SB

280

STATE of ALASKA

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Alvin Osterback
Chairman, House Resource Comm.

DATE: May 19, 1977

SUBJECT: Soil Survey Report (Requested during the hearing on SB 230)

FROM: F.S. Hensinger, DVM
Dept. of Nat. Res. (Agric.)

Attached is some material referencing the soil survey work that was done this past year under a cooperative effort indicated in the report.

There was a 25.0 contribution by the State for their share. A final report by the Soil Conservation Service will be available in July, and a copy will be furnished your committee.

Please see that Rep. Malone receives the second copy, as he was the member of your Resource Committee that specifically requested the information.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
2221 East Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 129, Anchorage, Alaska 99504

May 13, 1977

Mr. Allan Linn, Director
Division of Agriculture
P.O. Box 1088
Palmer, Alaska 99645

As the result of a request from the NANA Regional Native Corporation to the Alaska Soil Conservation District, Range and Soil Surveys were conducted by the USDA Soil Conservation Service on the reindeer grazing lands within the NANA Corporation boundaries last summer. A cooperative agreement between the SCS, Alaska SCD, NANA Corporation and the BLM was executed calling for cooperation among each of these agencies to accomplish the work. In addition, a cooperative agreement was signed between SCS, the Alaska SCD and the Bureau of Indian Affairs which provided for BIA funding up to $50,000 to be used in part for the Kotzebue area Range and Soil Survey. A breakdown of funding that went into the field work is as follows:

SCS	55,000
NANA Corp.	25,000
BIA	25,000
State of Alaska	25,000

Funds were used for a variety of purposes including a $45,000 contract with the University of Alaska, Geophysical Institute for assistance in using LANDSAT imagery and for collaborating in developing new technology for making surveys in the tundra areas of the State. Other sizable expenditures were for helicopter service, helicopter fuel, salaries for plant scientists and soil scientists, aides, per diem costs and airplane transportation.

A great deal more SCS time has gone into the development of the Range and Soil Survey Report after the close of the field season. It is estimated that an additional $25,000 of SCS funds will be expended to complete the Kotzebue area Range and Soil Survey Report which is due to be published in July 1977. This includes time spent in developing range site descriptions, soil descriptions, LANDSAT imagery map work, plant and soil laboratory analysis and printing costs.

During the past winter SCS initiated a study of snow conditions and its relation to reindeer range management in the area. This will be an ongoing study but during the past year SCS spent $5,000 in this endeavor.

The total area covered in the survey in approximately 4.5 million acres including the grazing permit areas of NANA Corporation, Karmun, Hadley and Grey. Development of new survey methods using LANDSAT imagery, computer technology and ground truth data collection by a team of field scientists using a helicopter for transportation permitted us to survey this large area in a short time. It was also done at a very low cost when compared to costs using conventional methods. BLM estimated that it would cost $104,000 to make range surveys on only 500,000 acres in the area.

The purpose of making the Range and Soil Survey is to provide inventory data necessary for range management planning. Through good range management by the reindeer herders, red meat production should be increased and the winter and summer grazing areas will be properly utilized. The Survey will present a scientific documentation of the potential value of the various range sites in the region.

Upon completion of the Range Survey the SCS will work with the reindeer herders and the BLM in developing individual range management plans.

The reindeer herders association at Nome have asked that range and soil surveys and the range planning work of the SCS and Alaska Soil Conservation District continue until all of the grazing lands on the Seward Peninsula are covered. That is an additional 12 to 15 million acres.

We feel that this project has been very successful in developing new methodology that will have far reaching benefits to the State of Alaska. I am attaching other documents that may provide additional information.

T. G. Freeman, acting

Weymeth E. Long
State Conservationist.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-107

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Date
No. Copies Rec'd

__St. Cons.
__St. Cons. Sec.
__St. Res. Cons. ✓
__Res. Cons.
__Soil Scientist
__Eng. Spc.
__Sa. Surv. Sup.
__Wtr. Res. Sp.
__Fairbanks
__Homer
__Palmer
__PM Sp.

TO : Ted Freeman, State Resource Conservationist, Anchorage

DATE: September 10, 1976

FROM : Jim Preston, Range Conservationist, Homer

SUBJECT: CONS - NANA Range/Soil Survey including the following four reindeer grazing leases: Karmun, NANA (old Clark), Hadley, and Gray.

Objective of Survey:
To provide the soil/range resource inventory data necessary for range management planning interpretations.

1. Increasing reindeer red meat production within the scope of range conservation planning.
2. Depicting in scientific documentation the potential value of surveyed area as its best use being for reindeer range.
3. To prepare a range plan for each of the four grazing leases.

Work Done:
Starting on 7-28-76 and finishing up one month later (about 8-26-76) SCS surveyed 4,500,000 acres. (refer to forthcoming memo from Preston to Freeman on use of Landsat in range/soil survey on Seward Peninsula-1976. This memo by Preston was also inputted by T. George, B. Fibich, and P. Scorup. Therefore, its tardiness is explained.)

Twelve to fifteen range site descriptions will be extracted from the 75 SCS-RANGE - 417's, "Plant Yield Records," executed on this 4,500,000 acre survey. Landsat color products dictate perimeters of study. If a range site could be called a sample area, 75 ÷ 15 = 5 SCS-417's. Each SCS- 417 reflects ten sample plots, thus 5 x 10 = 50 sample plots per sample area. This, of course, is guesstimation only as we are a long way from actually knowing how many range site descriptions we will end up with in this 4,500,000 acre NANA survey.

Work Remaining:
Refer to Umnak/Unalaska Survey Report dated 9-10-76 for step by step procedures in progressing from raw "plant yield record" data to planning stage, including follow-up.

Recommendations:
That a comprehensive range plan be prepared for the four grazing leases. In these plans will exist the basic and necessary maps, interpertations and narratives (Refer again to Umnak/Unalaska Report) plus an interpretive map showing accumulated snow depth, hard pack areas, prevailing wind direction and blown bare areas. Year by year follow-up will refine this data.

JEP:rw

THE USE OF SATELLITE IMAGERY IN THE RANGE AND SOIL SURVEY OF NANA CORPORATION LANDS OF THE SEWARD AND BALDWIN PENINSULAS

by

William R. Fibich, Soil Conservation Service
April 1977

A range survey is an inventory of the vegetation present on the land. The vegetation occurs in definite patterns, or native plant communities which can be identified and located on a map. A native plant community usually consists of a variety of different species of plants which are well adapted to living together on a particular part of the landscape.

The purpose of a range survey is to identify and describe the native plant communities in an area, to determine their food potential, and to indicate on a map their size and location. This vegetative inventory can then be used in planning the overall management of particular kinds of animals which will be living in harmony with these native plant communities. Plants are selective in regard to the kind of soil on which they live. There are different kinds of soil. Some soils are too wet, some are too dry, and some are just right for certain kinds of plants. Just as there are different soils there are different kinds of plant communities which inhabit these various soils. We, therefore, have a definite correlation between a particular soil and the plants which live on that soil. An inventory of the soils is an important part of the range survey.

In the process of making this range survey for the NANA Corporation the use of satellite imagery contributes mostly by showing the locations, patterns, and size of the various plant communities and their associated

soils. Satellite images are very similar to colored aerial photographs in appearance and are the result of variously reflected light from the earth's surface. These different light intensities are assigned individual colors. Each unique native plant community and its associated soil exhibits a particular ability to reflect light. The reflected light is collected by the satellite and a color-patterned image is the result. Since the color blue is usually assigned to the reflectance of water, the oceans, lakes, and streams are clearly defined. The land and water surface of the earth is easily identified, and a comparative linear scale can be established for the image.

The next step in this range survey was to investigate the various colors of the image. This investigation includes the complete inventory and classification of the principal plants and soils within the individual colors. This data supplies information such as pounds of feed available per acre, time of the year and location on the range the feed is available, and soil conditions which may affect the movement and health of the reindeer.

There are a few considerations one must understand when using these images to assist in the inventory of the range and soils. Within any one color there usually are two or more native plant communities and their associated soils. Also, in less than 10 percent of this study area of four million acres, there were instances where two different plant communities were represented by the same color, and where two different colors represented the same plant community.

~~DRAFT~~
1975

NANA CORPORATION AREA RANGE AND SOIL SURVEY

It is recognized by the NANA Regional Native Corporation that a good range inventory is the first step toward a successful reindeer herding operation. During the summer of 1975 the NANA Corporation requested the assistance of the Alaska Soil Conservation District and the USDA Soil Conservation Service in conducting Range and Soil Surveys on the designated Reindeer Grazing Permit Areas within the region.

In a range survey plant communities are identified and correlated with soil types. The extent and location of plant communities are mapped to be used in management plans. Yield data is then obtained to allow computation of the volume of plant material available for grazing. With this information, recommended stocking rates can be developed and management practices planned to allow for optimum production of the herd and proper protection of the range. The range and soil surveys will be the basis for comprehensive range management plans.

PRELIMINARY WORK

The total area involved is approximately five million acres in size and includes the current reindeer allotments held by Lawrence Grey (1,190,400 acres), Paul Hadley (2,232,320 acres), Charlie Clark (814,080 acres), and Alfred Karmun (689,250 acres). The NANA Reindeer Enterprizes, Inc. expects to soon be granted the permit for the Grey allotment by BLM. Because this area was too large to permit the SCS to complete the requested surveys within a reasonable time using conventional methods, it was necessary to devise a new and modern system to do the job. With the aid of the University of Alaska Geophysical Institute, a system using Satellite Imagery and computer

analysis of Landsat data was developed. A field test of the process was conducted on a small portion of the reindeer range of the Baldwin Peninsula during the late summer of 1975. It was found that with adequate ground truth field work by competent soil and range technologists that it was feasible to produce the range and soil inventory using Landsat data.

1976 WORK PLAN

This project is to refine the new technique, developed in 1975 and to test applicability over the whole area. During the 1976 field season, SCS will work with the University of Alaska Geophysical Institute in developing the use of Satellite Imagery and Landsat data in conducting soil and range surveys in the NANA region. Extensive field work will be conducted throughout the four permit areas by a technical team consisting of an SCS range specialist, a soil scientist, and a technologist from the University of Alaska Geophysical Institute. Field information will be correlated with Landsat data during the field season. It is estimated that four weeks of field time, using a helicopter for transportation, will be required to complete the investigation on the four to five million acres. Field studies are scheduled to be carried out during the month of August.

Estimated budget for the project is as follows:

SCS	
SCS technical assistance (field and office)	$30,000
SCS per diem and misc. expense	7,000
Helicopter 72 hours @ $400	28,000
Landsat technology cost	45,000
Total	$110,000

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TO : Ted Freeman, State Resource Conservationist
Anchorage

DATE: September 10, 1976

FROM : Jim Preston, Range Conservationist, Homer

Jim

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POUCH Y, STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
907 465-3800

April 25, 1977

TO: Senator John Sackett

FROM: Senator Jalmar Kerttula

SUBJECT: Department of Natural Resources, Div. of Agri.

The proposed appropriation provides State funding for contractual services with U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. Services provided will be soil and/or range surveys on the soils of Alaska to increase the resources data for the benefit of State Department of Natural Resources, other State agencies and the using public. Service will be arranged to allow the State a higher voice in establishing priorities to S.C.S. work activities in Alaska by having Soil Conservation Board of Alaska participate in survey area priority decisions.

At a current cost near 75¢ per acre, this amount will provide survey services to up to 67,000 acres of Alaska land. Exact locations are not finalized. Reconnaissance studies by S.C.S. indicate Alaska contains about 20,000,000 acres of tillable lands. Soil surveys facilitate land-use planning and implementation programs.

Senator Jalmar Kerttula
State of Alaska
Pouch Y, State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Kerttula:

I would like to provide additional justification for Senate Bill No. 280, an Act making a special appropriation to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture, to fund state participation in the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

1. The needs for resource inventories in Alaska are enormous. Decisions involving the use of Alaska's lands now and in the future will have substantial impact on the well being of future generations of Alaskans.

2. Soil inventories produced through the National Cooperative Soil Survey provide resource data of considerable value for all types of land planning and use. No maps of large areas of land are made in such detail and involve so many significant factors as do soil maps.

3. The soil survey program includes: (1) determining the important characteristics of soils, (2) classifying soils into defined classificational units, (3) establishing and plotting on maps the boundaries among kinds of soil, and (4) correlating and predicting the behavior of soils under defined sets of management practices including agriculture, forestry, civil engineering and wildlife management.

4. The ultimate usefulness of soil surveys depends upon accurate soil correlation. This process involves (1) comparing local classificational units with those already defined and named in the general system of classification, (2) recognizing, establishing and naming new units consistent with the system, (3) grouping geographic units into named and defined soil associations, and (4) arranging the units into keys or groups to bring out principles and relationships.

5. In spite of the need for soil surveys in Alaska, detailed soil surveys are available for a smaller acreage of land in Alaska than in any other state, except the very smallest states. Nevertheless, Alaska's needs for detailed soil surveys are greater than any other state.

6. At the present time, soil surveys in Alaska are accomplished entirely by soil scientists of the Soil Conservation Service, USDA, ostensibly in cooperation with the Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Alaska, under a cooperative agreement. In actuality, the State of Alaska employs no soil scientists to cooperate with the Soil Conservation Service in the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

7. Thus, the State of Alaska has no direct contact with the soil survey program in the state, and no voice in decisions regarding soil classification or correlation within the state. Yet Alaska relies heavily on soil surveys published by the USDA in developing legislation regarding land use and in making long term decisions regarding land use.

8. Senate Bill No. 280 would provide funds to permit the State of Alaska to be directly involved operationally and in a decision-making capacity regarding the classification, correlation and survey of soils in Alaska.

Sincerely,

James V. Drew
Director, Agricultural Experiment Station

BILL ANALYSIS

ASSIGNMENT DATE_____

UNASSIGNED_____

DEPARTMENT	SPONSOR (PRINCIPAL)	BILL NO.
Natural Resources	State Affairs	SB 280

DEPARTMENT POSITION

DIVISION DIRECTOR	DATE	COMMISSIONER	DATE
Allan Linn	4-20-77		

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE USE

☐ POSITION NOTED ☐ POSITION APPROVED ☐ POSITION DISAPPROVED

BY: DATE:

SUMMARY

(1) RELATED BILLS (SIMILAR OR CONFLICTING) Unknown

(2) a. ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR BILL		(2) b. ORGANIZATIONAL OPPOSITION TO BILL
Agricultural Agencies, Soil Conservation Subdistricts		Unknown

(3) PROGRAM EFFECTS OF BILL

Requires request to other Divisions of DNR regarding their nominations for areas of priority for soil survey. Effort should be very nominal.

(4) FISCAL IMPACT: ☐ NONE ☐ FISCAL ANALYSIS ATTACHED

(5) AMENDMENTS PROPOSED:

None

(6) COMMENTS:

a) See fiscal note for expenditure procedure and use of data.

b) Department and Administration priority regarding this type of expenditure for this FY budget unknown.

FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST
Bill/Resolution No. SB 280
Title Appropriation to Fund State Participation in National Coop Soil Survey
Requested by Senate Finance Date 4-20-77

II. FISCAL DETAIL
Agency Affected Dept of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture
Program Category Affected Development
Budget Request Unit(s) Affected Administration & Support

EXPENDITURES (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 77	FY 78	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82
100 PERSONAL SERVICES						
200 TRAVEL						
300 CONTRACTUAL		50.0				
400 COMMODITIES						
500 EQUIPMENT						
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.						
TOTAL		50.0				

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		50.0				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER (Specify)						

POSITIONS

FULL TIME		0				
PART TIME		0				
TEMPORARY		0				

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation Instructions, Section III)

Proposed appropriation provides State funding for contractual services with U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. Services provided will be soil and/or range surveys on the soils of Alaska to increase the resources data for the benefit of State Department of Natural Resources, other State agencies and the using public. Services will be arranged to allow the State a higher voice in establishing priorities in S.C.S. work activities in Alaska by having Soil Conservation Board of Alaska participate in survey area priority decisions.

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IV. DATE April 20, 1977 PREPARED BY Allen Linn, Director
AGENCY DNR, Division of Agriculture
PHONE 745-3236

Original: Legislative Finance
cc: Budget and Management
Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named)

33-001 (Rev. 10/76)