

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, State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources
3700 Airport Way Fairbanks, AK 99709

Ocean Policy Task Force Releases Final Recommendations

President Obama created the Ocean Policy Task Force in June 2009 and directed the group to develop recommendations that will help enhance national stewardship of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes and promote the long term conservation and use of those resources. The Task Force completed and released the final recommendations on July 19, 2010. Members of this group included 24 senior level policy officials from various areas of Federal Government.

Recommendations given by the Task Force include the formation of a National Ocean Council and prioritization of actions for this council to pursue, establishment of a Governance Coordinating Committee and creation of a National Ocean Council Steering Committee. The purpose of the Governance Coordinating Committee will be to work

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Nabesna Off-Road Vehicle Draft EIS

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Off-Road Vehicle Use in the Nabesna area of Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve is now available for review. Comments on the document will be accepted for 90 days to allow hunters adequate time for evaluation. Open house style public meetings are planned for Glennallen, Tok, Slana, Fairbanks and Anchorage. This EIS is part of a settlement from a 2006 lawsuit against the National Park Service.

To view the document, go to the park planning [website](#). Hardcopies are available upon request from the Park Headquarters in Copper Center (Mile 106.8 Richardson Highway, Copper Center, Alaska).

For more information, contact Bruce Rogers at 907-822-7276. Written comments can be submitted to Bruce Rogers at P.O. Box 439, Copper Center, Alaska 99573.

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US Forest Service Planning Rule Update

In mid-December 2009, the US Forest Service announced intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose potential environmental consequences associated with a National Forest System land management planning rule. While the formal comment period lasted just 60 days, the Forest Service has been using National and Regional roundtable sessions, blog posts and teleconferences to obtain public input and feedback on the proposed 2011 Planning Rule. The Draft EIS is expected to be published by December 2010 and the Final EIS is expected in November 2011.

The National Forest Management Act requires that Forest land management plans be revised every 15 years. Both the 1982 and 2000 Planning Rules were found to be costly, complex and procedurally burdensome. This led the Department to issue new rules in 2005 and 2008, both of which were found invalid by a Federal District Court. Because of these problems with the USFS planning rules, there are now 68 Forest level land management plans that are past due for revision. Since the USFS has an urgent need to develop a generally accepted and workable rule that will guide revisions of the Forest level plans, the agency is taking a new approach to development by using multiple rounds of public input and feedback through the previously mentioned Roundtable sessions, blog and teleconferences.

The Fourth National Roundtable was scheduled for July 29-30, 2010 in Washington, DC and the Second National Tribal Teleconference is scheduled for August 5th. Summaries of the roundtable sessions, draft concepts for the proposed rule content and summaries of public comment can be found on the [Planning Rule website](#). Some of the draft concepts relate to climate change, watershed health, recreation, monitoring and evaluation, collaboration and more. Comments on these draft concepts can be posted on the [blog](#) at any time.



Wildlife Observation Deck, Anan Interpretive Center
Photo Credit: Ashley Atkinson

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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.

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with State, tribal and local authorities to identify issues while the Steering Committee will help improve the linkage between science and management.

The Ocean Policy Task Force recommendations instruct the National Ocean Council to develop action plans for the priority objectives identified by the Task Force. These action plans will

specifically identify measurable actions (short, mid and long-term), performance measures and outcomes that will be used to assure the original objectives are met.

The National Priority objectives include the following:

- Ecosystem based management.
- Coastal and marine spatial planning.
- Continually inform decisions and

improve understanding for policy decision-making.

- Improve coordination and support for Federal, State, tribal, local and regional management.
- Increase resiliency and adaptation to climate change and ocean acidification.
- Establish and implement a science based regional ecosystem protection and restoration strategy.
- Enhance water quality through sustainable practices on land.
- Address environmental stewardship needs in the Arctic Ocean and adjacent coastal areas.
- Strengthen and integrate Federal and non-Federal ocean observation systems.

To read the entire Ocean Policy Task Force report, go to:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/oceans/>.



Whaling Boat, Barrow Alaska
Photo Credit: Donna Dewhurst, USFWS

Denali National Park Subsistence Resource Commission to Meet

The Denali National Park Subsistence Resource Commission will meet on August 28, 2010 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Cantwell Community Hall in Cantwell. The purpose of the meeting is to continue working on the National Park Service subsistence hunting program recommendations and other related subsistence issues. This meeting will be open to the public and both written and oral comments will be accepted.

Some items on the proposed agenda include the following:

- Denali Subsistence Management Plan.

- Subsistence Use of Horns, Antlers, Bones and Plants EA Update.
- Subsistence Manager Update.
- Federal Subsistence Board Update.
- Alaska Board of Game Update.
- Denali National Park and Preserve Subsistence Projects.
- Resource Management Program Update.
- Fire Management Program Update.

For more information, contact Amy Craver (907)683-2294 or Clarence Summers (907)644-3603.

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

<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/>

Scoping Period Open for Integrated Activity Plan and EIS for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Alaska State Office, Anchorage, Alaska, intends to prepare an Integrated Activity Plan (IAP) with an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) planning area. A July 28, 2010 Federal Register notice announced the beginning of the scoping period to solicit public input and comments. Formal scoping will end no sooner than 60 days from publication of the notice. A final end date will be announced through a press release and on the BLM-Alaska Web site, <http://www.blm.gov/ak>.

The BLM is requesting comments on management decisions, resources to be

addressed, and issues for analysis to help define the proposed actions and alternatives for the NPR-A IAP/EIS. Public scoping meetings will be held in Anaktuvuk Pass, Anchorage, Atkasuk, Barrow, Fairbanks, Nuiqsut, and Wainwright. The BLM also stated that additional public scoping meetings may be held in other communities if there is strong community interest. All public meetings, times, and locations will be announced through the local news media and on the agency Web site. Documents pertinent to this plan may be examined on the website listed above.

Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* <http://www.blm.gov/ak>.

- *Fax:* 907-271-5479.
- *Mail:* BLM Alaska State Office, Attention—NPR-A Planning Team, 222 West 7th Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jim Ducker, 907-271-3130; e-mail: jducker@blm.gov; or by mail: Bureau of Land Management, 222 West 7th Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599.

You may also request to be added to the mailing list.

