

3/22/11

OVERVIEW:

ALASKA

MOOSE

FEDERATION

Rebecca Rooney

From: Hewitt, Brenda L (DOT) [brenda.hewitt@alaska.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 10:05 AM
To: Rebecca Rooney
Subject: brush removal
Attachments: Funding Target - AMF Facilitator Budget - #01 (02.20.10).pdf; Funding Target - New Seward brush removal #01 (02.03.10).pdf; Funding Target - Feeding of Wildlife changes #01 (02.17.10).pdf; Funding Target - Salvage Program justification #02 (04.12.10).pdf

Try these

From: Cashen, Cindy L (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2011 4:07 PM
To: Thomas, Scott E (DOT)
Cc: Epstein, David B (DOT); Ackiss, Colleen M (DOT); Jeffers, Jefferson C (DOT); Kemp, Pat J (DOT)
Subject: brush removal

Hi Scott,

Today Pat Kemp and I attended a House Transportation hearing at the request of Committee Chair Peggy Wilson to listen to Gary Olson's AK Moose Federation presentation. During a discussion about roadway visibility, Rep. Wilson asked us to provide the DOT&PF regulations, rules and process dealing with brush and any other type of vegetation near highways, roads and roundabouts. Could you please tell me how to find them?

Sen. McGuire and Rep. Hoffman have a bill to place \$3-4 million in the capitol budget for moose-related projects(which I have attached). These projects are similar as to the ones Gary had asked for last year and which were not funded. I don't have his latest budget, but Gary must have expanded them or added new ones, since the totals for last year's proposed projects add up to about \$1 million.

Basically, what do planners use when designing or revising a road in relationship to brush/vegetation and/or visibility?

Sincerely,
Cindy

Cindy Cashen
Administrator
Alaska Highway Safety Office
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
tel: 907 465-4374
cell: 907 957-2562
fax: 907 465-4030
cindy.cashen@alaska.gov

"I Choose Respect"

Rebecca Rooney

From: Hewitt, Brenda L (DOT) [brenda.hewitt@alaska.gov]
Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2011 3:48 PM
To: Rebecca Rooney; Rep. Peggy Wilson
Cc: Thomas, Scott E (DOT); Cashen, Cindy L (DOT); Coffey, Michael J (DOT); Kemp, Pat J (DOT)
Subject: Brush removal
Attachments: cid_image002.png@01CA05ED.DF95B980; ATT3915454.htm

In the Transportation committee meeting presentation on Moose Habitat you asked Cindy Cashen and Pat Kemp to provide you with what DOT does now regarding brush removal. Michael Coffey, our chief of Maintenance and Operations provided the following information:

“The maintenance manual is very general:

MECHANICAL MOWERS

Mechanical mowers, grader mounted cutter, and hydroax are the primary methods employed to remove undesirable trees, brush, and weeds. Mechanical mowers are used to maintain turf and erosion control grasses. It is important for cutting equipment to be suited to the terrain.

Mowing should be used as an integral part of the roadside management program. Repeated mowing of grasses in unfertilized and dry areas will cause thinning and reduce the competitive capabilities of the grasses, thus allowing trees, brush, and weeds to become established. In areas with sufficient moisture, fertilizer will enhance the competitive ability of grasses to crowd out encroachment by weeds, brush, and trees.

Brush control is usually needed to improve sight distance, for aesthetic reasons and to provide an area for snow berms to be winged during the Winter. Saws, axes, and other cutting equipment may be used to selectively remove individual plants or parts of plants. Resprouting of any tree or shrub will be minimized if the cutting takes place in the summer, after the spring growth period is complete. The months of July, August, and September are the most effective periods in which to cut trees, brush, and shrubs. Brush removal in wetland areas may require a permit.

DANGEROUS TREES

Dead or leaning trees within or immediately adjacent to the right-of-way that endanger the traveling public, decrease sight distance, or could be a detriment to the highway should be felled by experienced operators. Always work with a helper and never attempt to remove a tree alone.”

Scott Thomas, a planner from Central Region said he is unaware of any statutes regarding brush removal but provided information about what he does from a planning perspective.

“I share the top moose crash areas with M&O and they work at District level to fit work into their normal brushing contracts. They also help when I make individual safety requests. Seasons affect how much they can do, and the willows and brush we have can be very difficult to

just cut and grind up. They also grow back fast. More than cutting would be a larger project. There has been a lot of cutting by M&O in recent years.

In Design, we review the public costs of high crash moose collision areas and the scope of the project for consideration of vegetation changes. We have removed willows on two major corridors and

In Permitting, we restrict vegetation planting through Policy and Procedure 05.05.030.

In Planning, I nominate Highway Safety Projects when cost-effective. HSIP work is not meant to replace routine design and maintenance work. Instead I have nominated fences and experimental Electromats in Research where we can do more than routine work.”

I hope you find the information useful

Brenda Hewitt



P.O. Box 231028, Anchorage, Alaska 99523 (907) 33-MOOSE

Legislative Target 2010 AMF Facilitator Role

February 20, 2010

Senator Lesil McGuire

Dear Lesil,

We have been approached with a request from multiple agencies to establish a 'facilitator' role regarding moose mitigation efforts within Alaska. The premise of this request is based on the 'Keeping it Simple, Easy Ways To Help Wildlife Along Roads' from the Federal Highway Administration (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/wildlifeprotection/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.viewTopic&topicID=1>).

Many of the Alaska Moose Federation's (AMF) accomplishments have been realized through common sense approaches without the need for large government expenditures. This is directly in line with this 'Keeping It Simple' motto. For instance; the request for the Alaska Department of Transportation to no longer plant 'Moose Browse' trees in any highway or road right-of-way. Additional roles of these facilitators will be to encourage all agencies to work with each other. Because there are no moose in Juneau, most agency leadership in the past likely did not fully grasp the severity of this problem.



AMF has successfully performed outstanding work in wildlife mitigation with only volunteers. Now agency personnel are requesting a professional AMF staff to continue this process. Additional duties of this staff will be to work with federal agencies, local governments, native corporations, private industry, fellow non-profit organizations, schools and the public as a whole to maintain education, public outreach, project management, project performance and support for the needed wildlife mitigation programs. In addition to the mitigation programs, the AMF has also been a primary component of recent state and federal search and rescue/recovery efforts utilizing our specialized snow cats and back country experience. This additional activity gives more support to the professional format.



The breakdown for this effort is as follows:

Director	\$62,400
Office Manager, Partner Coordinator and Contract/ Grant Administrator	\$52,000
Project Coordinator—Statewide Salvage, Habitat, Snow Trails, School, ROW work	\$41,600
Operational Manager—Operations, Maintenance and Transport of all equipment statewide	\$41,600
Travel—Juneau, wildlife mitigation conferences & project site visits	\$14,000
Consulting—Biologist, Forester or other professional trades on as needed basis.	\$30,000
Office Expenses (2 garage bay shop with office positions for 4 people) @ \$2,500/month	\$30,000
Utilities for office/shop (\$400/month)	<u>\$4,800</u>

Total Annual Facilitating Budget: \$276,400

Thank you for this consideration and, if you have any questions, please give us a call at (907) 317-2300.

Sincerely,

Gary Olson, Chairman
Alaska Moose Federation



P.O. Box 231028, Anchorage, Alaska 99523 (907) 33-MOOSE

Facilitator Role—Detailed Private & Public Participation

This page details the roles which each entity of this private and public partnership play regarding the wildlife mitigation efforts within the State of Alaska. These complex yet necessary relationships are what is required for successful programs needed to reduce vehicle collisions between moose and vehicles. The squares marked in the table specific the agencies (partners) that are active in the specific moose mitigation program listed at the top of the page.

Critical habitat enhancement.
Right-of-way brush clearing.
Directional fencing & crossings.
Deep snow trail creation.
Roadkill salvage program.
Youth education.

	<i>Critical habitat enhancement.</i>	<i>Right-of-way brush clearing.</i>	<i>Directional fencing & crossings.</i>	<i>Deep snow trail creation.</i>	<i>Roadkill salvage program.</i>	<i>Youth education.</i>
Dept. of Fish & Game	XXX		XXX	XXX		XXX
Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	
Dept. of Natural Resources	XXX			XXX		XXX
Mat-Su Borough & Mat-Su Cities	XXX	XXX	XXX		XXX	
Kenai Borough & Kenai Cities	XXX	XXX	XXX		XXX	
City of Anchorage		XXX	XXX		XXX	
BLM	XXX			XXX		
U.S. Forest Service	XXX			XXX		
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)		XXX	XXX		XXX	
Native Corporations	XXX			XXX		XXX
Private Industry	XXX	XXX	XXX			XXX
Alaska Railroad	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	
School Districts	XXX					XXX
Fellow Non-Profits	XXX				XXX	XXX
Soil & Water Conservation Districts	XXX			XXX		XXX
Alaska Moose Federation	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX



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Facilitator Role— Examples of Operations

This page will provide examples of programs which help justify the role of the Alaska Moose Federation in its request to receive funding as the facilitator in this multi-agency, private and public partnership.

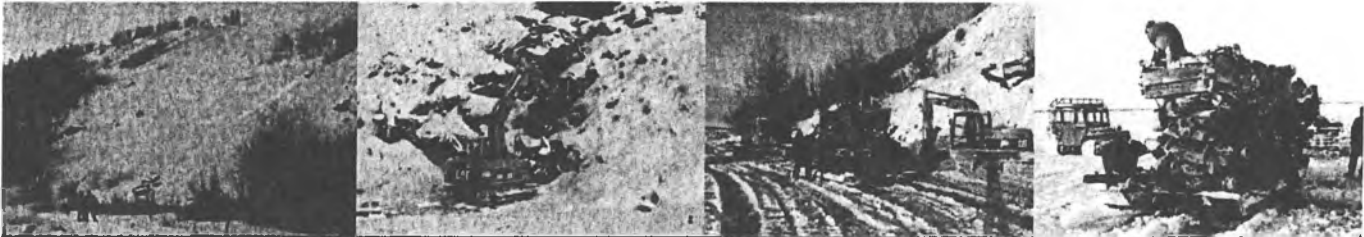
Anchorage roadkill salvage program: This effort included multi-year meetings with DPS/ State Troopers, DOT, ADF&G and the Anchorage Police Department (APD). Begun 12/09. Picked up over 20 moose so far.



Charities working on the road surface has stopped.

Effort begun by 4 donated trucks to the AMF. A Highway Safety Office grant modified the trucks. We now save APD 2 hours per retrieval and the moose are delivered to the charities.

Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge/ Kincaid Park landfill cleanup: The AMF facilitated this public/private partnership which removed nearly 100 junked cars from the refuge for ADF&G and the City of Anch.



This project included ADF&G, City of Anchorage, Anchorage Soil & Water Conservation District, NC Machinery, GCI, Beek's Excavating, Granite Construction, Inlet Petroleum, Alaska Metal Recycling and the AMF.

New Seward Brush Removal: The AMF facilitated the initial moose browse removal from the New Seward.



This project included DOT, DPS, City of Anchorage, Alaska Waste, SAGA and the AMF.

Mears Jr. High Wildlife Education: ADF&G and the salvage program educated 400 students at Mears



This project included ADF&G, Anchorage School District, Mears science teachers, Pruhs Corporation and the AMF.



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Legislation Request for 2010

Amending 5 AAC 92.230 to allow feeding of moose in the performance of the Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan

5 AAC 92.230. Feeding of game

A person may not intentionally feed a moose (except under terms of a permit issued by the department), bear, wolf, coyote, fox, or wolverine, or negligently leave human food, pet food, or garbage in a manner that attracts these animals. However, this prohibition does not apply to use of bait for trapping furbearers or hunting black bears under 5 AAC 84 - 5 AAC 92 or in the performance of the Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

This would allow for the intentional feeding of moose to encourage them to live away from highway & railroad corridors. The Norway effort of right-of-way clearing and diversionary feeding away from transportation corridors resulted in a 46% decrease in moose collisions over 18 years. ADF&G leadership sees no opposition per this change request. This change will enable this activity to not fall to middle agency management who may or may not be interested in highway moose mitigation.

This mitigation strategy is located within the Strategic Highway Safety Plan under **HM.4 CREATE WINTER CONNECTIVITY SNOW TRAILS AND DIVERSIONARY TREE CUTTING TO ENCOURAGE MOOSE TO STAY AWAY FROM ROAD SURFACES - TIER ONE.**

The website for this study is as follows: <http://www.bio.uio.no/cees/img/pictures/Andreassen%20et%20al%202005%20-%20Remedial%20action.pdf>.

Abstract: *We analyzed how the application of scent-marking, forest clearing, and supplemental feeding correlated with the number of moose (*Alces alces*)–train collisions along the most vulnerable railroad stretch in Norway. Data on 1,045 collisions has been compiled for 18 years since 1985, and remedial actions have occurred during various periods since 1990. We used sections of the rail line where remedies had never been applied as control sections to estimate the expected number of collisions per year and per km. In this way, we took into account the yearly variation in the number of accidents by using the difference between the actual number of accidents and the expected number of accidents as our response variable. We compared the difference between periods when remedies were applied to periods without any remedy. We found a general 46% decrease in the number of accidents during years with a remedy compared to what would have been expected the same years without any remedy. Forest clearing and supplemental feeding seem to be reliable ways of reducing the number of collisions. Scent was only applied for short distances in a few years, and the beneficial effects we observed were questionable. We conclude that mitigative effects may substantially reduce accidental mortality in moose populations if applied for long distances. We discuss the economics of game-vehicle collisions by performing a simple calculation to visualize the need for a bioeconomic approach to the problem.*

Key contact people for this include: ADF&G Assistant Commissioner Corey Rossi at 355-2473.
Colonel Audie Holloway of the Alaska State Troopers at 269-5641.
DOT Director of Research & Development Clint Adler at 451-5321.
Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Dave Carey at 262-4441.
Denali Borough Mayor Dave Talerico at 683-1330.

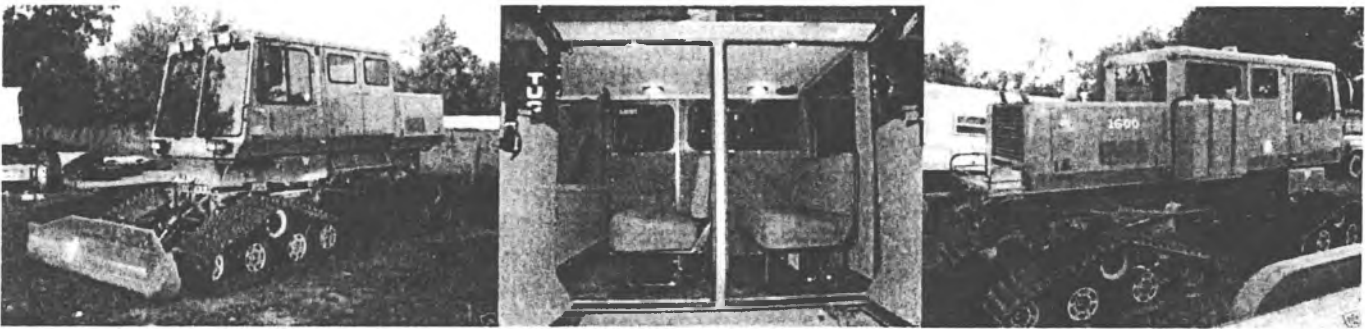
Legislation Request for 2010 (Funding request back up)

Amending 5 AAC 92.230 to allow feeding of moose in the performance of the Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan

\$300,000

Funding Request: The funding request for this effort would enable the AMF to perform the silage work adjacent to known wildlife collision corridors in the Mat-Su, Anchorage and Kenai areas.

The primary component for the operation of this snow cat is the purchase of a specialized unit which is powerful enough to transport the silage off of the road surface as well as the ability for the unit to provide simple living quarters for multiple days of operation. The unit below is a 2007 Tucker 1643 RE snow cat that holds 8 people. The two rear bench seats are removable which provide the ability for multiple day excursions. **The cost of this unit is \$115,000.**



An additional benefit to this vehicle will be in the performance of Search And Rescue (SAR) operations with the Alaska State Troopers and other emergency response agencies as performed by the Alaska Moose Federation. Recently, the AMF assisted state and federal emergency agencies in the rescue of an injured snowmachiner that was injured 11 miles up the Snow River out of Seward. Our 1994 Tucker Snow Cat (pictured) recovered 6 state snow machines from the Snow River while building a snow trail to within 1 mile of the injured party before the blizzard cleared enough for a Coast Guard Jayhawk helicopter from Kodiak to rescue the injured party. It snowed 3' during this rescue effort. The rescue sled was secured to the top of the rack of the snow cat. If the blizzard would have kept up, we would have been forced to secure the injured party to the top of the snow cat for transport to the highway. This unit being requested would allow for individuals to be within the protection of the cab.



The remaining portion of this funding request is for a truck and trailer, grass silage, fuel, maintenance and other costs associated with this effort. The process which creates silage, within the plastic wrapped bales, actually kills all seeds so there are no invasive weed issues regarding this work. All silage bales will be purchased in the Mat-Su Borough. We are needing a **Chevy 5500 crewcab 4x4 truck with a gooseneck trailer = \$60,000.** Purchase 150 bales of silage @ \$400/ bale = **\$60,000.** The fuel is estimated at **\$25,000.** Insurance, maintenance and operating expenses are **\$40,000.**



This is not a cost to the state but an investment: It is strongly anticipated that this program will be very successful as evidenced in Norway study (detailed on the first page). If the AMF is able to stop 100 moose collisions per year using this strategy, that would be an annual savings to Alaska equaling \$3,500,000 in vehicle damage and personal injury savings (\$35,000 per collision per DOT data). As cars continue to get smaller while moose remain the same size, it is imperative that the state help invest in increasing safety in known wildlife collision corridors to offset the continual growth of this major hazard on Alaska's highways.



Photo from Tucker Snow Cat Home Page

As evidenced by this particular snow cat in operation in Carbon County in the Rockies, these particular units are routinely used for Search And Rescue purposes in other states. This vehicle, as an operating component of this diversionary feeding program, is a solid investment for safety both on and off of Alaska's highways.



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Legislative Target 2010 Salvage Program Expansion

Moose Salvage Expansion—\$130,000

The current operations of the AMF salvage program cover the Anchorage Bowl from Knik River Bridge to Indian. There are 3 AMF trucks which have been outfitted to pick up moose whole which then deliver the moose to the existing charities. One truck in particular was donated by Alaska Waste which has a Stellar Hooklift unit that enables the AMF to pick up a moose in less than 10 minutes at the road surface with ease!



Previous salvage operations (pictured below)



routinely saw the charities butcher the moose, typically in poor driving conditions, on the road surface. This new program not

only saves the police over 2 hours per retrieval but also vividly points out the current safety liability to the charities in the Mat-Su and Kenai areas where this previous protocol still occurs.

The stories on the left side of the page show 3 recent, vivid examples where prolonged exposure on the road surface is growing extremely hazardous. This appropriation will allow the purchase of **fuel (\$35,000) insurance (\$25,000), and additional funding to outfit 10 additional donated trucks (\$70,000)** which will significantly increase safety in the Mat-Su, Kenai and Anchorage areas.

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Valley crash closes Parks Highway, injures 3

HIGHWAY CLOSED: Parks blocked at Trunk Road when sedan rear-ends trooper vehicle.

By RANDI WHITE
rwhite@adn.com

Published: February 8th, 2010 11:02 PM
Last Modified: February 8th, 2010 11:38 PM

WASILLA -- A stretch of the Parks Highway near Wasilla was closed temporarily and three people were taken to the hospital for treatment Monday after a car rear-ended an Alaska State Trooper pickup and burst into flames.

- Story tools
- Comments (45)
- Recommended (0)
- Email a friend
- Print

Alaska State Trooper spokeswoman Megan Peters said trooper Cody Utstar, 32, was stopped on the shoulder after checking on a vehicle in distress when the other car hit his pickup from behind.



enlarge
RANDI WHITE / Anchorage Daily News
Backed-up traffic waits while emergency medical responders check for injuries following a four-car accident that shut down a portion of the Parks Highway near the Trunk Road overpass Monday afternoon. An Alaska State Trooper stopped his truck to check whether anyone was inside the silver SUV in the ditch near his truck. After he got back in his vehicle, he was rear-ended by another car.

Mat-Su Features

The Mat-Su View

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Motorist with car trouble killed on Glenn

FATALITY: Witness says glare may have contributed as truck hit stalled vehicle.

By JAMES HALJEN
jhaljen@adn.com

Published: January 8th, 2010 08:13 PM
Last Modified: January 8th, 2010 08:13 PM

A driver who stopped along the side of the Glenn Highway, possibly with vehicle trouble, was killed Thursday afternoon when a pickup rear-ended his vehicle, throwing it forward some 50 feet and pinning the man underneath it, according to police.

- Story tools
- Comments (108)
- Recommended (18)
- Email a friend

The driver, Robert Marvin, 76, was trapped with his chest under the front axle of a Volkswagen van after the pickup apparently coming onto the highway from the South Birchwood on-ramp near Chugiak High School struck the van about 3:15 p.m., according to police.

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- Path critics question ethical rules proposals
- Houston City Council votes to keep police sergeant in office
- Path calls global warming studies 'snake oil science'
- Anchorage maintains its high rating on short-term bonds
- Whales suspect in struggles of Prince William Sound herring

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Car strikes, kills man walking in darkness on Glenn Highway

SUNDAY: Victim, wearing dark clothing, struck by Ford Taurus.

By KYLIE MCNAMIS
kymcnamis@adn.com

Published: October 4th, 2009 04:46 PM
Last Modified: October 5th, 2009 02:23 PM

A pedestrian was hit and killed early Sunday morning on the Glenn Highway, police say.

- Story tools
- Comments (70)
- Recommended (4)

The collision occurred just after midnight in the inbound lane of the highway, just south of the South Peters Creek exit, said Lt. Dave Parker, a police spokesman. The investigation closed the highway southbound until about 4:50 a.m.

More Anchorage stories >

- Valley crash closes Parks Highway, injures 3
- Bank robber gets 12 years after using ID in heist
- Anchorage maintains its high rating on short-term bonds
- Fantasy costumes at ski event combat all-too-real abuse
- Bill calls for protecting people over wildlife in Anchorage

trucks (\$70,000) which will significantly increase safety in the Mat-Su, Kenai and Anchorage areas.