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DENALI NATIONAL PARK
AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHTS ADVISORY COUNCIL

December 3, 2010
9:00 a.m.

Campbell Science Center
Anchorage, Alaska

Advisory Council present:

- Sally Gibert, Chair
- Joan Frankevich
- Erika Bennett
- Suzanne Rust
- Tom George
- Brian Okonek
- Nancy Bale
- Tim Cudney

National Park Service:

- Miriam Valentine
- Elwood Lynn

Audience Members:

- Michael Yorke
- Amanda Smith
- Chris Wilson
- Dan McGregor
- Lois Wirtz

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PROCEEDINGS

SALLY GIBERT: So, Miriam, do you
want to call to order?

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yes, I will.
Scott Babos.

LT. COL. SCOTT BABOS: Present.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Nancy Bale.

NANCY BALE: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Erika Bennett.

ERIKA BENNETT: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Tim Cudney.

TIM CUDNEY: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Joan
Frankevich.

JOAN FRANKENVICH: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Tom George.

TOM GEORGE: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Sally Gibert.

SALLY GIBERT: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Brian Okonek.

BRIAN OKONEK: Here.

MIRIAM VALENTINE: Suzanne Rust
sent a memo saying she would be a little late.

Charlie Sassara is absent --

TOM GEORGE: Hold it, you have a

1 message.

2 TIM CUDNEY: He's going to be
3 late. Emergency.

4 TOM GEORGE: "Work emergency came
5 up, I must attend. If I get it stabilized, I'll
6 attend. I apologize."

7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Amanda Smith
8 is here today and Mike Yorke. Amanda is -- her
9 resume application is forwarded to fill in Nan
10 Eagleson's seat. And Mike George is filling in
11 for Jim Edwards.

12 As of yesterday, we are still in
13 the White House Liaison Committee review for
14 those applications. So it's progressing, it's
15 just not progressing quickly enough.

16 So thank you, very much, for
17 coming this morning.

18 Elwood Lynn is also filling in.

19 SALLY GIBERT: So do you want to
20 do --

21 ELWOOD LYNN: I can do it real
22 quick. It's been probably a year -- a year since
23 I've attended, so it's fun to see all the
24 familiar faces, and I appreciate the hard work
25 and dedication. I've been getting feedback along

1 the way on some of the efforts that you put
2 forward. I saw Tim Cudney's write-up and Tom's.
3 So just on Triple Lakes. It's all good stuff.

4 So I don't have a whole lot more
5 to say, but just glad to see everybody, and I
6 appreciate all the efforts. And this time of
7 year, it's kind of hard to pull yourself out and
8 come on the icy roads. It's all good stuff.

9 SALLY GIBERT: Thank you.

10 I don't really have anything to
11 add.

12 The gentleman in the corner
13 there, would you like to introduce yourself?

14 CHRIS WILSON: I'm Chris from K2
15 Aviation in Talkeetna, Alaska.

16 SALLY GIBERT: You've never been
17 here before.

18 So did everybody get a copy of
19 the agenda? It's on the pink sheet here.

20 So here's the agenda. Are there
21 any suggestions for additions or anything?

22 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. I will be
23 happy to report on the Aviation Working Group for
24 Suzanne, but I can't report on the Outreach
25 Working Group. I wasn't there.

1 ERIKA BENNETT: Tom wasn't really
2 tied to that.

3 TOM GEORGE: I volunteered to
4 participate, but not to lead the charge. I
5 apologize. I didn't look at the minutes to see
6 who was or if anybody was.

7 ERIKA BENNETT: I don't think
8 anybody was totally in charge. I'm part of the
9 working group as well.

10 SALLY GIBERT: If nothing
11 happened at the last meeting --

12 ERIKA BENNETT: I'll do that.

13 SALLY GIBERT: Okay.

14 Any other members expecting to
15 have anything to share? Is that it for now?

16 Suzanne and Charlie will get to
17 add later if they show up.

18 So one of the things that we had
19 talked about at the last meeting -- this agenda
20 was based on some notes that I was taking in the
21 last meeting. We were kind of, like, let's do
22 that sometime, let's do that. One of them was
23 trying to figure out how to make the best
24 practices available to a wider array of partners.

25 TOM GEORGE: I'll talk about that

1 in the Aviation Working Group user report.

2 I think a broader discussion will
3 be good as well, but I think there has been a
4 little bit of progress, just to maybe start us in
5 that direction.

6 SALLY GIBERT: So maybe we should
7 just go ahead and start with that, with the
8 Aviation Working Group, unless you want to wait
9 for Suzanne, we can do that.

10 TOM GEORGE: I don't think we
11 should wait. She's going to be tied up for a
12 little while, she'll get here as soon as she can.
13 Kids and performing arts and things. They work
14 to a schedule of their own.

15 SALLY GIBERT: I dealt with that.

16 ERIKA BENNETT: And I'm going to
17 learn.

18 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. So, Tom, do
19 you want to talk about the Aviation Working Group
20 and what's going to happen?

21 TOM GEORGE: Okay. The Aviation
22 Working Group did have a meeting on the 1st of
23 October, and we discussed a number of things, so
24 I'll kind of run through, briefly a recap. We
25 did look at the unusual event feedback procedures

1 that were established last year. Again, this is
2 the notion that we've got some best practices in
3 those areas.

4 If there are cases where people
5 are, for whatever reason, not following those
6 best practices -- and, again, in some kind of
7 blatant and disruptive way, it would be nice to
8 get feedback on it. Especially while it's fresh
9 enough that we can figure out why it's happening,
10 it's a matter of people didn't get the word, some
11 problem with the practice, whatever it might be.
12 We think we might have a pretty good system on
13 the south side, and we did discuss that and
14 reviewed it.

15 However, there is a need for an
16 unusual event feedback on the north side, and
17 actually, Colin Malone took a note to go work on
18 that. I was hoping, Elwood, to hear in your
19 report on that, because that is still an
20 outstanding item that we need to figure out on
21 the north side as we're kind of working on best
22 practices on the north side. If we don't have
23 feedback to know whether it's good, bad or
24 indifferent, then the question is do we know
25 whether what we're doing is helping or making a

1 difference, one way or the other.

2 ELWOOD LYNN: I know Collin
3 Malone was working with Joe Van Horn, who is our
4 wilderness coordinator, but Joe is essentially
5 retired, and we're advertising for a new
6 backcountry wilderness coordinator. And we're
7 restructuring it where that position will oversee
8 the Backcountry Information Center, as well as
9 the two backcountry law enforcement officers. So
10 we're making a concerted effort to shift
11 resources to pay attention to the backcountry
12 more. And I think once that person is on board,
13 it will be well positioned to have a feedback
14 move that's working not only with interpreters,
15 but the backcountry patrol staff that we've got
16 going out there.

17 TOM GEORGE: Do you have any
18 estimate -- I know we're looking at the Council
19 meeting again in March.

20 Would something have happened by
21 March that might give us more information?

22 ELWOOD LYNN: Probably not by
23 March. We hope -- hopefully, we'll have somebody
24 hired by March, whether they'd actually be here
25 by then or not. That will be real close, but

1 they'll be ready for the summer season, and that
2 will be one of the tasks they'll be working on.

3 TOM GEORGE: Because I think that
4 is real important even in the interim, if there's
5 anybody we could work with to try to make some
6 progress on that. That would be worth it.

7 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Elwood, it's a
8 pretty simple request. All we're asking for --
9 we have gotten, for previous years, the voluntary
10 comment cards. We don't have them for 2009 and
11 2010, so I don't know that it's -- if it needs a
12 supervisor to --

13 TOM GEORGE: That's the second
14 request, which I was coming to.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Oh, I thought
16 that's what he was referring to.

17 TOM GEORGE: No, we're talking
18 about the feedback process --

19 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Like we did on
20 the south side?

21 TOM GEORGE: The second thing
22 right after that is the request to get comments
23 for 2009, 2010, again, with the notion of
24 screening them for aviation and noise-related
25 events. And that was the other thing that we're

1 looking for feedback.

2 NANCY BALE: My memory may fail
3 me, but it seems to me, didn't we hear at the
4 last meeting that either the '09 or '10 ones were
5 inadvertently thrown away? Maybe it would have
6 been the '09 ones.

7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So in 2009,
8 the policy -- the federal policy for filing
9 things was, don't keep your comment cards more
10 than three to six months. And so, you know --
11 because, you know, I know this Council feels
12 differently about those comment cards than the
13 federal government does, and so it was -- you
14 know, and I think there was a commitment then
15 from Paul in recognizing your desire to know that
16 information, that he made a commitment in 2010 we
17 would retain all comment cards, and then we can
18 certainly ask that those be scanned, sorted for
19 the aviation-specific ones. You know, and I was
20 thinking if we could just maybe even have them
21 available in a PDF for anybody on the Council who
22 is interested in looking at them. But I don't
23 think we have them for '09.

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: So '09, you
25 think?

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yes.

2 So that does not imply in any way
3 that the National Park Service is not interested
4 in how people's backcountry experience is. We're
5 more interested in doing it through a formal
6 survey method. The comment card gives us very
7 extreme ends and doesn't give us an accurate
8 sample.

9 NANCY BALE: In connection with
10 the formal survey, Miriam, could you go over what
11 the park actually did do? Wasn't there a survey
12 of back -- a backcountry user survey this summer?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right. You
14 know, we did -- we actually did two surveys. We
15 did -- Peter Fairbanks was finally able to do the
16 backcountry survey that was for the backcountry
17 management plan, we said we would go out and
18 start surveying backcountry services. We were
19 stalled in that process through OMB -- I mean
20 through the process back in Washington.

21 I thought the March meeting would
22 be a good time, because there's a lot of survey
23 work coming up. So there's what we call the
24 Peter Fix, or the UAF Backcountry Survey was
25 done, as well as -- we did our survey for the

1 Vehicle Management Plan, which may not have
2 implications for the -- it strikes me you're more
3 interested in the backcountry users' experience.
4 It might have some interest about dates, but we
5 can look at that.

6 The hard thing is, when we gather
7 all the data in September, by the time it's
8 actually -- the survey is put together, it still
9 needs to be peer-reviewed. It's not like
10 somebody puts it together and there's an
11 assumption, oh, that's all accurate. It's
12 actually reviewed by some other profession. I
13 would think by March, I have on my list, that
14 we'll maybe have a presentation on that. We'll
15 have Andrew come.

16 Does that answer your question?

17 NANCY BALE: This was entirely
18 about the Peter Fix?

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Peter Fix is
20 associated with our backcountry survey.

21 NANCY BALE: And then was there
22 another?

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah. And you
24 know what? I don't know if anything was
25 pertinent, because it was in regards to the

1 Vehicle Management Plan, so it had to do with the
2 trade-off piece of -- people who say that, well,
3 we'd like it to be in exceptional condition, and
4 so we're willing to tolerate this much. But then
5 there's a quantitative piece, what do you like,
6 what do you not like. There's a qualitative
7 piece, measured to that, this was the third piece
8 of -- so if you can't -- if that -- to that --
9 get that extreme of "I don't want anybody out
10 there when I'm using the park"; maybe you don't
11 get to go to the park. What are you willing to
12 trade off.

13 So let's put it into almost a
14 reality factor. We did the third section of
15 that. We will be doing that --

16 ELWOOD LYNN: It wasn't really
17 asking about overflights.

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: No. It was
19 probably asking about access more than that.

20 TOM GEORGE: Maybe we should
21 leave it. But those of us at the Council who are
22 very interested will be knocking at your door
23 just to look at it and get a flavor, because
24 there's certainly some things that you mention in
25 there which get to trades. Which I'd be

1 interested to know about. But whether it's
2 something to chew up the whole Council's time or
3 not, I guess we can wait and see. Any one of us
4 can follow up with that individually. It looks
5 like there's some interest for the whole
6 overflights, and we can ask to bring that
7 forward.

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So, here in
9 item 13 on the agenda is when I was just going to
10 give a short presentation on the survey that is
11 specific to backcountry use and sound monitoring.
12 And so -- maybe this will all kind of come
13 together. All this survey work we're doing, can
14 all come together, and what I would like to hear
15 from the Council is what you're interested in
16 knowing for the March meeting.

17 NANCY BALE: May I add one more
18 thing that I think I heard and I want to confirm
19 or deny it with the other members?

20 And what I thought I heard was
21 that -- how the unusual event feedback went
22 through the rangers who were on the mountain and
23 they did some listening and charting, and made
24 comments, and that seemed to work on the south
25 side. It was my understanding that Phillip was

1 not excited about burdening the north side
2 rangers with additional duties, so that to do a
3 similar type of listening and unusual event
4 feedback for the backcountry rangers was sort of
5 just a distant possibility.

6 Can you speak to that, Miriam, or
7 perhaps, Elwood?

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I would agree
9 with that is what Phillip shared in our last
10 meeting in Talkeenta. Part of it is, you know,
11 when we talked about the south side unusual
12 feedback group that was constructed, you had a
13 very -- you were on the west buttress, so a very
14 specific area. The staff that were participating
15 in that had years of experience along that route.
16 You know, you had a very -- I don't want to say
17 controlled -- so it's a little bit different on
18 the north side where rangers are going into
19 different -- I think he didn't feel, Nancy, that
20 there was that level of structure for the survey
21 to take place.

22 In Elwood's comment about having
23 this position for the wilderness coordinator
24 maybe serve a different role, you know, I'd be
25 interested in knowing where is the -- does the

1 Council have an area of concern that they're
2 specifically interested in having this unusual
3 feedback loop, you know, happen at. Is it on --
4 like you've done some work for the Triple Lakes
5 Trail, you had some discussion on the
6 Triple Lakes Trail. You kind of have to be
7 specific other than just saying "the whole north
8 side."

9 TOM GEORGE: Agreed. I believe
10 our purpose, at least on the south side, is we
11 have worked to set up some specific best
12 practices in specific locations, so to look to
13 get feedback relative to those, did they work,
14 and/or are they being followed, et cetera. And
15 with the notion, again, of hearing that
16 information in enough time, you know, soon enough
17 to be able to follow up and try to figure out if
18 something isn't working, why -- what was fresh in
19 the data still -- you know, before that 30-day
20 and all the comments get chucked, the equivalent
21 of it in the rest of the world.

22 So I think that is -- at least on
23 the south side, I think that is the purpose. And
24 I think at least a purpose for doing a similar
25 thing on the north side would be exactly that.

1 If Triple Lakes Trail is an area of concern all
2 the way around, we're doing something there to
3 try and improve that situation. Obviously, we
4 want feedback to know if it's working, if it's
5 not working, et cetera. And I think, for that
6 purpose, yeah, I think it needs to be tied to a
7 specific thing like a best practice, as opposed
8 to just a sweeping, anywhere kind of impression,
9 because that does get to another kind of study
10 and survey that maybe there are a number of
11 approaches to be taken to do that.

12 ELWOOD LYNN: I think what
13 Phillip might have been getting at is we don't
14 have the staffing level to dedicate somebody to
15 the Triple Lakes Trail for the whole summer.
16 Where the -- on the mountain -- we've got
17 somebody on the mountain for the whole climbing
18 season, so it's a small enough geographic area
19 with enough presence that we can make a
20 difference.

21 It's going to be real hit or miss
22 on the north side.

23 TOM GEORGE: We realize that,
24 instead of assuming that there just be a carbon
25 copy on the north side, that it's a different

1 circumstance, different way you're dealing with
2 it, different seasonal spread, kind of --
3 probably has to be looked at differently. I'm
4 not expecting somebody posted in a given location
5 for a huge amount of time, but I do think that
6 what staff you have is at least attuned to
7 looking at feedback of a nature to be funneling
8 in. Again, people are making an effort in the
9 aviation community to alter their behavior, and
10 we need some kind of feedback to see if that's
11 okay or not.

12 ELWOOD LYNN: We can commit to
13 that. The folks, when they are on patrol in the
14 backcountry, if they see an unusual event and it
15 will be documented and we'll have a feedback loop
16 that works -- it's not just tied up in a patrol
17 report, and then tallied at the end of the year.
18 We can come up with it.

19 TOM GEORGE: Along with that, as
20 we discovered, as we're, I think, still learning
21 on south side, there's a training component for
22 whoever -- whatever staff you have doing that so
23 that they have some idea, first of all, what a
24 best practice is, then you have -- tell one kind
25 of an airplane from another, in a general sense.

1 So there's going to be work to figure out how to
2 do that.

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: There was a
4 piece that John Leonard shared in Talkeenta, who
5 gives the information. He did it in September in
6 Denali, he used an information flow that didn't
7 work for everybody on the Council, so really,
8 that -- who -- who receives the information and
9 how they receive it is probably within the best
10 practices work group, you could kind of discuss
11 that.

12 TOM GEORGE: And we did for the
13 south side, and that's where we would like to do
14 the same thing on the north.

15 BRIAN OKONEK: I still think
16 there's some advantages to when rangers are out
17 in the field on the north side that they can
18 report back on just their impressions of how many
19 flights and what kind of noise intrusions there
20 were, not just unusual events. There's not sound
21 monitoring equipment in all those valleys that
22 are being walked. And Park Rangers aren't in all
23 the valleys, but, still, when they are in the
24 field, I think it would be great to have some
25 feedback of just what they're experiencing from

1 the air, you know. You know, what's happening in
2 the air if there's a -- because, otherwise, we're
3 not going to have any information for a lot of
4 these valleys at all. We're not going to know if
5 there's generally no flights going over the
6 valley or on a clear day there's constant traffic
7 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. I think it would be
8 very nice if the rangers could have some way of
9 reporting back on that. I don't think it would
10 be asking too much to have some kind of form that
11 they can --

12 ELWOOD LYNN: I think we can get
13 there, but it is going to take some training so
14 that everybody is reporting it the same way.

15 NANCY BALE: Is there going to be
16 -- this job, the wilderness job that was Joe's
17 job, he also supervised the backcountry rangers,
18 didn't he?

19 Is there someone else there in
20 that position right now at the park?

21 ELWOOD LYNN: Not right now.
22 With Joe gone, we're doing some significant
23 reorganization.

24 NANCY BALE: Will there be --

25 ELWOOD LYNN: For a while, the

1 backcountry office was reporting to the kennels
2 -- to the kennel's manager. But then we're
3 shifting back to put more emphasis on the
4 backcountry.

5 NANCY BALE: And so by March,
6 will there be some kind of general sketch-out of
7 the activities of the backcountry rangers for the
8 summer, or is that going to be early?

9 ELWOOD LYNN: I think March is
10 early. We'll be good to have somebody on board
11 by March.

12 NANCY BALE: About how many
13 backcountry rangers are there on the north side?

14 ELWOOD LYNN: Two.

15 NANCY BALE: That doesn't include
16 their supervisor, though. There's a supervisor
17 of them and two field ones.

18 ELWOOD LYNN: Well, the
19 wilderness coordinator will be their supervisor.

20 NANCY BALE: Two, plus that
21 person?

22 ELWOOD LYNN: Right.

23 NANCY BALE: Those ones are
24 involved in patrols, or are there also some
25 patrols that happen with the nonbackcountry staff

1 that make reports?

2 ELWOOD LYNN: The backcountry
3 information staff do one patrol every two weeks
4 just -- mostly as familiarization. And then we
5 have what's called "wildlife techs" which are
6 primarily focused on the front country, making
7 sure that people are handling their food properly
8 in all the campgrounds. But they will also get
9 into the backcountry on a patrol when they're
10 just -- just as more a familiarization.

11 NANCY BALE: So the total number
12 of patrols in the summer might be, maybe, 10 or
13 even fewer?

14 TOM GEORGE: You mean staff
15 people?

16 NANCY BALE: Uh-huh.

17 ELWOOD LYNN: What do you mean?

18 NANCY BALE: Go out on a patrol,
19 be out two nights or one night and then you come
20 back. A discrete trip.

21 ELWOOD LYNN: Well, like, say,
22 there's six people in the backcountry office.
23 Each one of those goes out once every two weeks
24 for an overnight.

25 NANCY BALE: Okay. So it ends up

1 being more like --

2 ELWOOD LYNN: So there are
3 probably several dozen patrols. And then in the
4 hunting season, we have a greater presence in the
5 backcountry.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Are there
7 still backcountry SCAs?

8 ELWOOD LYNN: No.

9 TOM GEORGE: What is that?

10 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Student
11 Conservation Association. It's a volunteer
12 program. And there used to be folks that went on
13 patrol for that program.

14 Would it help -- since we're
15 anxious to get this feedback going and obviously
16 you're having a staffing changeover, would it be
17 helpful for us to maybe have a subcommittee and
18 give you a suggested form that might work for --
19 to work with, or would you just rather do that?

20 ELWOOD LYNN: I think that would
21 be good. And then areas that -- like, such as
22 Triple Lakes, if there's different documentation
23 that you'd like to see there than in other areas
24 of the park, or other areas of concern that you
25 would like to get more feedback on, then maybe

1 there's a more inclusive-form-type of data that
2 you'd want to see.

3 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I'd be happy
4 to put a draft, something like that, together.

5 Does somebody else want to help
6 me with that, knowing that you'll adapt it to
7 your needs, but it will at least help us focus
8 what we want? If you have a new person coming in
9 March, then it would be hard to get it started
10 for the summer. So just to help me get it
11 started for next summer.

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm hearing
13 two things. I'm hearing a request to have an
14 unusual feedback group for areas that will
15 support best practices, do those work or not.

16 Then there's a request to have
17 something that when park staff or volunteers go
18 into the backcountry, there's a mechanism by
19 which they say, oh, yeah, this is what
20 overflights were like, or the air experience of
21 the backcountry.

22 Am I hearing correctly, there's
23 kind of those two things?

24 TOM GEORGE: I think there are
25 definitely two things. I know from -- Phillip

1 isn't here, because thinking back to the last
2 meeting he attended, I think he would be
3 challenging us all to say, tell us what it is you
4 want to know. I think when we get to this other
5 agenda item on kind of the studies and stuff
6 overall -- because I think it is a challenge to
7 figure out whether you actually need to design an
8 actual scientific study and have people skilled
9 in doing that go out and do it, or whether kind
10 of collecting anecdotal information as people
11 wander around. I think as a Council, we need to
12 focus on what is the information we're looking to
13 collect, and then that can be worked on to figure
14 out the best ways to collect it. At the moment,
15 I'm only confining myself to asking about
16 feedback on the best practices, that is something
17 that is specific, that people are doing that if
18 we know we're looking for feedback on that, to
19 evaluate whether they're good, whether they're
20 not making any difference, et cetera. And that
21 is a different need from kind of the general
22 awareness of what's happening. And both, I
23 think, are legitimate needs.

24 The question is, the general
25 awareness, what's the best way to tackle that?

1 Is asking for anecdotal reports as people wander
2 around the best way to do that, or is this
3 something that ought to be rolled into an
4 honest-to-God study and pursued that way? I
5 don't know the answer to that, but I recognize
6 that there might be multiple tools that might be
7 appropriate depending on what the information is.
8 I think our step is to sit down and define what
9 other information that we're really asking for,
10 rather than try and design something for them,
11 because we don't know what tools they have
12 available to bring to bear on this.

13 ERIKA BENNETT: Having a baseline
14 would be nice, too, because we've got more
15 information on the south side. I wouldn't say we
16 had a baseline to begin with, but we had pretty
17 good idea of what things were like. Right now,
18 other than the backcountry reports and the
19 comment cards and the overflights and the sound
20 monitoring, we don't have the best on-the-ground
21 listening baseline that we need. That might be a
22 place to start.

23 ELWOOD LYNN: I think it's
24 important to recognize that the sound stations
25 are really going to give you the baseline, the

1 scientific baseline. And Miriam's going to talk
2 about the study, that will be a scientific study
3 that will have some -- be peer-reviewed and
4 really have some merit to it, as Tom says. The
5 other is sort of anecdotal; are we going in the
6 right direction from field staff, but it's not
7 going to be scientific, it's going to be hit or
8 miss that somebody is there when an event
9 happens. And we'll provide some training, but
10 it's not going to be scientific.

11 SALLY GIBERT: I think it would
12 be an unusual event feedback for the north side
13 and would not necessarily be beholden to the best
14 practices, because we don't have any for Triple
15 Lakes at this point.

16 TOM GEORGE: Which means we do
17 have something, and that is the one thing we have
18 so far. We're working on others.

19 SALLY GIBERT: For the south
20 side, the unusual event is, in part, based on
21 some violation of best practices, whereas on the
22 north side, you know, I think it could be
23 anything that could be truly unusual. You know,
24 somebody bothering wildlife, something that would
25 be truly unusual. That would be totally

1 anecdotal, because nobody has an idea of what the
2 standard would be. If there was anything like
3 that, that would be useful, too, highlighting an
4 area of concern that we might not have thought
5 of.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I was thinking
7 kind of similar, like the journaling that they
8 did on the south side that they had set up, and
9 what you set up for us when we did Petersville
10 Road. The Ranger was out there, did he hear 5
11 overflights or did he hear 50, you know. Just
12 general feedback, knowing it's not scientific and
13 not comparable to something that was done the
14 previous year. That's what I was thinking of.
15 Seems pretty easy.

16 ELWOOD LYNN: Two different
17 things.

18 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Three
19 different things, I think.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: General
21 observations on a patrol, what it's like, and
22 then an unusual event, somebody straining
23 wildlife.

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: And a target
25 at Triple Lakes, and that's what I came away with

1 from this conversation; we're looking at three
2 different things. That's kind of a lot to ask
3 all those things. Where do we go from here?

4 TOM GEORGE: I think your idea of
5 perhaps getting a work group, some subsets is
6 that we can hash it out and do anything else
7 today is a good one just to -- but for us
8 to refine --

9 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Key things
10 we'd like to get.

11 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, the
12 information we want. I think we need to be a
13 little careful of, seeing the information we want
14 rather than trying to design for the Park Service
15 how to collect it, recognizing that there are
16 multiple ways to do that. And, yeah, I'd be
17 happy to work with you on that group to talk
18 about that. See if we can find something.

19 NANCY BALE: Elwood, is the MSLC
20 doing any work with its hiking and education
21 program on soundscape activities within the park,
22 like listening sessions with park guests as part
23 of the field camp?

24 ELWOOD LYNN: I don't know off
25 the top of my head.

1 NANCY BALE: That would be one
2 area where -- certainly awareness could be
3 developed through some kind of program.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Can I ask if
5 Amanda knows?

6 AMANDA SMITH: We don't have
7 anything, or Alaska Geographic and MSLC, to my
8 knowledge, doesn't have anything that's related
9 to soundscape, and then -- yeah. Just -- they're
10 more based on geology or natural history. Unless
11 there's a program I don't know of, which is
12 possible.

13 NANCY BALE: We could make a
14 recommendation that it might not be a bad idea if
15 you want us to.

16 SALLY GIBERT: I'm hearing a
17 subworking group or whatever -- you two, anybody
18 else?

19 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Anybody else?

20 BRIAN OKONEK: Can we do it by
21 e-mail?

22 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Sure.

23 SALLY GIBERT: A north side
24 feedback.

25 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Myself, Tom,

1 and Brian. I wrote down the goal is to define
2 what feedback we want on the north side. Let's
3 put a deadline on it, otherwise, I'm really good
4 at not getting back to it.

5 NANCY BALE: After Christmas
6 sometime.

7 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We're having a
8 meeting in March, we should do it before that --

9 TOM GEORGE: Let's get to the end
10 of the day, and come back to that. It depends on
11 how many other things we decide to do, we can
12 parse them out. Our last meeting we maybe
13 identified a bunch of neat things, looking at
14 this agenda, realized a bunch of it didn't get
15 started. Let's go easy until we figure out -- we
16 run the risk of getting nothing done on anything,
17 and that would be bad.

18 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Okay. I just
19 realize I run the risk of not following through
20 if I don't have a deadline.

21 SALLY GIBERT: I'm going to add
22 that to the agenda.

23 TOM GEORGE: Going back to the
24 aviation reports. This is good, we're talking
25 about things.

1 We did briefly allow time on the
2 agenda, just as a review of the best practices to
3 date, again with the notion that if anything is
4 causing problems about what we've done in the
5 past, we at least want to reflect on that.
6 Nobody identified any problems with the existing
7 best practices.

8 So we charged boldly ahead and
9 took a look at a best -- adding a new best
10 practice for the Great Gorge area. And in the
11 meeting, discussed it and I took the IOU to
12 actually draft the language which -- again, this
13 is one of the things that -- without deadlines, I
14 did get it out to the group, but it only went out
15 a few days ago. When we saw we weren't going to
16 be able to pull off an overall meeting yesterday,
17 we asked people to comment back by noon yesterday
18 if they had concerns with it. I did not see
19 anything in the way of concerns, therefore, we've
20 added a best practice. And I believe I have a
21 copy of -- yeah.

22 So I have a copy of that. So
23 essentially it's the existing document we had
24 with an Area 5 Ruth Gorge best practice added to
25 it. So I think -- and I've got this in digital

1 form that we can spread around.

2 SALLY GIBERT: Area 5?

3 TOM GEORGE: Area 5 Ruth Gorge.

4 SALLY GIBERT: I'm not familiar
5 with the numbering system.

6 TOM GEORGE: In other words, it's
7 the fifth best practice. It's not the fifth
8 best; it's the fifth.

9 (Chuckles.)

10 BRIAN OKONEK: Can you read it?

11 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, sure.

12 "Nature of activity during the
13 climbing season, late-April mid-June, climbers
14 may be utilizing the Ruth Gorge. The Gorge may
15 channel aircraft sound which may disturb climbers
16 who are camping, traveling, and climbing in this
17 area.

18 Air tour operator procedure:
19 Operators who are conducting scenic flight tours
20 and Ruth Mountain House glacier landings can
21 minimize flights on this area when weather allows
22 by using Pivot Pass or Buckskin Gap when
23 accessing the Ruth Amphitheater from the south.
24 Flightseers transitioning across the Gorge, are
25 encouraged to fly north or south of the Ruth

1 Gorge at or about 10,000 feet when able. When
2 leaving the Ruth Amphitheater via the Ruth Gorge,
3 operators are directed to fly directly through
4 the Gorge at low rpm settings and to fly on the
5 right side to minimize sound impacts at the
6 camping areas in the middle of the Gorge and to
7 avoid possible conflicting traffic."

8 And that's it.

9 So again, this would be in
10 addition to the list. And we'll look, again,
11 this summer to see how that works, what problems
12 it might cause, et cetera.

13 So that's -- that was --

14 SALLY GIBERT: Do we want to
15 adopt that as a Council best practice? I assume
16 we would.

17 ERIKA BENNETT: I would like to.

18 TIM CUDNEY: Discussion?

19 NANCY BALE: It would be good,
20 and I'd volunteer to draw up a map of it if it
21 helps. I see where Pivot Pass -- you're saying
22 approach the Gorge --

23 ERIKA BENNETT: Put it up on the
24 screen -- I'd be happy to plug any computer -- is
25 this the time when we want to discuss this best

1 practice?

2 TOM GEORGE: Sounds like it is,
3 sure.

4 NANCY BALE: I got my topo here,
5 so I can try plugging it in. Probably have to
6 turn it on, turn it off.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Let's take a
8 two-, three-minute break.

9 TOM GEORGE: Good idea.

10 (Break.)

11 ERIKA BENNETT: There's the Great
12 Gorge right here. This is where the landing area
13 is on the Ruth. When you take off, usually, you
14 take off, make a right-hand turn and come down
15 the Gorge and then out the Ruth Glacier to
16 Talkeenta.

17 What was the best practice?

18 I want to talk just from my
19 experience, and, Chris, you tell me what you guys
20 do nowadays. When you're doing a tour, a lot of
21 times you come through this area right here
22 (indicating), make a left-hand turn and set up
23 for landing down here; right here. And what I'm
24 hearing is that when they're doing a tour,
25 they're now going to try to go through this

1 smaller area, Pivot Pass, so it takes the
2 additional sound out of this area. Come into
3 this area, and instead of coming this way to set
4 up the landing, you'll come over the landing
5 area, which is going to make the landing area
6 more noisy. It's noisy already. Or come through
7 this area right here which is called Buckskin
8 Gap. There's the Buckskin Glacier. So instead
9 of channeling the landing traffic in this area to
10 set up for their landing, they're going to come
11 up through this side and this side, keeping more
12 sound out of this area. So the only time that an
13 airplane should be down in the Gorge is after
14 it's taken off and coming down here, or flying
15 over at 10 to 5 or above, since all these peaks
16 are around 10.

17 BRIAN OKONEK: The best practices
18 set for transitioning people, 10,000, can stay
19 north of the Gorge or south of the Gorge.

20 ERIKA BENNETT: North of the
21 Gorge or south of the Gorge.

22 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Just to be
23 clear, the reason for that is the center of the
24 Gorge is for ice climbing and camping.

25 ERIKA BENNETT: This is a very

1 popular area for a short period of time. I wish
2 Charlie was here -- Sarah climbed this little
3 thing right here (indicating).

4 TOM GEORGE: I missed that.

5 ERIKA BENNETT: I am so
6 embarrassed from that episode.

7 MICHAEL YORKE: 4.7 million
8 people watched her.

9 BRIAN OKONEK: I've spent a lot
10 of time in the Gorge. Because of the topography,
11 the Gorge echoes back and forth, reducing the
12 traffic in the Gorge and having the traffic going
13 down-glacier, there's a huge difference between
14 down-glacier --

15 ERIKA BENNETT: If you're coming
16 to here, right about here is where people are
17 winding it up and it comes down the Gorge.

18 BRIAN OKONEK: It's a popular ski
19 area. You land at the house and that --

20 ERIKA BENNETT: What is the time
21 period when people are most likely to be in
22 there? I know like July and August --

23 BRIAN OKONEK: Well, April
24 through June is when the glacier travel is the
25 best.

1 SALLY GIBERT: Is the best
2 practice time sensitive or --

3 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, late April to
4 mid-June.

5 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Can I ask, is
6 there an interest by the Council to have a
7 feedback group for this area?

8 TOM GEORGE: Sure. Absolutely.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm sorry. If
10 you're trying a new pattern, how will -- or how
11 will you know if it's successful?

12 ELWOOD LYNN: Who has folks on
13 the ground?

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah.

15 BRIAN OKONEK: There's not very
16 many NPS patrols in there.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Ever.

18 ERIKA BENNETT: Talk to AMS.

19 BRIAN OKONEK: There's guides in
20 there, and the climbing public, you know, the
21 climbing and skiing public. So that's a good
22 question.

23 One thing, you know, that you
24 could do is have it on -- when climbers check
25 out, but there's no mandatory registration.

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So it's a
2 little bit of a conundrum.

3 This area is voluntary
4 registration. If you use the area, you don't see
5 people. You catch people out, and do a mandatory
6 registration, and say how was your trip. Don't
7 have a Ranger in this area for this -- I think
8 your feedback loop has been successful in getting
9 you a, yeah, this works, or doesn't work. I
10 think we may be needing to look outside of the
11 box of how we get that done this time.

12 ELWOOD LYNN: Who represents the
13 climbing guides?

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Charlie. Is
15 that something that Charlie --

16 AMANDA SMITH: It seems like --
17 the way you get in and out of there is pretty
18 much through the Talkeetna Air Taxis. Going
19 through them, going through AMS, they're the ones
20 who run the Mountain House, they know who is
21 going in. You have to fill out a sheet for the
22 Mountain House every time. The trick is --
23 there's lots of -- they're set with a -- very few
24 people just walk in there. It happens, but
25 there's very few that do it.

1 ERIKA BENNETT: One or two people
2 actually snow machine in there.

3 AMANDA SMITH: That's incredible,
4 too.

5 You have people's attention on
6 one side or the other always. The question is,
7 you know, you ask how was this, your sound
8 experience, and they're not going to know there's
9 been a great improvement unless they've been
10 there before. The guides might know who our AMS
11 guides are constantly in there. But, you know,
12 how much was it interrupted, and then, you know,
13 and compare it. That's the only catch is they
14 might say, there are lots of airplanes, even
15 though there might be this really vast
16 improvement. But you do have -- I would think
17 there is the mechanism for using that, not just
18 NPS, but the outside realm of the circle.

19 SALLY GIBERT: If the guides were
20 alerted to this and asked to pay attention to see
21 if there is any difference, all you would need is
22 just a season basically to say there was a
23 difference. You don't need long term.

24 ERIKA BENNETT: Planes come
25 through here, this is already noisy.

1 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Years ago,
2 they were on the Ruth Amphitheater, that's where
3 we camped. Do people still camp there?

4 ERIKA BENNETT: Uh-huh.
5 There's Mt. Ted Stevens right
6 there, it's the south peak. That's Mt. Ted
7 Stevens.

8 NANCY BALE: Is that not Ted?

9 ERIKA BENNETT: The new mountain,
10 Ted Stevens, is right there.

11 TOM GEORGE: You mean Mt. Uncle
12 Ted?

13 ERIKA BENNETT: It's the south
14 peak -- Mt. Hunter, and that's now Mt. Ted
15 Stevens.

16 JOAN FRANKENVICH: To keep this
17 moving --

18 ERIKA BENNETT: Sorry.

19 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I'm glad to
20 know that. Turn this to Charlie and see if he
21 has any ideas and would like to follow up on
22 feedback.

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: There were two
24 comments, I think, Amanda made. The other piece
25 is the air taxis. When Suzanne -- maybe Charlie

1 and Susan together. Since they're not here,
2 we'll volunteer them.

3 (Chuckles.)

4 BRIAN OKONEK: Another good
5 feedback would be there are a few climbers that
6 have traditionally climbed there that have over
7 many seasons, some big wall climbers and stuff.
8 They probably have more time in there than just
9 about anybody. If Park Service knew they were
10 going in, they could ask them.

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay. So this
12 is the problem you're going to get with the Park
13 Service. It's one thing to have our staff
14 provide you with journaling and feedback. We
15 can't survey more than nine before we have to go
16 through a formal survey process. Nine people.
17 So I think it's a great idea. You could ask,
18 Brian.

19 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. And that's
20 where using some of our resources outside the
21 Park Service might be a more efficient and better
22 way to get information than asking the Park
23 Service, in this case. We're going to ask the
24 Park Service to do plenty of other things so
25 they're not off the hook, however.

1 NANCY BALE: There are upcoming
2 meetings about the climber allocation and use
3 fees, which, if those of us in the Council were
4 to attend those meetings, I'm sure there would be
5 some people there, some climbers there, who might
6 want to talk about this. It's not --

7 TOM GEORGE: That's after they
8 tarred and feathered the appropriate guy. I
9 don't know if that's the setting you really want
10 to bring this up or not. But go ahead.

11 (Chuckles.)

12 NANCY BALE: This one tends to be
13 a benefit to them if they're climbing a wall. It
14 might be a little --

15 ERIKA BENNETT: If you get
16 somebody that's stuck out on the Tooth for a
17 week, all they would have to do is put the
18 guide -- one airplane, two airplanes. Give them
19 something to do.

20 TOM GEORGE: So, Madam Chairman,
21 we're in discussion on this in terms of the
22 Council formally adopting this addition.

23 SALLY GIBERT: It seems like
24 we've got a new best practice I think the Council
25 could probably adopt. But I think that since we

1 don't have everybody here and since we certainly
2 don't have a lot of our standard observers, our
3 groupies, that --

4 TOM GEORGE: Be careful, Madam
5 Chair.

6 (Chuckles.)

7 SALLY GIBERT: -- that we might
8 want to keep it somewhat tentative.

9 TOM GEORGE: They snooze, they
10 lose.

11 SALLY GIBERT: We can adopt it --

12 ERIKA BENNETT: We can adopt it
13 in March.

14 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah. We can wait
15 and say we're adopting this in March.

16 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It gives
17 people time to permit it.

18 ERIKA BENNETT: In theory, it
19 looks great. I'd be curious to see how it
20 changes.

21 SALLY GIBERT: We're so darn
22 deliberative.

23 BRIAN OKONEK: I think it looks
24 very good. And I think it could add a great deal
25 of safety, also, for climbing the Gorge. The

1 Gorge has gotten kind of --

2 ERIKA BENNETT: Coming out of the
3 747, I always wondered who was going to T-bone
4 me.

5 TOM GEORGE: Well, bear in mind,
6 the very last line of this thing, we do put a
7 date on this every time we reissue it to be able
8 to tell it apart from earlier versions. "These
9 procedures are designed to be released in key
10 areas of Denali National Park. They are subject
11 for refinement/revision where operational
12 experience is gained."

13 So you learn something, you move
14 on. If you need to come back and adjust this, we
15 will.

16 ERIKA BENNETT: It is --

17 TOM GEORGE: I'd say, take credit
18 for an additional -- something you can add to a
19 fact sheet to this list, and we should move on to
20 newer things that we want to have.

21 NANCY BALE: Are you going to
22 send that around?

23 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely.

24 SALLY GIBERT: Are you suggesting
25 we just go ahead and adopt it knowing that it's

1 got that caveat in it?

2 TOM GEORGE: Whatever is the
3 pleasure of the group.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Sure.

5 NANCY BALE: I guess I'd like to
6 see it in written form.

7 TOM GEORGE: It came to your
8 e-mail, Nancy. You have an e-mail copy of this
9 already.

10 NANCY BALE: Was it part of the
11 minutes?

12 TOM GEORGE: It was a separate
13 attachment to the one that had the minutes.

14 NANCY BALE: I was familiar with
15 the discussion.

16 TOM GEORGE: That version was in
17 the revision language, so you can see every word
18 that was added or changed.

19 NANCY BALE: I'd be comfortable
20 with that.

21 ERIKA BENNETT: Do we have enough
22 people here to adopt it?

23 SALLY GIBERT: So I'm going to
24 use my method, not a decision meter, because it's
25 easier.

1 Any objections to adopting them?

2 Okay. Done.

3 So anything else?

4 TOM GEORGE: Yes. Then the next
5 item that the Aviation Decision Group took up, is
6 the identification and review of north side hot
7 spots and discussion for best practices there.
8 And this one -- again, I see we have an agenda
9 item down the road to talk more about that --

10 SALLY GIBERT: We don't have to
11 separate it. We can do it now.

12 TOM GEORGE: In that case, I
13 guess you want to talk about it since you kind of
14 presented the north side bubble concept.

15 Tell you what. Let me -- I think
16 -- let me see -- I think -- actually, that was
17 about it, but I do have a third page.

18 Let me just finish the report and
19 let's move it as an item, so we can talk about it
20 more fully.

21 We essentially started discussion
22 on that which we will resume here, as soon as I
23 finish this report. So the other item, then, is
24 kind -- since we didn't get a meeting yesterday,
25 which we hoped, I actually contacted -- since I

1 was in town anyhow -- contacted people
2 sequentially to start working more on a -- on a
3 GA outreach and education effort -- we recognized
4 at the last meeting that this best practices
5 document we have is something that is very
6 specific to the air tour operators, they can pick
7 it up and know where it is and what it means.
8 You hand that same thing to the GA pilots that
9 don't fly there every day, and they don't mean
10 anything at all. So we need a new and different
11 product for doing that. So the concept there is
12 the Park Service already has -- and, Mike, I
13 think you have a copy with you of the -- an
14 aviation map for Denali. And so probably I think
15 one of the next things we'll do is to -- and
16 that's why we very much need to include Colin
17 Malone as the park pilot and creator, as I
18 understand it, of this map to see if we can now
19 start to take -- and, again, perhaps one at a
20 time -- some of these different best practices
21 and find some way to put a GA-appropriate level
22 of information out since this is a tool that is
23 on the Web already. So updates are going to be
24 easy for people to get access to. And we already
25 have, both within the FAA and the aviation

1 community, means to outreach and education tools
2 to start to work on that process. So that's kind
3 of a -- what I think is one of our next steps.

4 So with that, I'll wrap up the
5 Aviation Working Group, and we can move on to the
6 other agenda items, unless there are questions.

7 ELWOOD LYNN: How much is GA
8 using tools --

9 ERIKA BENNETT: A lot more
10 lately.

11 TOM GEORGE: I couldn't give you
12 numbers. And I'm sure you know that there is a
13 version of this on Google Earth already, and
14 that's the other reason that if we can come up
15 with some graphics or something to add so that as
16 people are even just using this, not necessarily
17 thinking about sound, but thinking about, oh, I
18 want to go fly in this area, this may be a way to
19 get their attention with it, even though they
20 didn't necessarily go looking for sound-related
21 information.

22 It's a very exciting possibility
23 to do that.

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: When Nancy
25 gets that going, I can get started on an idea for

1 the north side that we started working on at the
2 last work group meeting.

3 So I passed around a map, and
4 without the blue line. You're already all
5 familiar with this where Nancy and I and others
6 tried to identify the areas where is the highest
7 use and the highest conflict areas with sound,
8 with overflights overhead.

9 And so the idea with the blue
10 line is this is a suggestion on a possible way to
11 mitigate it -- and, I guess -- first of all, just
12 to back up a little -- okay.

13 As I think everybody is well
14 familiar, in case -- just to catch everybody up,
15 or any newcomers. Here is the crest or the spine
16 of the Alaska Range, and here's the park
17 entrance, and here's the Park Road, and there's
18 the Kantishna area. And then these river
19 drainages have numbers and those are backcountry
20 units. And backcountry users get a permit per
21 backcountry unit. So not surprisingly, here's
22 the Park Road, and the yellow indicates -- the
23 yellow and the pink both indicate high-use areas
24 for both day hikers and overnight users. And the
25 pink area is where there tends to be, one, the

1 highest use because people tend to go south from
2 the road if it's open, if it's available, because
3 they want to go to the high peaks and the
4 glaciers, so the tundra is a little bit drier.
5 This is where we get the most conflicts, the
6 pink. It's no surprise, all the areas that are
7 easy access off the road is where people tend to
8 go. Additionally, obviously on the Park Road we
9 have bus riders. We have all the facilities at
10 the park entrance. We have several, four, five
11 campgrounds throughout the Park Road. Another
12 visitors' center at Eielson. Day hikers probably
13 don't get much more than a couple miles off the
14 road. Overnight hikers obviously get much
15 further.

16 And we have had numerous comments
17 and visitor comments about people's experience
18 being diminished by -- being surprised. And as
19 we mentioned before, the old park boundary here,
20 is designated wilderness. So this is -- in our
21 country, national park wilderness is our highest
22 protected land. So if you wanted to go someplace
23 and get away from the noisy, busy, mechanized
24 work-a-day world, this is the best place in the
25 whole country. Denali is one of the best

1 wildernesses probably in our country to have that
2 kind of experience. The park manages the
3 backcountry in keeping with that wilderness.

4 So it's very strict limits, and I
5 don't have the numbers in front of me. These are
6 big units. You can see, here's unit 6, I think.
7 Those are pretty big areas, a river drainage.
8 There might be only six people allowed per month.

9 AMANDA SMITH: Four is the most
10 common number, there's one or two that have six.
11 Then there's one or two that have just -- four,
12 actually, might be the lowest number -- that's
13 number of people per night allowed to sleep in
14 that unit.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It doesn't
16 include day hikers. It's not four parties; it's
17 four people. That could be one group. The point
18 being, I kind of realized at the last work group,
19 there's not very many people in here, why are we
20 worried about it. There's not very many people
21 because the Park Service is managing it to be a
22 wilderness. When I was commonly backpacking in
23 Denali, I usually could not go in the unit I
24 wanted to go because it's usually full. The most
25 popular areas fill up quickly. People do not see

1 a lot of other groups. There are not any signs,
2 any bridges for crossing. Unlike other
3 backcountry areas in the lower 48, no designated
4 camp sites. It's pretty much -- for people from
5 the Lower 48, this is unusual, this is
6 wilderness. This is the landscape as it's always
7 been. And that's a special experience for
8 people.

9 So the difficulty we're having is
10 that while people hike, they won't see a sign,
11 they won't see a camp site. They probably won't
12 even see another person beyond their own party,
13 they might have up to 30, 40 helicopters and
14 mostly airplanes fly overhead. That's the
15 problem we're trying to address here.

16 So here's an idea. Open for
17 other options, but here's an idea that we came up
18 with that we started discussing. The idea was
19 basically this blue line is configured as a
20 bubble, and the dotted line is because, in my
21 mind, this is some kind of draft, where exactly
22 this boundary might lay, it could be here, it
23 could be here, it could be determined.
24 Basically, the idea is to go five miles north of
25 the road and to the crest of the range south of

1 the road and form a bubble. And what I've heard
2 the air tour operators say is, "we don't like
3 routes, it doesn't work for us, it's unsafe."
4 The preference is not to fly in this area, but to
5 fly south of the range, which is also very
6 scenic, in fact glaciers are larger on this side.
7 Greg does this a lot from Kantishna, fly to the
8 north. So to try to stay out of there when
9 possible. When it's not possible, because of
10 weather or you just don't want to, for whatever
11 reason, then fly higher, so that no place is out
12 of bounds. The preference is fly south, fly
13 north. If you can't do that, fly higher. So
14 that there's no set routes, people can go
15 anywhere they want, but it helps by suggesting
16 people try not to fly over this area when
17 possible and/or fly higher to make the sound
18 impact less. That's the idea.

19 The FAA and the Park Service
20 recommend flights be 2,000 feet above ground
21 level. Our suggestion was for the bubble area,
22 increase that to 4,000 feet to increase that
23 separation between people on the ground and the
24 sound in the air.

25 So that's the idea. We discussed

1 it a bit at the work group meeting. Nobody ran
2 away and hid, much to my surprise. Nobody
3 screamed and yelled. But it's still very much a
4 work in progress. So I wanted to throw it on the
5 table and get people's feedback, additional
6 ideas, especially -- a lot of air tour operators,
7 people had a chance to think about it, where it
8 works, where it doesn't work.

9 BRIAN OKONEK: The other piece is
10 if you are flying over the area and returning to
11 the Healy end, the east end of the park to do the
12 eastbound journey going over the bubble, rather
13 than climb over the bubble on the way towards
14 Denali. The planes aren't descending, pulling
15 less power and --

16 SALLY GIBERT: Say that again.

17 JOAN FRANKENVICH: So just like
18 on the Ruth Gorge, that it's better for them to
19 be descending over the sound-sensitive area. A
20 lot of air tour operators who are in the entrance
21 area, they do a loop. If you're going to do a
22 loop and fly in a direction over this bubble area
23 and one loop over the south side, do your loop in
24 this direction, so you're gaining altitude on
25 this side and returning under less power in that

1 direction.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Did you have a
3 lot of pilots?

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: A
5 representative from every company, except not
6 Denali Air.

7 SUZANNE RUST: Greg LaHaie was
8 there.

9 TOM GEORGE: This map is the next
10 step, to share that with the group. We need to
11 get this in electronic form so we can --

12 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We didn't have
13 a blue line at the meeting.

14 NANCY BALE: That's a PDF. I can
15 send a copy of this around to everybody. It may
16 be kind of big. I might redistill it to be
17 smaller so it doesn't crash people's in-box.

18 TOM GEORGE: Just like everything
19 else, the devil's in the details, we need to get
20 this outline out and let people, then, look at it
21 -- especially the air tour operators, to their
22 individual operations -- to figure out if it
23 works, if it doesn't work, where there might be
24 other problems with it.

25 The other thing that came up in

1 the meeting, it came out that there are
2 conditions that the safest place -- it sounds
3 like the safest place to fly is down this
4 corridor at maybe a couple thousand feet when the
5 winds are such, and Greg LaHaie, I think,
6 mentioned at the last Council meeting, or at the
7 working group meeting, that he occasionally has
8 problems with his pilots. He's already using the
9 best practice, the one we were talking about a
10 minute ago. He's going out from Kantishna.
11 Instead of flying straight into park
12 headquarters, he comes up and comes around.
13 There's times when the wind is blowing around
14 from the Alaska range, that you or your
15 passengers get thrashed or worse. He's had
16 trouble with these pilots saying, "Why did you go
17 do that?" "Oh, well, I'm trying to stay out of
18 this area."

19 So we have to make sure we're
20 building in, since aviation safety is of equal
21 value here, something into the language, it also
22 does identify that there are times when this is
23 where you need to go as well, so we don't have
24 the adverse consequence of people focusing so
25 literally on the sound dimension that they're

1 overlooking something that may be very important
2 to them.

3 So that's one thing -- we have to
4 figure out how to achieve that balance in trying
5 to put things together.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: That's why I
7 didn't -- I mean, if I were in charge, I would
8 just say stay out of this area. But that's why I
9 didn't do that, because I understand, there's
10 safety considerations or whatever. And that's
11 why the height idea was a way to kind of find the
12 middle ground.

13 SALLY GIBERT: I think we
14 understand that really super well as a group.
15 And we need to make sure that the pilots
16 understand that as well. But it's a judgment
17 call and every single time we get in the plane
18 today, they're in charge of making that judgment
19 call.

20 TOM GEORGE: And I guess my
21 thinking is we're to the point where we actually
22 may need to incorporate some of the language,
23 whatever -- describes whatever we end up doing
24 that actually puts some of those -- mentions some
25 of those conditions under which, in fact, this is

1 the desirable place to go as well, so that
2 somebody who is just reading this isn't only
3 filtering it for the sound element, they're
4 actually seeing the other dimension as well.

5 JOAN FRANKENVICH: The safety
6 element as well.

7 TOM GEORGE: The safety element
8 as well. The other thing, it's easy to look at a
9 map of this scale, but that road, as I recall, is
10 a 90-mile road. This is a huge geographic area
11 we're talking about. So, yeah, we do have to
12 look more closely. When we get to talking about
13 ongoing research, I think to be able to address
14 something as sweeping as this, there may be some
15 research information that we need to be able to
16 figure out again what some of the consequences
17 and what the impacts might be.

18 I'll save that until we get to
19 that part of the meeting.

20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It is a huge
21 area. We have tour operators here and they go
22 over to the mountain. Whether they go this way
23 or this way, doesn't seem, you know, huge.
24 Because it's a long distance.

25 TOM GEORGE: It may not seem huge

1 to you, but when you put all the other factors
2 that the other operators have in place, it could
3 have very big -- economic or other aspects of it.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Which brings
5 me to my next point. We might as well just
6 continue with this discussion now, this is -- I
7 mean, are there other ideas, other options that
8 people see? It's the sense I got from the work
9 group meeting is, yeah, this makes sense, it's
10 reasonable. I think we can do this. Mostly we
11 already do this. This is kind of what we already
12 do, and where we can't; we can't. And it's kind
13 of like it's not going to change anything.

14 And so I think this is workable,
15 and we'll continue to work on it. I just want to
16 throw it out to the group if knowing, okay, this
17 is a problem we're trying to solve, do you see
18 other options for the work group to consider?

19 TIM CUDNEY: As you mentioned
20 last fall, last summer or spring, we had a couple
21 very off years. Number of flights, the activity
22 has been down on that -- I don't think Dan's here
23 yet -- where an operator like Denali Air would be
24 using four Navajos throughout the summer, all of
25 a sudden they're down to two. They've changed

1 their footprint. Same thing with Era; Era is
2 used to operating four during the peak season and
3 they're down to two, we've changed the footprint.
4 As well, we, both on adverse weather days -- I
5 say adverse weather days, under two categories;
6 one, where you can't fly because it's below your
7 minimums; two, where we can't provide a quality
8 tour, we go elsewhere, we go outside the park.
9 That, I think, is a mitigating factor already.

10 Based on the inside information
11 we have -- I shouldn't say inside -- the
12 information we have for what's going to happen in
13 2011, we think that we'll experience about
14 125,000 statewide less tourists. That puts us
15 still in the 2008-2009 levels. So we're not
16 going to see any great increase yet.

17 With the Triple Lakes Trail and
18 the mitigation we've done, I think that's still
19 in the right direction. I would like to see what
20 we were talking about, some better feedback of
21 what's happened, you know, what sort of -- you
22 know, is it noticeable? Are we making headway?

23 You know, when the economy turns
24 around, general aviation numbers are down as
25 well. People think twice about spending \$6 a

1 gallon or \$5 a gallon. So that may be down. I
2 think everything that we do right now, even
3 though the data -- I think it's going to be
4 skewed, because it's not a true number.

5 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Because
6 flights are already down because of the economy.
7 We need to keep that in mind.

8 TIM CUDNEY: Because all of a
9 sudden, we're fortunate enough to move our assets
10 around based on economic demand. Last year
11 during the oil spill and the moratorium in the
12 Gulf of Mexico where a lot of our customers say,
13 "we're not drilling, we're stalling our
14 contracts," every single one of our aircraft went
15 on spill response. We had a barrier. We took
16 aircraft that would have been on tours in Juneau
17 or Denali and stuck them down there. If all of a
18 sudden the economy does rebound, we'll add more
19 assets. I mean, it's like, if they build it,
20 we'll be there. But then again, we're going with
21 a skewed reporting.

22 But also, like I've said, on
23 behalf of Era -- and I'm pretty happy with
24 this -- we've mitigated our own stuff. And I
25 don't compete directly with what Eric does, I

1 don't compete directly with what R. D. does, it's
2 different volume. Bob, you talked about how far
3 people go into the park. What I did last year to
4 mitigate things for my company, I shaved flight
5 time. Shaving four minutes of flight at the end
6 of the summer on a helicopter is a tremendous
7 savings. And we did it, obviously, by not flying
8 that additional time on each leg of the tour.

9 I can't -- you know, like --
10 speaking for R. D., I don't see if he's got a
11 tour that goes around the mountain, I don't know
12 how much more you can shave by going around the
13 mountain. Excuse me, you know, by mitigating
14 that.

15 Same thing with Eric. Eric flies
16 out of Healy, which already adds flight time. I
17 don't want to speak for him, because he may come
18 up to the north side and then have direct
19 conflict with Greg if he's trying to depart from
20 Kantishna on that corridor.

21 So in answer to your question, I
22 think everybody has really put a real good effort
23 into mitigating what's going on already. But I
24 think we need to allow a little bit of time to go
25 by to see how this is really going to make an

1 impact by, you know, the economic chain as well.
2 We can still go at half capacity, you know, maybe
3 two thirds or whatever. And then all of a
4 sudden, say, in 2012, it rebounds again, all
5 these practices that we've been doing very well
6 with would change because the economy turned
7 around, all of a sudden we have this influx of
8 people, people are hiking over Triple Lakes that
9 have historically hiked every year. And all of a
10 sudden at one particular hour, instead of seeing
11 two aircraft, they see four. Because they've
12 gotten used to the last couple of years, "this is
13 kind of cool."

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: You bring up a
15 good point, too. With feedback, is things that
16 are less. Is it less because of mitigation
17 measures or is that because of the economy?

18 TIM CUDNEY: Can't lose sight of
19 that.

20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Our idea is to
21 come up with things that work when things are
22 good or things are bad. We look at things that
23 work into the future.

24 The other thing -- what works for
25 you, Era, and helicopters versus -- like -- my

1 understanding is Eric told me, he frequently will
2 fly in and out on the south side, and Greg was
3 saying, "I can't do that. I get bounced around."
4 Where Eric was saying -- then I realized, they
5 have different sized airplanes; we've got small
6 airplanes, larger airplanes, helicopters. I need
7 your help and your feedback. You've mentioned
8 repeatedly you've decreased your tours inside the
9 park and taken them outside the park.

10 TIM CUDNEY: I said we did it for
11 the park, we did it for economic value.

12 SALLY GIBERT: Take credit.

13 TIM CUDNEY: Seriously, think
14 about it. When I first came on board with Era,
15 we were flying all the way up to the tip of the
16 Muldrow and we're halfway up to Muldrow and
17 turning around. 75 minutes of flight time in a
18 helicopter is a lot of flight time.

19 NANCY BALE: What year was that?

20 TIM CUDNEY: I'm -- we started
21 doing the long flights. On 9/11 is when
22 everything turned around.

23 NANCY BALE: What was the high
24 year for overflight tours in Denali? Just a
25 guesstimate?

1 TIM CUDNEY: I won't tell you
2 that either.

3 (Chuckles.)

4 NANCY BALE: What was the best
5 year?

6 TIM CUDNEY: The better years
7 were '95 to '99. '95 to '98, that's where
8 they -- everybody experienced the best growth.

9 NANCY BALE: Interestingly
10 enough, that is where the data that led to the
11 conclusions in the backcountry plan was gathered.
12 So I guess you're bringing up the huge elephants
13 in the room, and that is scale and scope, and
14 it's not a problem right now because we have a
15 recession. But there could be -- I don't know if
16 there will ever be the climate there was in '95
17 to '98, but we have to posit that as a group.

18 Do we need to start thinking
19 about that scale and scope issue when these
20 bubbles become more important, when these
21 mitigation measures become important, and maybe
22 not as achievable either because you're so
23 crowded that you have to spread out, and you have
24 to go into some of the areas that were verboten
25 for safety.

1 So then where do you get that
2 intersection of scale and scope with proper
3 mitigation. Where is that?

4 TIM CUDNEY: Well, also --
5 aviation, in general, incurs probably some of the
6 highest operating costs of any, and cost drives
7 our industry. It drives how we do our business.
8 As well, there's also the safety platform of we
9 can't sacrifice safety for cost. And we've
10 considered it -- as is our company, we've
11 considered it for years like, you know what, when
12 does it become unfeasible to do this?

13 NANCY BALE: Even though you may
14 be making more money, it is becoming less safe or
15 less manageable, you mean?

16 TIM CUDNEY: No. If it was less
17 safe, we'd already be done. We're a publicly
18 traded company. I can tell you right now -- if
19 we had one fatality in a national park or -- we'd
20 be done. That's just -- the exposure is very
21 great in what we do. So we have to take
22 mitigating issues to watch how we fly. There's a
23 lot of days that my competitors will be going
24 because they operate under a different standard.
25 They'll be doing things where I can't go and I

1 can't see, or if we fly under the TOPS
2 regulations where I need three miles and 500 feet
3 versus somebody else who can do it with a mile
4 and 1,000 feet, or whatever. But I think -- I
5 don't think from a helicopter industry that we'll
6 ever be back to where we were, ever. Otherwise,
7 I'd be putting more aircraft back in Talkeenta,
8 or in Seward. We're not going to be there.

9 There are other things on the
10 horizon that are going to affect the air tour
11 operators as it is. The reauthorization bill
12 regarding segment fees on landings, on
13 overflights, that just constantly keep ticking at
14 people. There's going to be a time where it's
15 going to be, boy, people aren't going to spend 6-
16 or \$700 on an air tour where they just paid \$500
17 for their cruise. We're just not there. And I
18 don't think anybody in this room is very happy
19 with the way things are going in government right
20 now, and there's not a quick turnaround. It's
21 going to be a while.

22 MICHAEL YORKE: And from the
23 public side, you talk about the '90s there, '95.
24 Jet A, Tim Burns was there when it was 80 cents a
25 gallon. Now it's costing you what, 3.50, more?

1 Five times the amount. And then your insurance
2 quadrupled from '95 to today. Drive your car and
3 look at your insurance, it hasn't gone up four
4 times as much.

5 TIM CUDNEY: I'm not crying the
6 blues. These are facts.

7 ELWOOD LYNN: It's hard to
8 imagine that fuel is going to go down to those
9 levels.

10 TIM CUDNEY: Yeah, exactly.
11 Now, if they build that pipeline.

12 NANCY BALE: Are we to conclude
13 that the recession regulation and high cost of
14 fuel has done our job for us?

15 (Chuckles.)

16 NANCY BALE: We can just go home.

17 MICHAEL YORKE: There are a lot
18 of people in aviation who believe this.

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: In the time of
20 low air activity that it isn't the perfect time
21 --

22 TIM CUDNEY: Low activity,
23 there's still low activity on the ground, not
24 just isolated to one entity. I mean, look at the
25 visitors in the park.

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: '07 is the
2 highest.

3 AMANDA SMITH: There are maximum
4 numbers of people in certain areas. It is the
5 people that drive this. It's not even air tour
6 operators, it's visitors who are buying the seats
7 to get there. There are two different ways. But
8 on that number, I am certain -- or I would be
9 confident in saying that those units were filled
10 with the numbers -- like those -- those limits
11 are always going to be there for visitor use, and
12 they're always going to get filled. And I would
13 say that, just as far -- if wilderness is what
14 we're talking about on this particular topic of
15 conversation, like those numbers are filled
16 regardless of the economy, just because they're
17 such low numbers for visitor use. It's one thing
18 to remember, as far as, you know, there are
19 limits that you can't get the unit you want
20 because those are the maximums.

21 JOAN FRANKENVICH: And
22 nationwide, in Park Service, visitation has been
23 going up since the recession, people are
24 vacationing closer to home. Getting outdoors and
25 to the natural areas is what people do in hard

1 times. It's something they can do economically.

2 ELWOOD LYNN: Not so much to
3 Alaska parks, visitation is down.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: '07 was our
5 peak year in the park.

6 NANCY BALE: Visitation?

7 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right.

8 It certainly dropped after that.

9 TOM GEORGE: From the '08 data,
10 which I happen to have here, it looks like --
11 even in those popular units, you're looking at
12 68 -- 74 percent usage was the highest of these
13 backcountry units in that year.

14 SALLY GIBERT: For all --

15 TOM GEORGE: For the north side.

16 SALLY GIBERT: A lot of those on
17 the bubble don't get used very much.

18 TOM GEORGE: That's where this
19 map really is important.

20 (Suzanne Rust joins the meeting.)

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: As Joan has
22 described it, those people are going a mile or
23 two off the road.

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Tim, so you're
25 saying your highest year for flights was probably

1 '89 -- or '99, and you've gone down since then?

2 TIM CUDNEY: '95 through '98 were
3 banner years.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Were banner
5 years.

6 You have less flights over the
7 park now than you used to?

8 TIM CUDNEY: Absolutely. We've
9 changed our focus, too. Our focus is down. Our
10 marquee tour is not Denali National Park, it's
11 glacier landing on State land outside the park.

12 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Your focus has
13 shifted. So you're kind of an anomaly about
14 that?

15 TIM CUDNEY: I think so, yeah.
16 But, still, it's the days when Denali Air was
17 flying four and five aircrafts. Guide & Air was
18 flying -- '98, '99 were good years as well. You
19 can almost use 9/11 as kind of a benchmark. 9/11
20 made people focus. Everything has kind of turned
21 around. Then, of course, the economy really took
22 a dive.

23 Dan, we're talking about
24 decreased number of flights in an aircraft and --

25 DAN MCGREGOR: Yeah, the cutoff

1 in -- 9/11, there was a big drop.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Again, as far
3 as air choice, in general, my sense is you're
4 continuing to see rising use. I mean, maybe not
5 so much in the last two years, because of the
6 economy, but since the late '90s, you've seen
7 rising use.

8 TIM CUDNEY: Rising use.

9 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Rising number
10 of guests.

11 ELWOOD LYNN: 2008 was the
12 highest visitation for the Denali area, I
13 believe. Was that the highest number --

14 TIM CUDNEY: In the last five
15 years.

16 SUZANNE RUST: I would say so,
17 too. I mean -- I think we're likely to follow
18 whatever happens at the park. I think the park
19 is a good indicator, you know, if the park goes
20 up 5 percent, we're going to follow something
21 similar. If we look at park numbers, when the
22 economy kind of went to heck, I would assume that
23 park visitors dropped significantly. I would say
24 our air tours did as well.

25 JOAN FRANKENVICH: In the last

1 couple of years.

2 SUZANNE RUST: We also had the
3 added issue. You're just trying to establish a
4 trend for the future. Is that what you're kind
5 of --

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: No, I was --
7 Tim was just saying '95 through '99 was kind of
8 the heyday of growth, and I'm trying to compare
9 numbers now to then. The helicopter business, I
10 think, is different.

11 TIM CUDNEY: Very different.
12 What I was saying also is I don't think that
13 we're going to be where we were four and five
14 years ago for a long time.

15 SUZANNE RUST: I would agree with
16 that.

17 TIM CUDNEY: Also, I have to
18 remind them that the information that they
19 receive now on all of our best practices in
20 mitigating things we do, is going to be skewed
21 because the economy is off. And we've all -- I
22 don't want to say downsize, I want to be careful,
23 we've got our competitors and I want to watch
24 what we say.

25 (Chuckles.)

1 TIM CUDNEY: Seriously.

2 But things have changed, and the
3 numbers are not very accurate right now.

4 BRIAN OKONEK: Regardless of what
5 the numbers are, we're here because there's
6 enough flying going on that there are some issues
7 happening on the ground. And that's what we're
8 here trying to do is come up with a way to
9 balance things out. Backcountry is trying to be
10 managed as a wilderness area. There's other
11 places that's not necessarily wilderness. West
12 Buttress is not wilderness, there's still
13 aircraft traffic. We're coming up with some good
14 best practices and some ways for mitigating, for
15 now, even though the numbers will go up, and all
16 of a sudden what is happening this last summer
17 will -- won't -- will pale in significance to
18 what happens in two summers if the economy goes
19 up and the air taxis are able to bring more
20 planes on board. Maybe there will be more.

21 I think that gives us all reason
22 to continue working on ways that work best for
23 those on the ground and for you that are in the
24 aviation business in providing your services. At
25 the same time, people on the ground can continue

1 to have their expected experience, too.

2 SUZANNE RUST: I agree with that,
3 and I think that -- I think what I've learned
4 over these years is that this is a process, and I
5 think it should continue to be the process,
6 because whether it will be us sitting here in
7 five years or whatever, you know, it may be that
8 this is the best way for us to adapt and change
9 things, and if there are huge increases then what
10 do we do? Because things will change. That's a
11 given, things will always change. And this group
12 is not because it's able to deal with that and we
13 are -- I think all of us are trying, and we've
14 made some changes that have been significant.

15 BRIAN OKONEK: Because, I mean,
16 like Amanda was saying, on the north side it's
17 limited. There's a quota and a pretty small
18 quota to keep the place as wilderness as
19 possible. The West Buttress has a cap. There is
20 no cap on flightseeing. Hopefully, for your
21 sake, there won't have to be. That's why we need
22 to work on these practices and make it -- make it
23 workable for all concerned.

24 NANCY BALE: Can we talk for a
25 little while about flying over the Park Road?

1 I know that there was the whole
2 thing with Greg where there's this supposed
3 caveat for him not to do that because since he
4 lands in the park, there can be a caveat about
5 exact routes for him.

6 But no one else has it as a
7 caveat, but I think the word got out that flying
8 over the Park Road was perhaps not a very good
9 idea. And I'd just like to explore that a little
10 more. I'm looking at the Park Road here, and I
11 know the Park Road is between 1,800, 2,500, 3,000
12 feet in elevation, generally. Is that about
13 right?

14 So if you're flying above the
15 Park Road at 4,000 AGL, you're flying at 6,000
16 feet. So if you go closer to the range, you
17 really have to get above 6,000 feet to cross some
18 of those divides, don't you? I'm wondering from
19 the standpoint of fuel economy, if you have a
20 high route above the Park Road, you have scenic
21 views, you're flying high -- if you're at 4,000
22 AGL, you're still significantly above them.

23 Is that doable -- that's part of
24 the park that Greg reported having to fly in,
25 even though it was not in the contract to fly

1 there, because it was safer when the winds were
2 cresting over the range. So I guess my thinking
3 is if it was a beautiful bluebird day and the
4 winds aren't a factor, you can get great scenics
5 up at crest.

6 If you're not flying over the
7 road at some AGL that limits sound impacts
8 because you think the Park Service doesn't want
9 you to, could that somehow be amended?

10 Just throwing that all out in a
11 big pile.

12 TOM GEORGE: Say that last part
13 again, I didn't get that.

14 NANCY BALE: If you were not
15 flying over the Park Road because you thought the
16 Park Service didn't want you to, but it's a safer
17 location, and if you add a little bit more
18 elevation, you've done some work to protect the
19 soundscape and you've still got scenic views out
20 the window, is that something that hasn't been
21 done, because it's thought not to be acceptable?

22 Could that thinking change?

23 SALLY GIBERT: I think if you're
24 asking whether the Park Service is flexible and
25 what they require Greg to do, I mean, I think we

1 heard that -- definitely, yes. Greg seems to be
2 quite amenable to it. He says, just tell me
3 where to go. He's pretty flexible, it seems, his
4 big deal is safety.

5 SUZANNE RUST: You're talking
6 about kind of changing our thinking. The Park
7 Road has been --

8 NANCY BALE: Verboten.

9 SUZANNE RUST: Yeah. Avoid the
10 Park Road. That's where the visitors are and we
11 don't want to impact them. But you're saying
12 that, perhaps, increasing altitude flying over
13 the Park Road which is probably one of the better
14 places to fly.

15 Is that right, Dan?

16 NANCY BALE: A little safer.

17 SUZANNE RUST: A little safer.
18 That might be a better choice in really trying to
19 keep people farther out, out of the backcountry,
20 more insulated from the noise.

21 NANCY BALE: You do have that
22 issue, if you want to go up the mountain, you
23 have to do some crossover there near Eielson, I
24 suppose, don't you? If you want get a little
25 closer to the mountain, you do have to -- let's

1 see if I can --

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: You can go
3 beyond Eielson before you cut in, if you were
4 going over the road and on the way to the
5 mountain, coming back from the mountain.

6 SUZANNE RUST: Can we ask Dan to
7 maybe talk about their flight routes?

8 DAN MCGREGOR: I think I can
9 touch on maybe what Greg was speaking of, as far
10 as the wind routes that occur through there,
11 especially with the south wind. There's an area
12 just north of the Park Road called the Johnny
13 Birch area.

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Dan, do you
15 want -- sort of that --

16 TOM GEORGE: Come a little
17 closer. Use this laser pointer so you can point
18 to geographic areas.

19 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Dan, you're
20 with Denali Air?

21 DAN MCGREGOR: Right.

22 So typically, if we can, we're
23 definitely staying away. The Park Road is an
24 area we're trying to get away from as much as
25 possible. Either altitude-wise, typically it's

1 more of the -- off of the lateral edges of it.
2 What Greg was mentioning, flying high and getting
3 out in this area (indicating). If you're up
4 here, you're getting a lot of turbulence, you
5 know, the Polychrome area, up in that vicinity
6 you get a lot of bouncing, scary things that can
7 happen. So you push out north of the Park Road,
8 the mountain is through here. We try to avoid
9 Eielson when we can, and then swing up through
10 this area, and then you're getting in and maybe
11 jump onto the -- or the south flanges and get up
12 into this smoother area there. This area, too,
13 if we can, we also -- this is also a smooth area
14 on the south side; the windward side of the
15 mountains themselves.

16 I think -- I think that's
17 definitely a focus is to try and stay high and
18 away from that Park Road. I think that everybody
19 that flies through the Park's focus, in general,
20 is to do that. Typically, the factors as they
21 be, don't allow us to do both of those at the
22 same time always. If you're jumping back and
23 forth, clear bluebird day, we're nowhere down
24 there. We're down here flying, it's smoother. I
25 don't know if that answers the question.

1 Those are what I would refer to
2 as the high-wind routes, especially when you're
3 coming through. It's hard sometimes to get
4 across when you're climbing out through these
5 areas or gaining your altitude, it's hard to get
6 through this without getting a lot of roughness
7 until your altitude here and then you can cross
8 over. But at this time, we're well above a 4,000
9 AGL at that point anyway.

10 TOM GEORGE: What would your
11 typical altitude be on a profile like that?

12 DAN MCGREGOR: Oftentimes, in
13 through here, I would say we were above 8-, 9,000
14 feet.

15 TOM GEORGE: You're climbing --

16 DAN MCGREGOR: We're trying to
17 get across the spine. The more altitude, the
18 better. You get the wind effect, the
19 terrain-affected wind, at that point. Those are
20 minimums. That would be in excess of 6- or
21 something like that. We try and do that.

22 SALLY GIBERT: So where is -- on
23 that map, I see the words, but --

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: To the right.

25 Dan, just to catch you up a

1 little bit on the discussion we were having on
2 ways and suggestions to mitigate the north side,
3 is this blue -- that blue outline, we were
4 thinking -- we're trying to come up with a way,
5 ideas -- we're searching for ideas to protect
6 on-ground users on the north side. One idea is
7 that blue area is kind of a bubble of trying to
8 fly south or north of that bubble area. If you
9 can't or don't want to, fly higher. And right
10 now the recommendation from Park Service and FAA
11 is fly 2,000 feet above ground level. So over
12 the bubble level, we're suggesting 4,000 feet
13 above ground level.

14 Everything is still on the table,
15 you can go anywhere you want with the idea that
16 you try to stay out of the bubble area or fly
17 higher. So how does that -- you have that much
18 time to think about it. But I wanted to see how
19 that would work and fit your business.

20 DAN MCGREGOR: Right. I think,
21 initially, that -- it's an idea, I guess. I
22 think -- you know, there's some room for
23 discussion on that. Right off the bat, I would
24 see that eastern end being very difficult to deal
25 with that, because that is that barrier area

1 where the highway is going through, the railroad
2 going through, and that's where a lot of the
3 airports are based.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Keep the
5 altitude there.

6 DAN MCGREGOR: Exactly. That's a
7 spot to gain and to climb up through that.
8 That's just off of my head.

9 The other areas, you know, given
10 weather, you know, if it is a bluebird day, you
11 know, are not necessarily issues, but -- yeah, we
12 can look into it, I guess, more.

13 Yeah, I would say, you know, on
14 the recommendation basis, these are -- I think a
15 lot of us, I'll just make this clear, since I'm
16 on the board and it -- I'm not on the board,
17 we're all very worried, as we always have been
18 about these altitudes and establishing something
19 that is going to be ten years down the road a
20 hard line, and just really, really limit these --
21 on a general speaking when there's open dialogue,
22 we say, yeah, we're going to definitely do our
23 best to try this. All the operators have been in
24 that spot to say we really want to try and do
25 this and minimize impact. When it becomes a hard

1 line, then it's not -- there's no limit. It's
2 just that we don't fly there. It goes -- there's
3 a lot of times when that would just stop it
4 altogether.

5 JOAN FRANKENVICH: When the
6 weather's good, the altitudes are not a problem.
7 It's not a big deal. There's marginal days where
8 you can still fly and get views but you're not
9 going to get views.

10 On those days could you go around
11 the bubble area?

12 DAN MCGREGOR: I mean, it's very
13 -- it's a very dynamic area. It's hard to say.
14 There's days, yes, it would be no problem to zip
15 through Windy Pass and come out on the south
16 side. There's days when off the end of the air
17 strip there's no way you can get past that. When
18 you have to go out the park corridor or something
19 like that, it opens up nice, you climb out, it's
20 great. It's just a very dynamic thing.

21 JOAN FRANKENVICH: So no hard and
22 fast?

23 TIM CUDNEY: Just curious.
24 Outside of the bubble area, Dan, how much flight
25 time do you think that would add?

1 DAN MCGREGOR: As far as the --
2 you know, especially on the north side, that
3 route for us would add, you know, ten minutes of
4 flight time, you know, swinging out, north side
5 of the range which -- and a 60-minute tour is
6 fairly substantial. Swinging out, especially out
7 -- that's basically, reading that map, out
8 towards the Stampede Road, running that, cutting
9 all the way back north. South side, that's
10 something we do fairly regularly and we can route
11 that, because the mountain is -- the range is
12 heavy southwest. That's not an issue. The north
13 side route is tricky.

14 TIM CUDNEY: The north side of
15 the bubble scares me, it takes you past the other
16 side of the Park Road. Our route is similar --
17 I'll say similar, but different -- we do a
18 turnaround at Mt. Scott. We can be up along the
19 spine, again, weather's a big issue.

20 DAN MCGREGOR: This area, too, as
21 long as we're talking about wind, it can be
22 pretty rough. For some reason, there's kind of a
23 nice window through here of climbability and
24 smooth area. This area can be pretty rough,
25 unless you can go way out on the bubble. This

1 corner, too, kind of a transition area that cuts
2 off large amounts of time. It's a nice natural
3 climb area through here, too.

4 NANCY BALE: Going south is
5 generally climbing quicker, though, isn't it,
6 because you have big mountains pretty quick,
7 rather than going north, or is it about same?

8 DAN MCGREGOR: No. I would say
9 the hardest climbs are if we go due west along
10 the spine, because if we're going up through this
11 area, that's where we're cranking. This area at
12 Windy Pass is a couple of thousand feet MSL, sea
13 level. As you climb through here, there's nice
14 climb trends through here, in both these areas,
15 going this way right through there, that's the
16 hardest climbs. And the park corridor has large
17 climbs as well.

18 TOM GEORGE: Okay. I think this
19 is a, you know, great concept to look at, and I
20 think putting this map together is a good start
21 now to get everybody something concrete to look
22 at, think about.

23 On the way down yesterday morning
24 on the jet, I read one of these things that
25 Marion actually forwarded to me sometime ago.

1 "Modeling and mapping hikers' exposure to
2 transportation noise in Rocky Mountain National
3 Park." Essentially, what they did in this
4 park -- which has a whole lot of visitation
5 numbers associated with it than anything we're
6 talking about -- they handed out tracking GPS's
7 to the hiking folks so they could actually map
8 where they went, and the duration, how long it
9 took them to get so far. And then they
10 modeled -- in their case, the transportation
11 noise they're looking at is road noise on the
12 road corridor -- modeled how far out that
13 extended. The question was how long did it take
14 you to hike to a certain point to get below a
15 certain sound threshold.

16 Our situation obviously is very
17 different here, but I think in terms of one of
18 our informational needs -- and this clearly is --
19 you know, a study research question, not an
20 ask-anybody-what-they-think kind of question --
21 but I think it may be very important to us,
22 actually, to consider some techniques like this
23 to be able to refine -- for example, how far
24 north in this case do people really go? I think
25 -- and these are the zones -- and I also printed

1 out before the meeting the 2008 data, again,
2 which showed that concentration of visitors by
3 area, but these literally are visitors by these
4 big blocks. It doesn't really tell us much about
5 where within those -- and actually, in some of
6 the earlier discussions, I think you've drawn
7 some lines representing that.

8 But I think we really now,
9 actually, need to identify some information needs
10 to figure out where people are really going which
11 might then lead us -- at the same time, working
12 on aviation side with what are the practical
13 ramifications of the weather, the route and
14 whatnot, to then work something like this to see
15 if we actually can't refine it down to where it
16 is achievable, and also that it's really
17 addressing the primary desire, which is to
18 protect this for people.

19 So in my mind, at least, we're
20 coming up with now with, I think -- we can start
21 to quantify some information needs and maybe even
22 some methodologies for getting there, to help us
23 go from the grand picture to something that maybe
24 we get to -- again, achieving this balance and
25 can turn in to best practices and operations.

1 ELWOOD LYNN: All right. I think
2 we can pretty well tell you where the hikers go,
3 that's along the rivers, because it's too
4 difficult hiking through the tundra. Some units
5 around Eielson are a little more open, but the
6 farther east you go, people are going to be right
7 on the rivers, trying to get to the glaciers.

8 TOM GEORGE: The conundrum for me
9 is, on the one hand, in the Rocky Mountain case,
10 they're looking at numbers of people, whatnot --
11 and we've talked about this before in this
12 setting -- but it's like do you want to protect
13 the most -- the area where the highest
14 concentration of people are, which, by definition
15 is going to be closer to the road? Or, in fact,
16 is it more important to protect the areas that a
17 smaller percentage of the people get to, but they
18 may be more sensitive to the sound when they get
19 there?

20 NANCY BALE: They had an
21 expectation for a certain type of experience.

22 TOM GEORGE: And that, to me, is
23 also where we somehow need to quantify in a
24 better way than we have today, because we may be
25 in a situation here where, frankly, the area we'd

1 like to protect the most, and therefore should
2 alter best practices, might be this area that
3 fewer people get into --

4 ELWOOD LYNN: I think your
5 thinking is right along. Ours is starting to
6 change, and we're recognizing the -- especially,
7 if we could have slightly higher aircraft travel
8 over the road and then dropping into the
9 airports, that makes more sense than to be out
10 where people have invested several days of hiking
11 to get to solitude and that's where they find all
12 the airplanes.

13 TOM GEORGE: You've reflected
14 that on your map here, by your color here, the
15 red being not the roadway itself, the area a
16 little distant from the road to the crest. I
17 think we need to focus on quantifying a few more
18 of those details in order, then, to go from the
19 broad concept down to maybe some more specific
20 things.

21 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It's a
22 double-edged sword, the reason we're hearing more
23 complaints from the pink area than from the red
24 area is that's where the people go. I really --
25 and I could argue either side, because on the

1 road, you already -- people are in the bus 95
2 percent of the time, a lot of traffic on the
3 road. If you're high enough, that airplane might
4 not be that noticeable.

5 TOM GEORGE: 2- and 4,000 feet.
6 I really want to know how much of a difference
7 that makes to people on the ground. Just
8 thinking back to that thing we did at Gates
9 Creek. I would like to see something like that
10 done, again, maybe more in this setting. We
11 might have problems doing it in exactly this
12 setting just because of the --

13 ELWOOD LYNN: They're
14 under-powered or --

15 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. But we need
16 to really nail this down. I'm -- we've done
17 everything they've asked us to do and we're being
18 jerked around. You jerk people around too many
19 times, they want to quit playing the game
20 altogether. So I think we need to sharpen our
21 pencil and see if we can identify the information
22 we need to collect. This isn't something we do
23 overnight. And then start funneling that into
24 refining what we really want people to do.

25 I want to talk to Greg, and maybe

1 we can talk a little more at lunch. I had a
2 general impression that there is some wind events
3 that you actually don't want to be high, you
4 actually want to be lower going through that area
5 to avoid getting thrashed, which may be a more
6 extreme case than the cases we've talking about
7 here. That gets to the safety dimension which we
8 need to make sure we're not writing
9 recommendations that would cause people to be put
10 in harm's way unnecessarily.

11 JOAN FRANKENVICH: This is a work
12 in progress. This goes to the airport, there's
13 no way you can go that high.

14 TOM GEORGE: Talking to the
15 operators about the economic impacts of these
16 things, too. If the line up on the top, actually
17 on the north side came a little further south, if
18 after looking again at real visitor use and some
19 of these other -- and perception, what do people
20 really perceive most as the most annoying?

21 Yeah, I think there's a number of
22 very neat possibilities here. We have to get
23 some hard information in order to do this
24 intelligently and not keep jerking people around.

25 SUZANNE RUST: How do we get to

1 the decision point of what direction we go with
2 -- you know, as far as keeping traffic over
3 noisier area or keeping it, you know, where there
4 are fewer -- how do we get to that -- because
5 that really is where we are in the road, and then
6 we can start devising either a study, or we can
7 start doing other things to try to figure out
8 altitudes and offsets. But it seems like that
9 that's really --

10 SALLY GIBERT: I think that's one
11 of the questions that -- I think that when it
12 comes to the survey discussion later that the
13 Park Service has kind of said, you know, what
14 kind of information do you want us to be
15 gathering in future surveys. And that's the kind
16 of information, I think, that would be good to
17 get, to be able to figure out how to ask. And
18 I'm wondering, have there been any questions
19 asked in previous surveys or in, say, the public
20 involvement on the backcountry plan? Did you see
21 any sense about whether people were more
22 concerned about noise -- you know, is it better
23 to have less noise for many people or less noise
24 for the few that are far away?

25 Did you get any sense of trends?

1 ELWOOD LYNN: I don't know that
2 we've thought to ask that. And that's --

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That's the
4 trade-off piece.

5 ELWOOD LYNN: Yeah. And this
6 study that's coming up this summer, I think we
7 are going to try to find out if people are
8 investing time hiking, is there expectation that
9 it's quieter and quieter.

10 TOM GEORGE: Did you say you
11 already have the study already in the works to
12 address that?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We're going to
14 talk about that.

15 TOM GEORGE: We can wait. But if
16 you're going to talk about that today --

17 SALLY GIBERT: The answer is
18 "yes."

19 TOM GEORGE: Good, I'll wait for
20 that session.

21 SALLY GIBERT: That seems like
22 one of the hugest questions, on the north side,
23 that faces us, "what is the objective?" And I
24 think we're still not clear about what the
25 objective is. Are we still trying to do the most

1 bang for the buck?

2 NANCY BALE: The backcountry plan
3 really says that we are protecting a soundscape,
4 we really aren't protecting visitors' ears, but
5 it has been hard for us to think about that. So
6 we're going at it through visitors' ears. But
7 it's not quite accurate to say that's what the
8 backcountry plan says. The backcountry plan says
9 we're protecting the soundscape. So the
10 backcountry plan assigned to the wilderness core
11 a certain quality of soundscape, that may not be
12 attainable in some parts, especially in Triple
13 Lakes -- we'll talk about that later too. If we
14 have to go at it from the concept of people's
15 ears, we're adding a certain value to visitor
16 experience above and beyond whatever value the
17 backcountry plan assigned to the natural
18 environment. But, you know, it was really
19 totally based on what people found bothersome.
20 You know, you can't ask the tundra what it finds
21 bothersome.

22 TOM GEORGE: But you can do --
23 and people have done studies actually to address
24 that, and I don't know -- maybe we'll hear about
25 that as well.

1 NANCY BALE: Well, there have
2 been some studies of the -- what is it --
3 compounds in moose turds when they were exposed
4 to snowmachine noise. I remember this was
5 happening when we were doing the snowmachine
6 stuff. And so there is some animal data, but
7 it's very limited and it's probably never going
8 to be real rigorous.

9 TOM GEORGE: I don't think we
10 should preclude the notion of collecting
11 additional information and being responsive to
12 that. So I take your point, you're absolutely
13 right. It's the difference in soundscape
14 overall, and only focusing on human visitors.

15 NANCY BALE: In that sense, the
16 red and yellow are equally valid from the
17 standpoint of, anything that's in that soundscape
18 description is as valid as anything else is. But
19 I think we, in our own minds, think of if you
20 work to have an experience. And also those areas
21 are areas where sound can funnel and be more
22 bothersome because of the valleys, and there are
23 fewer trees and natural objects that protect you
24 when you are in one of those funnels. I would be
25 inclined to try to protect the red areas more if

1 I had to make a choice. I don't know what the
2 average person thinks, and I guess that's what
3 you'd have to collect data on.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I took some
5 notes recently on an article on a soundscape
6 plan, and there was a quote from one of the
7 soundscape people: "Only a 3-decimal change in
8 sound can detect whether predators affect prey or
9 not." So there's a study that says sound can
10 affect animals and their ability to live.

11 TOM GEORGE: And we need more
12 studies done here to answer those questions here,
13 absolutely.

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Ideally, in
15 the -- in protecting park resources, which -- the
16 blue line would be bigger, it would cover the
17 entire wilderness boundary. There's a lot of
18 ways to look at it.

19 As far as the road, that's a
20 really tough one. The only way I can think to
21 address it, maybe we can just have a couple
22 operators, you know, not tell everybody to change
23 what they're doing, try it and kind of see if
24 there's complaints. Or station people on the
25 ground, because, you know, there's a lot of

1 noise, but, boy, there's a lot of people, and you
2 could look at it -- I mean, it's really tough.

3 TOM GEORGE: Very tough.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Really tough.

5 TOM GEORGE: Every time I think
6 about it --

7 JOAN FRANKENVICH: And maybe --
8 that's why I think perhaps the bubble concept
9 works too. The operators said we don't want
10 routes. If we kind of scatter more and make --
11 if the road is no longer a "you can't fly," but
12 don't necessarily always go there. Some people
13 -- some are flying north, some are flying the
14 road, some are flying south, some are flying
15 south side of the spine. If people are spread
16 out, we spread out the impact, as opposed to
17 right now. There's somewhat of a concentration,
18 and that's why that area ends up red because
19 that's where people tend to fly. We spread that
20 out more. I think no matter how many studies we
21 have, we're going to find out there is no perfect
22 place. The reality is it's going to impact
23 people, regardless. So flying higher, maybe
24 spreading out, trying to avoid that area
25 altogether are possible options. I don't think

1 there's a perfect solution.

2 TOM GEORGE: If these were easy
3 problems, they would have solved them a long time
4 ago. We wouldn't be sitting here.

5 SALLY GIBERT: So to be able to
6 move on, do we want to bump this down back to the
7 working group for further deliberation?

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I think that
9 was always the intent.

10 SALLY GIBERT: In terms of survey
11 information as well.

12 NANCY BALE: You see most of the
13 commonly hiked-in areas are inside the bubble.

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: And remember,
15 this was to answer a specific question on how
16 high people get to coast through to the spine of
17 the range.

18 How far do people go south of the
19 Park Road, where do they generally get, and how
20 far do they get?

21 DAN MCGREGOR: Are there any
22 numbers associated with that? Is that based on
23 one hiker going up that course, or how many
24 people?

25 AMANDA SMITH: There are numbers

1 associated with it, and it's mostly tied to the
2 amount of permits. There's limits and caps on
3 the amount of time people can spend a night in
4 any one of those units, so there's often four,
5 and that's where you have people going the
6 furthest. Closer to the entrance, you get more
7 day-use hikers, they don't get close to the
8 spine.

9 TOM GEORGE: This is a map of it,
10 based on the permits, it doesn't necessarily have
11 the day-hiker component of it.

12 DAN MCGREGOR: That's one permit
13 regardless of the number of people?

14 AMANDA SMITH: Number of people
15 in the unit, yeah.

16 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Dan, what you
17 missed earlier that we were discussing, that kind
18 of came up in the last work group meeting, is
19 that there's not that many people here. Those
20 numbers, they're generally drainage valley, big
21 areas, strict use numbers. So Park Service has
22 done it so people have a wilderness experience.
23 A lot of those areas only allow four people per
24 night. That is so you don't see other people and
25 you have a wilderness experience. It's designed

1 that way for people in the backcountry to have a
2 wilderness experience.

3 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. I think we
4 can move on.

5 Let's do another five- or
6 ten-minute break.

7 (Break.)

8 SALLY GIBERT: Anybody, members
9 of the public, of which we only have a small
10 number, anything that any of you want to
11 contribute, and that includes, you too, based on
12 the discussion so far --

13 DAN MCGREGOR: Well, yeah, I
14 guess it was kind of touched on briefly about the
15 idea of, like, the percentage of the backcountry
16 plan -- and maybe this is in there somewhere --
17 the focus on the wildlife and the actual natural
18 habitat versus the people's experience in that.
19 It seems like that is -- seems like the focus of
20 this is the people's experience there. And I've
21 always wondered about that. I noticed she
22 mentioned a little bit about the predators'
23 ability, and I don't know what type of predators
24 that study was based on in the different
25 landscape as well. That's a direct crossover.

1 That would be a little more interesting to see
2 that side of it. I think that's what nature is
3 really about is itself, I guess. And I've just
4 kind of wondered what the percentage is.

5 We definitely focused on the
6 people and we know this answers some questions,
7 too, because I think Paul -- it was maybe a year
8 and a half ago, Paul had mentioned of the 400,000
9 that there was about 40 or so complaints
10 versus -- you know, related to aviation in some
11 manner. And so, to me, that's -- you know,
12 that's a pretty good percentage of pleasing
13 people that are coming into the park versus, you
14 know, the habits that we may have had in 2008.
15 That's doing something right.

16 So I guess my -- it would be
17 interesting to know that if this is changing and
18 spreading this out and taking the routes that we
19 have been doing over the past two years, if those
20 numbers have gone down and it's even less than
21 40, then that's -- are we going to beat that with
22 people? Are we ever going to get better than
23 that with all these actions? And if the natural
24 environment doesn't -- is not being affected or
25 the studies that we're doing are not affected,

1 you know, I don't know, I guess -- I'm relaying
2 some thoughts that people have, the concerns that
3 you brought up, Tom, about all this -- all the
4 back and forth that we're doing when we feel like
5 we're doing efforts and we're getting moved
6 around a little bit and we want to know if this
7 is helping or not. Bottom line.

8 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah. We talked
9 about that before you got here. We talk about it
10 at most of the meetings, it's a hard one to get a
11 handle on. We are working on that, and we had
12 quite a bit of discussion, like I said, this
13 morning, and I think we have more later on the
14 survey questions. And we talked about the
15 backcountry Ranger reports, and I think we'll
16 talk more about that at the March meeting as
17 well.

18 It is important to -- if the
19 pilots are making a concerted effort to change,
20 you know, you want to know that you're doing it
21 for a good cause. And it's hard to measure that,
22 especially in light of the downturned economy and
23 the number of -- the fact that there are just
24 plain old fewer planes in the air. And if
25 everybody is really happier, is that because of

1 the economy or is that because of your best
2 practices? It's going to be hard to tease that
3 out. But -- yeah, it's an issue.

4 As far as the natural environment
5 impacts versus people noises, I know early on the
6 first of the year, I tried to find information
7 from the State, especially from Fish & Game to
8 see if they had anything related to wildlife
9 impacts, and they don't. There's no studies that
10 have been done in Alaska, but the presumption is
11 that if people are following the FAA guidance of
12 staying 2,000 feet above ground level, that
13 that's adequate. And that -- so there's not --
14 there's very little, if any, Alaska-specific
15 information about wildlife.

16 There are some studies in the
17 Lower 48 but they tend to be from -- the reports
18 I've gotten from Fish & Game tend to be at higher
19 levels of use or higher concentrations than tend
20 to happen in Alaska. So Fish & Game in
21 particular is not particularly worried about the
22 impacts of overflights on populations as a whole.
23 That doesn't mean there couldn't be some stress
24 points at local areas, but there seems to be no
25 problem with -- no jeopardy to the population as

1 a whole.

2 Anything else?

3 MICHAEL YORKE: Just one comment
4 I'd make as a public -- when Dan was talking
5 about the turbulence in the area. And so there
6 would be a difference in the Navajos performing--

7 DAN MCGREGOR: Yes.

8 MICHAEL YORKE: There would be a
9 Navajo's level and others. Although we heard one
10 side, or one operator speak, it was a specific
11 type of aircraft that would be -- probably
12 comments from another individual would be maybe a
13 little bit more different.

14 DAN MCGREGOR: Most definitely.
15 There's a broader range. There's Navajos,
16 there's Super Cubs, and they're typically all
17 departing from different areas, which mandates,
18 you know -- you're going to be at different
19 altitudes and different places, just the way the
20 plane performs and what you can do, even best
21 routes, circles and things like that.

22 Very much a good point.

23 SALLY GIBERT: Okay.

24 So do people want to take a break
25 for lunch, break a little early and start early?

1 Take an hour.

2 (Lunch break.)

3 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. So we're
4 back in business here.

5 And several people have to leave
6 and do some substantial driving this afternoon,
7 and so I think it would be good if we could wrap
8 up at 4:00. Is everybody happy with that?

9 Okay.

10 So rather than just going to --
11 we'll arrange to stop at 4:00. That means the
12 last couple of agenda items, planning next
13 meeting. We'll have to get to that between 3:30
14 and 4:00.

15 I think in terms of what we've
16 covered and what we have to cover, in terms of
17 the Outreach Working Group, Erika, you were
18 basically going to say that nothing happened?

19 ERIKA BENNETT: Basically. Tom
20 and I talked very briefly at the very beginning
21 of the meeting about different ways of getting
22 the word out to general aviation, and we're
23 starting to think of planning some conferences at
24 a large general aviation conference this spring.

25 TOM GEORGE: Some talks at a

1 conference, yeah.

2 ERIKA BENNETT: Informational
3 talks.

4 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. So the idea
5 is to start to look around at existing
6 opportunities where you can plug in?

7 ERIKA BENNETT: Uh-huh. Yeah,
8 have a high volume of general aviationists.

9 SALLY GIBERT: Anything more we
10 need to talk about as a group?

11 ERIKA BENNETT: No, anything we
12 put together as a group is what we talk about.

13 SALLY GIBERT: We can expect
14 another report next March.

15 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely. But I
16 will say that outreach also -- oh, next month?

17 SALLY GIBERT: March.

18 TIM CUDNEY: I thought you said
19 next month.

20 TOM GEORGE: Quit scaring me.

21 SALLY GIBERT: We want it by
22 January 1st.

23 (Chuckles.)

24 TOM GEORGE: I do think we need
25 that -- other than an aviation -- to join that

1 part of the -- we need to bring outreach things
2 in other than aviation. There's an opportunity
3 for somebody else to sign up or they'll be
4 recruited mercilessly.

5 SALLY GIBERT: Whichever works.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: What happened
7 -- did something go forward with information that
8 Mike was working on, as far as getting some
9 information on the FAA materials?

10 MICHAEL YORKE: We did talk about
11 the supplement and where we were going to place
12 things that are still pending. It's looking
13 good. That was amending this page as Tom and I
14 and kind of a little informal mini group talked
15 about getting a Web page for them to go to. I
16 believe it was Brian who was somehow getting a
17 block or a little bubble, as I call it, on the
18 chart to get information and be able to download
19 -- excuse me, to get further information on the
20 Denali chart, so you can have the Denali chart
21 there available to them. The map will probably
22 take a little longer. I would say this is
23 probably going to happen by the spring. And
24 that's a good thing because we print it every,
25 what, 54 days?

1 TOM GEORGE: 56 days.

2 MICHAEL YORKE: Something like
3 that.

4 So those are pending along.
5 There's a couple of other changes that we talked
6 about. Colin Malone, who isn't here, obviously
7 was a big input in the chart there. There's a
8 few things we want to change on it. We want to
9 see if we can get the changes kind of going. I
10 think those are probably things that are going to
11 happen this spring, and I'm probably 90 percent
12 sure on that. Scott talked about getting
13 information in the handbook. He wanted to get
14 the information updated. So we reserved room for
15 you --

16 LT. COL. SCOTT BABOS: Are you
17 still planning to print the handbook?

18 MICHAEL YORKE: Yes, sir. And
19 that is by the Office of Runway Safety. The idea
20 was it was supposed to come out by November, this
21 is December.

22 TOM GEORGE: What is the status?

23 MICHAEL YORKE: I'm glad you
24 asked, Tom. It's probably January.

25 TOM GEORGE: It's ready for

1 printing?

2 MICHAEL YORKE: Sounds like. We
3 always want to get the first one out so we can
4 get the professionals to comment on it, and go
5 from there.

6 SALLY GIBERT: What's this
7 publication you're talking about?

8 MICHAEL YORKE: I think they're
9 going to call it the Alaska Aviator's Handbook.
10 It's got a fair amount of information in there.

11 Back to Colin Malone, he has this
12 chart on the NPS Web site. We also have it on
13 the FAA Web site, Go Fly Alaska. His chart is
14 much superior. Our goal is to get his chart over
15 there and let it reflect in the supplement and on
16 the chart, per Brian's suggestion, that that
17 would be the link to go to.

18 The reason is we can't publish
19 the whole chart.

20 TOM GEORGE: You mean in the
21 hard-copy booklet you can't?

22 MICHAEL YORKE: Yes, they are in
23 the hard copy booklet. When we go here on the
24 sectional of the SUPP, we want to put the Web
25 address in there as short as we can so you can go

1 to them. So the Web address that we're proposing
2 doesn't have the best map on it, we want to get
3 Collin's on that. I spoke with him, I don't
4 know, 20 days ago about it.

5 TOM GEORGE: Well, but this goes
6 back to this notion that, hopefully after we do
7 more work with Colin, his is going to change. So
8 hopefully -- again, we're pointing back to him as
9 a source. We're not replicating his map on some
10 FAA Web site.

11 MICHAEL YORKE: Absolutely.
12 We're duplicating that.

13 TOM GEORGE: We need to talk more
14 about that.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We're linking
16 to him.

17 TOM GEORGE: Linking to him, yes;
18 replicating, that's a problem.

19 MICHAEL YORKE: He didn't seem to
20 think that there was any problem -- we can talk a
21 little offline -- having whatever link it is to
22 take you to that. Just like you can put in
23 apple.com and buy an iPad, you can put in some
24 other company, Best Buy, and buy an iPad. The
25 idea is that everything would be the same. And

1 that would help and update since we talked
2 yesterday.

3 Does that help, Joan?

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Yes.

5 BRIAN OKONEK: And that would be
6 in the Alaska Aviator's Handbook?

7 MICHAEL YORKE: The map there,
8 it's in the state you see it right now where Tom
9 and Tim had it over there.

10 TOM GEORGE: We had talked
11 yesterday about trying to update some issues
12 about maybe some noise-sensitive areas and kind
13 of find a way -- that's our hope, and we're
14 premature in that right now --

15 LT. COL. SCOTT BABOS: Is this an
16 8-and-a-half by 11 or sub-size printout?

17 MICHAEL YORKE: I think it's in
18 between. I think it's going to be a little bit
19 bigger than this. Again, not my dollars doing
20 it, but we can get the input in.

21 LT. COL. SCOTT BABOS: It still
22 may be a one-time good deal? Is there going to
23 be an expiration day, or expect next printing six
24 months to a year later?

25 MICHAEL YORKE: Runway Safety

1 tells me this, they'd like to have it out in
2 November, so you can see that didn't work. I
3 encourage people to get in the first edition. I
4 know how things change. Maybe they'll have a new
5 one out in May. Now we're shooting for March.
6 So we're hoping for June and March.

7 TOM GEORGE: And you say that's a
8 runway safety project?

9 MICHAEL YORKE: Yes, Roger
10 Moscow. They're the ones who have the funding
11 for it, Tom.

12 TOM GEORGE: The point Scott's
13 making is a great one. That is, like an
14 expiration date -- are we starting a new series
15 which is going to be updated through time, or is
16 this a one-time good deal? But the information
17 is going to be dated as all publications are the
18 minute it leaves the press. And how we respond
19 to that is very different if it's an ongoing
20 updating kind-of-thing, versus a one-time thing
21 that will never be done again.

22 MICHAEL YORKE: The idea was to
23 have it ongoing every year. Again, who knows
24 what the budget will say on that.

25 SALLY GIBERT: It seems like it

1 would be -- for the time being, it would be
2 better to assume it's a one-time thing and keep
3 it general, if it does get updated to maybe be
4 able to define it.

5 TOM GEORGE: The best thing, to
6 me, is put in a link to a Web site. Now we have
7 the opportunity to make updates, whereas if we --
8 put a map in there today, there's nothing on
9 sound in it.

10 MICHAEL YORKE: That's correct.

11 TOM GEORGE: Part of the fact of
12 meeting the deadline is no sound information.
13 Where as a Web link and six months or a year
14 might have sound information. It might get
15 better following after that just like all the
16 rest of the stuff we're doing. From that
17 standpoint, I'd almost argue don't bother putting
18 the map in something that may be a one-time deal
19 if it's going to have a long duration.

20 SALLY GIBERT: Or you could
21 highlight some areas on the map, these are areas
22 where stuff is happening.

23 TOM GEORGE: Examples of, and
24 then the link to the Web site, for the full-meal
25 deal. That's why we need to understand --

1 MICHAEL YORKE: I don't build
2 that publication so --

3 TOM GEORGE: Well, we'll get to
4 the bottom of who does.

5 MICHAEL YORKE: Okay. Good luck
6 on that battle.

7 (Chuckles.)

8 TOM GEORGE: We'll take that up
9 in a different forum.

10 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. Anything
11 more on the Outreach Working Group?

12 No?

13 Okay. We can expect an update in
14 March.

15 I think we're down to number 9,
16 which I call "beyond the best practices." And
17 this was -- some of this is things that we wanted
18 to talk -- there are some specific things here.
19 One of the reasons I called it "beyond best
20 practices," it's become apparent to me that there
21 is a lot of things that have happened, a lot of
22 changes that are being made and progress being
23 made to make things better on the ground for
24 backcountry users that aren't reflected in the
25 actual best practices, that people have just made

1 changes themselves. Business-specific, maybe
2 even airplane-specific, there are a lot of things
3 that have gone on.

4 And I think that it would be --
5 personally, I think it would be helpful to have
6 some documentation of that, if not the specific
7 things -- I could see that would be
8 problematic -- but just some recognition that --
9 you know, sort of for the record that individual
10 businesses have, you know, both collectively and
11 individually, made a lot of changes in response
12 to being at the table, hearing each other out,
13 and saying I think I can do some stuff that will
14 be better. And I just want to acknowledge that
15 because I think a lot has happened in that
16 regard. And I just wanted to figure out how to
17 get that on the record somehow.

18 TOM GEORGE: Are you talking
19 about the fact sheet?

20 SALLY GIBERT: I'm talking about
21 sort of the third bullet. That's why I called it
22 "beyond best practices." It also means the
23 specific -- the Triple X fact sheet, the fact
24 sheet that's still on my desk -- so all of these
25 are sort of beyond best practices. That's why I

1 called it that, I think there's a lot of things
2 we were doing besides just making recommendations
3 to people about where they are going to fly.

4 SUZANNE RUST: I think it's good
5 for the operators to hear that. Even when Paul
6 spoke about how he felt this Council had made
7 progress, it gives us a perspective that
8 sometimes we're lacking, especially to note the
9 appreciation for operators who aren't here at the
10 table every single time, or maybe they -- the
11 aviation worker. I don't know if an e-mail -- I
12 don't know. I think it's an encouragement for
13 them to stay in the process, somehow, that there
14 is acknowledgment that they made changes. We
15 recognize that. We're still striving for other
16 changes.

17 The thing we're learning is
18 keeping people coming to the table is one of the
19 most important things we can do. And it is nice
20 to hear -- even though I'm sitting here and, you
21 know, Tim is sitting here, it's always good to
22 hear that feedback, some of the things we have
23 done has made a difference. It's working.

24 SALLY GIBERT: I was really
25 struck -- I've been struck all along. But I was

1 especially struck, when I went to my first
2 aviation meeting. I just went to that, I was
3 really astounded at, you know, how much people
4 knew what they were doing, how much they were
5 making judgment calls and, you know, all that
6 stuff. I was just really impressed that there's
7 a lot more going on to address the situation than
8 is represented in best practices. And I just
9 want that out there somewhere, and I don't know
10 how to do that whether there's value in offering
11 some examples -- maybe just examples to make it
12 real for people or what, but it's -- to me, it's
13 important to note.

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I think
15 separate from the best practices, maybe we need
16 accomplishments-to-date, of which best practices
17 is one, and then a lot of these other things.
18 Because like the things that have struck me that
19 people have done totally voluntarily is Suzanne
20 took off here seeing some climbers -- the Web
21 site improvements, and Tim said Era -- nobody
22 asked them -- Era is taking off, seeing some
23 wildlife, and they go the Park Road.

24 People need to be noted for that.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Turning your

1 attention to the park, lowering the emphasis on
2 the park. You've got other reasons why you're
3 doing that as well. It's a contributor. So it
4 doesn't mean we want to make that a
5 recommendation, "don't go to the park," that's
6 definitely not the point.

7 TIM CUDNEY: We also take down --
8 we removed, from a lot of our literature, Mt.
9 McKinley, and just left Denali National Park,
10 because that took the pressure off advertising to
11 the public that you're going to see Mt. McKinley.
12 Everybody knew you're not going to see it every
13 time.

14 That helped us a lot, too; no
15 more lap children.

16 ERIKA BENNETT: Managing
17 perceptions is huge when it comes to doing a
18 tour.

19 SUZANNE RUST: I think it's a
20 really good point, and I think the shift has
21 happened, and I think it's something I don't
22 think much about. The shift has happened, at
23 least, in our business. Where we talk about
24 selling the park experience, you're getting to
25 visit this amazing six-million-acre park and you

1 get to get a real good feel for it from the air.
2 Mt. McKinley is just a little piece of it.

3 TIM CUDNEY: I learned all my
4 stuff from your radio ads in the summer.

5 MICHAEL YORKE: Hey, at least
6 he's listening.

7 TIM CUDNEY: Yeah, I turned it
8 off.

9 (Chuckles.)

10 SUZANNE RUST: I had people
11 telling me it's Denali, not Mt. McKinley, and I
12 need to change. And mad. If they have something
13 to do, they call.

14 SALLY GIBERT: Not only is there
15 a value in helping people feel included and
16 acknowledged for their work, I think it's also --
17 it can be used as kind of advertising the value
18 of this process to other parks in, like, the
19 Lower 48.

20 Paul has been excited this group
21 is, so much, part of being able to articulate to
22 people in Arizona or Colorado or Hawaii is
23 letting them know that there's other values
24 besides just, you know, specific recommendations
25 for measures. There's the process of this

1 communication, and what comes out of that is of
2 enormous value. And that relates to the fact
3 sheet. That's something that we can -- I would
4 like to do in the fact sheet.

5 TIM CUDNEY: What we've talked
6 about at lunch is how far this committee has
7 moved even though we may think it's all baby
8 steps, compared to the end movement in the Grand
9 Canyon, which is almost stagnant.

10 ELWOOD LYNN: They're helping
11 with what's going on up here.

12 TIM CUDNEY: Nice to see. It's
13 --

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: One of the
15 things that has been shared at -- I think it was
16 at our Denali meeting last fall -- some people
17 were hesitant to share what they were doing
18 voluntarily outside of the best practices --

19 SALLY GIBERT: Outside of the
20 voluntary measures.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It was like
22 working for them, because it was totally up to
23 them, flexible. I think that in wanting to share
24 these, I think there really is value. I also
25 want to be sensitive to the operators who are --

1 like, I'd feel better about it if we went and
2 said, gosh, is there anything really cool that
3 you want to highlight that's outside of best
4 practices, rather than --

5 SALLY GIBERT: That's why I'm
6 saying maybe just using it by example. Saying,
7 for example, some operators have changed Web
8 sites to do this, some operators --

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Be more
10 generic in it?

11 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Even if it was
13 to go by the Aviation Working Group.

14 SALLY GIBERT: Where the
15 operators sit and say, "Are we okay sharing
16 this?"

17 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. Vetting this
18 carefully before letting it out the door. So
19 you're not putting something in it accidentally,
20 which, while it might be true, it actually might
21 have adverse ramifications.

22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If it's
23 somebody's business practice, giving them an
24 edge. You certainly wouldn't want to, "Okay.
25 Let's just advertise that for them."

1 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. You have to
2 watch out with these highly competitive people.

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah. Well,
4 that's just fair. That's fair.

5 TOM GEORGE: But I think you're
6 absolutely right, though, that once you kind of
7 come together and understand the situation, then
8 everybody can go home and look at it. And in
9 some cases, maybe some of the things we're doing
10 are almost subconscious. I know I certainly, you
11 know, now think a lot more about the impact of
12 sound generated from airplane as I fly places.
13 When, before, you thought about how much could
14 you keep from damaging your hearing, not
15 necessarily some of those other things.

16 And I see a benefit to this also,
17 because to the extent that we can provide some
18 examples and whatnot, then it might raise it to
19 people's conscious awareness in terms of their
20 own activities, whether that's in a business
21 setting or personal use setting or whatever.

22 I think -- and I guess the fact
23 sheet looks to me like the best first place to
24 try doing this and see what happens.

25 Again, little steps.

1 SALLY GIBERT: The fact sheet is
2 certainly one place. The fact sheet -- depending
3 on how it goes, the fact sheet won't have a lot
4 of words, so there may be value, like if somebody
5 out of state wants to know more about this -- you
6 know, this process on this extra value, there may
7 not be enough room to convey that, so, actually,
8 I think it's the first place to start. We might
9 want to have more of another thing -- I don't
10 know what, but something.

11 TOM GEORGE: Who said Facebook
12 earlier?

13 SUZANNE RUST: The fact sheet is
14 going to kind of speak to what the Council is
15 doing or what the best practices is doing.

16 SALLY GIBERT: That's why it's on
17 the agenda. My little list of things, I was
18 thinking we need to talk about the objectives and
19 the content; what are the objectives and what
20 should be the content. Photographs, how much
21 narrative we're going to have.

22 SUZANNE RUST: Getting back with
23 the program.

24 SALLY GIBERT: We need to kind of
25 fine-tune what the fact sheet is going to do and

1 all that.

2 SUZANNE RUST: I like the
3 value-added kind of component to what -- even
4 calling it that. There is, in this relationship,
5 not just the best practices that we've come up
6 with, but the value-added of understanding and
7 being -- understanding different perspectives,
8 and different operating climates, or values, and
9 then being able to adjust or work together. And
10 it may not ever make the best -- some things may
11 not ever make the best practices, but I think
12 that that is a real important part of what
13 explains what we're doing here.

14 SALLY GIBERT: Right. And I
15 think the forum has provided an opportunity to
16 build trust in areas where there really wasn't
17 any work because there was no opportunity to do
18 that. So now people can come, you know, you can
19 be a little more open, a little more frank, put
20 ideas on the table and it turns out to be not the
21 best idea. Okay. Move on. So there's like
22 almost no defensiveness anymore.

23 It's really impressive, and that
24 makes it just more -- just a healthier
25 environment to explore. And to me, that alone is

1 huge, huge. Then you get -- as you say -- all
2 this kind of subconscious things going on.

3 And so that's what I want to
4 document, things that are hard to document.

5 TOM GEORGE: That comes from more
6 drinking, more beer. Park Service is kind of
7 stinky on that.

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Real pizza on
9 the Petersville Road is great for establishing
10 trust. Having real pizza on the Petersville
11 Road.

12 (Chuckles.)

13 SALLY GIBERT: I missed that.

14 TOM GEORGE: Actually, a couple
15 of us were talking, we may want to try to do
16 something like that on the north side this coming
17 year. The thought not being the same purpose --
18 not being the same group. In fact, there might
19 be -- to actually get some people from some
20 lodges and/or other Park Service staff to
21 participate in an exercise of that nature or
22 something. Again, as an educational
23 raising-awareness-type-of-thing.

24 TIM CUDNEY: Was that May or --

25 TOM GEORGE: July 17th.

1 SUZANNE RUST: We were supposed
2 to do one in Denali.

3 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We were going
4 to do one in Triple Lakes and that never
5 happened.

6 TIM CUDNEY: We all canceled our
7 flight tours. Why bother?

8 ERIKA BENNETT: So are we talking
9 about the fact sheet --

10 SALLY GIBERT: I think we ought
11 to move to the fact sheet. I gave my sheet. I
12 just want to keep that in mind. I definitely
13 want to build in a fact sheet. Be thinking about
14 it. If the fact sheet becomes maybe not enough,
15 and if we get inquiries from someplace that wants
16 to know more about the process, it would be nice
17 to have a little hand thing on the side that
18 would be -- not the really pretty fact sheet, but
19 something else that describes the process.
20 Something that's kind of emerged, it's been --
21 kind of unexpected benefit.

22 TOM GEORGE: The challenge there
23 is anytime you go through a publication, you have
24 to identify an audience. And I sense that even
25 from this discussion, they're going to discuss

1 multiple potential audiences, people outside of
2 our peers. I mean, we all know there's some
3 grumbling, all they want to do is meet all the
4 time, they don't do anything. Which would be
5 another reason again. There have been some
6 accomplishments, some more quantifiable, some
7 maybe more subtle. But there are potential
8 multiple different audiences. And it may be, as
9 we get into details of it, we actually break out
10 some different versions or something for the
11 audiences. I think it's important to keep in
12 mind. If we can't say upfront who it's for,
13 we're going to flounder all over the place in
14 terms of arguing --

15 SALLY GIBERT: Maybe we should
16 start by listing all the people that might be our
17 audience and decide who our focus is going to be
18 or whatever.

19 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I can throw
20 out an idea. We're chartered to come up with
21 voluntary measures that we're supposed to give to
22 the secretary through the director of the Park
23 Service.

24 What if we simply write a letter
25 updating you on the process of this committee and

1 we have a list of best practices that's evolving,
2 we're still working on it, and we made a fact
3 sheet and we identify sound-sensitive areas.
4 We've had Web site improvements, we've noticed
5 better dialogue, and we just write a letter to
6 those who chartered this group and then --

7 ERIKA BENNETT: This is after?

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Just like a
9 midterm.

10 ERIKA BENNETT: This isn't what's
11 going in the fact sheet?

12 JOAN FRANKENVICH: The fact sheet
13 would be one item.

14 TOM GEORGE: An inclusion.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Just a status
16 update. This is what the group is doing, this is
17 what we've accomplished. That way, then it's a
18 public document to say -- because -- yeah, I
19 think there's a valid concern that over time
20 we're going to get a lot of people who look at
21 us, "Okay, so what have you done?" this is kind
22 of an interim. There are a lot of things at play
23 here. We've made a lot of improvements, they're
24 not all hard things we can point to.

25 TOM GEORGE: And a request, would

1 you hurry up and approve the remaining people so

2 --

3 (Chuckles.)

4 NANCY BALE: That letter can
5 happen anytime. We don't have to wait for
6 anything else.

7 TOM GEORGE: Sally will sign it,
8 that takes the heat off of them.

9 NANCY BALE: We need a committee
10 to draft a letter.

11 ERIKA BENNETT: Who would be the
12 audience; backcountry users, climbers?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Typically, a
14 fact sheet of the park. I shared them at the
15 September meeting. Some examples, those go into
16 all of our packets when we have a VIP come into
17 the park. If we have any member of Congress or
18 their staff or, you know --

19 ERIKA BENNETT: Where would the
20 general person find this?

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: They're in the
22 park, too, as, you know, a member of the public
23 or -- so in this case, somebody who is in the
24 park.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Would you find

1 them at the outlets?

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I don't know
3 that. I don't know. They are all on our Web
4 site as well. If you go to the -- you know,
5 public site for the park they're all available.

6 ERIKA BENNETT: People have to
7 seek these out, or is it kind of you're standing
8 in front of a rack?

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yes, like a
10 brochure rack, except it's all just fact sheets.
11 Things that interest people. Could be about
12 wolves or whatever --

13 ERIKA BENNETT: Aviation in the
14 park --

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah,
16 something like that. Yeah.

17 ERIKA BENNETT: This isn't
18 something that we necessarily can target a
19 specific audience, but we have to make it -- we
20 have to distill it to the point that it's going
21 to make sense to the regular public, not just
22 pilots, not just backcountry users.

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It's generally
24 an overview.

25 ERIKA BENNETT: Our audience is

1 picked for us by where it's available.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right. Why
3 was it created? What problem was it formed to
4 solve? How is it going?

5 It's just the facts. It's a fact
6 sheet. Here's how long it's been in existence,
7 this is why it was created. Our stakeholder
8 groups that are represented. Just some of the
9 facts.

10 ERIKA BENNETT: You've written
11 the fact sheet already?

12 SALLY GIBERT: She's got it.

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I pulled
14 language, the Council had already felt
15 comfortable with and approved, as a Council, to
16 describe itself or its goals.

17 ERIKA BENNETT: If somebody
18 walked into the Park headquarters or the south
19 side in Talkeetna and said, "I was up and saw a
20 million airplanes, what are you guys doing up
21 there?" and you go, okay, well, here's what we're
22 doing, and this is -- I don't know, kind of a --

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It helps from
24 an internal perspective, having the fact sheet
25 keeps the staff all on the same page, as well as

1 the public getting that; this is the direction
2 we're heading with it. When Sally and I had been
3 talking about this, there really is -- there's
4 this need for it. There's so much more than
5 that, this value-added piece. Even if -- I think
6 Sally had suggested, even if that's a paragraph
7 in this, because that's such an important element
8 of the work at the Council.

9 ERIKA BENNETT: This is what's
10 happening, and this is -- we've had reduction in
11 the number of complaints here.

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: And sometimes
13 there's a -- you know, would you want to
14 encourage people to participate at your Council
15 meeting, like if there's any -- would there be
16 any action you'd want people to take, or just
17 stay in --

18 SALLY GIBERT: A good place for
19 having them, if you wish to learn more about
20 this, please visit "blank."

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: And so some of
22 the Web sites that have been discussed so that
23 the map update, it would just be a link, that
24 would be a perfect place for that Web site.

25 SALLY GIBERT: We wouldn't want

1 to put in best practices. We'd want to have a
2 link to that Web site.

3 TOM GEORGE: This all sounds
4 great as long it has Miriam's phone number.

5 (Chuckles.)

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It would be
7 hosted by --

8 ERIKA BENNETT: I'm into
9 distilling things like journalism stuff.

10 SALLY GIBERT: This is standard
11 Park Service publication format.

12 TOM GEORGE: That makes it
13 easier. That defines the format. We need to
14 find out what's appropriate, how much
15 information.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So remember
17 when I made the plea for pictures? You can
18 imagine with aviation pictures -- they don't have
19 happy people in the cockpit.

20 So the pictures are equally
21 important to the text to tell the story,
22 certainly to tell the scope. We have the
23 researcher pictures, we have our park admin
24 aviation photos, but we don't have everything
25 else.

1 So just a reminder.

2 SUZANNE RUST: You don't have any
3 of those with you?

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I don't have a
5 fact sheet with me. Sorry about that.

6 SUZANNE RUST: I remember
7 studying it last time.

8 SALLY GIBERT: I can --

9 ERIKA BENNETT: Is it front, or
10 front and back?

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Front and
12 back.

13 NANCY BALE: It's got a photo at
14 the top.

15 ERIKA BENNETT: Big red airplane.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I specifically
17 ask for nothing that's advertising a business.

18 JOAN FRANKENVICH: An obvious
19 thing for pictures is we have an air tour
20 visitor, we have a mountaineer, and we have a
21 hiker. We're managing this for everybody.

22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right. We
23 certainly have the Kahiltna strip shots where you
24 have planes landing, providing access into
25 wilderness recreation. We don't have pictures of

1 hikers -- well, we do have some. Maybe hikers on
2 the ground, aircrafts above.

3 ERIKA BENNETT: You have a lot of
4 hikers.

5 BRIAN OKONEK: I've got lots of
6 hiker pictures. There's also the research and
7 management component.

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: And we have
9 that. We have plenty of those.

10 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Do we want a
11 picture of soundscape monitoring? That's
12 something people aren't aware of.

13 NANCY BALE: We have a sheet on
14 soundscape now?

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yes. We have
16 a display --

17 SALLY GIBERT: It would be good
18 to have something that segues to it.

19 NANCY BALE: Or refer to that
20 fact sheet somehow.

21 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I have some
22 quotes that might be appropriate. You want
23 quotes?

24 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay. That
25 would be good.

1 NANCY BALE: A discussion of
2 aviation's ANILCA purpose. You know, it's
3 mentioned in ANILCA.

4 SALLY GIBERT: I think a brief
5 reference about the fact that airplanes are --
6 airplane landings are an allowed use under
7 ANILCA. And they manage the airspace. Two
8 important facts to know why this is going on.

9 We don't need to have a big
10 dissertation.

11 TOM GEORGE: I can see how this
12 is going to be fun keeping it to two pages.

13 NANCY BALE: That's why it hasn't
14 happened yet.

15 SALLY GIBERT: I'm still writing
16 it, and I'm hoping that with the holidays coming
17 up, things will slow down a little bit.

18 TOM GEORGE: Draft out on January
19 12th, is that what I'm hearing?

20 SALLY GIBERT: If I don't have
21 something done by January 1st, then I think you
22 could pretty much assume I'm not going to have
23 time to do it. I don't see any big lulls in my
24 job activity in the next 6 to 12 months.
25 Sometimes you get a holiday lull. I'm not taking

1 any time off. Sometimes I can get stuff done
2 during this little window here coming up. I
3 would really like to work on this.

4 ERIKA BENNETT: You said you kind
5 of did a draft fact sheet?

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Sally?

7 SALLY GIBERT: I brought it.

8 ERIKA BENNETT: I would like to
9 get that, too. I'm pretty good at putting things
10 like that together.

11 SALLY GIBERT: Why don't you just
12 e-mail it to her.

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Absolutely.

14 ERIKA BENNETT: That's from my
15 college background.

16 TOM GEORGE: The 1st of January
17 is a Saturday. Use the 4th. Based on where we
18 are, we can make whatever adjustments we need.

19 SALLY GIBERT: January 4th.

20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Does that mean
21 we'll have photos from people by then?

22 SUZANNE RUST: Sure.

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: January 4th.

24 SALLY GIBERT: January 4th is the
25 deadline for throwing stuff into the hopper.

1 Okay.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We're sending
3 our pictures and quotes and ideas to Sally.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah. And
5 then by the 4th, Sally will say I'm going to get
6 to it or not.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Photos in
8 particular, you might as well send a copy to
9 Miriam, too.

10 TOM GEORGE: You know, we really
11 ought to just set up a little Web where
12 people could --

13 NANCY BALE: Google Docs. So you
14 can have --

15 TOM GEORGE: Google Docs on the
16 Google site, actually, where you can -- a
17 restricted Wiki so it's not open to the public,
18 but people can upload right onto that. And
19 instead of having copies and crashing everybody's
20 e-mails, images tend to be bigger picture things
21 anyhow. I'm doing one of these right now for an
22 aviation event. I'll look and see if I can do --
23 just using a Google free site. This is a
24 temporary thing that goes away after we're done.
25 It's not part of the government. We're not

1 dealing with the government constraints. It's a
2 work area, but that way you upload to that,
3 everybody can see everything that's on the thing
4 without endless attachments.

5 NANCY BALE: Kind of like a poor
6 man's FTP?

7 TOM GEORGE: Yeah.

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: And that's
9 going to be helpful for photos. Like before, I
10 went through all my old photos of hikers, I might
11 --

12 MICHAEL YORKE: Yeah. I know you
13 have some great photos that you used in some of
14 the past presentations. Other things, you can
15 take a look at what's there, you can add things
16 that you have. That might complement that. If
17 somebody else has got something better already in
18 that area, then you don't waste your time
19 flooding folks --

20 TOM GEORGE: I'll take the IOU,
21 to try and set that up. And the way that would
22 work is you would get an e-mail from me with a
23 link to that Web site.

24 SALLY GIBERT: Do you know if
25 you'll have a password?

1 TOM GEORGE: It may require a
2 g-mail account. And if this doesn't work, we'll
3 figure it out.

4 NANCY BALE: It's easy to do an
5 e-mail account, and then just fetch your e-mail,
6 and use your e-mail, as long as it's typed in, we
7 will fetch it, like, "I'm Nancy at Denali
8 Systems." And I make use of their wonderful spam
9 filter, so I'm getting much less spam than I used
10 to get. It's kind of complicated. If you had to
11 do a g-mail account, you can still use your home
12 e-mail as long as you put in "fetch."

13 TOM GEORGE: If it comes to that,
14 you can describe -- I don't know how that works.

15 MICHAEL YORKE: You can't make a
16 mistake. It's simple. Do you want everything to
17 come to Google; you say "yes."

18 NANCY BALE: All of us post-war
19 babies can do it.

20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Tom, what did
21 you call that, a Google site?

22 TOM GEORGE: It's a Wiki, a Web
23 thing that all the people involved have access
24 to.

25 SALLY GIBERT: The only people

1 that have the link are people that can have
2 access to it.

3 TOM GEORGE: When you set one of
4 these up, you can either declare is it open to
5 the world, or is it private. If it's private,
6 you can add people to it. By putting your e-mail
7 address in there and it's sending you the link,
8 it now recognizes that you're one of the people
9 that have access. You can have people have
10 access for read only. You can have access to
11 write to it as well.

12 ERIKA BENNETT: If it has our
13 e-mail address, you should be able to link to it.

14 TOM GEORGE: Well, the only thing
15 I don't know is whether -- again, this is Google
16 and free --

17 NANCY BALE: It might prompt you
18 the first time you go up to create a g-mail
19 account.

20 TOM GEORGE: We'll find out the
21 answer. If this avenue doesn't work, there are
22 other avenues we can use to do this.

23 NANCY BALE: For collaboration.

24 TOM GEORGE: I will try that. If
25 I falter, somebody else can do it. One of those

1 things, if you don't do it often enough, it can
2 be cryptic; if you do it a lot, it's a piece of
3 cake. I'm not doing it enough.

4 SALLY GIBERT: I think we've got
5 a good sense of our content and objectives. For
6 starters, we need to do photos. We have a plan.

7 And the interim report thing,
8 this letter, I really like that idea. We can
9 maybe let the fact sheet get out in front a
10 little bit, you know, tier off that and see
11 whatever we want.

12 SUZANNE RUST: Maybe this letter
13 as an ongoing thing. Maybe we do it once a year,
14 once every two years, so we can kind of
15 demonstrate progress through time.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

17 SUZANNE RUST: It's hard to look
18 back and think of everything that's happened over
19 the meetings and -- boy, it would be nice to be
20 able to look from one document to the other, just
21 as a summary.

22 SALLY GIBERT: Whenever we feel
23 compelled where we feel we've done enough to do
24 another one, we'll do that.

25 TOM GEORGE: Whenever you want

1 something. We're doing great, but.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Send money.

3 SALLY GIBERT: I like that idea.

4 Okay. Triple Lakes. Managing
5 perceptions.

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Can I ask that
7 that be included in 13?

8 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. Any reason
9 not to?

10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'd like to
11 have the discussion at the same time I discuss
12 surveys, if what your three paragraphs is what
13 you're going to talk about.

14 TOM GEORGE: You mean this draft
15 hiker education thing? I don't care.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Sound
17 monitoring. I'm not sure how big this is going
18 to be for today. Is this something that we need
19 to talk about today, as far as influencing -- I
20 guess the first question to the Park Service is
21 how much input, if any, do you want from this
22 group in terms of placement of the one or two
23 discretionary stations that you provide each
24 year.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Annually, you've

1 had two, and we've been invited to make a
2 recommendation of this.

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I spoke with
4 Jared yesterday, and there could be a
5 recommendation -- if you have some, if in the
6 work for the future you feel there's a benefit of
7 having a sound monitoring site which is what, I
8 think, the Council has done. Wanted to look at
9 south side, we want some stations there. So I
10 don't know how this will be impacted by your
11 desire to know more about the north side. But if
12 those locations that you're interested in could
13 be suggested by the March meeting, that allows
14 enough time for us to have them part of our
15 compliance process, because all the stations have
16 to go through NEPA compliance, it's kind of part
17 of the package. So if you don't need it today,
18 maybe things will emerge today or through your
19 working groups where you can come in March.

20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Is there a
21 replacement for Jared?

22 ELWOOD LYNN: Not in hand, but we
23 are ready to advertise for a position.

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Okay.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Is it advertised

1 as a new Jared?

2 (Chuckles.)

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You know
4 David, who you've all met, is still working for
5 the Park Service.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: That
7 interactive Web site he demonstrated last time,
8 is that on-line somewhere?

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That is a good
10 question. I don't know that.

11 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I looked for
12 it yesterday, and I couldn't find it. I read my
13 notes and said it wasn't on-line when he showed
14 us.

15 TOM GEORGE: When it does come
16 on-line, e-mail that to the group.

17 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I didn't
18 search real hard, but I first went to -- you go
19 to Denali, and you go to management, current
20 management, overflights committee. I went there
21 to look for the soundscape data, and I couldn't
22 find it. Then I Googled soundscape and went to
23 it.

24 SALLY GIBERT: There's some key
25 words. I went there too yesterday, poking

1 around. There still needs to be more help to get
2 to our Web site. It needs to be something closer
3 to the front. Ideally, on the front page that is
4 something -- I had to fish around quite a bit.

5 JOAN FRANKENVICH: You have to
6 know where you're going.

7 SALLY GIBERT: I got there, I'm
8 looking around at links, and I'm not seeing
9 anything.

10 JOAN FRANKENVICH: The
11 transcripts are there.

12 SALLY GIBERT: Then I looked more
13 closely and I clicked on some -- there's words in
14 text that are highlighted, so if you want to know
15 more about something, if it's referenced in a
16 narrative, there's a couple of live links, but
17 it's still not very easy to navigate.

18 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Soundscape, a
19 lot of soundscape data there, it seems to be in a
20 different place.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Most of the
22 data is located under the Central Alaska Can
23 Network, you know, versus being -- and I think --
24 when you say you Googled it, you Googled it
25 within the Denali home page.

1 JOAN FRANKENVICH: See, I think
2 you went -- I don't know where I was. And I
3 didn't spend time finding out. But if there
4 could be, wherever I was, that had the
5 information I wanted, if there was a link on the
6 NPS overflights communication page to get me
7 there would be helpful.

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay.

9 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I'm not being
10 helpful --

11 TOM GEORGE: Maybe we ought to
12 all take an IOU to take a look at the page. The
13 problem isn't information, the problem is how
14 it's laid out. Maybe all of us can look at that
15 and either e-mail some comments or something, and
16 depending on whether all of those comments
17 converge in one nice area, you can say, "Aha," or
18 if they take you all over the place, then maybe
19 you can get a few people to sit down and --

20 ELWOOD LYNN: The more eyes the
21 better.

22 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. I mean, there
23 is enough done now, people are liable to want to
24 -- liable to want to look at it, ourselves
25 included, trying to find material that's been

1 sweated over to get it there. I think it would
2 be a good thing to do. And I don't think it's
3 much work to rearrange it.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Some of the
5 framework that we -- some of the content of a
6 Park Service Web site is prescribed to us. It
7 will look like this. It will link like this. So
8 you kind of work within a framework, and once we
9 pass the framework, though, if it's not
10 intuitive, this is where I would click to find
11 out more information that we can pull up, like
12 highlighting within text. If that isn't working
13 for people, well, we'll do something different.
14 We'll lay it out different. That level of detail
15 is probably something we can accomplish. The
16 whole like -- I mean, can you really have a --
17 park planning a whole other set along that or --
18 we can't do that. Even though we've asked for
19 that.

20 TOM GEORGE: Ultimately, because
21 you have some restrictions on -- as you've
22 identified, if that becomes too much of an
23 obstacle. Using this notion of a Google page,
24 somebody on the Council could go put together a
25 page with the links to the various places in your

1 page and this, again, would not be a Park Service
2 thing. Again, not the way we want to see this
3 developed, but if we get to where the red tape is
4 strangling too much, then I think there's another
5 approach we can take, and that's something that
6 we could advertise to whoever we need to. Again,
7 I'm not -- it's not the best way to do things,
8 but if we get caught at some point, there at
9 least is a way, I think, that we can make it
10 easier, at least for ourselves.

11 SALLY GIBERT: Do you have any
12 constraints on nongovernment links that you can
13 put on a government site?

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I think so.

15 TOM GEORGE: Probably they do.
16 That's why I'm saying it would be us linking to
17 them, not the other way. This would be a nonPark
18 Service thing.

19 SALLY GIBERT: How would the
20 public find it?

21 TOM GEORGE: Google it and find
22 it, potentially. That's the world we're in. It
23 will be on Nancy's Facebook page.

24 SALLY GIBERT: Too bad we don't
25 have a shorter name.

1 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We're going to
2 publish things. We're starting to disseminate
3 information out on maps and locations, we need a
4 Web site that's going to stay constant to go to
5 for information.

6 TOM GEORGE: That's what should
7 be Council Web site. Not that there's any
8 guarantee that the Park Service tomorrow would
9 turn around and regenerate in ways which might
10 cause the whole thing to change.

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We went
12 through a whole reprocessing of the format of the
13 reprogramming of the Web sites. That was a
14 learning process within the Web site. I'm
15 confident that they're going to stay within the
16 system for a little while. Long enough to train
17 people to use it.

18 SALLY GIBERT: Can you do
19 something like a -- can the Web site look as
20 simple as nps.gov/Denali/overflights?

21 NANCY BALE: There is a simpler
22 way to get there than what's posted on the press
23 releases?

24 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We could look
25 at -- there's that Google -- there's a search

1 spot off to the left on the home page, we could
2 look to see -- the whole overflight, where does
3 that take you. We want the first thing that it
4 will take you to is the page on the Web site. We
5 can look at doing that. I need to -- once you
6 guys get all of your thoughts together, then I
7 can go and sit with the people that do this far
8 more than I do it, and say we need to make it
9 user friendly.

10 TOM GEORGE: That will be the 5th
11 of January.

12 SALLY GIBERT: In terms of what
13 we do with this one, do we want to just
14 individually send suggestions or --

15 TOM GEORGE: Right now, review
16 Web site and send comments to Miriam.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: By February
18 1st.

19 TOM GEORGE: Jeez, we're getting
20 structured.

21 NANCY BALE: Elwood, it's true
22 that there's going to be a permanent station.
23 Jared said something about that at the last
24 meeting.

25 ELWOOD LYNN: Permanent station?

1 NANCY BALE: Soundscape station,
2 where they could listen for snow machines, it was
3 going to be through the winter. It was going to
4 be a winter/summer station, up Cantwell Creek, or
5 something like that.

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: A permanent
7 installation?

8 NANCY BALE: Does anybody
9 remember him having said that?

10 They do need to analyze that
11 winter component if that's another sound
12 component. The other question was: Have they
13 actually decided of the two random stations?

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: No. That's
15 why he said the Council -- you could weigh in by
16 March, that would still allow enough time for
17 those two administrative sites.

18 BRIAN OKONEK: Were any of the
19 sites that are planned for next summer in those
20 areas to the south of the Park Road, between the
21 Park Road and the spine in the Alaska range?

22 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It would be
23 nice to know what the random would be --

24 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah. Because
25 they were chosen randomly. I don't know if those

1 would be selected out.

2 ELWOOD LYNN: We might be able to
3 find out where this year's sound stations are
4 going to go.

5 TOM GEORGE: Help you know
6 whether --

7 BRIAN OKONEK: I would make a
8 suggestion now that if there isn't going to be a
9 sound station in there, one of the random ones,
10 that one of those valleys, you know, gets a sound
11 station for next summer.

12 NANCY BALE: I've actually
13 prepared a map with four suggestions: One at the
14 mouth of Red Bridge Valley, one in the Polychrome
15 Glaciers, one on the west end of the Toklat, and
16 one at Sunshine Glacier.

17 TOM GEORGE: We need to look in
18 any of those areas --

19 NANCY BALE: Those have been
20 studiously seemingly avoided.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It's random.

22 TOM GEORGE: Must be a
23 conspiracy.

24 (Laughter.)

25 SALLY GIBERT: Are there any

1 areas in the pink zone that have a random
2 station?

3 NANCY BALE: I looked through the
4 data before the last meeting, no. There was one
5 station on the Tek, I think, a lot closer to the
6 road. Nothing up near -- closer to the spine
7 which was one of those places where there was not
8 cover and there was ground effects and things. I
9 picked these areas knowing that they were
10 destinations for people, mostly backcountry
11 campers, not necessarily hunters.

12 SALLY GIBERT: What about in the
13 yellow area?

14 NANCY BALE: North of the road or
15 --

16 JOAN FRANKENVICH: No. There's a
17 bit of yellow to the south of the road.

18 NANCY BALE: I think there's some
19 closer to the road.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: There have been.

21 DAN MCGREGOR: There was one
22 between the saddle of the sanctuary and the Tek.
23 There was one on the Polychromes, what we call
24 Calico Ridge, the eastern side of the eastern
25 branch of the Toklat, there was one there. One

1 at the bend of the Muldrow. If they aren't right
2 on those areas, they're very close to those
3 areas. For the past several years we've noticed
4 them and taken note of those.

5 SALLY GIBERT: I guess that's the
6 information that we do have; what's done and
7 what's expected.

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Yeah.

9 NANCY BALE: Jared had a map that
10 he handed out at the last meeting that showed all
11 their placements so far.

12 TOM GEORGE: If we're going to
13 get a list of things going, and we've got pasts
14 to look at, why don't we do that without chewing
15 up crew time? See if we can wrap up by 4:00.

16 NANCY BALE: Web site suggestions
17 by February 1st.

18 SALLY GIBERT: And then in the
19 relative near future, Miriam is going to send us
20 what has already -- the sites -- the current
21 sites of the random --

22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: For fiscal
23 year '11.

24 SALLY GIBERT: As soon as you
25 know --

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Maybe a
2 compilation, again, and have all of the sites
3 that have been done.

4 SALLY GIBERT: And as soon as you
5 know, the two new random sites.

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Two new random
7 sites --

8 TOM GEORGE: New selected sites.

9 JOAN FRANKENVICH: The six
10 random.

11 SALLY GIBERT: The ones that are
12 picked literally at random, nobody gets to pick
13 where those might be. We know there's two more
14 left --

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You'd like to
16 know where those six random sites will be for
17 2011. The maps that are fully inclusive of all
18 the sites that have been done. So that we have
19 one --

20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We can have
21 two.

22 SALLY GIBERT: Right. The other
23 piece of information to put on that, if we can do
24 it without a lot of hassles, is the date when
25 each of those sites have already been done, what

1 year that was.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We might
3 choose something to be repeated.

4 TOM GEORGE: Exactly.

5 SALLY GIBERT: Ideal. A place --

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: That's been
7 repeated in the zone that Nancy described, that
8 would be the north of the spine, in those
9 southern backcountry units to the road. So she
10 talked about Red Bridge Valley, the west branch
11 of the Toklat, Sunshine Glacier, and Polychrome
12 Glacier.

13 NANCY BALE: One of the
14 Polychrome Glaciers, I've got this map, of all
15 the stations to date, it includes the 2010
16 placements. It looks like there was something
17 between the two branches of the Toklat in '09.
18 In '04, it looks like there was something on the
19 Tek in '04. In '07, there was something right
20 next to the road on the Tek. Then I've made a
21 couple of marks of places that really haven't
22 been -- had anything, according to this map. One
23 of them is the Upper Sanctuary between the two
24 branches, and the other one is Polychrome, Upper
25 Polychrome, looks like.

1 But this map is kind of -- I
2 think there's a better one. You can't really see
3 the landmarks very well. But I think that would
4 help, you know, '04 was quite a while ago. Even
5 if you repeated that station or put it a little
6 bit higher, you would probably -- that would be
7 helpful, because you'd have two sets of data.

8 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay, I'll try
10 to get something back to everybody.

11 NANCY BALE: Then I also have the
12 soundscape monitoring Web site. This might have
13 been that interactive thing,
14 nps.gov/naturescience/soundscape.

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Nature science
16 is a page.

17 NANCY BALE: Is that maybe just a
18 fact sheet?

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Might be.

20 Got that topic covered.

21 Any public comments while we're
22 at it?

23 DAN MCGREGOR: Maybe for Elwood,
24 I'm not really sure. We can try and keep an eye
25 on those because we're curious. I know they're

1 random selections, there are also ones in
2 specific areas, like Triple Lakes and different
3 spots like that. We assume those are related to
4 park numbers and people going in there, and areas
5 that are -- you know, for reasons, that's why we
6 want certain information. A lot of things that
7 we noticed from the air that we're trying to
8 figure out what they are, if they're actually
9 these monitoring stations, it seems like the word
10 we get when we're noticing these areas is very
11 different from what we're seeing from the air. I
12 don't know if those cross over. Because I'm
13 seeing -- we've seen, like I mentioned, those
14 other places that aren't on those maps and we see
15 what we think are stations and what we've heard
16 are the listening stations.

17 SALLY GIBERT: Oh, I see. So
18 you're concerned that maybe what is on the ground
19 and what's in the maps are not matching?

20 DAN MCGREGOR: Yeah, yeah. It
21 doesn't sound like any of the ones that I'm
22 thinking of, that she's mentioning. So I'm
23 wondering if something is getting lost along the
24 way there.

25 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Are you sure

1 it's a sound monitoring station?

2 DAN MCGREGOR: That's another
3 question I have. What else -- there's a lot of
4 different things out there. But I guess the
5 words we get are -- I mean, I know there's
6 weather stations and things like that.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Seismic stuff.

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It's a
9 research park. I mean, you know, people come and
10 specifically to do research in Denali, but all of
11 that goes through a compliance process because it
12 all falls under federal law.

13 TOM GEORGE: If you mention
14 coordinates of a station, you should be able to
15 send it to Miriam, and they should be able to
16 tell you what that is.

17 DAN MCGREGOR: And find out what
18 that is.

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It could be a
20 really cool educational moment for people in
21 your -- your passengers, like flying over,
22 they're looking, goodness sakes, there's a
23 breadth of stuff.

24 DAN MCGREGOR: Right.

25 MIRIAM VALENTINE: 90 percent

1 happens in the summer.

2 DAN MCGREGOR: Those are topics
3 we cover in the air, the noise and soundscape of
4 the park, things like that. It would be
5 interesting.

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: The soundscape
7 project is a ten-year study. So, I mean, they
8 just wanted to get a solid look at the soundscape
9 of Denali. So when we say it's done randomly,
10 it's truly --

11 SALLY GIBERT: The sites were all
12 gridded out. Just like a cross.

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It's -- it
14 will take ten years to get this cumulative
15 baseline, and the two admin sites that we talked
16 about really are an area of concern that's been
17 expressed. You know, a lot of it has been
18 focused on the mountaineering on the south side.
19 So that's how it dovetails with the best
20 practices. Could we change something with the
21 behavior of an aircraft to reduce what -- you
22 know, the measurements, that, in relation to the
23 standards set in the backcountry plan. You
24 probably do see a lot out there, though.

25 That's an interesting

1 observation, though.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: The soundscape
3 stations are small. They're a microphone, and a
4 plastic box or two. I don't think it's sound
5 panels. It's all --

6 TOM GEORGE: Solar panels for the
7 --

8 DAN MCGREGOR: I thought they
9 were solid through, like six feet or something,
10 to try and get them away from those animals that
11 were eating them.

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Or maybe it
13 depends on the brush in the area. If it was
14 something on a boom, that does sound like a --

15 DAN MCGREGOR: Typically, it's a
16 reflection, that's what you get, like a solar.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Interesting.
18 It would be interesting to get more feedback from
19 you. We think about them being obtrusive from a
20 wilderness landscape perspective. They're
21 intrusive from the flying visitor looking down.
22 It could be a simple fix to like not have that.
23 Dull metal, just something so it's not so
24 reflective.

25 Okay. Where are we on your list?

1 Anything else?

2 Next thing on the agenda is
3 review the annotated brainstorming list. I was
4 going to bring some, I was thinking you guys
5 wouldn't think to bring your copies. Our
6 network, our server, I couldn't get access to my
7 documents. I have one.

8 NANCY BALE: I have it -- I could
9 project it.

10 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Sally, do you
11 remember -- I think I left it at home.

12 Never mind, sorry. Never mind.

13 NANCY BALE: This is the one that
14 you had color-coded, right?

15 SALLY GIBERT: I also sent one in
16 black and white.

17 NANCY BALE: I think I have the
18 most recent one.

19 SALLY GIBERT: I sent it out, the
20 latest version. The black-and-white one I sent
21 out, it was 8/20/10.

22 Boy, if you have blue-green color
23 blindness, you won't be able to read this.

24 NANCY BALE: What's cool about
25 this is how much we've actually done. We've

1 actually done some of these things.

2 SALLY GIBERT: When I was looking
3 at this, to make these notes, this is where it
4 first really started dawning on me about how much
5 we'd done that isn't necessarily represented by
6 best practices.

7 NANCY BALE: The glacier landing,
8 we haven't gone too much into glacier landing,
9 yet, have we? That's still kind of maybe in the
10 future.

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Even in one,
12 the whole best practices that have been developed
13 for that area, what was earlier discussed on the
14 Ruth Gorge.

15 SALLY GIBERT: The other thing --
16 I mean, like these original issues were also
17 developed pretty early on, you know, based on
18 understandings that were even older than the date
19 of the discussion, you know, because people were
20 coming in with perceptions of how things were
21 during those heavy growth years in the '90s, and,
22 you know, things like now there are fewer larger
23 planes going in, you know, less 185s, things like
24 that. So there have been a lot of changes which
25 we haven't influenced, but that just changed the

1 nature of it that have improved things. I mean,
2 just having fewer Cessnas and more bigger planes,
3 that in and of itself is a huge improvement. We
4 can't take responsibility for it, but it's -- I
5 think it's helpful to acknowledge.

6 NANCY BALE: There's fly high.
7 That's certainly been a big discussion point.

8 SUZANNE RUST: It has, but I
9 think about that and just about what we learned
10 at the Gate Creek Cabins. I think I was so
11 struck with that, that high doesn't necessarily
12 transmit -- translate to quieter. I think really
13 changing our -- that's where a study would -- a
14 real study. We did, you know, basically a
15 listening exercise, but really understanding the
16 impacts in the park of, you know, what height and
17 offset means, because then we can think in terms
18 of how to guide our pilot staff or how to
19 actually make a difference, because it doesn't
20 make a lot of sense to me to say go to 4,000 feet
21 rather than 2,000 feet if it doesn't translate to
22 really any significant difference to someone on
23 the ground. If it's offset, you know, and it
24 does, or if it does and you have to go, is it
25 4,000 feet, is it 5,000 feet. What actually does

1 make a difference? And I don't think we know
2 that information right now.

3 ELWOOD LYNN: I wonder if the
4 propagation software is a better tool -- because
5 it's going to be so terrain-specific anywhere you
6 are, and you can't afford to do that all out, but
7 the propagation software which then you can play
8 with offsets and elevation and power curves and
9 really predict what it's going to be, at least --
10 a lot of it's going to be either seat of the
11 pants or the next step up will be this
12 propagation software. And then if you still have
13 site-specific areas that you want to know, then
14 you can get on the ground.

15 SUZANNE RUST: I guess what I'm
16 saying, we still go back to higher is better.
17 What are the real things that make a difference?

18 JOAN FRANKENVICH: What I learned
19 from the Petersville Road, offset is better than
20 the height. But realize, that wasn't a very good
21 attempt because those with the low planes were
22 hidden by the trees, which isn't the case in most
23 of the park. That environment is going to
24 change. If there isn't the opportunity to
25 offset, you're going to be overhead, then I still

1 think we can assume that higher is better. The
2 question is: Is it a great deal better or a
3 little bit better?

4 SUZANNE RUST: And how hard are
5 we working to achieve that? And I think that
6 that is the question, as an operator, really, is
7 it one decibel, is it 5, is it 10. At what point
8 are we able to discriminate a difference?

9 JOAN FRANKENVICH: That is
10 probably out there.

11 SUZANNE RUST: I'm sure it is. I
12 think it must be somewhere. I have to say it
13 would be interesting to know in the environment
14 of Denali National Park different areas. We
15 talked about Ruth Gorge and how the soundwaves
16 react in that area versus, you know, where we
17 were over at Gate Creek Cabins, a completely
18 different environment and not representative in
19 any way of what might happen.

20 TOM GEORGE: I wouldn't mind
21 repeating something like that Gate Creek thing in
22 a different setting. At least talking to Jared
23 about the issue of whether the trees were acting
24 appropriate there, his claim is that the
25 wavelength should not be attenuating sound much

1 at all. I agree, just at the visual level, it's
2 hard to -- you see something standing there, you
3 think that actually that is being a screen and a
4 filter, whereas if it's a wide open space -- so I
5 mean, that was an interesting comment that he
6 made. And that's where this notion that you have
7 a distance away, you're looking at the slant
8 range essentially as opposed to, you know, just
9 straight overhead. So for a mile offset, there's
10 5,000 feet. But a mile up, that's a whole
11 different kettle of fish.

12 I do think for a variety of
13 reasons, it would be worthwhile to maybe try a
14 similar thing. I was going to talk to Colin. I
15 think a couple years ago he -- I assume it was
16 Colin -- flew some of the park airplanes over
17 just a sensor that Jared had set up, and we
18 listened to the recordings. Well, again, let's
19 try something similar to that, with an offset
20 built in and pizza or whatever --

21 (Chuckles.)

22 ELWOOD LYNN: That might be
23 something at the Stampede Corridor.

24 TIM CUDNEY: The Stampede doesn't
25 give us a footprint for the helicopters.

1 TOM GEORGE: Again, in this case,
2 you're purposing bringing your aircraft to
3 controlled circumstances.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: There's more
5 trees there.

6 ELWOOD LYNN: You don't have any
7 trees in the Stampede.

8 TOM GEORGE: I'd say, look around
9 for a location, because obviously there's
10 logistic requirements.

11 ELWOOD LYNN: 8 mile, you can
12 barbecue there and have your overhead and mile
13 left and right.

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Okay. Tom,
15 barbecue pizza.

16 (Chuckles.)

17 SALLY GIBERT: Could we set up a
18 temporary sound station there?

19 TOM GEORGE: Sure, yeah.

20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Just like we
21 did at Petersville Road. That's what we're
22 doing. A mile off, that would be great.

23 TIM CUDNEY: If we could do it
24 earlier, that would be better.

25 TOM GEORGE: Meaning what?

1 TIM CUDNEY: Late May or so.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: When you need
3 your planes to do --

4 ELWOOD LYNN: A better chance of
5 having good weather.

6 TOM GEORGE: Late May.

7 SUZANNE RUST: It would be
8 worthwhile to have a conversation with an expert,
9 to have somebody come. There's got to be an
10 expert out there.

11 SALLY GIBERT: A sound --

12 NANCY BALE: The guy that did the
13 presentation a couple years ago. It would be
14 great --

15 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, actually, the
16 Park Service. And do you know -- did Paul talk
17 with -- the soundscape program when he was down
18 there in Fort Collins? At least he told me on
19 the phone -- I talked with him before he went to
20 visit with them -- that he was going to talk
21 about them -- or getting them to review the
22 broader program.

23 ELWOOD LYNN: I don't know who
24 all was on his docket.

25 TOM GEORGE: I know we talked

1 about possibly bringing Kurt to a meeting or
2 something. That might be a good time
3 opportunity, because, yeah, he's got -- the
4 acoustic scientist that the Park Service actually
5 has that's running that program is -- I don't
6 know if he's running the program, he's a key
7 element of the National Soundscape Program. He
8 was the one that put on that two-day workshop.

9 SUZANNE RUST: He did research in
10 this area.

11 TOM GEORGE: He gives talks and
12 training on how this all works.

13 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Who is that?

14 TOM GEORGE: Kirk -- is it
15 Brewster or -- he works for the Park Service.

16 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Something like
17 that. He works out of state.

18 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, Fort Collins.
19 He's one of two people that came up a couple
20 years ago and put on a two-day workshop for park
21 planners which several of us attended. It was
22 very educational. In fact, if he did come up, I
23 think we'd want to maybe give to the Council and
24 whoever, you know, a broader audience, some of
25 the lecture just kind of -- an introduction to

1 acoustics, essentially, is what it is.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I think we're
3 under a 30 percent reduction in travel. Every
4 time we -- Denali pays for travel, it counts
5 against our cap. And so we're going to look for
6 more -- I think it's a great idea, we can
7 certainly contact the National Soundscape
8 Program. We can certainly ask if they would
9 video conference in. If we're going to be up at
10 the Stampede, he can be at the MSLC, and he can
11 be looking at us and we can be looking at him. I
12 haven't paid for him to come from Denver for two
13 days, only to come and spend a day -- I don't see
14 that --

15 TOM GEORGE: We'll work on that.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We can make
17 the information available, and we can certainly
18 do it with the facilities we have at the MSLC.
19 But to be able to sit around and have a beer with
20 him, probably won't occur this year if we're
21 going to be successful.

22 TOM GEORGE: How about if we ask
23 the program office --

24 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If it happens
25 on their travel dollar? We can do anything you

1 want.

2 TOM GEORGE: We'll talk after the
3 meeting.

4 NANCY BALE: So how about No. 8?
5 Is that yours, Brian? They're not necessarily
6 individuals, I mean, because I compiled this and
7 different people oftentimes gave me similar
8 recommendations and I just kind of meshed them
9 together. You can't label anybody on these
10 things. I just don't know the climbing scene
11 well enough to have made that recommendation
12 itself.

13 BRIAN OKONEK: It's a
14 consideration, for places with heavy use on the
15 ground.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Going back to just
17 the height, the altitude issue, one of the things
18 I've learned before it became more important, is
19 whether you're flying level or descending or
20 climbing, but that seems to be at least as
21 important as altitude, and that's already been
22 taken into account or is being taken into account
23 in the recommendations.

24 TOM GEORGE: Which is exactly why
25 you don't want to locate people or hike trails

1 and things close to airports. By definition,
2 when you leave an airport, you have to climb. We
3 know that's a noisy environment.

4 SALLY GIBERT: So where are we at
5 here? We're kind of flying around.

6 SUZANNE RUST: It would be easier
7 if we each had a hard copy.

8 SALLY GIBERT: Well, we can defer
9 this until the next meeting.

10 TOM GEORGE: Why don't we, and
11 circulate this in advance, so people could have
12 read --

13 SALLY GIBERT: It's been
14 circulated several times, but it will be
15 recirculated.

16 TOM GEORGE: Now it's in color.

17 SALLY GIBERT: I'll send out a
18 color version and a black-and-white version. Two
19 versions, if they have color, it's great.

20 TOM GEORGE: If you don't have a
21 color printer, you can make it all black in two
22 strokes. You don't need to make it --

23 SALLY GIBERT: I changed the font
24 on the black-and-white one, so you can still tell
25 the difference.

1 TOM GEORGE: If you have time to
2 make two versions.

3 SALLY GIBERT: They already exist
4 and I sent them out. That's my point. I will
5 resend this.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It was on the
7 agenda at the Denali meeting and we didn't get
8 that.

9 SALLY GIBERT: I'll resend them
10 in both black and white and in color.

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: What's the
12 action you would like people to take on them?

13 SALLY GIBERT: Several people
14 have asked that we go back and look at this list
15 to see if there's anything that we ought to take
16 up --

17 NANCY BALE: We've actually
18 talked about most of the stuff here. Except for
19 the glacier landings is the main thing we haven't
20 talked about --

21 SALLY GIBERT: Validating what
22 we've done.

23 BRIAN OKONEK: You can add a 17
24 to the list, and that's something which has been
25 started already, is getting information out to

1 the aviation community.

2 NANCY BALE: Potential
3 recommendation.

4 ERIKA BENNETT: Outreach.

5 TOM GEORGE: Not limited to the
6 aviation community, let's look broader.

7 BRIAN OKONEK: That would be an
8 18, then, we're talking about people that are
9 flying airplanes is what I'm talking about.
10 People that are going to be in the park, flying
11 an airplane and what's been going on in the park
12 to try to reduce conflicts, what are techniques
13 people can use to help accomplish that purpose.

14 TOM GEORGE: I want people on the
15 ground to know about that, too.

16 SALLY GIBERT: He's talking about
17 perceptions and expectations.

18 BRIAN OKONEK: I look at that as
19 a totally different number then.

20 TOM GEORGE: That's fine. No
21 argument. That's the good thing about numbers,
22 there's not a limited supply.

23 SALLY GIBERT: They're very
24 different. I can add those.

25 So that brings us to discussions

1 of survey -- upcoming survey work, backcountry
2 plans, standards and indicators, and the Triple
3 Lakes perception issue.

4 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay. Before
5 I start, let's all have the same expectation for
6 the level of information I'm going to be able to
7 provide you with today. I'm not coming with the
8 survey for you to review or anything like that.
9 I do want to share with you kind of a broad
10 picture of where we intend to go with surveying
11 for visitor experience, which has a component of
12 sound, natural sounds, how people feel about
13 sounds. So there's a broad picture, there's how
14 this relates to the backcountry management plan
15 and our commitment to review the standards in
16 2011. And then there's a piece that I would like
17 to spend probably the majority of time on, is
18 preparing for our March meeting and being at the
19 March meeting having a presentation by the folks
20 who will be doing the survey work. And so being
21 able to talk to the principal investigators who
22 will be conducting the work, some of those
23 details.

24 Okay. So big picture.

25 JOAN FRANKENVICH: So this is

1 different than the survey that happened this
2 summer? This is something new?

3 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right.

4 Just to clarify, the survey we
5 did this past summer by Peter Fix -- we'll call
6 it the Peter Fix backcountry survey -- is a
7 commitment we made in the 2006 backcountry plan,
8 to assess what is a good experience for a
9 backcountry experience, get some baseline. It
10 took two-and-a-half years to get that through the
11 process. That is going to be ongoing.

12 JOAN FRANKENVICH: That was the
13 2010 one?

14 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Right.

15 SALLY GIBERT: Those questions
16 are going to be asked every year.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You know what,
18 I don't believe it's every year. But it's on a
19 -- I want to say that's on a three-year cycle,
20 but I'm not sure about that. That was like
21 specific to a commitment made in the backcountry
22 plan.

23 Because of your involvement and
24 your interest in areas of soundscape -- and I
25 think Nancy said it best earlier today when she

1 said the backcountry plan really talked about
2 indicators and standards for the natural
3 soundscape of the park, and really wasn't
4 addressing that from a -- from visitor ears.
5 Okay. Because the Council has been so engaged
6 and is interested in that piece, which is really
7 a social science piece, well, how is this really
8 affecting people? How do they feel about this?
9 That was shared with Jared and our social
10 scientist, Ann Dackerman, and some people sat
11 down and said maybe we need a more comprehensive
12 look at this.

13 So the survey that's going to be
14 done -- and so if any of you have been following
15 our Vehicle Management Plan, it's a similar
16 methodology. The first piece is qualitative. So
17 phase I, which will occur in 2011, is going to
18 look at -- is going to ask people who access the
19 backcountry to just describe what you hear.
20 While you're out there, what are you hearing?
21 Are you hearing wind, rain, you know, large
22 animals, small animals? Do you hear cell phones?
23 Some of these things are also going to be on our
24 trail systems, like Triple Lakes. Do you hear
25 aircrafts, the train, vehicles? Just a wide

1 breadth; what do you hear?

2 Once you get through "what do you
3 hear," it goes down to, well, how do you feel
4 about what you hear, in general? Did the cell
5 phone -- was it very annoying or very acceptable
6 to not acceptable, on a range of about 10. You
7 have kind of the spectrum. But for everything
8 that they heard, they would then rate; that was
9 acceptable, that was not acceptable.

10 And then the third piece -- which
11 is I think a lot about what you talked about --
12 how did you feel about it? Sound of the stream
13 made me feel relaxed. The sound of the wind made
14 me feel anxious. The sound of the vehicle
15 actually made me feel safe because I knew I was
16 close -- so we're going into this, there are no
17 assumptions made. There's no assumptions that a
18 human-caused sound is going to negatively, in any
19 way, impact somebody's visit to Denali National
20 Park.

21 So earlier, as Joan described,
22 this really cool wilderness in the Park Service
23 is a big thing. Denali is kind of known for
24 that. We want to get down to, like, we know what
25 that means to us on Park staff, how we feel about

1 that. These are people who are actually out in
2 your resources and enjoying themselves or just
3 having a park experience, we want to know
4 firsthand what they think.

5 That's phase I, this whole
6 big-picture collection, and as it follows, like
7 you've been following the backcountry plan. Then
8 it moves into phase II.

9 TOM GEORGE: You said three
10 things: What do you hear, what do you feel about
11 what you heard -- what was the third?

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Describe what
13 you hear and kind of how you feel about the
14 sound, and then the third one is how did it
15 personally -- how did the visitor feel -- how did
16 that make --

17 TOM GEORGE: How did it make you
18 feel?

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Extremely
20 subjective, very personal.

21 From that -- so that occurs,
22 that's your big-picture collection. I think it
23 addresses some of what you've been talking about,
24 because, you know -- so does it -- what we had
25 learned earlier in our air taxi survey, when

1 people landed on the glacier, you know, we
2 learned that people didn't mind hearing planes in
3 a portal, because that's how they got there. But
4 the further up the mountain they went, oh, we've
5 worked to get here and we're still hearing
6 planes. Some of that kind of stuff, like, you
7 know, how does that affect, positive/negative,
8 your experience.

9 Big picture.

10 Year 2, which is where I think
11 the Council will want to -- and are encouraged to
12 share with us what they think. Once we kind of
13 have a feel for that, we get down to the
14 quantitative part of the study. And this is
15 where you would start looking at what is a good
16 indicator? We have indicators for sounds. What
17 are some indicators for this backcountry
18 experience, and, okay, a component of that being
19 sounds.

20 I don't know if it will be year 3
21 or 4 that it will lead to the actual what is --
22 what is an appropriate standard.

23 I shared this with some -- you
24 know, we went into the backcountry plan having a
25 knowledge base, the best knowledge available to

1 us, set the standards. We said, you know, we're
2 going to learn more. So we made the commitment.
3 This is that stretch, like we want to know more.
4 And we want to know this visitor of this social
5 science piece which, you know, we want to know
6 more about that to incorporate. It may mean that
7 indicators and standards stay exactly -- in the
8 end, what will this look like? It may stay
9 exactly the same. Or they may be more refined,
10 we might find that one indicator -- we might need
11 to add an indicator that we had to consider
12 before. We may need to change a standard based
13 on this survey work. When we do survey work, we
14 try to pull -- like an example is, in the Vehicle
15 Management Plan, we have multiple survey sources
16 to pull from, you know, it's usually not one
17 informing it. So this social -- should give it a
18 name. Sounds like all we do is go out and talk
19 to people.

20 So Colorado State University and
21 an actual contractor has been brought in. And
22 some of the folks who are going to be
23 participating as the lead on this for us also
24 work part time for the National Natural Sounds
25 Program. So the soundscape people who do our

1 national work are also assisting with this
2 project.

3 So I don't know if -- so the link
4 about -- you had questions; how is the national
5 team going to come in, and are they doing an
6 objective review? You know what, I can't speak
7 to that because Paul is out of the country right
8 now, but there will definitely be some of that
9 expertise brought in for this survey work.

10 So did I cover the first two?

11 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Phase I is
12 2011. Phase II, is the following year, then?

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm hoping in
14 '12.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: There was
16 another phase. We might revise the standards; is
17 that what you said?

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Remember
19 earlier, we had been talking about trade-offs,
20 it's really annoying to have an aircraft, we used
21 an aircraft to get here. Someone would say an
22 aircraft. That's not acceptable. I used an
23 aircraft to get here. That's a little more
24 acceptable. That's the third phase of this
25 survey approach. And we just completed it, phase

1 III, for the management plan. It's called the
2 "trade-off piece." Even though you would love to
3 have this high standard, if it means to have that
4 high standard, you're not going there, would you
5 be willing to trade off a little bit.

6 And I don't know much about that
7 piece yet.

8 TOM GEORGE: We're going to be
9 really interested.

10 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It would be
11 interesting to know how that played out for the
12 Vehicle Management Plan to see how that might
13 play out for this.

14 In 2011, though -- so in talking
15 to Peter Newman as one of the prime folks who is
16 going to be, like, a lead on this for us, he's an
17 associate professor or dean -- or something --
18 out of Colorado State. I think he's far more
19 important than that, but he was really excited
20 that this group was so interested -- oh, this is
21 great, this is great.

22 TOM GEORGE: You're stuck on
23 Peters; Peter Fix. And Peter Newman doing this.

24 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Peter Newman.
25 I said, how can I best encourage this specific

1 group to engage in the survey. So it's valuable
2 to the work and like, you know, it's a realistic
3 okay workload for everybody.

4 He said, you know, this is what
5 you've heard before. What are their areas of
6 interest. What do they want to know? What are
7 they concerned about? If you could have, like --
8 I was thinking like a work group get together and
9 say what we really want to know from a visitor
10 perspective, is this. Or we want to know this.
11 Or, like, you know, we're thinking about moving
12 aircrafts over the road, how would we go about
13 figuring out -- all of those questions that truly
14 have already come up today, a list of those.
15 Like what is it you're really interested in
16 knowing?

17 The second part of that is he
18 said he would be available for a March 24th
19 meeting to talk to us. So Andrew agreed that he
20 would be there to give a PowerPoint. We could
21 have Peter Newman, he's based out of Colorado, I
22 don't know where he will be in the country that
23 week. He said he would call in, just be able to
24 answer some very specific questions about survey
25 work. I said that would be great. One -- so

1 this is now -- I'm going to make a link to the
2 Triple Lakes suggestion.

3 One of the things Council members
4 are looking at is how do we have the proper
5 expectations for the visitors so they understand
6 aircraft use over the park. I shared with them
7 your Triple Lakes dialogue you had going. He
8 said that's great. They're just starting to do
9 this at Colorado State University at their lab
10 where they're checking to see what kind of
11 messaging -- response to a certain kind of
12 messaging. So how you write it up, how that --
13 the whole -- you know, we talked about, if you
14 tell people there's aircraft, they're sensitized
15 to that, and they're going to be looking for
16 it -- they're doing a whole study to see how do
17 we best do that or can we best do that, or -- all
18 of that.

19 So we can talk to him about that
20 in March, as well.

21 TOM GEORGE: Great.

22 ELWOOD LYNN: What's interesting,
23 they have done a study at the Gates, and people
24 that were on float trips that have flown in on
25 the plane and then asking them about overflights,

1 and they were much more tolerant of the type of
2 plane that they flew in than other planes; we
3 don't like those, but this one is okay.

4 ERIKA BENNETT: I was actually
5 given that survey. The hunting group. Landed,
6 how are you doing, they handed out two of them.
7 I held onto mine. Because I'm like -- I
8 didn't --

9 TOM GEORGE: You're just telling
10 us about this?

11 (Chuckles.)

12 ERIKA BENNETT: I wasn't on the
13 Council yet. It was 2006. But I knew --

14 TIM CUDNEY: Where did they meet
15 you?

16 ERIKA BENNETT: Everybody had
17 flown in, there were four airplanes there. We
18 were like the test subjects from heck, but they
19 gave it to us anyway. It was very interesting,
20 the types of questions. I kick myself for not --
21 I didn't know where we would be going with this
22 Council. I knew I was being considered. Isn't
23 this kind of funny? Now I'm like, wow, man. It
24 was a great survey, I had a lot of fun answering
25 it. It did have specific questions about

1 aircraft. How did you feel, how many overflights
2 did you witness? How did you get to where you
3 got? Plane. How tolerant are you of? And I'm
4 like, oh, very. Very, very, very. Let's see how
5 much we can skew this one.

6 (Chuckles.)

7 TOM GEORGE: Keep talking, Erika,
8 keep talking.

9 (Laughter.)

10 ERIKA BENNETT: It was very
11 interesting. I would like to see the results of
12 that study, I know they're probably out there by
13 now. But I just thought it was very interesting
14 that they weren't targeting aviation, there was
15 definitely a section on it. It's important, a
16 lot of what you do in Gates is --

17 TOM GEORGE: Less roads than
18 Denali.

19 SALLY GIBERT: We should get that
20 survey and results.

21 ERIKA BENNETT: It was Gates. It
22 was actually '08.

23 SALLY GIBERT: They're starting
24 the backcountry plan. That was obviously getting
25 ready for that.

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: What I would
2 like to see is if there's an interest among
3 Council members to form some kind of working
4 group or someplace where we can, like, by March
5 1st, have the list of potential questions. I'm
6 not saying that they need to be -- we can -- I
7 think Peter Newman is doing this -- what do they
8 want to know? How can we -- certainly, the 2011
9 being this broad brush, we're just gathering
10 data, he'll be looking at what you really want to
11 know. So, how would that, you know, feed into
12 2012; that type of thing.

13 But he's also -- he'll be more
14 prepared for the conversation on the 24th.

15 SALLY GIBERT: The questions, I
16 presume, for 2012 were done; yes?

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: '11.

18 SALLY GIBERT: I'm sorry, 2011.

19 ELWOOD LYNN: Those, we had to
20 submit.

21 SALLY GIBERT: So it would be
22 helpful to know -- can we get that just as an
23 informational? Are we allowed to see that
24 information, those questions?

25 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I can

1 certainly ask him.

2 SALLY GIBERT: That would be
3 helpful -- if that's the starting point, then we
4 can say, okay, based on this information being
5 collected, then we can be thinking about, okay,
6 what's the next step? We can come in March and
7 be ready to talk about that.

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I wonder if it
9 would be useful not to be colored by what he
10 thinks, and just what information do we need to
11 know.

12 NANCY BALE: Phase II kind of
13 depends, in a way, on the results of phase I,
14 what people said.

15 TOM GEORGE: It takes a while to
16 find out. That gives us time to write down our
17 questions. I do think we'd like to know what
18 those questions are, yeah. Let's go ahead and
19 raise them right now.

20 Actually, I think this is one
21 that would be good for each of us individually to
22 think about things and then send them to some
23 common point. Aggregate them together and kick
24 them out. Move into some kind of discussion over
25 that.

1 NANCY BALE: This isn't the same
2 as what we were talking about before, what
3 information we wanted to collect?

4 TOM GEORGE: Actually, I think it
5 is.

6 BRIAN OKONEK: Not for phase II.
7 Because phase II, the way I get it, would be
8 basically, what is a good indicator of the
9 quality of the soundscape.

10 NANCY BALE: Or backcountry
11 experience.

12 TOM GEORGE: We're being invited
13 to provide questions that we'd like to have
14 answers, period. It may not roll into this.
15 That's the beauty, we're actually being given the
16 opportunity to say what we want to know.

17 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm going to
18 put a little caveat on this.

19 TOM GEORGE: Don't burst our
20 bubble yet.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I am going to.
22 Don't assume that you're writing the survey
23 questions. It's what you want to know.

24 TOM GEORGE: It's what do you
25 want to know. What is the information we're

1 looking for.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Phase I,
3 because we have to go through the OMB process,
4 and because it's also this very broad brush, you
5 know, what did you hear? You can hear a lot of
6 things when you're out in the woods. How did you
7 feel about that? I felt great about it. How did
8 it make you feel? What was your experience with
9 that? It made me more relaxed, agitated,
10 annoyed, whatever. Whatever it was. It could be
11 that you're on the Triple Lakes Trail, there was
12 a family with three young children who would not
13 -- were having a bad day. That ruined your trip,
14 had nothing to do with aircraft.

15 ELWOOD LYNN: It sounded like
16 one.

17 (Chuckles.)

18 TOM GEORGE: A helicopter can be
19 real obnoxious if you're just out there. But if
20 you have a broken leg, that could be the best
21 sound in the world.

22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: They started
23 this by looking at more woods. I think Andrew
24 may have sent that to you.

25 TOM GEORGE: That's one of the

1 studies you sent.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: And they were
3 interested in this whole visitor perception of
4 sound as part of their experience. And, you
5 know, I think it's really interesting. I think
6 whole visitor piece -- the Council certainly has
7 talked about it -- it seems like a logical
8 evolution from where we were. We put together
9 the 2006 plan. We're just getting a little more
10 sophisticated in how we maybe approach it.

11 Okay. So this working group, I'd
12 be happy to host or lead.

13 ERIKA BENNETT: If we came up
14 with a question, we can e-mail it to you.

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'll be
16 responsible for consolidating everybody's
17 questions into one thing. I'll arrange for a
18 teleconference. We can all just talk about it,
19 what do people think about that, does that
20 include the scope of what we talked about as a
21 Council.

22 TOM GEORGE: Our questions may
23 feed off of each other. One may see something in
24 a question --

25 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I want

1 everything by February 15th.

2 TOM GEORGE: Slave driver.

3 (Chuckles.)

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Will you send
5 an e-mail outlining, this is what I want?

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We're going to
7 call this the "survey working group," okay?

8 TOM GEORGE: Yeah.

9 NANCY BALE: Can you pose the
10 question in a nutshell, the nutshell question?
11 What, in your mind, are the indicators of a
12 quality --

13 MIRIAM VALENTINE: The question
14 is what do you, as a Council member -- what
15 information do you want to know or what are you
16 concerned that we don't know enough about, that a
17 survey -- of whatever kind, might help?

18 JOAN FRANKENVICH: About
19 backcountry users and sound.

20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Nancy, your
21 question about those people who are out in the
22 Refuge Valley, we want to know how they feel
23 about it. How are they affected by it. You may
24 want to know specifically about aircraft. That
25 would be a fine thing to add to the list. Does

1 that help, or no?

2 SALLY GIBERT: Is the survey for
3 backcountry -- yeah. So that's the other
4 question: Who is the survey going to be
5 administered to? Will people in the bus get one,
6 as well as overnight --

7 TOM GEORGE: The answer is they
8 don't know. Again, our task is to figure out
9 what informational things do we want to know.

10 NANCY BALE: From people.

11 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Day hikers and
12 how they're -- you can say that, or you can
13 say --

14 SALLY GIBERT: We're not
15 constrained on that.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You know what,
17 this is, seriously, wide open. It's up to these
18 people to bring it down.

19 ERIKA BENNETT: I want to know
20 the tolerance issues. Like as a backcountry
21 user, how tolerant are you of aircraft, any
22 aircraft noise whether or not it brought you in
23 or not, how tolerant are you knowing that -- if
24 they know -- if you know that aircraft are used
25 for rescue, you know, aircraft are used for

1 resupply --

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You almost
3 have an educational component. Once educated
4 about aircraft use, have you found people to be
5 more tolerant? And it's also Nancy and Joan's
6 conversation earlier today. Are people more
7 tolerant closer to the road? Are they --

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: That's
9 perfect.

10 ERIKA BENNETT: How hard did you
11 work to get to your silence.

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We want to
13 know the backcountry user who has been out there
14 four days or longer.

15 TOM GEORGE: The longer you've
16 been away, are you more tolerant or less
17 tolerant. That's the example of what we're
18 looking at. An informational, a knowledge
19 question is what we're looking at.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: I think you might
21 want to define tolerant. Is it number of
22 overflights that you hear, or how --

23 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. What factors
24 play into that.

25 SALLY GIBERT: What's more

1 important --

2 NANCY BALE: Phase II is about
3 the indicators, it's not about --

4 SALLY GIBERT: Loud noise, yeah.

5 ELWOOD LYNN: And just like on
6 the buses we found out that -- asked people if
7 they were watching wildlife, when did it feel too
8 crowded; one bus, two buses, five buses at the
9 same wildlife. At what point did they feel like
10 it was too crowded and management needed to step
11 in. We got consistent answers on that. That's
12 how we're developing the management plan.

13 TIM CUDNEY: Are there
14 regulations, as far as number of buses that can
15 stop?

16 NANCY BALE: I think the bus
17 drivers have an informal rule of thumb.

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: No rules,
19 though.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: And they sort of
21 worked it out amongst themselves, they recognize
22 --

23 TOM GEORGE: They have some best
24 practices.

25 ELWOOD LYNN: But then it

1 depends, what has the wildlife viewing been that
2 day. If it's the first bear and the last chance
3 to see it that day --

4 SUZANNE RUST: What was the
5 consistent answer?

6 ELWOOD LYNN: 3.1 buses.

7 TOM GEORGE: You have the results
8 of this for the vehicle management?

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Oh, yeah.
10 There's a lot of data. You would like it. We
11 used that for the modeling. We were to change
12 bus behavior on the Park Road, change the number
13 of buses, how is it -- so it has been run through
14 a model.

15 TOM GEORGE: My question is: Is
16 this something you think would be of interest to
17 the group?

18 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You need to
19 talk to me. There's a lot of information.

20 TIM CUDNEY: To open up a whole
21 new discussion, a couple years ago there was the
22 Spruce Creek discussion about routing a road, and
23 having it come out --

24 ELWOOD LYNN: Through the north
25 access.

1 TIM CUDNEY: Is that still
2 something that's out there?

3 ELWOOD LYNN: It's basically
4 dead.

5 TIM CUDNEY: It is dead. I guess
6 that's a good thing.

7 TOM GEORGE: Even the Chamber of
8 Commerce --

9 NANCY BALE: There's some people
10 in DOT.

11 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Frank
12 Murkowski was largely driving that, now he's not
13 in politics anymore. It really dropped off the
14 table.

15 So a couple questions on this,
16 Miriam.

17 So is this just north side or is
18 it mountaineers too?

19 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Just north
20 side. I have to be careful. Were they going to
21 do something?

22 ELWOOD LYNN: I don't think so.
23 I think it's north side.

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Just bus
25 riders or only people like day hikers and

1 backpackers.

2 ELWOOD LYNN: Day hikers and
3 backpackers.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Not bus
5 drivers, not people in the campground. So we
6 can't answer, "Are you more bothered over the
7 road" --

8 ELWOOD LYNN: One of the
9 locations was going to be downstream on the
10 Savage River Trail. One mile from the Park Road,
11 and then up some of the drainages, but they were
12 trying to catch people off of the Park Road.

13 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Okay. So just
14 to focus our questions -- so it's primarily day
15 hikers, backpackers off the Park Road?

16 SALLY GIBERT: That's just for
17 phase I.

18 TOM GEORGE: I don't think we
19 should be limiting ourselves right now; think
20 broadly about what questions you want answered.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If you have
22 questions that can't be answered within the scope
23 of this survey period. It would be great for
24 people like Andrew and other folks to think
25 about, oh, we may need another survey. It takes

1 a while to get those queued up.

2 TOM GEORGE: Put your request in
3 now.

4 SUZANNE RUST: I'm trying to
5 think about how many years ago we talked about
6 being a part of this process, and that it was
7 going to be something that we hoped to be a part
8 of.

9 TOM GEORGE: And now you are.

10 SUZANNE RUST: It's taken a while
11 to get there. I think that -- I think it's very
12 valuable.

13 ELWOOD LYNN: We actually were
14 able to slide this whole survey a year ahead, we
15 had some year-end money that we were able to get
16 them moving, otherwise it was going to -- we
17 wouldn't be here for another eight months,
18 anyway.

19 TOM GEORGE: That's great.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: It's happened
21 pretty quickly. For the phase I, it's fairly
22 generic, then it starts to focus in.

23 SALLY GIBERT: So are we done
24 with this topic? I think we have a good sense of
25 what we need to do from that.

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay.

2 TOM GEORGE: Let's take a
3 three-minute break.

4 SALLY GIBERT: Let's take a break
5 and then talk about the Triple Lakes thing,
6 specifically.

7 (Break.)

8 SALLY GIBERT: We're back at it
9 here. What we have left to accomplish here today
10 is talk about this thing on the board, the Triple
11 Lakes hiker education recommendation.

12 And basically, 15 and 16, which
13 is identify our -- basically our outline and what
14 we need to do to be ready for in March, which
15 we've kind of done a pretty good job of tracking
16 this, we've been going through today, which is
17 really nice. And then fishing for a date in
18 September, next fall at the park.

19 And then the other homework
20 assignment we want to give ourselves, we've also
21 been kind of capturing those too as we go along,
22 those homework assignments, and March -- the
23 things that will be on the agenda for March. The
24 first thing I'll do when I get to the office is
25 I'll write those up right away when it's still

1 fresh, and get those out to everybody next week
2 so we don't, like, wait for two months and go,
3 now what we were doing.

4 So anyway, I'll commit to doing
5 that.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I keep
7 forgetting to mention to you, Tom Brian and I
8 said we were going to do a group on feedback we
9 want on the north side. At the break, Amanda
10 spoke to me and Tom, said she was interested in
11 being in the group too, if you want to add her to
12 that. That was the very first one. The Ranger
13 -- any kind of Ranger journaling.

14 NANCY BALE: I was on there, too,
15 and Amanda wants to be on there.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Nancy, Joan,
17 Amanda. Anybody else?

18 ERIKA BENNETT: Joan, Brian,
19 Nancy, Amanda.

20 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Okay. Got it.
21 Okay.

22 I'll send that out in draft, and
23 then you guys can make sure you've got
24 everything.

25 One of you basically handled 15,

1 we'll do that over e-mail the next week.

2 Should we talk about a date for
3 September and get that out of the way?

4 TOM GEORGE: How about a date in
5 May?

6 NANCY BALE: Is Labor Day the
7 4th, the 5th?

8 KELLY BAY: First of May is the
9 Trade Show.

10 How about the previous, the 21st
11 of May?

12 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Perfect.

13 TOM GEORGE: Saturday, yeah.
14 Eightmile Lake, what's there?

15 ELWOOD LYNN: A parking area.

16 SALLY GIBERT: I may or may not
17 be here. We haven't made plans yet.

18 TOM GEORGE: That's why we're
19 getting our dates in here.

20 SALLY GIBERT: I have a lot of
21 control over that.

22 There's a bigger likelihood I'd
23 be around the previous weekend, like the 14th.

24 TIM CUDNEY: That's kind of a
25 tough weekend for the operators --

1 SALLY GIBERT: Go back to the
2 21st day --

3 SUZANNE RUST: I'm okay with the
4 14th. It's just hard to say whether we'll be
5 able to make it or not.

6 TIM CUDNEY: Princess opens on
7 the 14th?

8 SUZANNE RUST: That's where the
9 numbers are the lowest.

10 TIM CUDNEY: Not for me.

11 TOM GEORGE: Why don't we stick
12 with the 21st and we'll check with Sally closer
13 to the -- you missed the first one, didn't you?

14 SALLY GIBERT: I did.

15 ELWOOD LYNN: At the Stampede
16 Road.

17 MICHAEL YORKE: Tentatively, the
18 21st, or affirmatively?

19 SALLY GIBERT: Tentatively. I'll
20 try to be here.

21 JOAN FRANKENVICH: For Nancy,
22 after school is probably a lot easier. For me,
23 it might be easier.

24 TOM GEORGE: We'll put down the
25 21st for now.

1 ELWOOD LYNN: It might be
2 interesting to do a flyover with a -- you could
3 do a Cub and a helicopter --

4 TOM GEORGE: We'll lay out a
5 pattern again.

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: What I'd like
7 to do this time is do directly overhead and do
8 different heights. Last time we did different
9 heights, but off to the side.

10 TOM GEORGE: The finishing one
11 was an overhead shot.

12 SALLY GIBERT: Could we have a
13 military jet?

14 JOAN FRANKENVICH: 10,000 feet.
15 20,000 foot.

16 NANCY BALE: That's not an MOA.

17 SALLY GIBERT: We can talk about
18 that more at the March meeting.

19 TOM GEORGE: We'll try and flesh
20 out some details. We'll --

21 NANCY BALE: There's a place
22 called EarthSong Lodge up there that might be
23 able to provide us with some -- I can check with
24 John Nierenberg, the owner, we can go there and
25 have lunch or something.

1 MICHAEL YORKE: What's the name
2 of the lodge?

3 NANCY BALE: EarthSong Lodge.

4 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Have some of
5 our listening when we're more quiet to simulate a
6 backcountry experience, as opposed to a social
7 experience. I was busy talking a lot of times,
8 which is a different experience.

9 BRIAN OKONEK: I could hear Joan,
10 but I didn't hear any of the airplanes.

11 (Laughter.)

12 TOM GEORGE: Oh, this is a hard
13 group.

14 NANCY BALE: Don't you love it
15 when what you say gets twisted around?

16 TOM GEORGE: We're at September
17 now. Before we go any further --

18 TIM CUDNEY: How about the 8th
19 and 9th? That was like the same time we did it
20 last year.

21 TOM GEORGE: When is the holiday,
22 the 5th?

23 KELLY BAY: Monday is the 5th.

24 TIM CUDNEY: That's the date.

25 Dan, you awake?

1 DAN MCGREGOR: Oh, yeah. Joan
2 has been talking so loud over there.
3 (Laughter.)
4 MICHAEL YORKE: The day wears on.
5 BRIAN OKONEK: Is it the 8th or
6 the 9th?
7 KELLY BAY: Overnight.
8 MICHAEL YORKE: 8th is the
9 Thursday, Friday is the 9th.
10 SALLY GIBERT: We can have 9th,
11 but people arrive the 8th.
12 BRIAN OKONEK: This will be at
13 Denali National Park.
14 Miriam, you're going to try to
15 line up park housing this time?
16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: As much as
17 possible.
18 SALLY GIBERT: We're ready to
19 talk about the Triple Lakes hiker education.
20 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Yes.
21 SALLY GIBERT: I think this is a
22 great recommendation. I was doing a little
23 wordsmithing on it, it doesn't change the
24 substance. I was hoping to get something out
25 earlier, but I didn't finish.

1 Any thoughts about the overall
2 intent and where it's going?

3 So question for the Park Service.
4 How -- what format options do you have for
5 getting to this kind of information? Do you have
6 like a trail head -- one of those trail head
7 signs where you can stick a piece of paper? What
8 do you have at the trail heads?

9 ELWOOD LYNN: We would have to
10 build something at the trail heads right now.
11 We've got the Backcountry Information Center, but
12 most of the day hikers don't go there. But we
13 could put a temporary sign standard up and post
14 it and see how it's received.

15 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So how are you
16 suggesting it? If we're looking at this in light
17 of our best practices, one way is to educate.
18 What's the feedback?

19 SALLY GIBERT: Isn't necessarily
20 a feedback -- it could be also used as a
21 feedback. At least the way I was thinking of it
22 is just literally to help people understand this
23 is an area that has a lot of traffic. Even if
24 they do know that, that measures have been taken
25 to reduce the aircraft impact so that they hear

1 aircraft, they know that that's pretty much what
2 they're going to hear. And that if it weren't
3 for us, they'd probably hear even more, or be
4 louder or closer or whatever.

5 And, you know, just so they don't
6 think that things are out of hand, wow, we need
7 to do something about this, as if there's
8 anything more to do.

9 MIRIAM VALENTINE: So the end
10 result would be that you would measure success by
11 the number of comments that -- you know, a
12 reduction in the number of comments coming into
13 the superintendent's office --

14 SALLY GIBERT: Reduction of
15 complaints.

16 MIRIAM VALENTINE: On the
17 Triple Lakes Trail?

18 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah. More
19 tolerance and understanding of aircraft in the
20 area.

21 NANCY BALE: Have there been a
22 lot of complaints, Miriam?

23 MIRIAM VALENTINE: People have
24 shared kind of, anecdotally, their personal
25 experience about being very affected by aircraft.

1 We certainly are in that mix, Park Service
2 aircraft is in that mix. You know how we are
3 about these surveying instruments, just because
4 there's less complaints coming into the
5 superintendent's office regarding the
6 Triple Lakes Trail, we're not going to say it's
7 because we did messaging at the trailhead.

8 TOM GEORGE: I think the idea of
9 looking to see if there's a measure to evaluate
10 effectiveness or feedback is great. But I guess,
11 to me, the thought is that we should be trying to
12 educate people on some of these things. I'll
13 have to admit, I wasn't thinking about a focus on
14 aircraft -- think beyond the Park Service here,
15 businesses that are taking advantage of the park
16 to draw and encourage -- to tell travelers when
17 they're there at their place of business what
18 there is to do here, what are the mechanisms out
19 there today that you would get information about
20 the Triple Lakes Trail. The thought is to look
21 at those places and to add some information as
22 opposed to making some standalone product that
23 only talked about aircraft.

24 To me, that almost draws too much
25 attention to the aircraft. I pose that as a

1 question. This recommendation, to me, is aimed
2 at saying, hey, let's -- you know, we ought to
3 encourage the Park Service and others, maybe
4 that's the language change. Again, this is
5 something that shouldn't be limited to the Park
6 Service, but how do you and/or businesses convey
7 information about trails and things that they
8 use?

9 ELWOOD LYNN: Right now we have a
10 one-page flier that we rate how difficult the
11 trail is, but we don't really describe what
12 you're going to experience. It's pretty basic.

13 TOM GEORGE: We talked earlier
14 about fact sheets. Would you do a fact sheet on
15 the trail as a mechanism? Again, not just
16 focused on aviation, but about the trail. To me,
17 the thought here is to try and inject some
18 information into other things as opposed to
19 making this a target, essentially.

20 SALLY GIBERT: If you had a
21 kiosk, the little bulletin board with a little
22 roof over it or something, that's kind of what I
23 envision, a typical trailhead thing like that
24 will have a map -- topo map, you are here, you
25 know, this is the distance to get to various

1 places, maybe some pictures of what you might
2 see, moose or something like that, and something
3 about the fact that -- whatever comes out of
4 this.

5 It's not all about airplanes, I
6 agree. This is a trail, the Park Service
7 recently upgraded, you know, about what you did
8 here. And this is a high-traffic area for cars
9 and visitors and airplanes. Just sort of be
10 aware of that.

11 NANCY BALE: And the trains.

12 TOM GEORGE: Yeah.

13 SALLY GIBERT: Put the whole
14 thing in context.

15 ELWOOD LYNN: We do have a
16 bulletin board project where we're replacing
17 bulletin boards and upgrading the media. So we
18 can talk with the person who is overseeing that
19 to see if he can work that into the whole
20 presentation of the trail.

21 SALLY GIBERT: Uh-huh.

22 SUZANNE RUST: Do you, on your
23 Web site, have -- I don't remember, it's been a
24 while since I looked at the Web site --
25 information for people to be able to go and click

1 on different trails?

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We have it for
3 the backcountry visits.

4 ELWOOD LYNN: We have just that
5 one-page flier. I haven't looked for any
6 descriptions recently on each trail. That's
7 another area.

8 SUZANNE RUST: I was thinking
9 maybe just looking at kind of a broader picture
10 of providing a better service to the users,
11 because I know when people come to Talkeenta,
12 they have no idea where to go to hike or what
13 their ability level is, how fast they can get to
14 a place, whether it's with a shuttle or they walk
15 there, or do they take -- you know, it might be
16 nice if you could do a simple format that
17 addresses the different trails in the park, you
18 know, how users -- level of difficulty. What
19 expectations you might have so that you're
20 talking about the park in general, and then
21 educate the front desks of hotels and, you know,
22 grizzly bear, campgrounds, so they can easily go
23 click on it.

24 That's one of the big issues for
25 me is finding the resource, and then making it

1 easy to find, printing it out, and I think that
2 as people became educated, that's a service.
3 Like here, at the different list of the different
4 trails, this one is close by. Why don't you do
5 this one?

6 ELWOOD LYNN: We'll talk with
7 interpretation and Jay Elhard, he's got the lead
8 on this.

9 SALLY GIBERT: Another thing is
10 there's more and more guidebooks being written
11 about hiking in Denali. Those guidebooks are --
12 they do things that I think the Park Service
13 doesn't want to do. There's a lot of social
14 trails, sort of backcountry routes, that the
15 books talk about that the Park Service doesn't.
16 Park Service tends to -- last I heard anyway, was
17 interested in portraying a walk off into the
18 wilderness and not sort of follow the trails even
19 though there's trails out there. Some of the
20 systematic trail descriptions, you might not want
21 to, you know, write them up or portray them that
22 way as a trail. It's more like an area to go
23 into. But private -- the books and everything,
24 if this information is made available even at a
25 trailhead, it will eventually hopefully filter

1 into the private guides as well.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: We can
3 certainly do what Susan described. I think
4 people with the Smartphones for the developed
5 trails -- because the backcountry units actually
6 do one for each unit, there's a full description
7 of that unit. And because the Park Service
8 produced it, here's the social trail, easy way
9 in, and stuff like that.

10 SALLY GIBERT: You could do that
11 for the developed trails, maybe?

12 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm sorry. Is
13 the language in this a formal recommendation,
14 then, to the Park Service for consideration? Is
15 that what's up? I mean, are we at that level?

16 TOM GEORGE: That's what we're
17 talking about.

18 SALLY GIBERT: I was working on
19 some edits, but they're not hugely substantive,
20 just make it easier to read.

21 NANCY BALE: I marked that
22 because I just felt like the subject -- there's
23 just a little subject/object confusion. Perhaps
24 explain how aircraft are used by NPS to manage
25 the park, monitor game populations, perform

1 search and rescue, as well as providing visitors,
2 NPS doesn't use the aircraft to provide visitors,
3 that's done by other types of entities. That
4 probably wasn't your intention, but it tends to
5 read that way.

6 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely. And
7 let's fix it. Maybe make it two sentences,
8 versus what the --

9 NANCY BALE: In particular, with
10 respect to Triple Lakes, I'm not sure it's NPS
11 activities that are any kind of percentage
12 responsible for the noise there, it's more the
13 highway, the VOR and the strip.

14 TOM GEORGE: They take off and
15 land at the McKinley Park strips, which is right
16 there.

17 SALLY GIBERT: Sometimes. Part
18 of it is to recognize that even the Park Service
19 uses airplanes.

20 NANCY BALE: Oh, absolutely, but
21 I don't know whether that's part of the Triple
22 Lakes advisory or some other instrument.

23 I'm just bringing that up.

24 SALLY GIBERT: It's a good fact
25 sheet point.

1 NANCY BALE: Yeah, sure is.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I echo it.
3 That kind of jumped out at me, too. It seems, to
4 me, that information for Triple Lakes, the
5 problem is we would want people to be aware,
6 there's an airstrip right over the hill and
7 general aviation. Those are the key things.

8 TOM GEORGE: There's two
9 airstrips, and so that's why the mention of air
10 tours, so that puts an explanation for why the
11 airplane is coming off that airstrip.

12 JOAN FRANKENVICH: How often --
13 one, how many park flights are there per day
14 compared to general aviation and air tours? My
15 guess is it's a pretty small percent. Two,
16 they're talking off from an airstrip. Are they
17 going over Triple Lakes? Most air tours are
18 going over Triple Lakes.

19 ELWOOD LYNN: Greg LaHaie is
20 flying out of the Park strip.

21 DAN MCGREGOR: And Colin is based
22 out of there, and all the helicopters.

23 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Those people
24 taking off from the strip --

25 TOM GEORGE: It goes clear over

1 to -- right next to it.

2 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Just to take
3 this back. In a frontcountry plan, the Park
4 strip was originally -- as all of the trail
5 planning was going on, was intended to be closed.
6 There was a change in the decision and it
7 remained open. We now had conflict that we
8 thought had been planned to avoid. So that's a
9 big part of the -- we had trail systems we told
10 the public we would create. We're committed to
11 create them and want to create them, regardless,
12 we still have an active -- there's a couple of
13 pieces to this.

14 NANCY BALE: I suppose it's
15 possible. I had never really thought about how
16 the Park strip might affect those parts of the
17 trail that are near Hines Creek and Riley Creek.
18 I had never considered that. But that's a
19 possibility. I just had always thought about --
20 the big disturbance, to me, is when you're hiking
21 up the side of the hill from McKinley Village
22 where you have the air brakes on the trucks, the
23 train, the air strip, the VOR, and I hadn't
24 really thought about it. But I think in the
25 entrance area, in general, there's issues with

1 airplane noise. We discovered that when we were
2 up there and we did that sound listening session
3 with Jared.

4 So I guess you could certainly,
5 you know -- yeah. Refer to that strip as an
6 issue in a discussion of Triple Lakes.

7 ELWOOD LYNN: The trains at north
8 end as well.

9 NANCY BALE: I guess that is --
10 that's right, it has to be pretty concise.
11 Hikers are advised that there may be more noise
12 --

13 TOM GEORGE: This is
14 recommendation of intent. Different products
15 might have different levels of information.

16 ELWOOD LYNN: I think what we'll
17 do is give it to our interp folks.

18 TOM GEORGE: Let's fix that down
19 to two sentences. You're right, that is an
20 error.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Ultimately --
22 as I read this -- what the Council would like to
23 recommend is that visitors using that trail, in
24 particular, have a realistic expectation of the
25 quality of their visitor experience as it relates

1 to the soundscape. You're in a business place,
2 you've got trains, vehicles -- even as busy as it
3 is, isn't it cool that you have this nice trail?
4 You could still experience and have a good
5 outdoor experience, you're just not having the
6 classic Denali wilderness experience.

7 BRIAN OKONEK: You're on the
8 border of the park in one of the busiest passes
9 in the Alaska range.

10 ELWOOD LYNN: This much text, I
11 think, is probably appropriate on a Web link for
12 a trail description that can be used to instruct
13 our employees on how to get the message --

14 SALLY GIBERT: This is about the
15 recommendation to you, not what --

16 TOM GEORGE: Not to write in the
17 document at all. This is expressing the desire.

18 ELWOOD LYNN: With this much
19 reading on the trailhead, they're going to walk
20 right by.

21 TOM GEORGE: We purposely stay
22 away from not trying to design the product for
23 anybody -- recognizing the potential for
24 different products, whether they're in guidebooks
25 or trailhead things or Web sites.

1 NANCY BALE: Maybe you can have
2 little logos; this trail is a two-airplane trail,
3 this trail is a three-airplane trail, this is a
4 one-airplane trail.

5 (Chuckles.)

6 SALLY GIBERT: That actually is
7 -- one of my overall outcomes of this whole
8 thing -- I don't know when -- is to help people
9 when they choose to visit Denali whether they're
10 doing the backcountry or day hikes or whatever.
11 If sound is important to them, it's becoming more
12 and more important to visitors, it's a value that
13 wasn't even recognized 15 years ago. Now it's
14 getting to be kind of a big value.

15 So one of the things I would like
16 to see at some point is information to the public
17 about if that's like the most important criteria,
18 where are they most likely to get that? And
19 obviously, if they're 20 miles from Minchumina,
20 they can. And that not all places are created
21 equal. So I don't want to do anything with it
22 right now. Over time, there should be more
23 information available to people that want to have
24 that as part of their criteria, just to minimize
25 some of the complex they would stumble into

1 otherwise, but wouldn't have to necessarily deal
2 with.

3 TOM GEORGE: I'm word-merchanting
4 (sic) to fix this problem.

5 JOAN FRANKENVICH: And this is
6 probably obvious, but it is that we don't
7 consider this is the end and this problem with
8 Triple Lakes is solved. I think everybody --

9 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely.

10 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We spent a lot
11 of time and everybody put a good-faith effort
12 into Triple Lakes, and there just really is no
13 good solution. I want to remain open, that we
14 don't stop, necessarily, should ideas come at a
15 later date if things change or something. And in
16 general, just a reminder that the charter of this
17 group is to solve the problem -- mitigate the
18 problem of aircraft sounds to visitors on the
19 ground, not to change their expectations. I
20 think this is totally appropriate for this place.
21 We've tried to work on it and we pretty much have
22 done the best we can. It's pretty appropriate
23 for this. I wouldn't see it as appropriate for
24 the rest of the park.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Yeah.

1 NANCY BALE: You might want to
2 mention to provide access for mountaineering --
3 the access for mountaineering is totally an
4 ANILCA thing.

5 SALLY GIBERT: How about if
6 everybody shoots Tom their little edits.

7 TOM GEORGE: Let's fix this right
8 now and just be done with it.

9 SALLY GIBERT: Okay. I can give
10 you some, too.

11 NANCY BALE: Access to
12 mountaineering activities.

13 JOAN FRANKENVICH: That doesn't
14 really focus on the Triple Lakes problem.

15 NANCY BALE: You're going to make
16 a case statement, that's a better case statement
17 than what you had before.

18 TOM GEORGE: I agree with both of
19 you.

20 So what do you want?

21 (Chuckles.)

22 NANCY BALE: That's not going to
23 appear on a trailhead.

24 TOM GEORGE: Again, yeah, this is
25 not language for any brochure.

1 NANCY BALE: Joan is right. It
2 doesn't really apply to Triple Lakes.

3 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I'd like to
4 think about, you know, what exactly -- how we are
5 going to say this to visitors. Because I think
6 it might be appropriate to also put it as, we're
7 going to enter into wilderness and that has
8 values, we're working on that the best we can,
9 but be aware of that in this area.

10 SALLY GIBERT: So why don't we
11 ask the Park Service, the interpreter staff are
12 going to take the first crack at it. Why don't
13 we ask if they can send us a draft of what would
14 be at the trailhead.

15 TOM GEORGE: Well, I'm worried
16 that we're getting too much into the Park's
17 business at that level. I mean, are we going to
18 do the same thing for the Web site and everything
19 else? I think the thought here is to express a
20 recommendation and then let them do the work on
21 it. Again, we've got a bunch of high-level
22 things to do. If we get too far down in the
23 weeds, we're going to --

24 SUZANNE RUST: Well, we could
25 review it.

1 SALLY GIBERT: I wouldn't mind
2 asking them. If they can't do it or whatever, if
3 it's not enough time, or if we only have a day to
4 do it, not everybody is using it, whatever. I
5 think there's no harm in asking. That would be
6 helpful to see how it gets interpreted.

7 TOM GEORGE: Again, the thought
8 -- I agree with Joan that this is a targeted
9 thing in a given area where we've done some
10 things and we see the remaining problems, it
11 doesn't mean -- I mean, we will continue to work
12 to try and make further improvements here as we
13 figure we can. But we know enough already to
14 know this is a problem area and, therefore, to
15 actually take some step toward managing, you
16 know -- user expectations also seems in order.

17 To me, this, too is something --
18 the reason to try this now rather than waiting
19 five years from now, is to let it go forward, see
20 what happens and learn lessons from that and
21 adjust as we go just like we'd adjust to best
22 practices. So, again, I think this is going to
23 be an ongoing thing we look at. We ought to try
24 and just, again, let it go and then look over
25 shoulders as is appropriate. It seems, to me, if

1 the Council asks specifically for that, we're
2 really kind of jumping in the deep end of things,
3 which isn't to say that any one of us as
4 individuals can't call up and ask to see that.
5 Miriam is always happy to --

6 MIRIAM VALENTINE: I'm intrigued
7 by Peter Newman's work and his interest in this
8 whole messaging. He's going to have a level of
9 expertise that we're not going to find as staff.
10 If you feel that this a worthy recommendation to
11 ensure quality experience in the park -- for all
12 users, those flying over it and those on the
13 ground -- I think it's worthy of moving it
14 forward and doing it thoughtfully. Certainly,
15 our interp staff will want to take a look at it.
16 What do they want to know; this is the kind of
17 stuff you want to know. How do we manage visitor
18 expectation as a quality experience?

19 I'd love for Peter to be able
20 come back and say, well, try this type of
21 messaging, and then we'll do a little survey, or
22 we'll do this for the feedback group to know, is
23 that really working, or is how you're messaging
24 out really working. That's a piece I'm
25 interested in knowing, you know.

1 TOM GEORGE: I think taking this
2 recommendation and adding to the list for him to
3 look at it along with anything else we might look
4 at is a great way to go forward.

5 NANCY BALE: I think there are
6 two messages, there's the unavailability of
7 intrusive motorized sound on the Triple Lakes
8 Trail. There is this unavailability. And there
9 is another value-added statement about aviation
10 in the park. And they are two separate messages,
11 so I'm not sure that we need the second message
12 in a Triple Lakes Trail advisory.

13 ERIKA BENNETT: If you're going
14 to get a message out there, basically, make sure
15 somebody who is on that trail knows that it's
16 going to be unavoidable, that you're going to
17 hear more than your average amount of sound
18 intrusions, and leave it at that.

19 SALLY GIBERT: Well, and the fact
20 that measures have been taken already to make an
21 effort to reduce it.

22 TOM GEORGE: If do you that,
23 you're just -- you're just poisoning people to be
24 extra tense about airplane noise. And that's
25 where, to me, you ought to at least make the

1 effort to explain to people what role airplanes
2 are serving in this area right along with that.

3 NANCY BALE: It is noisy there
4 not because airplanes are serving, but it's
5 because of this node.

6 TOM GEORGE: It's noisy for both
7 reasons.

8 MIRIAM VALENTINE: It could
9 become the sounds trail, and part of the
10 experience is noting how many different sounds
11 you hear on this trail. You just take a
12 completely different approach, it's unavoidable,
13 there's a lot of cool things happening. People
14 are coming down to this area a lot of different
15 ways, it's not what we normally do. People want
16 to come here. That's why I'm interested in like
17 how Peter is going about it. How creative we can
18 be in, like, you know -- how can we paint it so
19 on the canvas we have this little black dot?
20 People aren't looking at the black dot; they're
21 looking at the white canvas. You're in this
22 node, you can get the beautiful lakes and still
23 have this great outdoor experience.

24 TOM GEORGE: You have a
25 multi-dimensional experience.

1 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Yeah. How
2 cool is that? That's why I think it's going to
3 take -- it's not just a simple, tell them it's a
4 worthy thing that we have aircraft over here.
5 You know, I know it doesn't say that. I don't
6 want that just to be the focus, though.

7 TIM CUDNEY: Has anybody ever
8 heard the train from the lakes at all?

9 ELWOOD LYNN: Not from the lakes.

10 TIM CUDNEY: Because of the
11 altitude?

12 ELWOOD LYNN: You're behind the
13 ridge. I think one thing that you could describe
14 to people is how busy it is as you're leaving
15 civilization and then a lot farther -- as you
16 hike to the center of the trail it gets quieter
17 and quieter, and as you approach civilization,
18 you start hearing more sounds. And so not focus
19 on airplanes, but you're hearing the highway,
20 you're hearing the train -- but it is really
21 remarkable as you -- particularly from the south
22 side, you climb up over the ridge and drop into
23 the lakes, all of a sudden --

24 TOM GEORGE: Yeah. So notice the
25 contrast over this relatively short distance.

1 ELWOOD LYNN: And then as you're
2 walking along, you get down towards Riley Creek,
3 and you get the noise of the creek, but then as
4 you walk down the stream, then you have the
5 intrusion of the ---

6 TOM GEORGE: Come back into the
7 --

8 JOAN FRANKENVICH: It could be
9 Denali National Park, notice how the sounds
10 change. You're in the front country area. The
11 sounds are going to be unavoidable. When you're
12 closer to the visitor nodes, you're going to hear
13 more sounds. And somehow maybe -- but try to
14 make it a positive, which is what you're
15 concerned about. You don't want to accent the
16 negative.

17 TOM GEORGE: Right. That's
18 where, again, this is just intended to be a
19 recommendation for the Park Service to do
20 something including that. It doesn't -- and
21 that's where I don't want to see something that's
22 just a trailhead thing that says watch out for
23 noisy aircraft. And so there are a range of
24 things. And that's all the more reason that I
25 don't want to limit -- you know, I think the

1 range of things beyond this Council's grasp and
2 expertise to really do this. So the thought here
3 is to make a recommendation, say, now, let's go
4 in something and let's include some aviation
5 information with it. But that's not intended to
6 limit -- because a number of these things that
7 we're talking about right now I think are very
8 exciting ideas. I also don't think this Council
9 is going to sit down and design that either.
10 That's beyond our scope, you have other people
11 that have that expertise. We're just trying -- I
12 mean, to the best of my knowledge at the moment,
13 there's nothing. And that's the thing is to move
14 from nothing to something.

15 ELWOOD LYNN: And I think we can
16 do that.

17 TOM GEORGE: If you feel we need
18 to modify this recommendation to do that, I'm
19 happy to do that. But I do think we actually
20 need to send some recommendation of some kind,
21 again, so we're actually taking a step in this
22 area and if it gets added to our list of showing
23 the work -- we're working on these issues from
24 multiple directions.

25 MIRIAM VALENTINE: If the

1 Council's expectation is that you're not going to
2 be the final edit to whatever is done, this is
3 great.

4 TOM GEORGE: Absolutely.

5 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Is that true?
6 Is there anybody that feels -- you know, I'm
7 happy to share how we're progressing on it and
8 the feedback we're getting on it, all of that.

9 TOM GEORGE: It's not a Council
10 document, that's right, it's a product. It could
11 be multiple products that multiple entities do.

12 Remember, all this Council really
13 does is recommend it, anyhow. We are not the
14 Park Service. We don't write the songs.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: We'd like to
16 be at times.

17 NANCY BALE: The other thing I
18 might want to change is not use the term "manage
19 expectations" as much as to "create accurate
20 expectations." Because managing expectations
21 gets into an area I am not sure I'm comfortable
22 with. But creating accurate expectations or
23 perceptions, I'm totally comfortable with. And I
24 know that you take that quite innocently.
25 There's another place, too, I can't find it right

1 now.

2 TOM GEORGE: Here's another
3 manage expectations.

4 NANCY BALE: Should be noted to
5 create an accurate perception -- or to create
6 accurate expectations. I think that would work.

7 SALLY GIBERT: Even the sentence
8 as noted, too.

9 NANCY BALE: That's true.

10 TOM GEORGE: That sentence goes
11 further than that. We could break it in.

12 SALLY GIBERT: Just take it to
13 manage expectations along the trail.

14 NANCY BALE: I just found,
15 actually, making that whole role of aircraft, I
16 would make a different paragraph, a different
17 sentence. Again, I prefer to separate those two
18 concepts, because I think all you really need to
19 know when you're on Triple Lakes Trail is that
20 there are many influences on the soundscape there
21 that may create an overall perception of
22 motorized sound.

23 ELWOOD LYNN: So a period after
24 noted and start -- explain --

25 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Even just end

1 there.

2 TOM GEORGE: Well, so you're
3 saying -- is this what you're saying?

4 NANCY BALE: My view is that,
5 really, all you need for Triple Lakes is that
6 first paragraph. Then that second paragraph is
7 additional information that can be used in
8 interpretation in more general interpretive
9 activities, rather than in specific to Triple
10 Lakes.

11 TOM GEORGE: Well, I guess my
12 recollection is if you're going to try to educate
13 people, why not take it a level deeper and offer
14 some explanation as to why. To me, that's one of
15 the glaring things that's missing here is this
16 understanding of what airplanes do as opposed to,
17 well, they're there and it's noisy. So I guess I
18 don't see any harm in -- again, where it fits --

19 NANCY BALE: I don't think people
20 would be disturbed by the fact that this is a
21 transportation and communication node, because
22 after all, they would expect that to be the case
23 at the entrance to the park. Where they would
24 need more information would be, perhaps, for
25 other aspects.

1 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Tom, I see
2 where you're coming from, I think there's value
3 in this. I'm not sure where and how, and maybe a
4 Triple Lakes Trail brochure is the place for it.
5 Because it seemed that value judgment is from one
6 lens, which is a perfectly valid lens. I also
7 want to hear the value of wilderness which it is.
8 Should air tour passengers get a piece of
9 information saying, you're flying over
10 wilderness, tomorrow you might be the visitor on
11 the ground and you're impacting them. And then
12 it just gets --

13 TOM GEORGE: Again, that's where
14 this is fairly narrowly targeted. It's not
15 trying to be the be-all and end-all of education
16 opportunities or recommendations. I guess my
17 feeling is the reason I think some of this needs
18 to be written down is I believe the Park's pretty
19 good right now today about educating people about
20 wilderness. What I'm not seeing is anything --
21 maybe it's unique to the Alaskan parks. Again,
22 I'm not trying to make this a broader statement
23 worldwide, either, but on the other hand, I think
24 to the people that might take this and use it in
25 various, you know, brochures, whatever, to have

1 this information -- I mean, sometimes that gets
2 distilled into a few words in a sentence or
3 something.

4 Again, we're not trying to design
5 the end product here. But I think to leave out
6 the notion, including some rationale for why
7 these things are here is missing an opportunity.
8 And, again, where and how much of it gets picked
9 up, that's going to be totally at the discretion
10 of the people that are cranking out the different
11 products.

12 SALLY GIBERT: Also depending on
13 how it's worded, we're not supposed to get into
14 that, that inevitability thing can be
15 characterized in such a way as to illustrate what
16 you're saying without having to --

17 TOM GEORGE: Again, I'm not
18 assuming because we put some words in here, that
19 those were verbatim or anything else. On the
20 other hand, to leave them out and not convey to
21 brochure writers, who might not have an
22 understanding about those things, why shouldn't
23 we do that? What's wrong with doing that?

24 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Generally, air
25 tours are not a value of wilderness.

1 TOM GEORGE: This is Alaska.

2 JOAN FRANKENVICH: But an air
3 tour, other than Denali, is no different than an
4 air tour over the Grand Canyon.

5 TOM GEORGE: All I'm putting in
6 here is I'm trying to put explanation --

7 JOAN FRANKENVICH: If it's
8 mountaineering transportation, yes. Air tours, I
9 don't see the Alaska distinction from any other
10 park, just plain flightseeing. Access, yes,
11 that's an Alaska distinction.

12 SALLY GIBERT: To see Alaska
13 parks, pretty hard to see these areas if you're
14 not in an airplane.

15 JOAN FRANKENVICH: You can say
16 that for the Grand Canyon.

17 SALLY GIBERT: You can drive up
18 both sides of the rim --

19 DAN MCGREGOR: You can drive to a
20 lot of places that I think you can't,
21 necessarily, in this area.

22 MIRIAM VALENTINE: Joan is
23 presenting, though, a very important point,
24 that's the push back you're going to get. As
25 managers of a park that has designated

1 wilderness, you know, we follow the Wilderness
2 Act to manage it. It's not like somebody says,
3 well, you know, you're Alaska. Because that
4 corridor where this is -- it's not the new ANILCA
5 lands, it's not those new park additions. So we
6 want -- it's valid what she's saying; it's valid
7 what you're saying. So that's why I think it's
8 going to take some finesse in presenting and to
9 creating accurate expectations of your
10 experience. If you truly, as a Council, have
11 given this good-faith effort, can we provide you
12 with voluntary measures to mitigate impacts to
13 the soundscape by aviation? We can't, for safety
14 reasons and all these other -- okay. Right on.
15 That was your role. Now, this is what you say:
16 Well, one way, though, that you can improve
17 visitor experience in that area is to help
18 educate them. Okay. Now, it's our turn to take
19 it over and say, okay, how do we, within our
20 mandate, what we are charged by Congress to do,
21 as well as address the realities we have here in
22 Alaska, as well as this node.

23 I think it needs to shift over to
24 us once the recommendation has been formally
25 made. And we need to work it and massage it. We

1 aren't going to solve it here today.

2 NANCY BALE: What you just said,
3 maybe that needs to get added as a last sentence
4 of that first paragraph: The presence of air
5 tour base general aviation Parks Highway should
6 be noted. In addition, efforts by operators to
7 reduce the impact of aviation sounds have been
8 made. So -- because we didn't address the strong
9 efforts that had been made. So that should be
10 addressed because it shows good faith.

11 TOM GEORGE: Say that again.

12 NANCY BALE: On the part of the
13 operators. It was not on the part of the
14 Council; it was on the part of the operators. It
15 was given credit.

16 SALLY GIBERT: We said we were
17 going to adjourn at 4:00. We can either keep
18 going or we can officially adjourn and then those
19 few that want to wordsmith this, we can do that.

20 TIM CUDNEY: We have to propose
21 the final at the next meeting.

22 SALLY GIBERT: We can just defer
23 to -- well, it can be adopted in concept and
24 still have some wordsmithing. I don't want to
25 put --

1 NANCY BALE: To mitigate aircraft
2 words.

3 TIM CUDNEY: We could be close.

4 NANCY BALE: Should be noted.

5 TIM CUDNEY: I like that.

6 DAN MCGREGOR: Did we agree to
7 add the park strip in this somewhere as well?

8 SALLY GIBERT: It's up on top.

9 TIM CUDNEY: If it was me, I
10 would change one thing; in addition, efforts on
11 the part of the aircraft operators.

12 NANCY BALE: Okay.

13 TOM GEORGE: I hate typing in
14 front of a crowd.

15 (CHUCKLES.)

16 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, yeah, that's
17 right. Park Service, too.

18 SALLY GIBERT: A little
19 wordsmithing on the first sentence, and then I'll
20 stop. Second line, air tour flights. Rather
21 than patterns, say, operations, because it isn't
22 just patterns. Air tour flight operations, to
23 reduce conflicts.

24 TOM GEORGE: Yeah, that's good.
25 Operations to reduce conflicts. Too, conflict is

1 kind of a jargon term. I learned that from the
2 military, Scott, wherever you are. We've got to
3 deconflict these operations over here. That's
4 where I got that one. Bad influence.

5 (Chuckles.)

6 TOM GEORGE: Sally, did you have
7 more?

8 SALLY GIBERT: One more. Next
9 sentence, "in spite of these procedures," take
10 that whole thing, through "considerable." Just
11 say, "nonetheless" and then that replaces "in
12 spite of these procedures." So "nonetheless,
13 considerable air traffic remains in the area."

14 NANCY BALE: You don't have to --
15 after the "the."

16 SALLY GIBERT: Actually, I've got
17 a couple more things, just grammatic. Let me
18 give them to you. I like having when there's
19 lists like that, to start a new line for each
20 one, like bullets.

21 Are we ready to go with this?

22 I'll call the question.

23 We just broke them down, the A,
24 B, and Cs, individual lines, so they're easier to
25 digest. We're doing a little bit of grammatical

1 stuff here. Not substantive.

2 Joan.

3 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Miriam was
4 talking, I was thinking, too, Tom. I wonder -- I
5 feel better sticking to the factual stuff, and
6 not the value stuff. Maybe there's not -- I
7 understand Tom's desire for that, maybe at the
8 visitor center. I'm thinking, as a wilderness
9 advocate reading that, which a lot of the trail
10 users are going to be, that might make me angry
11 to hear the value -- the value of air tours
12 flying over me in a wilderness area. It could
13 backfire on that description.

14 SALLY GIBERT: I don't think it
15 says that. The value, kind of the value of
16 aircraft, over the park. I think that's when
17 we're going to get into --

18 The whole paragraph, we need more
19 time to think about it or skip it for now.

20 ELWOOD LYNN: That's where the
21 park staff will work on it -- this is just a
22 seed.

23 JOAN FRANKENVICH: Tom has been
24 talking about it for a long time.

25 SALLY GIBERT: Maybe rather than

1 just say "explain," just say "recognize," and
2 then -- and then the Park Service can use their
3 discretion about how that's recognized.

4 NANCY BALE: And I would say
5 recognize "that," not "how."

6 JOAN FRANKENVICH: I can accept
7 that.

8 NANCY BALE: Remember our
9 applause meter, I can live with it.

10 (Chuckles.)

11 NANCY BALE: Thanks, Tom, for
12 being a good sport.

13 TOM GEORGE: My pleasure, it's a
14 group game here.

15 NANCY BALE: You betcha.

16 SALLY GIBERT: Is everybody happy
17 with this?

18 NANCY BALE: I can live with it.

19 TOM GEORGE: If you can see
20 little grammatical things, we can clarify it.

21 MIRIAM VALENTINE: You're going
22 to send an electronic copy and follow up with a
23 hard copy?

24 SALLY GIBERT: So are we going to
25 go with this, subject to any grammatical things,

1 no substance? Any objection to that?

2 None?

3 Should we adjourn, yes?

4 Everybody happy with that?

5 Okay. We're adjourned.

6 (Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.)

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