

Alaska Lands Update

monthly updates on Federal management
actions for the people of Alaska

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
Photo Credit: USFWS

Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas, Department of Natural Resources, State of Alaska
3700 Airport Way Fairbanks, AK 99709

Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange/Road Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announces the availability of a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge proposed land exchange/road corridor for public review and comment. The DEIS evaluates a proposed road corridor through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and the Izembek Wilderness Area.

The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge is a unit of the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge located at the westernmost tip of the Alaska Peninsula. Established in December 1980 by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Section 303(3) which redesignated the existing Izembek National Wildlife Range, containing the 417,533-acre watershed surrounding Izembek Lagoon and Section 702 (6) of ANILCA designated 300,000 acres (72%) of the Izembek Refuge Unit as wilderness. The extraordinary wildlife and wilderness resources of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge have been recognized for their national and international significance. Congress designated the wilderness area for its outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined type of recreation. It contains outstanding ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, and historical value. It has retained its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, and is currently managed to protect and preserve its natural conditions.

The EIS is to analyze the proposed land exchange and the potential construction and

operation of a road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. The Service identifies a specific road corridor through the Refuge in consultation with the State, the City of King Cove and the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove. Following completion of the EIS and Record of Decision the Secretary is required to determine whether the land is in the public interest.

There are five alternative, including a "No Action" alternative. No preferred alternative has been selected for the Draft EIS, pending evaluation of public comments and a preferred alternative will be identified in the final EIS. The document and project history can be found at <http://izembek.fws.gov/EIS.htm>. Public open house meetings will be held in Anchorage, Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon and Sand Point, Alaska. Dates, times, and locations of each meeting or open house will be announced in advance in local media and on their Web sites.

The Service seeks comments on the issues and alternatives addressed in the DEIS, and all substantive comments will be addressed in the final EIS. Comments are considered substantive if they: question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of the information in the document; question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of the environmental assessment; present reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the draft EIS; and/or provide new or additional information relevant to the assessment.

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USFS Planning Rule is Final

On March 23, 2012 the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment signed the final planning rule for National Forest System land management planning. The final rule is the result of the most collaborative rulemaking effort in Agency history. This effort included hosting over 63 public meetings across the country and receiving over 325,000 public comments. The Forest Service can begin using the final planning rule to develop, revise, and amend plans 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

There are very few differences between the preferred alternative that was released to the public in the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on February 3, 2012 and the final planning rule. A few clarifications were made to better represent the intent of the preferred alternative. These clarifications do not substantively change the rule.

The final planning rule can be found at the Planning Rule website located at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule>. There is also information on what's next and how to stay involved. There will still be several opportunities for you to contribute to the planning process, such as the development of new directives to provide more specific direction on how to consistently implement the new rule, and the public will have an opportunity to comment on the directives before they're finalized. There will also be a new federal advisory committee to advise the Chief of the Forest Service and Secretary of Agriculture on implementation of the new rule. The committee will begin meeting this summer and all committee meetings will be open to the public. ♦

The JPARC Draft Environmental Impact Statement is now Available

On March 30, 2012, the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released for public review and comment. The proposed JPARC enhancements would: Enable realistic training and testing to support new technologies; respond to recent battlefield experiences, and enable the military to train with new weapons systems and tactics so military personnel can succeed in actual combat. The DEIS is available online and for download <http://www.jparceis.com>. Hard copies are available for review at area libraries. The Draft includes agency expertise and comments by the public during the scoping process. It also contains a description of the affected environment, a reasonable range of alternatives for each proposed action, and an analysis of the impacts of each proposed action alternative, including the no action alternative.

Comments will be accepted through Thursday, June 7, 2012 and may be submitted in writing, orally, and electronically; visit the project website for more information. Public hearings are planned for various locations during the month of May, 2012. To view the Spring 2012 newsletter visit

<http://www.jparceis.com/JPARC%20EIS%20NewsLetter%20Spring%202012.pdf>.

For additional information contact the ALCOM Public Affairs Office, 9480 Pease Avenue, Suite 120 JBER, AK 99506, phone: 907-552-2341, fax: 907-552-5411. ♦

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AS 41.37.160 The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas in Alaska is established in the department [Natural Resources]. In the exercise of its responsibilities, the commission shall consider the views of citizens of the state and officials of the state.

Lake Clark General Management Plan Amendment Preliminary Alternatives are Open for Public Review

The National Park Service (NPS) has released a General Management Plan (GMP) Revision for Lake Clark National Park and Preserve that will provide updated direction for managing the park over the next 15 to 20 years. After scoping in the summer of 2011, NPS has developed three preliminary alternative concepts and potential management zones for the park which would amend the existing 1984 GMP. You may access this information at the NPS PEPC website, <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=36331>. Your ideas and concerns are welcomed and encouraged. Comments should be received before Tuesday, May 8, 2012, and can be:

Sent electronically: Complete the electronic version of the comment form on the web at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/lacl> (click on "General Management Plan - Lake Clark National Park and Preserve" and then "Open for Public Comment").

Mailed to: Lake Clark National Park and Preserve - GMP Amendment, 240 W. 5th Ave, Suite 236, Anchorage, AK 99501

Emailed to: LACL_Planning@nps.gov.

Shared at an open house: You may provide your comments in person and speak with planning team directly about your ideas, experiences, and questions at one of four upcoming open houses. The open house schedule is: Tuesday April 10, 2012 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm at the Alaska Islands and Ocean Visitor Center located at 95 Sterling Highway, Homer, AK 99603; ph. 907-235-6961. Wednesday April 11, 2012 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm at the Donald E. Gilman River Center, 514 Funny River Road, Soldotna, AK 99669; ph. 907-260-4882. Thursday April 12, 2012 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm at the Campbell Creek Science Center located at 5600 Science Center Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507; ph. 907-276-1247; and on Thursday April 26, 2012 from 10am to 11 am there will be an online meeting at <http://www.facebook.com/AlaskaNPS>. ♦

Alaska Federal Lands Long Range Transportation Plan comment deadline is

Wednesday, April 11, 2012.

For more information visit the National Parks Service PEPC website at

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=39393>

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Planning Update Released

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has issued their fourth planning update on the Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The booklet summarizes the public comments we received on the Draft CCP/EIS.

During the public comment period, which ran from August 15 to November 15, 2011, more than 612,000 communications were received (e.g., letters, emails, faxes, website submissions, statements at public meetings, etc.). Of these communications, 1,990 were unique, 115,468 were customized form letters, and the remainder were identical form letters originating from 28 different organizations.

The Planning Update booklet quotes a subset of the communications received to provide insight on the breadth of public comments. Every communication we received was read and reviewed. Each was evaluated to determine if it addressed specific elements of the Draft CCP/EIS, and Refuge staff are in the process of writing responses to these communications. The Service's responses will be published in the Final CCP/EIS later this year.

The Planning Update and more information on the CCP process can be found at <http://arctic.fws.gov/ccp.htm>. A limited number of printed copies of the booklet are also available. If you would like to receive one, please send your mailing information to:

ArcticRefugeCCP@fws.gov. ♦

Agency Websites:

National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/state/ak/index.htm>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<http://alaska.fws.gov/>

U.S. Forest Service - Region 10, Alaska

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/>

Bureau of Land Management

<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en.html>

Department of the Interior

<http://www.doi.gov/>

National Marine Fisheries Service

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/>

BLM-Alaska Releases Draft NPR-A Plan

On March 29, 2012 the Bureau of Land Management released the Draft Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. The five volume document, available online at www.blm.gov/ak,



proposes several alternative future management strategies for the nearly 23-million acres of federal lands in the NPR-A on Alaska's North Slope. The public comment period will run from March 30 through June 1.

The draft plan proposes several alternative future management strategies for the NPR-A. This plan is the first plan that covers the entire NPR-A, including BLM-managed lands in the southwest area of the NPR-A which were not included in previous plans. Decisions to be made as part of this plan include oil and gas leasing availability, surface protections, Wild and Scenic River recommendations and Special Area designations. The NPR-A IAP/EIS presents four alternative approaches for the planning effort including a "No Action" alternative.

"From key oil and gas reserves, to the Teshekpuk and Western Arctic caribou herds, to the world-class breeding and nesting ground for numerous species of waterfowl, the NPR-A contains resources that must be considered and balanced in a way that will best meet the present and future needs of our nation, Alaska,

and the local residents who depend on these lands for their subsistence way of life," said BLM-Alaska State Director Bud Cribley. "This plan will guide decisions that will affect some of our nation's most significant and important resources, and I hope the

public will take advantage of this opportunity to provide input as we move forward."

A *Federal Register* Notice of Availability for the plan was published on March 30 and has launched the official public comment period, March 30 through June 1. The public

is invited to provide comments about the draft plan and its alternatives. Comments must be received by June 1, 2012 to be considered. There are five ways to submit comments:

- Online by accessing the BLM's website at www.blm.gov/ak;
- By mail to: NPR-A IAP/EIS Comments, AECOM Project Office, 1835 South Bragaw Street, Suite 490, Anchorage, AK 99508.
- By fax to: (866) 611-9420 or (907) 268-4224;
- By hand-delivering your comments to AECOM at their Anchorage address listed above or to BLM's Public Information Center in the Federal Building, 222 W. 7th Ave., Anchorage;
- By speaking at public meetings on the Draft IAP/EIS that will be held in May in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and the North Slope communities of Anaktuvuk Pass, Atkasuk, Barrow, Nuiqsut, Point Lay, and Wainwright;

If you have questions about the public comment process, please call Jim Ducker, BLM-Alaska Project Lead at (907) 271-3130. ♦

Glacier Bay National Park - News Releases

On March 8, 2012, the Glacier Bay National Park (GLBA) Superintendent Susan L. Boudreau released the following information on their website, <http://www.nps.gov/glba/parknews/newsreleases.htm>

Disposal of human waste in undeveloped areas - The 2012 superintendent's compendium current regulation on disposing of human waste in the Wilderness is currently under review. Currently the 2012 compendium regulation reads: "2.14(a) (9) Sanitation: designated areas for disposal of human waste in undeveloped areas. When the ground is not frozen, human feces must be either packed out or deposited in a "cathole" dug 6-8 inches deep in soil at least 100 feet from any water source, shoreline, campsite or trail. When the ground is frozen, human feces must be disposed over at least 100 feet from any water source and covered with snow or packed out. Tissue paper and sanitary items should be buried, burned or packed out.

(Continued on page 6)

A Meeting of the Denali National Park and Preserve Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council

The National Park Service (NPS) announces a meeting of the Denali National Park and Preserve Aircraft Overflights Advisory Council. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss mitigation of impacts from aircraft overflights at Denali National Park and Preserve. This meeting is open to the public and will have time allocated for public testimony. The Council will meet on Monday, April 23rd, 2012, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Residence Inn Anchorage Midtown, 1025 35th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99508, phone (907) 563-9844.

For additional information contact Miriam Valentine, Denali Planning by email at

Miriam.Valentine@nps.gov, phone (907) 733-9102 at Denali National Park, Talkeetna Ranger Station, PO Box 588, Talkeetna, AK 99676. ♦

The National Park Service Outreach Event

The National Park Service (NPS) will mark its 100th anniversary in 2016, and is embarking on a series of actions to transform its work. To start that transformation, the leadership of the Alaska Region of the NPS is beginning a series of public conversations about how the Service should work to accomplish the major themes of the centennial as well as discuss current operations and issues in Alaska's national parks. The centennial themes include how to better connect people to parks, how to advance the NPS education mission, and how to better preserve America's special places.

Alaska-specific topics to be discussed include how state predator control and intensive wildlife management programs are affecting national park units, improving the on-line offerings of national parks to better serve both in-person and virtual visitors, and operational changes that could make national parks easier to visit.

The outreach events will take place in several locations during 2012, both at public meetings hosted by the NPS and as a part of other large public events. The schedule is as follows:

Meetings were held in Anchorage on March 29th and 31st, at the Great Alaska Sportsman Show, Sullivan Arena; and to be held

In Fairbanks on April 17, 5-8 p.m. at the Morris Thompson Center Open House; and

In Palmer on May 22, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Community Center, also known as The Depot.

For more information contact John Quinley, Asst. Regional Director, Communications & Partnerships of the National Park Service -- Alaska Region, 240 West 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501, ph. 907-644-3512. ♦



Izembek Land Exchange/ Road Corridor DEIS (continued)

(Continued from page 1) To ensure consideration, please send your written comments by Friday, May 18, 2012. Comments may be submitted or requests for copies or more information may be made by any of the following methods. You may request a summary of the DEIS, or a CD-ROM containing the summary and full DEIS. *Agency Web Site:* Download a copy of the summary or full DEIS document at <http://izembek.fws.gov/EIS.htm>. *Email:*

izembek_eis@fws.gov; include "Izembek National Wildlife Refuge DEIS" in the subject line of the message. *Fax:* Attn: Stephanie Brady, Project Team Leader, (907) 786-3965. *U.S. Mail:* Stephanie Brady, Project Team Leader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503. *In-Person Pickup or Drop-off:* You may pick up a copy or drop off comments during regular business hours at the address listed above.

For additional information contact: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-3357. ♦



BLM-Alaska Eastern Interior RMP Public Meeting Schedule

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Interior Field Office has released the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS). This RMP will provide future direction for 6.7 million acres of public land including the White Mountains National Recreation Area, the Steese National Conservation Area, and the Fortymile area. In addition, it will cover BLM lands not currently included in an existing land use plan: the upper Black River area and scattered parcels along the highway system. This Draft is open for public review until Monday, July 23, 2012. During this time, the Eastern Interior Field Office will be hosting several public meetings within the region as shown below. Additional information is available at the BLM-Alaska website, <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en.html> or by contacting the BLM at (907) 474-2340 or (800) 437-7021 (within Alaska).◆

Location	Date	Time	Time
Anchorage, Campbell Creek Science Center	May 9, 2012	Open House: 3:00 - 7:00 pm	Public Meeting: 7:00-9:00 pm
Fairbanks, Morris Thompson Cultural Center	April 9, 2012	Open House: 2:00 - 7:00 pm	Public Meeting: 7:00-9:00 pm
Fort Yukon, Tribal Hall	April 11, 2012	5:30 - 8:30 pm	
Chalkyitsik	TBD	TBD	
Circle, Community Center	April 16, 2012	5:30 - 8:30 pm	
Eagle, Eagle School	April 23, 2012	6:30 - 9:30 pm	
Eagle Village, Tribal Hall	April 24, 2012	2:39 - 6:00 pm	
Delta Junction, Community Center	May 17, 2012	4:00 - 8:00 pm	
Central, Historical Museum	May 7, 2012	Open House: 4:00 - 7:00 pm	Public Meeting: 7:00-9:00
Tok, Tok School	May 16, 2012	6:00 - 9:00 pm	
Chicken	TBD	TBD	

BLM-Alaska Resource Advisory Council to Meet

Department of the Interior, Bureau of tjennning@blm.gov.

The 15-member Council advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in Alaska. At this meeting, topics planned for discussion include: Draft Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, Alaska Lands Conveyance update, and other topics of interest to the RAC.

All meetings are open to the public. Depending on the number of people wishing to comment and time available, the time for individual oral comments may be limited, so be prepared to submit written comments if necessary. ◆

For more information contact Thom Jennings, RAC Coordinator; BLM-Alaska State Office phone 907-271-3335 or email

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Glacier Bay National Park - News Releases (continued)

(Continued from page 4) "Superintendent Boudreau would like to announce that implementation for the above compendium regulation will not be implemented for calendar year 2012. This would allow for disposal of human waste within the intertidal zone for the 2012 season.

Vessel Transit Permit System Expiration – Effective 11/30/2011, the transit vessel permit system at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve has expired. GLBA superintendent's compendium reads: "**13.1152(a)**. Private vessel permits and conditions states: Private vessels are required to obtain a permit in Glacier Bay proper from June 1 through August 31 of each year for a total of 25 per day. This permit process will no longer accommodate transit vessel permits."

With the expiration of the transit permit, the number of vessel permits available on short notice has been increased to better accommodate spontaneous vessel use in Glacier Bay. The allocation is 12 permits available on short notice (up to two days in advance) and 13 permits available for reservation up to 60 days in advance. For more information on either news release, contact Albert Faria – Chief Ranger, 907-697-2621, or visit the GLBA website at <http://www.nps.gov/glba/parknews/newsreleases.htm>. ♦

BLM-Alaska hosts April NPR-A lecture series

The National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A), on the Arctic Slope, is a place few get to visit, yet is home to some of our nation's most significant and important resources. It is a place of oil and gas reserves, where the Teshekpuk and Western Arctic caribou herds breed and graze and numerous species of waterfowl breed and nest in its world-class nesting grounds. Every Thursday during the month of April, BLM-Alaska is offering a public lecture series, "Understanding Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve,". The science lectures will take place at 7 p.m. at the BLM Campbell Creek Science Center, 5600 Science Center Drive. The entrance to the Campbell Creek Science Center is near 68th Avenue off Elmore Road. The four lectures are:

April 5: People, Land, & Resources - The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska stretches from the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast. Join Stacie McIntosh, supervisor of the BLM Arctic Field Office, for an overview of this unique reserve and the challenges and opportunities it presents for the BLM.

April 12: Prehistory of the NPR-A - Join us as BLM archaeologist Mike Kunz of the BLM Arctic Field Office describes the story of human migration from the Old World into what is now Alaska.

April 19: Looking for Oil in the NPR-A - Come learn about the geology of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. Lou Niglio, geophysicist with the BLM-Alaska State Office, will describe efforts to find and develop the area's oil resources.

April 26: Birds of the NPR-A - Come discover the tremendous variety of bird life found in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. Join Debbie Nigro, wildlife biologist of the BLM Arctic Field Office, to learn more about particular bird species that BLM has identified as being of special conservation concern.

For additional information please call 907-267-1247 or visit <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sciencecenter.html>. ♦



NPS-Alaska Extends Comment Period on Collection EA

The National Park Service (NPS) has extended the public review period for an environmental assessment addressing the subsistence collection and use of shed or discarded animal parts and plants from NPS areas in Alaska. In response to a request for additional time, the deadline for public comment is now May 3, 2012, about a month longer than originally scheduled.

The NPS is considering promulgating regulations to allow subsistence collection and use of shed or discarded animal parts (for instance, antlers, horns, bones, hooves) and plants to make handicrafts for personal or family uses, for barter, or to sell. Collection activities would only be allowed in NPS areas where subsistence is authorized in accordance with Titles II and VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980.

Please send written comments to the attention of Bud Rice, NPS Alaska, 240 W. 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501. For more information or to post a comment online visit the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) program located on the NPS public comment website at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. If you have questions about the EA, please contact Bud Rice, Environmental Protection Specialist, at (907) 644-3530 or Sandy Rabinowitch, Subsistence Manager, at (907) 644-3596. ♦