

**Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project  
(FERC No. 14241)**

**Small Mammal Species Composition and Habitat Use  
Study Plan Section 10.12**

**Part D: Supplemental Information to  
June 2014 Initial Study Report**

Prepared for

Alaska Energy Authority



**SUSITNA-WATANA HYDRO**

*Clean, reliable energy for the next 100 years.*

Prepared by

ABR, Inc.—Environmental Research & Services

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Section 1 (Part A) of the June 2014 ISR for the Small Mammal Species Composition and Habitat Use Study (Study Plan 10.12) details the development of this study from the Revised Study Plan (RSP) in 2012, through the end of the 2013 study season. Section 7 of the ISR (Part C), filed in June 2014, sets forth AEA's plan and schedule, at that time, for completing this study and meeting the objectives of the RSP.

As detailed in Section 2.2 of the ISR Part D Overview, various circumstances have required AEA to extend the original timeframe for completing the Commission-approved Study Plan. As explained in the June 2014 ISR, this Study 10.12 was not implemented in the 2013 study season. Since that time, this study continues to be deferred.

The primary purpose of this Part D Supplemental Information to the ISR for Study 10.12 is to identify all documents associated with this study, provide a summary of variances and modifications presented in the ISR (Parts A and C), and identify AEA's plans for completing Study 10.12 in a manner that meets the objectives of the Commission-approved Study Plan.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Purpose of Study

The goal of the study is to synthesize baseline data on small mammals in the Project area to enable habitat-based assessments of the impacts expected to occur from development of the Project.

The study objectives are established in RSP Section 10.12.1:

- Describe the species composition and relative abundance of small mammals in the Project area.
- Describe the habitat associations of small mammals within the Project area.

### 2.2. Study Components

The components of this study include the following:

- Information on small mammals in the Project area will be compiled and synthesized from the available literature, including the extensive small mammal survey data collected in the 1980s for the Alaska Power Authority (APA) Project.
- Information synthesis will be used to assess the use and relative importance of wildlife habitats (see RSP Section 10.19).

### 3. STATUS, HIGHLIGHTED RESULTS, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Section 7 of ISR 10.12 (Part C), filed in June 2014, described that the implementation of this study was deferred. Since that time, AEA has not completed any additional work on this study. Therefore, there are no results or updates to report for this study.

### 4. SUMMARY OF STUDY 10.12 DOCUMENTS

Since filing of the RSP in 2012, AEA and FERC have prepared several documents pertaining to this study. To aid review by FERC staff and licensing participants, each of these documents is listed below. Each of these documents is accessible on AEA's Project licensing website (<http://www.susitna-watanahydro.org/type/documents/>) by clicking on the entry in the "Link" column in the table. In addition, these documents are available on FERC's eLibrary system (<http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp>), in Docket No. P-14241.

Title	Date	Description	Link
10.12. Small Mammal Species Composition and Habitat Use (Revised Study Plan)	12/14/2012	This document presents the plan for this study, including goals, objectives, the study area, and proposed study methods for small mammals.	<a href="#">RSP for Study 10.12</a>
FERC Study Plan Determination for Study 10.12	2/1/2013	This document presents FERC approval of Study 10.12, which approved AEA's Revised Study Plan with no recommended changes.	<a href="#">FERC SPD for Study 10.12</a>
Draft Initial Study Report for Study 10.12	2/3/2014	This draft of the ISR summarized the study methods and variances during the 2013 study season, and presented preliminary data collected for Study 10.12. This draft ISR was later republished as Part A of the final ISR.	<a href="#">Draft ISR for Study 10.12</a>
Initial Study Report for Study 10.12	6/3/2014	This document is the Initial Study Report (Parts A, B and C) for Study 10.12. Part A republishes the Draft ISR. Part B identifies supplemental information and errata in Part A. Part C presents study modifications and plans for completing the study.	<a href="#">ISR Part A for Study 10.12</a> <a href="#">ISR Part B for Study 10.12</a> <a href="#">ISR Part C for Study 10.12</a>
Initial Study Report Meetings, October 21, 2014 (Parts A and B)	11/15/2014	Transcripts and AEA's agenda and Powerpoint presentations for the ISR meeting concerning the Project wildlife studies filed by AEA.	<a href="#">Transcripts from ISR Meeting</a> <a href="#">Materials from ISR Meeting</a>

### 5. NEW STUDY DOCUMENTATION SUPPLEMENTING THE ISR

Because this study has been deferred, no additional reports or documents are available to supplement the ISR for this Study 10.12.

## **6. VARIANCES**

### **6.1. 2013 Study Season**

The following variance is reported in the June 2014 ISR:

- The study was deferred until the next study season (2014; ISR 10.19, Part A, Section 4) and then to 2015 (ISR 10.19, Part C, Section 7) rather than being implemented in 2013, as proposed in RSP Sections 10.12.6 and 10.12.10.

### **6.2. 2014 Study Season**

Because this study has been deferred, no variances were encountered during the 2014 study season.

## **7. STUDY PLAN MODIFICATIONS**

### **7.1. Modifications Identified in ISR**

As detailed in Section 7 of the ISR (Part C), AEA plans no modifications of the methods for this study. However, the study area has been changed from that described in the RSP (Section 10.12.3). As described in Section 1.3 of the ISR Part D Overview, AEA has eliminated the Chulitna Corridor and added the Denali East Option road and transmission line alternative corridor to the study area.

### **7.2. Modifications Identified since the June 2014 ISR**

Other than the modification identified in Section 7.1 regarding the study area, AEA has identified no modifications of the methods for this study since the June 2014 ISR.

## **8. STEPS TO COMPLETE THE STUDY**

In light of the variances and modifications described above, the steps necessary for AEA to complete this study are summarized below:

- Review, analysis, and synthesis of existing data on the occurrence and relative abundance of small mammal species;
- Incorporation of additional information on abundance and habitat use by snowshoe hares and voles from Study 10.10, Terrestrial Furbearer Abundance and Habitat Use; and
- Application of this synthesis to the wildlife habitat types mapped by Study 11.5, Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Mapping in the Upper and Middle Susitna Basin, and inclusion in the ranking of habitat values that will be the principal analytical product of Study 10.19, Evaluation of Wildlife Habitat Use.