

Survey Information Sheet for the Inclusive Conservation Executive Committee

Introduction

We will soon be launching the next phase of our Inclusive Conservation research project with communities in the Denali region. This information sheet provides an overview of our current research plans. We welcome any feedback or thoughts from members of our Executive Committee about how we can improve our process.

Why are we conducting this research?

The purpose of our project is to understand multiple viewpoints on the future of public land management in Alaska. Building on two years of in-depth discussions with residents living in the Denali region, we have two populations that we will be sampling in the next phase of the project, and so we refer to them as two different surveys. The survey of residents along the Parks Highway – or the Interior Alaska survey – examines people’s experiences and uses of natural resources in Interior Alaska, as well as preferences for the future alternatives of public land management. The second survey draws from a broader population and is directed at representing residents across the state of Alaska. This state-wide survey also examines experiences, uses and perspectives on natural resources and will be a point of comparison. Findings from both surveys will be shared widely in various forms (e.g., reports, presentations, a film), and we hope can be used for planning and management related to the diverse interests of both residents and their associations with public lands.

Who will receive our surveys?

For our Interior Alaska survey, we have purchased contact information for 3,000 residents living in the Interior Alaska from the U.S. Postal Service (Fig. 1). Our questionnaire will be sent to ~95% of residents living between Nenana and Talkeetna that are located on or near the Parks Highway, as well as all residents in Minchumina and a small number (9.7%) of people living in one zip code west of Fairbanks. These addresses include PO boxes and street addresses where mail is received.

For our state-wide survey, we have purchased a sample of approximately 500 residents in the state from a company called Qualtrics. The majority of these residents live in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. This sample will be representative of Alaskan demographics on the basis of age and gender according to the 2010 Census.

What is our survey process?

While our state-wide survey will be administered online only, our Alaska Interior survey will be administered in three waves. **First**, we will send the questionnaire and an introductory letter to all 3,000 residents in the Interior. We will invite them to complete and return the questionnaire by mail using a postage paid envelope or complete it online using an ID number. That is, we will track who participates in the study to calculate a response rate so the online version can only be completed with an ID number. **Next**, after approximately one week, all people who did not respond will receive a reminder post-card. **Finally**, after two weeks, another packet including the questionnaire and final cover letter will be distributed to all non-respondents.

How will we encourage participation?

We will encourage participation for our Alaska Interior survey in several ways. In addition to contacting potential respondents on three occasions, we will draw on “best practices” established in previous research. Our team will be hand addressing envelopes to personalize correspondence, using first class stamps, printing our questionnaire covers and introductory letters in color, signing our cover letters, and use distinctly colored envelopes. We will also be posting flyers, making announcements in the media (e.g., radio, Facebook) and distributing our newsletter when the survey is launched to raise awareness. Members of our Executive Committee will also be asked to encourage participation of people at their places of employment. It is our hope that at least 30% of residents contacted will participate in the study.

What are the next steps?

We are pilot testing our survey with 30 residents who live in a rural zip code west of Fairbanks. The pilot test is being administered online through a company called Qualtrics. Results from our pilot test will be used to make adjustments to formatting and identify any issues with how our questions are worded. Both surveys are projected to launch May 2020. We would welcome any thoughts about the proposed process that we have outlined in this information sheet. Feedback on the questionnaire sent along with this email would also be appreciated and very much welcomed – either email or telephone discussions would work well to receive your feedback. We will look forward to entering and analyzing our data in summer/fall 2020 and sharing results in various formats as they become available over the coming years.

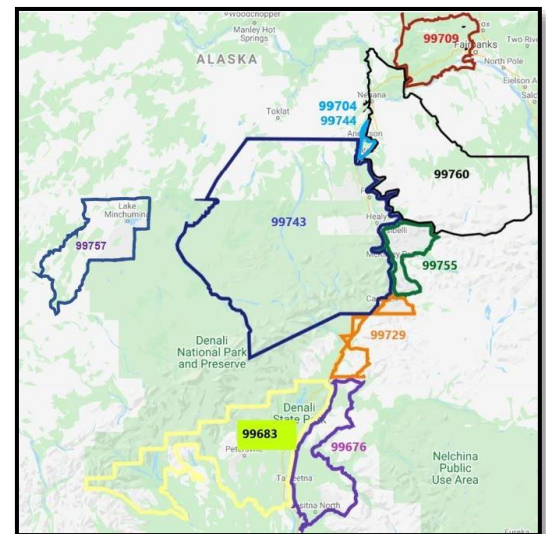


Figure 1. Zip codes of residents in our Interior Alaska survey who will be asked to participate