

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

**Wildlife Harvest Analysis
Study Plan Section 10.20**

**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

Fairbanks, Alaska

November 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Background	1
2.1. Purpose of Study	1
2.2. Study Components	2
3. Status, Highlighted Results, and Achievements.....	2
4. Summary of Study 10.20 Documents	2
5. New Study Documentation Supplementing the ISR.....	3
6. Variances	3
6.1. 2013 Study Season	3
6.2. 2014 Study Season	3
7. Study Plan Modifications	4
7.1. Modifications Identified in ISR.....	4
7.2. Modifications Identified since the June 2014 ISR	4
8. Steps to Complete the Study	4

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 1 (Part A) of the June 2014 ISR for the Wildlife Harvest Analysis Study (Study Plan 10.20) 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 10.20 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 10.20 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 10.20 in a manner that meets the objectives of the Commission-approved Study Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Purpose of Study

The goal of this study is to compile and analyze information on the distribution of big game, furbearers, and small game (including both small mammals and upland gamebirds, assuming data are available) and to understand patterns of hunting effort and harvest in the study area. These data will provide information on identification of past and current trends in hunter access modes, hunting locations, and harvest locations, and identify potential Project-induced changes that are likely to alter hunter access or harvest patterns. These findings will help predict the impacts of those changes on wildlife harvests. This study is a multi-year effort that began in 2012 with the Technical Memorandum *Past and Current Big Game and Furbearer Harvest Analysis*.

The study objectives are established in RSP Section 10.20.1:

- Identify past and current harvest effort for large and small game including furbearers, harvest locations, access modes and routes.
- Compare current harvest locations of large and small game, including furbearers, with data on the seasonal distribution, abundance, and movements of harvested species, using the results of other, concurrent Project studies on big game and furbearers (RSP Sections 10.5–10.11).
- Provide harvest data for use in the analyses to be conducted for the recreation and subsistence resource studies (RSP Sections 12.5 and 14.5, respectively).

The information developed in this study will be used to help develop any necessary measures to address Project impacts on hunting opportunities, hunter distribution, and impacts to game species abundance.

2.2. Study Components

This study consists of the following components:

- Compilation and analysis of Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) harvest database records.
- Review of ADF&G management reports.
- Review of ADF&G trapper questionnaires.
- Review of ADF&G small game outlook and harvest surveys.
- Review of ADF&G and USFWS subsistence surveys and harvest reports.
- Interviews with regional biologists.
- Comparison of harvest patterns with development plans and the distribution of game mammals and birds.

3. STATUS, HIGHLIGHTED RESULTS, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Section 7 of ISR 10.20 (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 10.20 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
10.20. Wildlife Harvest Analysis Study (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 the wildlife harvest analysis.	RSP for Study 10.20

Title	Date	Description	Link
FERC Study Plan Determination for Study 10.20	2/1/2013	This document presents FERC approval of Study 10.20, which approved AEA's Revised Study Plan with no recommended changes.	FERC SPD for Study 10.20
Past and Current Big Game and Furbearer Harvest Analysis (2012 Technical Memorandum)	3/7/2013	This technical memorandum summarizes existing information on big game and furbearer harvest.	Mar. 2013 TM for Study 10.20
Draft Initial Study Report for Study 10.20	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 10.20. This draft ISR was later republished as Part A of the final ISR.	Draft ISR for Study 10.20
Initial Study Report for Study 10.20	6/3/2014	This document is the Initial Study Report (Parts A, B and C) for Study 10.20. 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.	ISR Part A for Study 10.20 ISR Part B for Study 10.20 ISR Part C for Study 10.20
Initial Study Report Meetings, October 21, 2014	11/15/2014	Transcripts and AEA's agenda and PowerPoint presentations for the ISR meeting concerning the Project wildlife studies filed by AEA.	Transcripts from ISR Meeting Materials from ISR Meeting

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 10.20.

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 10.20, Part A, Section 4) and then to 2015 (ISR 10.20, Part C, Section 7) rather than being initiated in 2013 (RSP Section 10.20.10).

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 ISR 10.20 (Part C), AEA plans no modifications of the methods for this study.

7.2. Modifications Identified since the June 2014 ISR

AEA has identified no modifications of the methods for this study since the June 2014 ISR.

8. STEPS TO COMPLETE THE STUDY

The steps necessary for AEA to complete this study are summarized below (and described in RSP Section 10.20.4):

- Compilation and analysis of Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) harvest database records;
- Review of ADF&G management reports;
- Review of ADF&G trapper questionnaires;
- Review of ADF&G small game outlook and harvest surveys;
- Review of ADF&G and USFWS subsistence surveys and harvest reports;
- Interviews with regional biologists; and
- Comparison of harvest patterns with development plans and the distribution of game mammals and birds.