

Alaska Lands Update

Polar bear cubs emerge from their den in spring and head to the ocean in search of food; Photo Credit—USFWS

monthly updates on Federal management actions for the people of Alaska

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

BLM releases FONSI and Decision Record for the Delta River Special Recreation Management Area

The Bureau of Land Management-Alaska announced on 4/17/2013 the release of its approved Delta River Special Recreation Management Area Plan (SRMA) along with a Finding of No Significant Impact, Decision Record and Approved Plan for the Delta River SRMA and East Alaska RMP Amendment (Approved Plan). Based on information from the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Proposed Delta River SRMA and Approved Plan, it has been determined that Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) will have no significant effect on the quality of the human environment and that none of the anticipated environmental effects meet the definition of significance.

The Approved Plan provides for a mix of river recreation uses and user groups while managing to protect the Delta River environment and the identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values. It maintains a setting that supports diverse recreational opportunities, integrates resource protection with an appropriate range of visitor uses and is aimed at minimizing social conflicts and protecting river resources with an emphasis on education and interpretive outreach.

The DR serves as the final decision establishing the land use planning decisions outlined in the Approved Plan. No further administrative remedies are available for these land use planning decisions, which are effective immediately. However, the DR also contains implementation decisions that may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals within 30 days of BLM's publication of notice of this decision in the Federal Register. Please review Section 9.0 *APPEAL PROCEDURES* in the DR for a more detailed discussion of the appeal process. The implementation decisions will become effective after the 30-day appeal period has run, unless an appeal is taken and a petition for a stay is granted.

The plan can be found online on the BLM-AK Planning website at: <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.html>. Hard copies of the plan are available upon request by contacting the BLM Glennallen Field Office, P.O. Box 147, Glennallen, AK 99588, by phone (907) 822-3217 or by email blm_ak_gfo_general_delivery@blm.gov. ♦

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Comment Deadline Reminders

- The **Tongass National Forest 2008 Land and Resource Management Plan 5-Year Review** is now open for public comment period until June 30, 2013. The documents can be found online at www.fs.usda.gov/main/Tongass/landmanagement/planning;
- USF&W Service **Draft Clarification of the Application of Select Terms Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act** is open for review at: http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/mmm/seaotters/pdf/final_sa.pdf; until May 17, 2013;
- NOAA and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management are accepting comments until May 27, 2013 on an **EIS analyzing the Effects of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic**. More information can be found at the project website: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/eis/arctic.htm>.
- Kenai Fjords National Park has prepared an **EA to evaluate the feasibility of an interagency multi-modal trail along the Herman Leirer Road**. The EA can be found at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>; comments will be accepted online until June 7, 2013;
- The Sitka Ranger District invites comments on the proposed **Camp Coogan Riparian and Wildlife Thinning Project**. Comments should be received by May 24, 2013. For more information: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet/projects/tongass/landmanagement/projects?sortBy=0&archive=0>; page down to Camp Coogan;
- The USF&W Service **Draft Revised Marine Mammal Stock Assessment Reports for the three stocks of northern sea otters and the Pacific walrus in Alaska** is open for public comment for 90-days after it has been published in the Federal Register. Access the reports at <http://www.regulations.gov> under Docket No. FWS-R7-ES-2012-0019 or by navigating to the species information pages at <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/mmm/reports.htm>;
- The National Park Service has prepared an **EA to consider access alternatives for the removal of abandoned military debris from Native-owned inholdings within Gates of the Arctic National Park**. The 30-day comment period ends May 31, 2013. Find the EA online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=11&projectID=45085&documentID=53215>;

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, AK

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/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/>

USFWS Announces Decision on Petition to Delist Wood Bison

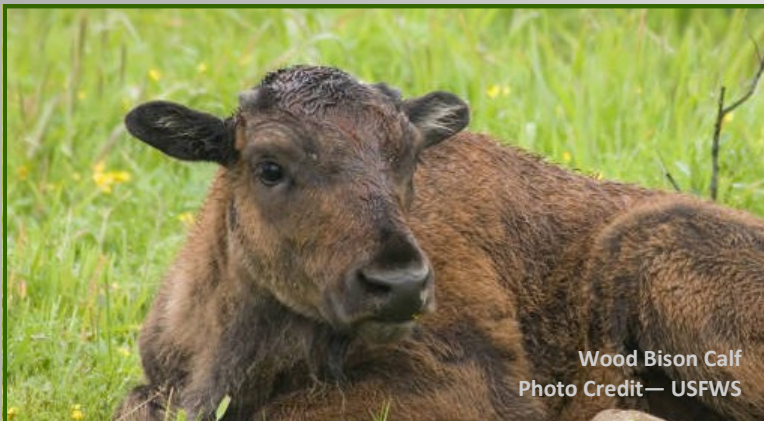
On April 19, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published in the *Federal Register* a 90-day finding on a petition to delist the wood bison and remove it from protection under the Endangered Species Act. "Based on our review, we find that the petition does not present substantial information indicating that delisting the wood bison subspecies may be warranted. Therefore, we are not initiating a status review in response to this petition. However, we ask the public to submit to us any new information that becomes available concerning the status of, or threats to, the wood bison or its habitat at any time." The full text of the finding is available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket Number FWS-HQ-ES-2012-0094.

According to the Service the petition requested the wood bison be removed from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife. The wood bison is currently listed as threatened. "Although we recognize that controversy exists around the sub-

specific designation for wood bison, nomenclature stability, management history, and the acceptance of two subspecies by the American Bison Specialist Group, the Canadian National Wood Bison Recovery Team, and other zoologists lead us to the conclusion that retaining the current nomenclature is appropriate and defensible." (see full text for citations)

The petitioners argued that wood bison and plains bison should be considered as one species but did not indicate that all or most threats to bison have been ameliorated. The petition focused on the success of recovery efforts for wood bison, and the Service agrees that the status of wood bison is more secure today than it once was. However, the Service's final rule to reclassify wood bison as threatened, which was published May 3, 2012 (77 FR 26191), they identified threats that remain to the species. The petitioners did not provide any new information about the status of the species that we were not already aware of and had evaluated in our final rule.

The Service concludes that the petition does not present substantial scientific or commercial information to indicate that delisting the wood bison under the Act may be warranted at this time. Although the Service will not conduct a thorough review of the status of the species at this time, they encourage interested parties to continue to gather data that will assist with the conservation of the wood bison. If you wish to provide information regarding the wood bison, you may submit your information or materials to Marilyn Myers, Endangered Species Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fisheries and Ecological Services, 1011 E. Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503; or by telephone at 907-786-3559; or by facsimile at (907) 786-3848, at any time. ♦



Wood Bison Calf
Photo Credit— USFWS

Environmental Impact Statement on the Effects of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic Ocean

Commission Members

- Representative Wes Keller**, Wasilla
Chairman - (H)
- Mark Fish**, Anchorage
Vice Chairman - (G)
- Rod Arno**, Palmer (S)
Executive Committee
- Charlie Lean**, Nome (G)
Executive Committee
- Senator John Coghill**, Fairbanks (G)
- Kathleen Liska**, Anchorage (G)
- Mike Meekin**, Palmer (H)
- Warren Olson**, Anchorage (S)
- Ron Somerville**, Juneau (H)
- Susan Smith**, Chokosna (G)
- Alex Tarnai**, Tanana (G)
- Frank Woods**, Dillingham (G)
- (S) SENATE APPOINTMENT*
(H) HOUSE APPOINTMENT
(G) GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENT

On March 21, 2013, NOAA and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced the release of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Effects of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic Ocean, which analyzes how a broad range of potential offshore oil and gas activities in the Arctic could affect marine mammals, other resources, and Alaska Native communities. That document can be found on the project website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/eis/arctic.htm>.

NOAA and BOEM's new analysis follows comments received from stakeholders received after release of the initial draft EIS in December 2011. A summary document of substantive changes has been prepared by NOAA to aid in review and comparison of the 2013 supplemental draft EIS with the original 2011 draft EIS. The summary can be found online at: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/eis/arctic_sdeis_summary.pdf.

Written comments on the Supplemental DEIS should be received by May 27, 2013, and may be submitted by mail, fax, or electronic mail to the Responsible Official: Helen M. Golde, Acting Director Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 1315 East West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; by phone: (301) 427-8400; by fax: (301) 713-0376; or online via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at: www.regulations.gov; enter NOAA-NMFS-2013-0054 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the "Comment Now" icon on the right of that line. ♦



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www.dnr.alaska.gov/commis/cacfa

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.



BLM-AK Patents over 700K Acres to State of Alaska

The Bureau of Land Management held a signing ceremony on 4/24/2013 patenting a large block of land near Sleetmute to the State of Alaska. BLM-Alaska State Director Bud Cribley signed the patent and presented the final documents to Alaska Department of Natural Resources Deputy Commissioner Ed Fogels.

The 729,000 acres patented were previously conveyed to the State in Tentative Approval (TA) status, subject to survey. The BLM completed survey in 2011, leading to final patent. The lands are located along the Kuskokwim River about 100 miles downriver from McGrath. About 5 million acres of the State's 105-million-acre total allotment remain to be conveyed under the Statehood Act. About 37 million of that 105 million acres have been conveyed with Tentative Approval and are just awaiting survey for final patent.

For more than 30 years, the BLM has been involved with the survey and conveyance of lands in Alaska under three statutes: the Native Allotment Act of 1906; the Alaska Statehood Act, and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The work being done to implement these laws is collectively called the Alaska Land Transfer Program. When completed, over 150 million acres, approximately 42% of the land area in Alaska, will have been transferred from federal to state and private ownership.

Cribley said that today's signing comes at a pivotal time in the BLM's Land Transfer Program.

"We just completed a comprehensive inventory and analysis of our Land Transfer Program and can now clearly see what is left to accomplish," he said. "We are laying out a plan to finish the job, and taking action on all fronts, maximizing the resources we're given to expedite actions and get to completion." ♦

Kenai Fjords National Park Evaluates Multi-Modal Trail Along Herman Leirer/Exit Glacier Road

An Environmental Assessment has been prepared evaluating alternatives for the feasibility of an interagency multi-modal trail along the Herman Leirer Road. A multi-use trail (bicycle, pedestrian and ski) is being considered along the Herman Leirer Road, starting from the Seward Highway and ending at the Exit Glacier Nature Center in Kenai Fjords National Park. The approximately 8.2 mile trail would pass through public lands managed by State of Alaska, United States Forest Service, and National Park Service. The goal of this multi-modal trail which traverses across a variety of public lands and right-of-ways is to offer an outstanding visitor experience while protecting the resources over which each agency has responsibility. No private lands would be involved, but in some areas private lands would be adjacent to the trail corridor. This environmental assessment analyzes the impacts of different trail routing concept alternatives.

It is important to note, that at this time, there is no funding to construct any of the proposed alternatives. This EA will serve as a common vision for state, federal, and local agencies as well as organizations to pursue funding for such a project. To comment on this environmental assessment, please go to <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>; comments will be accepted online until June 7, 2013. For more information contact Sharon Kim, Chief of Resources, Kenai Fjords National Park, P.O. Box 1727 Seward, AK 99664; by phone (907)422-0546. ♦

Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Board to Meet

The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm Corridor Communities Association will hold its annual spring meeting on May 9 in Portage. There will be a tour of the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center at noon and the meeting will follow from 1-4:30 p.m. at the Center.

This year's spring meeting will include a review of several significant projects taken on by the heritage area and its partners, including curriculum developed with the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District.

The non-profit board of directors for the Kenai Peninsula-Turnagain Arm Corridor Communities Association oversees the project selection, fundraising, and implementation of the heritage area's management plan. Its meetings are open to the public.

Please call 907-360-0480 with question about the meeting; and more information on the heritage area is available online at www.kmtacorridor.org. ♦



Red Elderberry, Fireweed and Wild Raspberry
Photo Credit—USFWS

Land Management Rule Will Facilitate Renewable Energy Development on Public Lands

In support of the Administration's strategy to develop environmentally responsible renewable energy on public lands, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is issuing a regulation that will facilitate right-of-way applications for lands with wind and solar energy development potential.

Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the BLM is charged with managing the public lands for multiple uses. Under existing regulations, lands proposed for exchange or sale can be closed to the filing of mining claims. However, lands included in a proposed right-of-way remain open to the location and entry of mining claims while the BLM is considering the application.

The Final Rule will revise the regulations to provide for the segregation of lands to facilitate the processing of solar and wind energy right-of-way applications, and the Final Rule, once published in the Federal Register, will replace the interim temporary Final Rule.

Under the Final Rule, lands with right-of-way applications for solar or

wind energy development could be segregated from the location and entry of mining claims. Such segregations would only be authorized as needed and would not necessarily cover all lands where renewable energy right-of-way applications have been filed. A segregation would be effective for two years and could be extended for an additional two years if the appropriate BLM State Director determines that an extension is necessary for the orderly administration of the public lands. The rule also provides for termination of a segregation by one of three means: (1) by having the BLM issue a decision issuing or not issuing a right-of-way for the wind or solar energy proposal; (2) by publishing a *Federal Register* notice of termination of the segregation; or (3) without further administrative action at the end of the segregation period.

More information can be found on BLM's website: <http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en.html>. A full text version of the Final Rule is also available online at: <http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2013-10087.PI.pdf>. ♦

Interagency Working Group Calls for Integrated Management and Planning for a Rapidly Changing Arctic

An interagency working group chaired by Interior Deputy Secretary David J. Hayes released a report that calls for an integrated management strategy for the rapidly changing Arctic. The report highlights the need for a coordinated approach that uses the best available science to integrate cultural, environmental and economic factors in decision-making about development and conservation.

"This report chronicles how Arctic residents are dealing with rapid, climate change-induced impacts on their resources and traditional ways of life at the same time that new economic activity and opportunities are emerging — notably oil and gas, marine transportation, tourism and mining," said Hayes, chair of the Alaska Interagency Working Group that commissioned the report. "It is imperative that we reduce redundancies and streamline federal efforts as we safely and responsibly explore and develop Alaska's vast resources while preserving the region's rich ecosystems that will sustain future generations."

The report "*Managing for the Future in a Rapidly Changing Arctic*" is based on input from a wide range of Alaska stakeholders. In addition to recommending integrated management, the report recommends continuing high-level attention on the Arctic, strengthening state and tribal partnerships, encouraging more stakeholder engagement, undertaking more organized and inclusive scenario planning, and

coordinating and potentially consolidating environmental reviews that are now being prepared by multiple agencies.

The report does not recommend new regulations or represent

new policy decisions, but it does call for a review of the activities of over 20 federal agencies involved in the U.S. Arctic by the end of 2013 with an eye toward increased coordination and the elimination of duplication of efforts. **Congress has entrusted the federal government with primary jurisdiction over nearly three quarters of the U.S. Arctic's land mass. In addition, the federal government has a special relationship with Alaska natives, including Alaskan tribes and native corporations.**

The report also includes the launch of a new government web site, the Arctic Science Portal, by the Arctic Research Commission, which is chaired by former Alaskan Lieutenant Governor Fran Ulmer. This web portal will provide decision makers and other interested parties with easier access to scientific information about the Arctic. It includes information on topics such as sea ice, fisheries, oil spill research and many others. It can be accessed at <http://www.arctic.gov/portal/>.

The DOI press release dated 4/4/2013 can be found online at: <http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/index.cfm>. A copy of the report is available at: <http://www.doi.gov/news/upload/ArcticReport-03April2013PMsm.pdf>. ♦



Arctic Fox, St. George Island
Photo Credit— USFWS

PROJECTS ON THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

1. 5-Year review of the 2008 Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan is ongoing and comments are being accepted through June 30, 2013. A new edition to the project website includes Land Use Designation Maps with the Roadless Rule Overlay. The maps have been posted in .pdf and .jpg file formats.

Summaries of seven community meetings held earlier this year, an online comment form and more information is available online at the project website: www.tnf-5yearreview.com.

The Tongass National Forest is continuing to look for feedback from the public on whether the plan is working or if changes are needed.

2. The Sitka Ranger District is evaluating the proposed Camp Coogan Riparian and Wildlife Thinning Project to pre-commercially thin approximately 365 acres of overstocked young-growth stands using various treatment methods. The goal of land managers is to receive comments on the proposal; assess the possible effects, and seeks ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects on the properties. The project is scheduled to begin late summer or fall 2013. This announcement opens public comment for the scoping period. Comments should be received by May 24, 2013. It is the Forest Service intention to prepare this analysis as a Categorical Exclusion and issue a Decision Memo on the proposed action. More information on this proposal contact Martin Becker at 907-747-4293 or visit the project website at at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet/projects/tongass/landmanagement/projects?sortby=0&archive=0>; page down to Camp Coogan.

3. The Tongass National Forest has released its Schedule Of Proposed Action for the annual quarter starting in April 2013. This is a list of proposed, ongoing and completed projects analyzed under the requirements of the National Environmental Protection Act. The entire schedule may be viewed at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/forest-level.php?111005>. ♦

USFWS AK to Discontinue Fax News Release Distribution

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska will no longer use fax to distribute its press releases. Information distribution will continue by way of email listserver and online posting at: <http://alaska.fws.gov/external/newsroom/aknews.htm>. If you do not currently receive releases electronically and wish to be added to our listserver, please send an email to: fws-alaska-news@lists.fws.gov; include "subscribe fws-alaska-news and Your Name" in the body of the email and no subject in the subject line.

The Region 7 listserver provides the latest news releases issued by the External Affairs Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska. Everyone interested in fish and wildlife, refuges and other issues involving the Service in Alaska is invited to subscribe.

For additional information or for help subscribing, please email cathy_rezabeck@fws.gov or by phone at (907) 786-3351 ♦

Senate Subcommittee Advances Sealaska Lands Bill to Fulfill ANCSA Promises

U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski testified on Thursday, April 25, 2013, before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Public Lands Subcommittee in support of legislation to complete the aboriginal land claims promised to shareholders of the Sealaska Native Regional Corporation. The revised Southeast Alaska Native Land Entitlement Finalization and Jobs Protection Act (S.340) establishes where and how Sealaska may select 70,075 acres of land owed to it under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. To view the full text of the press release, visit Senator Murkowski's website at: <http://www.murkowski.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases>. ♦



Orange Hawkweed
Photo Credit — USFWS

BLM-AK To Begin The Central Yukon Resource Management Plan

The Bureau of Land Management Central Yukon Field Office is developing a new resource management plan (RMP) for the Central Yukon Planning Area. The RMP will provide future management direction for approximately 16 million acres of BLM-managed public land including the Dalton Highway and Central Yukon areas

When completed and approved, the RMP will replace two existing BLM land use plans: the Utility Corridor RMP, completed in 1991 and the Central Yukon RMP, completed in 1986. It will also provide a RMP for a portion of the lands currently covered by the Southwest Management Framework Plan from 1986 and unplanned lands near Fairbanks. The total acreage within the boundary of the Central Yukon Planning Area is approximately 59 million acres, of which approximately 16 million acres are BLM-managed public lands. Other federal lands in the

planning area include portions of the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, the Koyukuk, Innoko Northern Unit, Nowitna, and Kanuti National Wildlife Refuges, and the U.S. Army Tanana Flats and Donnelly training areas. The planning area boundary includes 24 remote villages representing 15 tribal entities, and three ANCSA Regional Corporations including Doyon Limited, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and NANA, Inc.

Initiation of the planning effort and public scoping are scheduled for 2013. More information can be found online at the BLM Planning website: <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.html>.

If you would like to be on the mailing list for the Central Yukon RMP, send your name and address to: Central-Yukon@blm.gov or call the Fairbanks District Office (907)474-2200. ♦

USFWS Releases Stock Assessment Reports for Walrus and Sea Otters

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has prepared draft revised marine mammal stock assessment reports (SARs) for the three stocks of northern sea otters and the Pacific walrus in Alaska. Stock assessments use the best available scientific information to describe the geographic range, minimum population estimate, current population trend, annual human-caused mortality and serious injury, and commercial fisheries interactions for each marine mammal stock. These reports are periodically updated to reflect the most current information and the draft reports are available for public review and comment.

The public comment period will run for 90 days following the April 18th, 2013 publication in the *Federal Register*. You may view the draft revised stock assessment reports on <http://www.regulations.gov> under Docket No. FWS-R7-ES-2012-0019. You may also view them in Adobe Acrobat format by navigating to the species information pages at <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/mmm/reports.htm>. The Service has new information that demonstrates the Southeast and Southcentral stocks of northern sea otters have increased in population and the Southwest stock of northern sea otter, currently listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), though not considered recovered, is believed to be stabilized. For the Pacific walrus, the Service determined in 2011 that listing as threatened or endangered under the ESA is warranted but precluded by higher priority actions to amend the Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. The Service intends to finalize these SARs to reflect this new information subsequent to review of any comments or additional information that may be provided by the public. ♦



Pacific Walrus Cow and Calf, April 2007
Photo Credit— USFWS

USFWS Announces Reward for Information on Eagle Deaths

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement is investigating the death of two golden eagles near Chickaloon, Alaska. A reward of up to \$2,500 is being offered for information leading to a conviction of the person or persons responsible for the deaths.

The eagles were discovered in the Anthracite Ridge area northwest of the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail along Purinton Creek. The eagles were found lying dead on top of a bait pile of meat that was surrounded by snares used by trappers. Evidence at the scene suggests the eagles were caught and killed in the snares while trying to get at the meat in the bait pile. One of the golden eagles was an adult female and the other was an immature male.

Golden eagles are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, both federal wildlife statutes. Violations of these statutes carry maximum criminal penalties of up to \$100,000 and/or one year in federal prison.

Anyone with information concerning these eagles is asked to call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement in Anchorage at (907) 271-2828. ♦



Yukon River
Photo Credit— USFWS

Chandler Lake Drum Removal—Mitigation Project Access Environmental Assessment

The National Park Service is considering an application for temporary access across park lands in Gates of the Arctic National Park in an Environmental Assessment (EA) currently open for public comment through **May 31, 2013**. A resident of Anaktuvuk Pass is proposing to use her Native Allotment on the shores of Chandler Lake as a staging site for other village residents and contractors to remove Department of Defense military debris abandoned in 1940's and 1950's. The project area is around the Chandler Lakes and is wholly within the boundaries of the Park; the project aims to remove debris from seven other Native Allotments and Native Corporation Lands. The requested access would traverse about 20 miles of non-wilderness park lands along Kollutarak Creek to southern Chandler Lake. The application requests the necessary permits to authorize access to the inholdings with two 8-wheeled Argos during two consecutive summer, 2013 and 2014, one or two roundtrips with the Argos between Anaktuvuk Pass and Chandler Lake would be needed each summer to collect and stage the debris on the allotment. The abandoned DOD materials would then be transported by snowmachines and sleds, or aircraft if poor snow conditions exist, during the subsequent spring seasons of 2014 and 2015. Anaktuvuk Pass residents are presently allowed to use Argos and snowmachines in that area for subsistence purposes only.

The project is funded by the Native American Land Environmental Mitigation Program through a cooperative agreement between the DOD and the village of Anaktuvuk Pass, a federally recognized Alaska Native tribe.

The NPS would issue a Right-of-Way Certificate of Access (RWCA) pursuant to ANILCA Section 1110(b) – Access to Inholdings, and, if identified, establish any necessary limits on the access and maintenance methods to protect park resources. The EA analyzes the potential environmental impacts which could result from the three access alternatives being considered.

Alternative 1 – The No Action Alternative would grant no access permit over NPS lands. There would be no direct impacts to park lands from overland travel and the applicant would have to find another route or use aircraft for all transportation;

Alternative 2 – Summer Argo access with spring snowmobile transport where the NPS would issue a RWCA to allow up to two roundtrips with two 8-wheeled Argo ATV's per year during summer 2013 and 2014 (project total no more than 8) to collect and stage the debris on the Allotment; and up to 20 round trip for each of two snowmachine per spring (March-April) 2014 and 2015 (project total no more than 80 round trips), provided adequate snow cover, to transport the debris from the Allotment to Anaktuvuk Pass for proper disposal. One extra trip by Argo per summer would be authorized for emergencies. **This is the Preferred Alternative.**

Alternative 3 – Summer Argo access with no snowmachine use authorized. The NPS would issue a RWCA for summer Argo use, with a slight route change possible, only one round trip per Argo per season and no emergency Argo trip authorized, project total of 4 round trips. Debris removal activities would be conducted by aircraft, float plane by summer or ski plane by winter. Any emergency transits would be made by float plane.

The EA may be found online at the project website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=11&projectID=45085&documentID=53215>.

The 30-day comment period for this EA will close on **May 31, 2013**. Comments will be accepted from the NPS public comment website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, or in writing to Greg Dudgeon, Superintendent, 4175 Geist Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709-3420, or Bud Rice, NPS Alaska Regional Office, 240 West 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501. For questions about the EA or public comment process, contact Bud Rice, Environmental Protection Specialist, at (907) 644-3530 or the Park Planner and NEPA Specialist, Jobe Chakuchin at