

Alaska Lands Update

Gambell, Saint Lawrence Island

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 Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS for Leasing of Hardrock Minerals in the White Mountains National Recreation Area

The Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS amends Alternative D to address hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains National Recreation Area (NRA). Section 1312 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), withdrew the lands within the White Mountains NRA from location, entry, and patent under the Mining Law of 1872, but allows the Secretary to "permit the removal of the nonleasable minerals" from these lands, provided the Secretary makes a finding that such disposition would not have significant adverse effects on the administration of the NRA. The BLM has interpreted section 1312 as allowing for the disposal of previously locatable minerals within the NRA by lease, as described in its regulations. The White Mountains RMP issued in 1986 recommended opening about 44 percent of the NRA to hardrock mineral leasing. This decision was never implemented. The Draft RMP/EIS considered hardrock mineral leasing in the

White Mountains NRA as an alternative considered but not analyzed in detail. In the Draft RMP/EIS, the BLM previously described that the provisions under ANILCA for hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains NRA applied only to removal of hardrock minerals from unperfected mining claims that existed before November 16, 1978. Since there are no longer any mining claims of record within the NRA, it was thought that no one could meet the requirements to lease hardrock minerals. This understanding was incorrect, as the BLM, through its regulations has interpreted Section 1312 of ANILCA as allowing for the disposal of hardrock minerals by lease even in the absence of an underlying unperfected mining claim subject to certain findings by the Secretary. In order to analyze in detail and obtain public comment on an alternative involving hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains NRA, the BLM has issued a Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS. The Supplement amends Alternative D to include hardrock mineral leasing. This alternative would recommend making approximately 160,000 acres in the White Mountains NRA available for hardrock mineral leasing. The Supplement describes the additions to Alternative D, assumptions for analysis, and the environmental effects associated with hardrock mineral leasing. A decision on whether or not to recommend open-



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Comment Deadline Reminders

- BLM Alaska **Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan** supplemental documents on hard rock mining were released on January 11, 2013. A 90-day public comment period for both the Draft RMP/EIS and the Supplement began on that date and will close on April 11, 2013. The project can be found at: <http://www.blm.gov/ak>;
- Comment period for USF&WS Proposed Rule on the **Impact Analysis of Critical Habitat** has been reopened. The new deadline for comments is February 6, 2013. You may submit comments and view project information at the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>; search for FWS-R9-ES-2011-0073, which is the docket number for this rulemaking.
- USF&W Service has extended the comment deadline for its Draft Technical Guidance for selecting **Surrogate Species** in their **Strategic Habitat Conservation** concept until March 29, 2013. The project website can be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/landscape-conservation/draft-guidance.html>;
- **BLM Alaska Ring of Fire RMP and Haines Planning Area Amendment** March 14, 2013. The project website is http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning/ring_of_fire_plan/Haines_Block_Supp_EIS_Amend.html;
- The January 2013 **Schedule of Proposed Actions** for the Tongass National Forest is now available and can be found online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/forest-level.php?111005>. If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Webb, 907-228-6293 or suzannewebb@fs.fed.us

Documents expected out soon:

- **Izembek Land Exchange/Road Final Environmental Impact Statement and Public Interest Determination** from the US Fish and Wildlife Service is not expected until February 2013;
- The **Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan** for the **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge** is still pending Secretary approval. There is no projected release date at this time;
- Katmai National Preserve, Brooks River Bridge Final Environmental Impact Statement is expected out in February 2013.

Prospectus Released for Glacier Bay Lodge and Tours

On January 4, 2013, Superintendent Susan Boudreau announced the release of a prospectus soliciting proposals for the Glacier Bay Lodge concession operation in Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve.

Glacier Bay Lodge is an architecturally award winning 56-room lodge located in Bartlett Cove near the community of Gustavus. The primary services to be provided will include lodging, food and beverage services, a daily vessel tour of Glacier Bay, camper drop-off and pick-up services, vehicle transportation services between Gustavus and Bartlett Cove, gift and sundry sales and marine fuel sales.

The services are currently provided by Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Concessions, LLC. Its concession contract expires on December 31, 2013. The new contract will have a 10-year term commencing in 2014. The prospectus includes the financial terms of the contract, utilization and operating information, a market area overview and the selection factors used to award the contract. Of particular note, the Alaska Marine Highway System began providing ferry service between Juneau and Gustavus in 2010. The ferry service adds a lower-cost alternative (as well as vehicle transport) between Juneau and Gustavus.

The prospectus is available for download at <http://www.concessions.nps.gov/prospectuses.htm>. For more information contact Susan Boudreau by phone number: (907) 697-2230 or email at Susan_Boudreau@nps.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, 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/>

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Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan Supplemental Released

ing the NRA to hardrock mineral leasing as a feature of the agency preferred alternative in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS will be made after reviewing and considering public comments on the Draft RMP/EIS and the Supplement.

Comments related to the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS and Supplement may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- **Web site:** <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.html>.
- **Fax:** 907-474-2282.
- **Mail:** Eastern Interior Field Office, Attention—Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS, Bureau of Land Management, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.

Copies of the Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS are available at the Fairbanks District Office at the above address; at the Alaska State Office, Public Information Center, Bureau of Land Management, 222 West

7th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99513; and on the following Web site: <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.html>. For further information contact Jeanie Cole, 907-474-2340 or 05cole@blm.gov.

****SEE Meeting Schedule on Page 4****

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

Mike Meekin, Palmer (H)

Warren Olson, Anchorage (S)

Colleen Richards, Anchorage (G)

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

BLM Director Explains Rejected Governor Parnell's Recommendation Regarding Consistency Review Determination in Published Notice

The Bureau of Land Management has published a notice on January 22, 2013, to explain why the BLM Director is rejecting the Alaska Governor's recommendations regarding the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Delta River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) Plan and East Alaska Resource Management Plan (EARMP) Amendment. A brief summary of the correspondence begins on July 25, 2011, the BLM released the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Delta River SRMA Plan and the EARMP Amendment. On September 20, 2011, the Governor of Alaska submitted a Governor's Consistency Review Finding of Inconsistency for the EA and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Delta River SRMA Plan and EARMP Amendment (Finding) to the BLM Alaska State Director. The State Director determined the Governor's Finding was outside the scope of the Governor's Consistency Review process and did not accept the Governor's recommendations. A written response was sent to the Governor on March 28, 2012, addressing issues raised in the Governor's Finding, and informing him of clarifications made to the BLM's Decision Record for the project. On April 27, 2012, the Governor appealed the State Director's decision not to accept his recommendations to the BLM Director. The BLM Director issued a final response to the Governor affirming the State Director's decision and made minor revisions to the final decision record for the project to address some of the Governor's concerns. For more information contact Joe Stout, Division Chief for Decision Support, Planning and NEPA, telephone 202-912-7275; address 1849 C Street NW., Room 2134LM, Washington, DC 20240; email j2stout@blm.gov. A copy of the Delta River SRMA Plan and EARMP are available on the BLM-Alaska Web site at: www.blm.gov/ak. A copy of the Director's Protest Report can be found at: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/planning/planning_overview/protest_resolution/protestreports.html. ♦

The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas will meet in Juneau on **Friday, February 22, 2013** in the Judiciary Room of the Capitol Building, and **Saturday, February 23, 2013** in The House Finance Room of the Capitol Building, Juneau.

Please refer to our website for more information and tentative agenda. <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/cacfa/>

BLM Resource Advisory Council Seeks Member Nominations

The BLM is requesting nomination from the public nomination for their Resource Advisory Councils (RAC) members whose terms are expiring this year. The RACs provide advice and recommendations to the BLM on land use planning and management of the National System of Public Lands within their geographic areas. All nominations must be received no later than March 14, 2013 and must include the following information:

- Letters of reference from represented interests or organizations;
- A completed Resource Advisory Council application; and
- Any other information that addresses the nominee's qualifications.

For additional information on the Alaska RAC and seats available contact Thom Jennings, Alaska State Office, BLM, 222 West 7th Avenue, #13, Anchorage, AK 99513, 907-271-3335. ♦



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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.

Rural Determination Process for the Subsistence Management Program for Public Lands in Alaska

Federal subsistence regulations require that the rural or nonrural status of communities or areas be reviewed every 10 years. In 2009, the Secretary of the Interior initiated a review of the Federal Subsistence Management Program. An ensuing directive was for the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) to review its process for determining the rural and nonrural status of communities. As a result, the Board has initiated a review of the rural determination process and is requesting comments from the public.

The Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils have a substantial role in reviewing subsistence issues and making recommendations to the Board. The Federal Subsistence Board, through the Councils, will hold public meetings to accept comments on this notice between August and October 2013. You may present comments on this notice during those meetings at various locations in Alaska. Meeting location and times will be advertised in local and statewide newspapers, and be posted on the Web. For additional information online visit: <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/index.cfm>.

The Board will engage in outreach efforts for this notice, including a notification letter, to ensure that Tribes and Alaska Native corporations are advised of the mechanisms by which they can participate. The Board will commit to efficiently and adequately providing an opportunity to Tribes and Alaska Native corporations to prior to the adoption of any changes in policy

or regulation concerning the rural determination process. The Board will consider Tribes' and Alaska Native corporations' information, input, and recommendations, and endeavor to address their concerns.

The Board requests input from the public on the rural determination process and regulations, and ways to improve them for the benefit of rural Alaskans. The Board has identified the following components in the process for review: Population thresholds, rural characteristics, aggregation of communities, timelines, and information sources.

All the comments received will be used by the Board, in coordination with the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, to assist in making decisions regarding the scope and nature of possible changes to improve the rural determination process.

Comments must be received or postmarked by November 1, 2013 and may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- Electronically: Comments addressing this notice may be sent to subsistence@fws.gov.
- By hard copy: U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: USFWS, Office of Subsistence Management, 1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121, Attn: Theo Matuskowitz, Anchorage, AK 99503-6199, or hand delivery to the Designated Federal Official attending any of the Federal Subsistence Regional

Advisory Council public meetings. ♦

Senator Murkowski Introduces Bill to Restore Subsistence Harvest of Gull Eggs in Southeast Alaska

On January 28, 2013, U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski reintroduced legislation restoring the traditional rights of the Huna Tlingit to gather glaucous-winged gull eggs in Glacier Bay National Park as part of their subsistence hunting activities. "The Huna Tlingit have gathered gull eggs as part of their traditional subsistence activities for centuries – certainly long before Glacier Bay was made into a national park," Murkowski said. "Gull eggs are part of their traditional diet and cultural identity, and I believe it's an activity they should be allowed to continue legally." Glacier Bay National Park in Southeast Alaska is the ancestral homeland of the Huna Tlingit, who traditionally harvested gull eggs at rookeries from the cliffs of Glacier Bay prior to, and following, establishment of the park. Collection was prohibited in the 1960s under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and National Park Service regulations. The National Park Service determined in 2010 that annual harvests would not harm the gull populations in the park, but congressional action is still required to authorize gull egg collection. Murkowski's legislation would allow tribal members of the Hoonah Indian Association to collect gull eggs up to two times a year at as many as five locations within Glacier Bay National Park.

Murkowski introduced similar legislation in 2011, during the 112th Congress. Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, plans to introduce companion legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives. ♦

BLM-Alaska to Host Meetings on a Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Interior Field Office has announced the initial schedule of public meetings for a Supplement to the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS). The Supplement amends Alternative D of the Draft RMP/EIS to address hardrock mineral leasing in the White Mountains National Recreation Area. The Supplement and the full Draft RMP/EIS are both available for public comment through April 11, 2013.

The BLM is holding public meetings to help familiarize the public with the Supplement and to gather public comments. The field office may schedule additional meetings in other communities in March and will announce those meetings on the BLM website at www.blm.gov/ak.

Community	Location	Date	Time
Fairbanks	Morris Thompson Cultural Center	February 13	Open House: 3-7 pm Public Meeting: 7-9 pm
Anchorage	Campbell Creek Science Center Multi-Purpose Room	February 19	Open House: 4-7 pm Public Meeting: 7-9 pm
Chalkyitsik	Community Hall	March 4	Open House: 5-6 pm Meeting/Hearing: 6-8 pm

For more information, visit the Eastern Interior RMP Home Page at www.blm.gov/ak or contact Jeanie Cole, Planning Team Leader, Eastern Interior Field Office at (907) 474-2340 or (800) 437-7021.



Alaska's National Parks invite public comment on each park's compendium through February 15, 2013

This year, the National Park Service is proposing restrictions to taking wildlife in national preserves. These proposals, which would preempt State regulations, are in response to recent changes in State regulations pertaining to the take of wolves, coyotes, and bears in some game management units, including certain national preserves.

The NPS is proposing to prohibit the take of wolves and coyotes between May 1 and August 9 in the following national preserves: Denali, Gates of the Arctic, Katmai, Aniakchak, Alagnak Wild River, Lake Clark, Wrangell-St. Elias, and Yukon-Charley Rivers. In some or all areas within these preserves, recent



changes to State hunting regulations allow wolves and coyotes (including pups) to be taken in late spring and summer. The NPS has stated that the proposed shorter season is more consistent with federal subsistence regulations.

The proposed compendiums for Denali, Wrangell-St. Elias and Yukon-Charley Rivers also include a prohibition on the taking of brown bears at a bait station. In addition, the NPS proposes to renew a temporary prohibition on using artificial light to take black bears at dens and taking black bear sows with cubs at dens in Denali and Gates of the Arctic National Preserves. The NPS is proposing these changes to State regulations because the agency has determined that these practices are inconsistent with its policies for managing national preserves.

Public involvement in the compendium process began in early December when the National Park Service held the first of seven public hearings to hear input as these restrictions were being drafted. After this round of public comment on the compendium provisions ends on February 15, the NPS will consider revisions and expects to publish the final compendiums in April 2013.

The proposed revisions to the 2013 compendiums are available at <http://www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendiums.cfm>. Written copies may be requested directly from the park or the National Park Service, 240 W. 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501, Attn: Compendium.

Comments will be accepted by mail or e-mail between January 15 and February 15, 2013. Comments are welcome at any time in addition to this timeframe, but comments received after February 15 will be considered in future compendium revisions. ♦

NPS Compendium Discussion Set for Facebook

As part of the annual public review of draft national park compendiums in Alaska, the National Park Service will use a Facebook Event to allow dialogue and provide additional information on the proposals.

The event begins February 4 and continues through February 15. NPS Alaska Regional Office staff will be on-line during weekday business hours to answer questions and point participants to additional information. The address for Facebook is www.facebook.com/AlaskaNPS

The NPS will also conduct a "live chat" during the Facebook event; that will occur on February 5 from 1 to 3 p.m. Members of the regional leadership team will be available for a timely ex-

change of information and comment.

Compendiums are written compilations of designations, closures, permit requirements and other restrictions imposed under discretionary authority found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). They are tools to help manage Alaska's national parks help provide for the enjoyment, use and protection of our national parks.

Proposed changes for 2013 include the closure of an old trail in Wrangell-St. Elias where a newly constructed trail reaches the same destination, and improved human waste disposal practices in Glacier Bay. Also, several NPS areas in Alaska are proposing restrictions to taking wildlife in national preserves. These proposals are based

on recent changes in State of Alaska regulations pertaining to the take of wolves, coyotes, and bears in some game management units, including certain national preserves.

The proposed compendiums and information for providing comment can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendiums.cfm> A written copy of any proposed compendium may be requested directly from the park or the National Park Service, 240 W. 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501, Attn: Compendium. The public comment period on the proposals runs through February 15, 2013. ♦

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Recreation Visitor Study for 2013

The Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute in Missoula, Montana, works under an interagency agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, to provide information in support of public wild lands management planning. The Wilderness Act of 1964 directs the management of the National Wilderness Preservation System to protect natural wilderness conditions and provide outstanding opportunities for the public to find solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreational experiences. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge contains 8,000,000 acres of federally protected wilderness, Molly Beattie Wilderness, and over 11,000,000 acres of land and water managed for multiple values (e.g. subsistence, wildlife, water quality, scenic values, etc.). The wildlife refuge is also mandated to provide recreation experiences to visitors under several laws.

Scientists at the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute periodically monitor and report visitor use, user characteristics, and visitor feedback on federal land management actions, to managers and the public, to help meet federal mandates related to visitor use management planning.

Agency personnel use the collected information to ensure visitor recreational activity does not harm the natural resources of the refuge and to guarantee the protection of wilderness type recreation experiences. The Agency intent is to compare 2013's recorded visitor responses to the previous survey responses, dated in 1977 before Refuge status and Wilderness designation. Additionally, the Agency will expand the scope of the survey to include visitor feedback to understand major dimensions of visitor experiences there and factors that influence those experiences. Potential factors of influence could include encounters with other visitors, subsistence users, researchers, and agency personnel, and information sources used to plan the trip.

Visitors will be contacted as they enter the Refuge, or upon exit and will be provided with a postage-paid postcard that offers them alternate methods to respond to the survey: (1) Mail the postage-paid postcard to the Leopold Institute with a name and address to

receive a mail back survey, (2) mail the postage-paid postcard to the Leopold Institute with an electronic email address to receive an electronic form of the survey, or (3) keep the postcard that contains a web address for on-line completion of the survey. All responses will be voluntary and confidential. Data collected in this information collection are not available from other sources and have not been collected since 1977.

This study will only ask recreation visitors, who are non-local and nonsubsistence users, questions about their recreation visit, their personal demographics relevant to education and interpretation goals, and factors that have influenced or are likely to influence their recreation visits.

Survey respondents will be told that this information is voluntary and confidential so their names will not be connected to their responses in any way. The Survey will not include questions related to oil exploration or development within the boundaries of the Refuge.

Public comment will be most helpful and is invited on: (1) Whether this collection of information is necessary for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical or scientific utility; (2) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments must be received in writing on or before April 1, 2013 to be assured of consideration, and should be addressed to Alan E. Watson, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station, 790 E. Beckwith Ave., Missoula, MT 59801 OR may be submitted via facsimile to (406) 542-4196 or by email to: awatson@fs.fed.us.

For additional information contact: Alan E. Watson, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, (406) 542-4197. ♦



Proposed Establishment of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Wood Bison in Alaska

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), in cooperation with the State of Alaska, propose to establish a nonessential experimental population of wood bison in central Alaska, in accordance with section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973. This proposal, if made final, would also establish provisions under which wood bison in Alaska would be managed. We are seeking comments on this proposal and on our draft environmental assessment which analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed reintroduction.

Under the Endangered Species Act, the Service may establish an experimental population, allowing for the reintroduction of a species to its former range with special rules that allow for some of the management requirements of the ESA to be relaxed to facilitate acceptance by local landowners and managers. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) proposes to reintroduce wood bison into one or more of three areas within their historical range in central Alaska, specifically the Yukon Flats, Minto Flats, and the lower Innoko/Yukon River area, see Figure 1. If this proposed rule is adopted, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) would have primary management responsibility for leading and implementing the wood bison restoration effort, in cooperation with the Service. ADF&G would serve as the lead agency in the reintroduction and subsequent management of wood bison in Alaska; however, ADF&G would continue to coordinate with the Service on these restoration efforts. Management of populations in the area would be guided by provisions in: (1) The

(Continued on page 7)

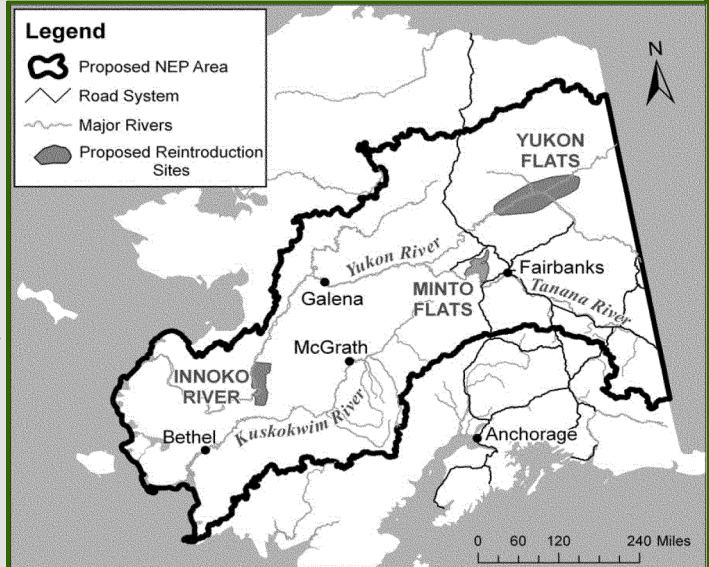


Figure 1. Boundaries of the wood bison NEP (black line) and location of the three sites for wood bison reintroduction in Alaska (gray areas).

Notice of Open Public Meetings for the National Park Service Alaska Region Subsistence Resource Commission

The NPS has announced that the Aniakchak National Monument SRC, Denali National Park SRC, and the Wrangell-St. Elias SRC will hold meetings to develop and continue work on NPS subsistence program recommendations and other related subsistence management issues. These meetings are open to the public and will have time allocated for public testimony. The public is welcome to present written or oral comments to the SRC. SRC meeting locations and dates may change based on inclement weather or exceptional circumstances. If the meeting date and location are changed, the Superintendent may issue a press release and use local newspapers and radio stations to announce the meeting.

The **Aniakchak National Monument SRC** will meet from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, February 11, 2013, at the Katmai National Park Office in the King Salmon Mall in King Salmon, AK. For more information about the meeting and agenda contact Eric Veach, Acting Superintendent at (907) 246-3305 or Mary McBurney, Subsistence Manager, at (907) 235-7891, or Clarence Summers, Subsistence Manager, at (907) 644-3603. If you are interested in ap-

plying for SRC membership, contact the Superintendent at P.O. Box 7, King Salmon, AK 99613 or visit the park Web site at: <http://www.nps.gov.ania/contacts.htm>.

The **Denali National Park SRC** will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 5:p.m. on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, or until busi-



ness is completed at the Cantwell Community Hall in Cantwell, AK. For more information about the meeting and agenda contact Philip Hooge, Assistant Superintendent, or Amy Craver, Subsistence Manager, at (907) 683-2294 or Clarence Summers, Subsistence Manager, at (907) 644-3603. If you are interested in applying for Denali National Park, SRC membership, contact the Superintendent at P.O. Box 9, Denali Park, AK 99755, or visit the park Web site at: <http://www.nps.gov.dena/contacts.htm>.

The **Wrangell-St. Elias National Park SRC** will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6 to Thursday, March 7, 2013, at Kenny Lake Community Hall in Kenny Lake, AK. For more information about the meeting and agenda contact Rick Obernesser, Superintendent, or Barbara Cellarius, Subsistence Manager, at (907) 822-5234 or Clarence Summers Subsistence Manager, at (907) 644-3603. If you are interested in applying for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park SRC membership, contact the Superintendent at P.O. Box 439, Copper Center, AK 99573, or visit the park Web site at: <http://www.nps.gov.wrst/contacts.htm>. ♦

Wood Bison in Alaska (continued)

(Continued from page 6)

associated special rule; (2) the EA for this action and ADF&G's environmental review; and (3) management plans developed for each area by ADF&G with involvement of landowners and other stakeholders. The rule would also allow for future regulated hunting based on sustained yield principles, once the herds are deemed sufficiently resilient to support such.

We particularly seek comments concerning: (1) Any information on the biological or ecological requirements of wood bison; (2) Current or planned activities in the proposed nonessential experimental population area; (3) Current or planned management of the NEP population; and (4) Any information concerning the boundaries of the proposed NEP area.

Comments on this proposed rule must be received or postmarked on or before March 19, 2013, and may be submitted by: *Federal eRulemaking Portal*: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Search for docket FWS-R7-ES-2012-0033 and then follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted to <http://www.regulations.gov> must be received before midnight (Eastern Time) on the date specified in the *U.S. mail or hand-delivery*: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R7-ES-2012-0033; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203. For additional information contact Sonja Jahrsdoerfer, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503, (907) 786-3323, or email woodbison-AK@fws.gov.



Chugach National Forest Launches First Phase of Forest Plan Revision

Chugach National Forest officials announced on January 31, 2013, the beginning of the first phase of a three year planning process to revise the 2002 forest plan under a new National Forest System Planning Rule. The forest plan provides direction for managing resources and activities such as recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, historic and sacred sites, vegetation, mineral exploration and development, and timber.

"The Chugach National Forest is the backyard for nearly half of Alaska's population and provides opportunities for residents and visitors to live, work, and play across its 5.4 million acres. It's an important place, and forest plan revision is the process in guiding management over the next fifteen years," said Forest Supervisor Terri Marceron.

During phase one, also known as the "assessment," the Forest Service will identify and evaluate existing information about ecological, economic and social conditions and trends related to the Forest and Southcentral Alaska. The resulting assessment report will provide a sol-

id base of current information for phases two, drafting the revised plan and developing an environmental impact statement (EIS), and three, developing a monitoring strategy.

The public is invited to learn more about the process and provide feedback at nine Forest Planning Forums across the region. During the forums, the Forest Service will ask:

- How the public uses the forest now, how might use and users change over the next fifteen years;
- What the public sees as emerging issues and trends;
- How the public can best be involved in the revision process.

Last February the Chugach announced that it was selected as one of eight national forests across the country to revise its forest plan under the new planning rule. The Forest was selected because of its robust engagement with the public during development and implementation of the 2002 forest plan.

Meeting Dates:

Thursday, February 7 - Alaska Forum on the Environment, Dena'ina Center (Anchorage), 9-10:30am;

Wednesday, February 20 - Girdwood Community Center, 6:30-9pm;

Thursday, February 21 - Seward Public Library, 6:30-9pm

Soldotna Sports Center, 6:30-9pm;

Saturday, February 23 - Chugach National Forest Supervisor's Office (Anchorage), 10am-12:30pm;

Monday, February 25 - Cooper Landing Community Center, 6:30-9pm

Moose Pass Community Hall, 6:30-9pm;

Wednesday, February 27 - Cordova Masonic Hall, 6:30-9pm;

Thursday, February 28 - Prince William Sound Community College (Valdez), 6:30-9pm;

For more information, please visit:

- Chugach Forest Plan Revision "Spotlight" at www.fs.usda.gov/chugach;

- New Planning Rule background at www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule

To request information or sign up for the mailing list, email chugachplanrevision@fs.fed.us. ♦