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National Park Service
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and Alagnak Wild River
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Winter 2024 Updates for Katmai National Park and Preserve/ Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve/ Alagnak Wild River

SUBSISTENCE DIVISION, MALLORY ZHAROFF & DILLON PATTERSON

Aniakchak National Monument Subsistence Resource Commission

- Aniakchak National Monument Subsistence Resource Commission met via teleconference on October 28th, 2024. The next meeting is scheduled to be held in-person in King Salmon on February 11th, 2025.

Community Subsistence Harvest Surveys

- The National Park Service Subsistence Advisory Council funded comprehensive subsistence harvest surveys in Chignik Bay, Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, and Perryville, which will be completed in partnership with the ADF&G Division of Subsistence. These surveys will document subsistence use of all resources in the 2024 calendar year. NPS and ADF&G staff will begin fieldwork in the spring of 2025.

Caribou Subsistence Hunt for Kokhanok and Igiugig

- The superintendent of Katmai National Park and Preserve has issued a limited subsistence caribou hunt for the residents of Kokhanok and Igiugig. Four caribou per community can be harvested in the Katmai National Preserve (within unit 9C) starting January 1st, 2025 and closing March 31st, 2025, a total of ninety days to hunt. Hunting permits will be issued using the Federal Subsistence Permit System. The in-season manager will continue to monitor and assess population trends over time using minimum counts to make informed decisions on any future caribou subsistence hunts. Furthermore, Katmai National Park and Preserve is working collaboratively with the communities of Igiugig and Kokhanok to incorporate local and Indigenous knowledge in the management and stewardship of these caribou. This effort is ongoing and is still being developed.

Aerial caribou surveys in and around Katmai National Preserve

- This year Katmai staff conducted aerial surveys counting caribou in and around Katmai National Preserve. Katmai staff began conducting spring minimum counts of caribou in 2021 and 2022 finding 306 and 312 caribou. Surveys have been conducted during early spring when fresh snowfall can help staff locate groups of caribou. This year staff counted 425 caribou during surveys conducted on March 26th and 27th. This year staff also conducted summer and fall surveys to identify habitat use and aggregation patterns throughout the year as well as to test methods for collecting composition information from the population. Katmai staff plan to continue these monitoring efforts next year in 2025.

Moose trend area surveys

- This fall Katmai staff completed fall trend area moose surveys. Trend area surveys allow staff to monitor moose abundance and composition across years. Total counts, bull: cow, and calf: cow metrics help alert biologists to population level changes that may occur. Surveys are typically conducted during late fall between November and December while bulls still have their antlers. Ideally surveys are conducted after fresh snowfall, so moose are easier to spot. Detection rates can vary across years as conditions change. This year staff were able to complete surveys in all four trend areas typically surveyed (Branch River, Park Border, Angle/Takayofu, and Cinder River). Counts, bull: cow, and calf: cow ratios were all within their normal range over the past 10 years.

Brown bear aerial stream surveys

- One of the difficult parts of wildlife management is estimating how many individuals are in a population. Biologists are often trying to estimate how many individuals were missed during surveys. This year staff conducted repeat aerial stream surveys counting bears congregating along salmon spawning streams. The replicate surveys are done over a short period of time while the population can be considered closed to movement. Differences between the replicate surveys will be used to understand how many individuals are typically missed during a survey. Results will help biologists understand total bear use and how the population of bears using salmon spawning streams is changing through time. Katmai staff plan to continue replicate aerial stream surveys for brown bears in 2025 and results from the analysis should be completed next winter.

CULTURAL RESOURCE DIVISION, EVGUENIA ANICHTCHENKO

ORV/ATV Access in Katmai Preserve

- In fall of 2024, KATM received \$73,310.00 from the NPS Regional Subsistence Advisory Council to collect data on traditional subsistence access routes in Katmai National Preserve. The project will combine local and Indigenous knowledge with remote sensing technology (LiDar) to identify optimal routes to the Kukaklek Caribou Herd and other important subsistence use areas for Kokhanok and Igiugig residents. This project builds on previous work that demonstrates the traditional use of off-road vehicles to access subsistence use areas in Katmai pursuant to Section 811(b) of ANILCA. The project will help inform analyses and management decisions compliant with NEPA, Section 106, and Section 810.

Culture Camps

- KATM 2024 culture camp was held in partnership with the BBF, community of Perryville and NPS Tribal Liaison Program. Campers from Perryville, Igiugig, Levelock and Port Hyden participated in cultural activities in Perryville hands on archaeology in Brooks Camp, Valley of 10,000 Smokes hike, and had a chance to meet with the NPS staff in Brooks Camp. 2025 Camp is evolving in partnership with Igiugig and Kokhanok. Other communities' ideas and collaboration are welcomed. Contact Evguenia_Anichtchenko@nps.gov

Placename Project

- New 3-year partnership “Documenting Katmai National Park Indigenous placenames” started in fall of 2024. KATM is partnering with the BBNC, Council of Katmai Descendants and Igiugig Village Council to record Indigenous placenames along the Alagnak Wild River and Brooks Camp.

Aniakchak Bay Archaeological Collection Project

- KATM will hire a museum intern for FY 2025 and 2026 to rehouse and catalogue artifacts excavated from Aniakchak Bay archaeological site. Intern will have their duty station in Anchorage, \$22.50 an hour. In partnership with BBNA. If interested, contact Jenya Anichtchenko Evguenia_Anichtchenko@nps.gov
- Elders and youth from Aniakchak associated communities will visit NPS regional office to view and discuss Aniakchak Bay collections and share traditional knowledge about the bay, artifacts and traditional subsistence and way of life (travel costs and honoraria are covered, projected time frame January-February). Let us know if you are interested: Evguenia_Anichtchenko@nps.gov

Upcoming 2025 Publications

- Completing educational kit “Traditional Plants & Medicine: Learning with Language.” This collection is based on extensive knowledge of Mary Olympic.
- Layout and printing of Pat Partnow’s manuscript “People of Brooks River.” This book combines historic research with information provided by many Indigenous residents and focuses on history of Brooks and Naknek Lakes and vicinity.