on the
19 type of lens.

20 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Let's say it's
21 a regular lens. What you have is have people
22 stand out a known distance away and compare
23 size. One of the biggest things up there,
24 flying around, you have to tell people early on
25 that there's no good reference point out there

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1 for you to judge distance. For sure, you're
2 going to scrape the wings. The first thing
3 they say, they recognize, like an airplane down
4 on the glacier, "Oh, my gosh." You remember
5 how big -- you couldn't see their faces, you
6 could make out they're people. Have someone
7 stand out in a taxiway sometime and measure the
8 distance. You tell me what it is.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We passed the
10 whole picture around. You posed the question.
11 Now you're not giving the answer.

12 TOM GEORGE: He's wanting each of
13 us to vote.

14 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I'm saying the
15 perception of things, very difficult of things.
16 Imagine someone standing out halfway down the
17 runway. Could you recognize it?

18 BRIAN OKONEK: No.

19 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Could you say
20 they're people?

21 BRIAN OKONEK: Yeah. That
22 picture was taken from probably less than a
23 quarter of a mile.

24 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Not much less,
25 about 2,000 feet. 1500 to 2,000 feet. So, you

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1 go, "Huh?" So -- we've had situations right in
2 Talkeenta where the person's perception was the
3 airplanes were flying over houses at 200 feet.
4 We looked and said, "No, it would be about 1100
5 feet." But they're sure that they're closer.

6 ERIKA BENNETT: You're saying
7 that's about 2,000. I can say in the seven
8 years I flew with Summit Tours I got that close
9 to the summit maybe twice, ever.

10 ERIK DENKEWALTER: This was taken
11 quite a few years ago when people were still
12 trying to feel their way around that. We can
13 see people when they're standing on the summit,
14 you can see them from quite a ways away. I can
15 see climbers three or four miles away.

16 ERIKA BENNETT: Because you know
17 what you're looking for.

18 ERIK DENKEWALTER: That's right.

19 JIM EDWARDS: You can tell
20 they're holding AK47s after a while.

21 (Chuckles.)

22 TOM GEORGE: This sounds like
23 something we're going to do at the Talkeenta
24 meeting is go down the runway.

25 ERIK DENKEWALTER: There are

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1 people in all these comments here, I have here,
2 the airplane was 500 feet, 300 feet over my
3 head. But it doesn't matter. If you tell them
4 what the facts are, you're not going to change
5 their mind. What they're really saying to you
6 is that the airplane was much closer than they
7 thought it should be. So that is the whole
8 thing we're talking about here. It's annoying
9 people. And it doesn't matter if you're 2,000
10 feet or 300 feet over their cabin or over their
11 tent or whatever; they don't like it. That's
12 what we're dealing with.

13 In this case, the guy thought it
14 was great, signed it and everything.

15 ELWOOD LYNN: I was on an Alaska
16 Airlines flight that swooped down, and I could

17 pick out the climbers very easily. It was
18 quite the experience.

19 JIM EDWARDS: Did you report that
20 to my agency?

21 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Quite the
22 experience for the climbers too, no doubt.

23 TOM GEORGE: Presumably on radar
24 with air traffic control.

25 KELLY BAY: They cleared it. I

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1 guarantee, they weren't out VFRing it.

2 ERIK DENKEWALTER: Denali 1
3 arrival that is a published arrival route from
4 Nenana between Foraker and McKinley and makes a
5 big bend around, McKinley intersection,
6 Talkeenta DOR and went in. We talked about
7 this map of the park. It would be nice if
8 someone put those established airways all over
9 it. Amazing, the campground where you had the
10 sound monitoring over 436, isn't that
11 surprising? Talking Pass is right around the
12 edge of Victor 248. T242, which is not a
13 route, but almost, goes by Moose's Tooth,
14 Silverthrone, lots going on right there. I
15 realize standards are set. I think standards
16 were set without any idea that there were
17 already air routes over that area, established
18 well before the backcountry came out. I have a

19 feeling the backcountry plan never took into
20 consideration some of those things. I'm not
21 saying something could be done. There's an
22 awful lot of air traffic over the park. Goes
23 between Fairbanks and McGrath, Minchumina.

24 JIM EDWARDS: The reality is,
25 unless the public changes, the air traffic

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1 isn't going to change, and the air traffic
2 doesn't change and we don't have a major
3 breakthrough in technology. I'll guarantee you
4 the standards in that backcountry plan are not
5 achievable.

6 ERIK DENKEWALTER: We are
7 improving our standards in the aircraft quite
8 considerably.

9 JIM EDWARDS: But even the
10 overflight of the jets are going to make it
11 impossible. I mean -- and we're not going to
12 do anything about that. Because I'll guarantee
13 you the public won't stand for us delaying air
14 traffic and messing up --

15 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Jets rarely
16 make exceedances over that. They rarely count.

17 JARED WITHERS: They count all
18 the time.

19 TOM GEORGE: I think, Jared, for

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20 a couple of data points, if you can do a sort
21 between jet and prop and color code them on
22 diagrams like we just saw, I think that would
23 be helpful for us to understand what
24 contribution they make and where they fit in
25 that spectrum, so I --

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1 JARED WITHERS: I can do that,
2 and they're pretty regular, almost anywhere in
3 the park you'll hit between one and six jets a
4 day that are generally above natural ambient.

5 CHARLIE SASSARA: No one has
6 complained about it.

7 BRIAN OKONEK: There's been that
8 traffic ever since I've been in the park, but
9 the big notable change is when the flight-
10 seeing really excelled and really picked up and
11 number of glacier landings picked up, and the
12 number of circumnavigations around the
13 mountain, that sort of thing. That's when
14 airplanes began to really take notice. Before
15 that, the airplanes that were being used as
16 transportation to take people to the glacier
17 and back, they weren't noticeable either. They
18 came to base camp and left, and they weren't
19 nearly as numerous. It's a numbers game,
20 big-time. It's definitely changed the
21 backcountry experience.

22 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Jared, if you
23 are able to do that, can you also separate
24 helicopter from fixed wing?

25 JARED WITHERS: That's something

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1 we were discussing, I think that's the way it's
2 going to go.

3 TOM GEORGE: That would be
4 outstanding. Can you get his twin?

5 ERIK DENKEWALTER: I think you
6 can look -- not in sync, I think you would see
7 twins, we'd have to look and see how fine the
8 data is. There is a slight difference in what
9 you're seeing there with that --

10 TOM GEORGE: As a research
11 project, if there's a chance to just even take
12 a little bit of data set, either you guys work
13 on it or farm it out to somebody else, that is
14 the kind of distinction if you can tease that
15 out of the data that down the road would be
16 very helpful.

17 JARED WITHERS: I think that is
18 something that could be possible. It would
19 take a focused effort, and I think at that
20 level confidence would drop. You'd have to
21 take it as it is.

22 TOM GEORGE: Some error with it.

23 JARED WITHERS: I think that is
24 not out of the realm of possibility.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Do you want to

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1 invest any time at some point in this process
2 in looking at areas of the park that are less
3 overflown? Sort of kind of an education, the
4 park education effort for people that are
5 looking for more of a natural quiet that they
6 could go to?

7 NANCY BALE: We'd probably have
8 to fly there.

9 SALLY GIBERT: I mean, they
10 probably would. But if you had a specific --

11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Like,
12 designating some new fly zones.

13 SALLY GIBERT: Not designated --

14 ERIKA BENNETT: Places that are
15 quieter already.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Places are quieter
17 and less likely to see X number of flights, if
18 you flew into X place somewhere. Somewhere
19 where if you landed at this kind of remote
20 airstrip and walked that way, that you would
21 hear less --

22 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I think at this
23 point there aren't any --

24 SALLY GIBERT: Other than
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25 mosquitoville.

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: There aren't
2 areas that are not easily accessible. Unless
3 we create some. I think that would frustrate
4 people.

5 SALLY GIBERT: I don't have a
6 sense of that. That's why I'm asking the
7 question.

8 TOM GEORGE: You can extend the
9 Park Road, can't you?

10 SALLY GIBERT: Okay.

11 KELLY BAY: Just some quick
12 feedback. You kept away from the military,
13 which is good. I checked with both Elmendorf
14 and Eielson public affairs before I came to
15 this meeting. We had zero complaints this
16 summer that were called in to either one of the
17 bases to complain about military aircraft in
18 Denali Park. That doesn't mean it didn't
19 happen. Hopefully, that is a good sign. I'm
20 hoping for any other people who were there all
21 summer who may have seen any military aircraft
22 transient. I'm sure it did happen sometime
23 this summer. But hopefully, it has been less
24 and less, and it's not to the point that anyone
25 has any data and given me and said, "Hey,

1 Scott, the military, they're acting
2 irresponsible." we're bored. we got rid of
3 the A10s out of the state, those were some of
4 the rogue pilots out there. F22s should not be
5 around that altitude. But, hopefully, I don't
6 know if anyone has any experiences or saw any
7 military aircraft when they shouldn't have been
8 there. That's a good thing.

9 And last thing I wanted to throw
10 out, I think many of you guys were aware, we
11 were having a very good conversation back -- it
12 was on the news. There was a group of military
13 wounded warriors who were wounded in Iraq over
14 the last two to three years. There was a
15 Lieutenant Colonel Marc Hoffmeister who led a
16 group in June up to Denali for their 19 days on
17 the mountain, group of six of them. All six of
18 them had life-altering injuries, fake legs,
19 fake arms. And they spent 19 days on the
20 mountain, and they actually summited two people
21 out of the group of six. The other people fell
22 off. Talking about people with major injuries,
23 I talked to people and said, "Hey, Mark, what
24 can you give me?" He's one of top ten
25 adventurers in National Geographic Adventure

1 Magazine. He's got a full-page article on what
2 his team did, and he's one of the top ten
3 adventurers of this year in Adventure Magazine.
4 He talked about Denali and how it was a
5 life-changing experience for him and his
6 warriors who were coming back from Iraq and
7 wounded. He was in a depressed state. And
8 when he got focused on Denali, it pulled him
9 out of the depression. It's a positive article
10 about Denali. He was pulling up there.

11 I said, "How many aircraft did
12 you see?"

13 He said, "I saw aircraft 19 days
14 I was there. I saw more on clear days than on,
15 you know, overcast days." He said, "I never
16 saw any to the point that I was annoyed by
17 them." Of course, he says, "I have a different
18 perspective."

19 He owes his life to a helicopter.
20 I said, "How close did they get?" He said 1500
21 feet. That's his estimate, which might be
22 pretty accurate.

23 Overall, if you had a chance to
24 look at that magazine article, very positive.

25 when he was climbing, he said I

1 know those people in that aircraft, couldn't be
2 doing what I'm doing. There are other people
3 that want to climb and are injured, those who
4 are injured and couldn't do it. Those who
5 can't. A good news standard for what we're
6 trying to do is trying to make it accessible
7 for all people to have an experience.

8 JOAN FRANKEVICH: Do you know
9 what time of year the climb was?

10 KELLY BAY: They were on the
11 mountain from June 1 to June 19th. Two out of
12 six.

13 TOM GEORGE: The December
14 edition.

15 KELLY BAY: He's a friend of
16 mine. I know him personally. A real good
17 article. Hopefully, we can get tourists who
18 want to come but not stay.

19 TOM GEORGE: Scott, do you know
20 for, like, the red flags, is there any mention
21 of the park in the briefing in flight or what
22 you call in-briefing?

23 KELLY BAY: They made it part,
24 red flag happened which happened four times
25 each year, it's been hammered hard. When

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1 there's crews or airplanes transferring between
2 Elmendorf and Eielson or Fairbanks and
3 Anchorage, that you don't do a VFR delay in
4 Denali National Park. I'm sure it did happen.
5 That's something that's been easier. We're the
6 easiest group to get people in line. Anytime
7 you see a plane out of line, you can call me
8 24/7. I'll take it. It's an emphasis. We
9 respect the air space in Denali. That's not
10 our air space. FAA air space, taxpayer. We
11 look harshly more at who are trying to do the
12 VFR delay going through Denali. Since we got
13 no reports, it's one sign that it's working.
14 They're better at avoiding detection.

15 TOM GEORGE: You train for that,
16 after all.

17 (Chuckles.)

18 KELLY BAY: We're up there
19 picking K2 on the side.

20 (Chuckles.)

21 SALLY GIBERT: I was going to do
22 another public comment period. Do you have
23 anything more, Eric, to add? I don't know that
24 we have anything more to do today.

25 TOM GEORGE: We're going to beat

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1 the 5:00 o'clock deadline.

2 NANCY BALE: I have a question.
3 Our mandate on safety recommendations, just to
4 throw it out. It's there. And we haven't
5 really focused much time on it except that --
6 we haven't focused on it except Erika giving a
7 Capstone presentation the second meeting.

8 ERIKA BENNETT: There was some
9 discussion last spring on e-mail -- I think,
10 Eric, you were more fully enlightened about
11 what Capstone or at least a part of the A-VSB
12 system what it could do for traffic awareness
13 in the park regardless of ground space
14 stations. But if there were two airplanes in
15 the park similarly equipped with these boxes,
16 that they could see each other the same as
17 radar, but they would not -- it would be --
18 technology would not be being used to its full
19 extent. But it could be used for traffic
20 avoidance. But that's --

21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: We talked
22 about that extensively. One of the concerns is
23 that people start putting their head in the
24 cockpit thinking that they're going to see
25 other aircraft by looking in the cockpit. It's

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1 worse than if you say keep your head out the
2 cockpit looking outside all the time. It was
3 not received by all operators equally. Some of
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4 them weren't that concerned about getting
5 people in. We can have one straight person out
6 there that can cause problems. So if -- the
7 flying that we do around Denali is not the same
8 as going out in western Alaska in bad weather.
9 I think we just got that sitting on the burner,
10 still thinking about it. Not ready to jump
11 into that.

12 ERIKA BENNETT: That was good
13 that you got to the discussion point with the
14 operators.

15 ERIK DENKEWALTER: North side
16 operators included. We brought that up there.
17 No accidents, no incidents, no nothing this
18 year. So, whether you attribute it to luck or
19 not, we're lucky. We'll take it.

20 ERIKA BENNETT: We'll take it.

21 ERIK DENKEWALTER: It wasn't just
22 luck. Operational control is a never-ending,
23 nonstop, no mistakes. So, we're going to try
24 to continue to do that, just continual
25 vigilance, hopefully we'll continue on.

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1 ERIKA BENNETT: Okay.

2 JIM EDWARDS: This particular
3 issue that you've raised is one of the reasons
4 that I want to get out to talking. And I won't

5 know where. I think that will go until after
6 all that happens, and I still might not know.
7 It's a progressive kind of thing.

8 TOM GEORGE: I want to add,
9 Nancy, lest you think nothing has been done
10 about safety. In fact, every consideration of
11 best practices starts with and ends with: Is
12 this a safe thing to recommend? And, in fact,
13 there were a number of things that were
14 discussed that either fell by the wayside or
15 in -- were later rescinded. Don't feel like
16 aviation safety is not getting attention in
17 this forum. In fact, the notion is before we
18 consider anything different is: Does this
19 cause a safety problem?

20 NANCY BALE: Oh, not -- no
21 negatives coming from me. Just that the
22 group -- this group hasn't really talked too
23 much about safety since Erika's presentation.
24 I'm sure the work group and the providers have
25 talked about it in other locations, but I'm not

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1 sure it's been on our agenda.

2 SUZANNE RUST: I want to follow
3 up on what Tom says. I think they just go hand
4 in hand. It's, like, you can't have one
5 without the other. And I remember first
6 looking at the mission of this group and

7 realizing that safety was the first thing, and
8 then us making recommendations that came from
9 that, you know, to protect the resource, the
10 soundscape. What's happened then, as we made
11 recommendations, they're kind of filtered
12 through first looking for safety and how does
13 it enhance or doesn't it enhance, and then we
14 progress with them. So I do believe that as a
15 group, even though it -- maybe have a working
16 group. But other recommendations were coming
17 or actually meeting that goal. Part of the
18 mission, for sure.

19 JIM EDWARDS: I will take the
20 task on of looking to see what accidents and
21 incidents we've had within the park. And I'm
22 only aware of one fatal up there. And it's
23 kind of a special case. I'm not sure it's even
24 worth our getting into, because we're not in
25 the business of wildlife management, and those

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1 people we have ways of overseeing anyway. But
2 if there is something going on in terms of
3 safety, and I can find out about it, I'll
4 present it to this group.

5 TOM GEORGE: Sounds good.

6 SALLY GIBERT: Anything else?

7 NANCY BALE: I know I'm

8 encapsulating. Sorry about that. I've been
9 thinking about Kantishna. I'm wondering if
10 there's any one or two or three people who
11 would like to do a Kantishna report, perhaps in
12 May, or maybe better to do in October that
13 would consist of, you know, maybe going out to
14 Kantishna as a group of two or three,
15 interviewing lodge owners, interviewing users,
16 interviewing your service folks and getting
17 general information from them on their concerns
18 with respect to right now any possible future
19 developments out there, concerning aviation.
20 If that's a report that the group would enjoy
21 getting, I'd be willing to be one of those two
22 or three people. And it involves a trip or two
23 to Kantishna to gather data. But it becomes a
24 really concentrated microcosm out there in the
25 summer. Lots of guests. Lots of staff. Lots

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1 of businesses operating in full. And then two
2 or three businesses that depend on aviation for
3 at least part of their tourism, and then one
4 air carrier.

5 SUZANNE RUST: This summer, I had
6 the opportunity to fly out -- with Greg, out to
7 Kantishna, hike some and ride the bus back, and
8 that might be -- that might be something that
9 might be able to be arranged on backhaul.

10 Maybe Greg would be willing to fly people back
11 in on an empty leg. It was a great experience.
12 I ran into Matt at the coffee shop. He said,
13 "Why don't you come out? We'll show you where
14 we're going." That was really good. It gave
15 me a good perspective of what they were doing.
16 So, that was -- it was a great trip. So they
17 might be willing to do that on a day where they
18 don't have -- I know they have a lot of empty
19 legs going in, and then you can ride the bus
20 back out, and get kind of both experiences.
21 When I was out there, besides the airplane I
22 flew in on, I saw one airplane. We were
23 hiking, and it didn't bother me. I was
24 actually excited to see him. That might be a
25 good option. It gives you kind of the full

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1 experience.

2 NANCY BALE: Just wondering if
3 the council thinks that's a -- trying to
4 develop some in-depth knowledge of the
5 Kantishna situation is worthwhile for the
6 council.

7 BRIAN OKONEK: I would think so.
8 It's one of the busy spots in the park.

9 NANCY BALE: Jim was talking
10 about hot spots. I suppose if you were to

11 define a hot spot, that would be definable that
12 way.

13 TOM GEORGE: Sure.

14 SALLY GIBERT: It could be
15 prioritized. I'm kind of sensing that the --
16 this spot here seems to be getting -- the
17 mountain -- it seems to be getting a lot of the
18 first-priority attention right now. It's
19 options to kind of take on both at the same
20 time is maybe tackle that one next fall.

21 NANCY BALE: Data gathering
22 should probably occur during the summer,
23 though.

24 SALLY GIBERT: That's true.

25 TOM GEORGE: Put that on the

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1 agenda for the meeting prior to going to
2 summer.

3 NANCY BALE: I'd be glad to
4 develop a proposal for how to do it.

5 SALLY GIBERT: Great. You're on
6 the agenda.

7 NANCY BALE: Okay. Maybe we
8 could get Greg to come to the meeting.

9 ERIKA BENNETT: I have a way of
10 getting in touch with Greg. I could probably
11 get that meeting date to us.

12 JOAN FRANKEVICH: sally, you said
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13 you would get e-mails to us for the meeting
14 dates, to firm up the dates?

15 SALLY GIBERT: I'll try to get
16 the e-mail out today.

17 Anything else?

18 Sorry.

19 NANCY BALE: Well, yeah, if we
20 can actually -- when we're holding it during
21 the week -- no, never mind. I was going to say
22 hold it later, but, no, never mind. I feel bad
23 that I'm not involved more when I have to be
24 gone. I feel bad about it.

25 SALLY GIBERT: I know.

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1 JOAN FRANKEVICH: You can look
2 for those in-service days. That's a great
3 solution.

4 SALLY GIBERT: Right.

5 NANCY BALE: I'll look at your
6 e-mail.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Especially for
8 next October.

9 NANCY BALE: I can find it and
10 review it.

11 JOAN FRANKEVICH: I have it,
12 Nancy.

13 NANCY BALE: For the school

NL09-369 - DNP Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council - 1Dec09
14 district.

15 JOAN FRANKEVICH: For the next
16 school district.

17 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. I think
18 we're done. Okay, adjourned.

19 (Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE

2

3 I, SANDRA M. MIEROP, Notary Public
4 for the State of Alaska, and Certified Realtime
5 Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing
6 proceedings were taken before me at the time and
7 place herein set forth; that the proceedings were
8 reported stenographically by me and later
9 transcribed by computer transcription; that the
10 foregoing is a true record of the proceedings
11 taken at that time; and that I am not a party to,
12 nor do I have any interest in, the outcome of the
13 action herein contained.

14 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
15 my hand and affixed my seal this 13th day of
Page 252

16 December, 2009.

17

18

19

SANDRA M. MIEROP
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My commission expires: 9/11/12

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