



Alaska Lands Update

**Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas, Department of Natural Resources, State of Alaska
101 Airport Road. Palmer, Alaska**

Notice of Availability of Additional Information on Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Resource Use Limitations Identified in the Draft Eastern Interior RMP/Draft EIS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published a Notice of Availability February 24, 2012, of the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public review and comment, planning regulations require the BLM to notify the public of proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and specify the resource use limitations which would occur if the ACECs were formally designated through approval of the Eastern Interior RMP. Based on public comment on the Draft RMP, the BLM proposes the reconfiguration of the Fortymile ACEC and proposes a new ACEC on the Mosquito Flats. These specific proposed ACEC boundaries were not noticed in the Draft RMP/EIS. Thus, the BLM is providing this notice and public comment period for these two proposed ACECs.

More information regarding this proposal and the public comment period, including maps and planning documents are available on the Eastern Interior RMP website at www.blm.gov/ak/eirmp.

You may submit comments related to the new ACEC information in this notice until March 3, 2014.

You may submit comments related to the new ACEC information by any of the following methods: Email: easterninterior@blm.gov. Fax: 907-474-2282.

Mail: Eastern Interior Field Office, Attention—Eastern Interior RMP, Bureau of Land Management, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.

For more information contact Jeanie Cole, telephone 907-474-2340 or email j05cole@blm.gov ♦



Proposed Information Collection; Alaska Guide Service Evaluation

Information is collected to help evaluate commercial guide services on our national wildlife refuges in the State of Alaska. The National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act of 1966 authorizes permitted uses, including commercial visitor services, on national wildlife refuges when we find the activity to be compatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established. With the objective of making available a variety of quality visitor services for wildlife-dependent recreation on National Wildlife Refuge System lands, permits can be issued for commercial guide services, including big game hunting, sport fishing, wildlife viewing, river trips, and other guided activities. The FWS uses Form 3-2349 as method to: Monitor the quality of services provided by commercial guides. Gauge client satisfaction with the services. Assess the impacts of the activity on refuge resources. The client is the best source of information on the quality of commercial guiding services. Send your comments to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803 (mail); or hope_grey@fws.gov (email). Please include "1018-0141" in the subject line of your comments.

To request additional information about this IC, contact Hope Grey at hope_grey@fws.gov (email) or 703-358-2482 (telephone) or visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/>, search 2015-01849. ♦

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- Gates of the Arctic Revised RMP – Deadline March 13
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- Proposed Critical Habitat for the Arctic Ringed Seal – Revised Deadline March 31
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Subsistence Taking of Wildlife Regulations on Public Lands in Alaska



The US Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service have proposed a rule that would establish regulations for hunting and trapping seasons, harvest limits, and methods and means related to taking of wildlife for subsistence uses during the 2016–17 and 2017–18 regulatory years. The Federal Subsistence Board is on a schedule of completing the process of revising subsistence taking of wildlife regulations in even-numbered years and subsistence taking of fish and shellfish regulations in odd-numbered years; public proposal and review processes take place during the preceding year. The Board also addresses customary and traditional use determinations during the applicable cycle. When final, the resulting rulemaking will replace the existing subsistence wildlife taking regulations. This rule would also amend the general regulations on subsistence taking of fish and wildlife.

The Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils will hold public meetings to receive comments and make proposals to change this proposed rule on several dates between February 10 and March 19, 2015, and then hold another round of public meetings to discuss and receive comments on the proposals, and make recommendations on the proposals to the Federal Subsistence Board, on several dates between August 17 and November 4, 2015. The Board will discuss and evaluate proposed regulatory changes during a public meeting in Anchorage, AK, in April 2016.

Comments and proposals to change this proposed rule must be received or postmarked by March 25, 2015. You may submit comments by one of the following methods: *By email:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for FWS–R7–SM–2014–0062, which is the docket number for this rulemaking; 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.

The Federal Subsistence Board and the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils' public meetings will be held at various locations in Alaska. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** at <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for FWS–R7–SM–2014–0062, for specific information on dates and locations of the public meetings. ♦

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Subsistence Evaluation, and Schedule of Public Hearings for the Proposed Airport, Angoon, Alaska

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has prepared a Draft EIS for the proposed airport in Angoon which is now available for public comment. Included in the Draft EIS are a subsistence evaluation consistent with Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The FAA intends to host public information meetings and hearings on the Draft EIS/810 Evaluation/4(f) on the following dates: **1.** March 3, 2015 in Juneau, Alaska, at the Centennial Hall, 101 Egan Dr., Juneau, AK from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; **2.** March 5, 2015 in Angoon, Alaska, at the Angoon Community Association Building, 315 Heendae Rd., Angoon, AK from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.; **3.** March 10, 2015 at the Holiday Inn, 550 C St. SW., Washington, DC, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Copies of the Draft EIS and the evaluations are available at the following locations: **1.** Online at www.angoonairporteis.com; **2.** Juneau Public Library, Downtown Branch, 292 Marine Way, Juneau,; Douglas Branch, 1016 3rd Street, Douglas, Mendenhall Mall Branch, 9109 Mendenhall

Mall Rd., Juneau; **3.** U.S. Forest Service, Admiralty Island National Monument Office, 8510 Mendenhall Loop Road, Juneau; **4.** Angoon Community Association Building, 315 Heendae Rd., Angoon; **5.** Angoon City Government Office, 700 Aan Deina Aat Street, Angoon; **6.** Angoon Senior Center, 812 Xootz Rd., Angoon; **7.** The FAA, Airports Division. Please contact Leslie Grey at (907) 271–5453 for a copy.

You may submit comments or request more information by any of the following methods: by Email: comments@angoonairporteis.com; include “Angoon Airport EIS comments” in the subject line of the message; by U.S. Mail: Angoon Airport EIS Comments, 1220 SW. Morrison, Suite 700, Portland, Oregon 97205; and in person: To drop off comments, contact Leslie Grey at (907) 271–5453. Comments must be received on or before March 11, 2015. ♦

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/>

Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska; Rural Determination Process

The US Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service (Secretaries) propose to revise the regulations governing the rural determination process for the Federal Subsistence Program in Alaska. Under current regulations, the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) defines which community or area of Alaska is rural using guidelines and characteristics defined by the Secretaries. This new process will enable the Board to be more flexible in making decisions and take into account the regional differences found throughout the State.

The Secretaries, through the Board, will hold public meetings in conjunction with the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Councils) to receive comments on this proposed rule on several dates between February 10 and March 19, 2015. In addition, the Councils will discuss and make their recommendations to the Board. The Board will discuss and evaluate proposed regulatory changes during a public meeting in Anchorage, AK, on or before April 2016 and make recommendations on the proposed rule to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture.

To obtain more information visit the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for FWS–R7–SM–2014–0063.

Comments and proposals to change this proposed rule must be received or postmarked by April 1, 2015.

You may submit comments: *Electronically:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for FWS–R7–SM–2014–0063, which is the docket number for this rulemaking; by post 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.

The Federal Subsistence Board and the Councils' public meetings will be held at various locations in Alaska. See the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** in the announcement for specific information on dates and locations of the public meetings. For more information contact: Federal Subsistence Board, c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attention: Eugene R. Peltola, Jr., Office of Subsistence Management; (907) 786–3888 or subsistence@fws.gov. For questions specific to National Forest System lands, contact Thomas Whitford, Regional Subsistence Program Leader, USDA, Forest Service, Alaska Region; (907) 743–9461 or whitford@fs.fed.us. ♦

Commission Members

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(H) HOUSE APPOINTMENT

(G) GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT

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For more information, visit our website:

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.

Designation of Critical Habitat for the Arctic Ringed Seal; Extension of Comment Period and Notice of Public Hearing

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a proposed rule in the Federal Register on December 9, 2014, to designate critical habitat for the threatened Arctic subspecies of the ringed seal under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and announced that the public comment period would close on March 9, 2015.

This document, we extend the comment period through March 31, 2015, to provide additional time for the public to submit comments. NMFS also announced the specific date and location for a public hearing on the proposal in Bethel, AK, on February 26, 2015, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center, 420 Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway, Bethel. You may submit written comments on the proposed rule, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2013-0114, by any one of the following methods:

Electronic Submission: via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0114>, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. For any submissions through the e-Rulemaking Portal, always be mindful of a potential time difference between Alaska and Washington D.C.

By Post: Address written comments to Jon Kurland, Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668.

Electronic copies of the proposed rule, list of references and supporting documents, and the draft economic report (i.e., Regulatory Impact Review (RIR)/4(b)(2) Preparatory Assessment/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Act (IRFA) report) prepared for this action are available from <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0114> or from the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov>.

For more information contact: Tamara Olson, NMFS Alaska Region, (907) 271-2373; Jon Kurland, NMFS Alaska Region, (907) 586-7638; or Marta Nammack, NMFS Office of Protected Resources, (301) 427-8469. ♦



Notice of Availability of and Request for Comments on the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is announcing the availability of and requests comments on the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017-2022 (DPP). This draft proposal is for the 2017-2022 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program that will succeed the current 2012-2017 Program.

The DPP provides the basis for gathering information and conducting analyses to inform the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) on which areas to include for further leasing consideration in the 2017-2022 Program. Section 18 of the OCS Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1344) specifies a multi-step process of consultation and analysis that must be completed before the Secretary may approve a new Five-Year Program. The required steps following this notice include the development of a Proposed Program, Proposed Final Program, and Secretarial approval. In conjunction with this notice, BOEM is publishing a Notice of Intent to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the 2017-2022 Program, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

BOEM will accept internet comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=BOEM-2014-0096-0001> click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. For any submissions through the e-Rulemaking Portal, always be mindful of a potential time difference between Alaska and Washington D.C.. By Post: comments and information on the 2017-2022 Program to Ms. Kelly Hammerle, Five-Year Program Manager, BOEM (HM-3120), 381 Elden Street, Herndon, Virginia 20170.

Please submit comments and information to BOEM no later than March 30, 2015.

Ms. Kelly Hammerle, Five-Year Program Manager, at (703) 787-1613. ♦

Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve General Management Plan Review

The National Park Service has released a plan that updates the 1986 General Management Plan and guides the future of Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. This plan will direct management of park resources, visitor uses, and facilities for the next 15 to 20 years. It also provides guidance for stewardship of park wilderness and backcountry recreation.

The General Management Plan Amendment / Wilderness Stewardship Plan / Environmental Assessment identifies and evaluates three management alternatives and their environmental impacts to natural and cultural resources, wilderness character, and visitor experiences. The NPS preferred alternative would continue the current management approach. There would continue to be a strong focus on protecting wilderness character, including maintaining opportunities for solitude and self-reliance, and the park's wild and undeveloped

qualities. No new infrastructure or visitor facilities would be provided. The preferred alternative also includes management zoning as well as indicators and standards for wilderness character. Under all of the alternatives, subsistence use in the park and preserve would continue to be a priority and supported in accordance with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

The plan is available for public review from January 12, 2015 to March 13, 2015 on this website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=30266>, along with meeting dates and locations. Comments may be submitted electronically on this website, or by regular mail to: Gates of the Arctic GMPA, National Park Service, 4175 Geist Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709. ♦

Revised Draft Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and the Effects of Climate Change in NEPA Reviews

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is publishing revised draft guidance on how National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and documentation should address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the impacts of climate change. Many projects and programs proposed by, or requiring the approval of, the Federal Government have the potential to emit or sequester GHG, and may be potentially affected by climate changes. It follows, under NEPA, that Federal decision makers and the public should be informed about the proposal's GHG emissions and climate change impacts.

This revised draft guidance supersedes the draft guidance CEQ issued on February 18, 2010, entitled "Draft NEPA Guidance on Consideration of the Effects of Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas emissions." 1 The February 2010 draft guidance specifically did not apply to land and resource management activities. That distinction is no longer retained, and this revised draft guidance applies to all proposed Federal agency actions subject to NEPA.

This revised draft guidance: (1) Discusses direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts analysis of a proposed action's reasonably foreseeable emissions and effects; (2) highlights the consideration of reasonable alternatives and points to the need to consider the short-term and long-term effects and benefits in the alternatives analysis and mitigation to lower emissions; (3) recommends that agencies use a reference point to determine when GHG emissions warrant a quantitative analysis taking into account available GHG quantification tools and data that are appropriate for proposed agency actions; (4) recommends that an agency select the appropriate level of action for NEPA review at which to assess the

effects of GHG emissions and climate change, either at a broad programmatic or landscape-scale level or at a project- or site-specific level, and that the agency set forth a reasoned explanation for its approach; (5) counsels agencies to use the information developed during the NEPA review to consider alternatives that are more resilient to the effects of a changing climate; and (6) advises agencies to use existing information and tools when assessing future proposed action, and provides examples of some existing sources of scientific information.

The NEPA Draft Guidance documents are available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/nepa>.

Comments should be submitted electronically to GCC.guidance@ceq.eop.gov, or in writing to the Council on Environmental Quality, ATTN: Horst Greczmiel, 722 Jackson Place NW., Washington, DC 20503.

For more information contact: Horst Greczmiel, Associate Director for National Environmental Policy Act Oversight, at (202) 395-5750. ♦



BLM—Alaska Resource Advisory Council Seeking 5 Nominations

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced it is seeking nominations for 5 positions on BLM's Alaska Resource Advisory Council (RAC), which advises the BLM on public land issues. As published in a *Federal Register* notice on February 3, 2015, the BLM will accept nominations for 45 days. The nomination period ends March 20, 2015.

The BLM's RACs, composed of citizens chosen for their expertise in natural resource issues, help the Bureau carry out its stewardship of 245 million acres of public lands. The Bureau, which manages more land than any other federal agency, has 31 RACs across the west, where most BLM-managed land is located. The Alaska RAC consists of 15 members with an interest or expertise in public land management and includes such individuals as conservationists, ranchers, outdoor recreationists, state and local government officials, tribal officials, and academics. The diverse membership of the RAC helps ensure that BLM land managers get the varying perspectives they need to achieve their mission, which is to manage the public lands for multiple uses.

"As a land-management agency that carries out a multiple-use mission, the BLM seeks out and values diverse input from citizens who care about the stewardship of America's public lands," said BLM

Alaska State Director Bud Cribley. "This input advances our efforts in managing uses of and protecting resources on the public lands for future generations of Americans to enjoy."

Individuals may nominate themselves or others to serve on an advisory council. Nominees, who must be residents of the state where the RAC has jurisdiction, will be evaluated on the basis of their training, education, and knowledge of the council's geographical area. Nominees should also demonstrate a commitment to consensus building and collaborative decision making. All nominations must be accompanied by letters of reference from any represented interests or organizations, a completed RAC application, and any other information that speaks to the nominee's qualifications.

Alaska has five positions open in the following categories:

• **Category One (1 position)** – Public land ranchers and representatives of organizations associated with energy and mineral development, the timber industry, transportation or rights-of-way, off-highway vehicle use, and commercial recreation.

• **Category Two (1 position)**– Representatives of nationally or regionally recognized environmental organizations, archaeological and historical organizations, dispersed recreation activities, and wild horse and burro organizations.

• **Category Three (3 positions)** – Representatives of state, county, or local elected office; representatives and employees of a state agency responsible for the management of natural resources; representatives of Indian Tribes within or adjacent to the area for which the RAC is organized; representatives and employees of academic institutions who are involved in natural sciences; and the public-at-large.

To learn more about the BLM Alaska RAC and download an application, visit <http://www.blm.gov/ak/rac> or contact Thom Jennings, RAC Coordinator, at email: tjennings@blm.gov or telephone (907) 271-3335. ♦

