

# 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

## BLM Issues Supplement and Extends the Comment Deadline for the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS

Tuesday, July 3, 2012, the BLM announced its intention to release a Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and extend the comment period deadline of July 30, 2012 for the Draft RMP/EIS in order to accommodate the Supplement. The Supplement is expected in the coming weeks and will amend Alternative D of the Draft RMP/EIS to address hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains National Recreation Area, and will be available for a minimum 90-day public comment period. The BLM will continue to accept comments on the Draft RMP/EIS during this 90-day comment period, and will schedule additional public meetings and Section 810 subsistence hearings for the Supplement. The availability of the Supplement and the closing date for the extended comment period will be published in the *Federal Register* and on the BLM Eastern Interior RMP Home Page through [www.blm.gov/ak](http://www.blm.gov/ak) when the Supplement is released for public comment.

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act withdraws the White Mountains National Recreation Area

from the mining laws, but allows the Secretary of the Interior to issue leases for hardrock minerals if such leasing would not have significant adverse effects on the recreation area. The Draft RMP/EIS released in February considered hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains but did not analyze it in detail. Public comments received in response to the Draft RMP/EIS prompted the BLM to conduct further legal research on this issue. As a result, the BLM decided that the Supplement was needed to analyze a full range of alternatives and to obtain public comment on hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains. Although release of the Supplement will delay the planning schedule for the RMP/EIS, the BLM concluded that addressing the issue of hardrock mineral leasing now is preferable to risking even longer delays by waiting until later in the planning process.

For information about the Eastern Interior planning process, visit the Eastern Interior RMP Home Page at [www.blm.gov/ak](http://www.blm.gov/ak) or contact the BLM at (907) 474-2340 or (800) 437-7021 (within Alaska).

## A Reminder - Timing your Comments

We want to remind members of the public who submit comments online through agency links such as the National Park Service **Planning, Environment & Public Comment (PEPC)** website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/publicHome.cfm>) to be aware of the time difference between Alaska and other areas of the country where the agency servers may be located. For example, on the **PEPC** site if you submit comments on the *Final Denali Vehicle Management Plan*, the comment page will remind you that the comment period closes on 07/30/2012 at 11:59 PM Mountain Time (or 9:59 PM Alaska Daylight Time). After that time the PEPC site will not accept electronic comments. For the Denali VMP, if you cannot make the PEPC cutoff time, you may still submit your comments via e-mail to Miriam Valentine before 12:00 Midnight ADT on June 30, 2012 at: [Miriam.Valentine@nps.gov](mailto:Miriam.Valentine@nps.gov).