

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

NABESNA OFF-ROAD-VEHICLE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT...

...to be released during summer 2011. An EIS has been written as one of the settlement agreement conditions resulting from a 2006 lawsuit filed against the National Park Service (NPS) challenging permits issued for the use of Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) on nine trails in the Nabesna district of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. A draft EIS was published in August 2010 analyzing five different management alternatives, as follows:



Alternative 1: No Action. No trail improvements proposed. Recreational ORV use would not be permitted on the Suslota, Tanada Lake, or Copper Lake

trails. Subsistence ORV use would continue.

Alternative 2: Represents pre-lawsuit conditions. No trail improvements proposed. Recreational ORV use permitted on all nine trails. Subsistence ORV use would continue.

Alternative 3: Few trail improvements. No recreational ORV use permitted. Subsistence ORV use would continue, subject to monitoring to make sure conditions on unimproved trails do not get worse.

Alternative 4: Most trails would be improved to a maintainable level. After improvements, recreational ORV use would be permitted on trails in the National Preserve, not the National Park, the Copper Lake, Tanada Lake, Boomerang trails. Subsistence ORV use would continue, subject to monitoring to make sure conditions on unimproved trails do not get worse.

Alternative 5: Most trails improved to a maintainable level. After improvements, recreational ORV use would be permitted on all nine improved trails,

but not in the designated wilderness. Subsistence ORV use would continue, subject to monitoring to make sure conditions on unimproved trails do not get worse. And, subsistence ORV users would be required to stay on designated trails in the wilderness. Alternative 5 was identified as the NPS preferred alternative.

The Final EIS, which is scheduled to
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CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO NEPA

Each year Federal agencies in Alaska make numerous decisions that could have environmental impacts on the lands and resources for which they have management responsibility. Most federal agency actions or projects, including construction projects and plans to manage or develop federal lands, require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The environmental review process under NEPA provides the public the opportunity to be involved with the federal agency decision-making process. Both the environmental review and the decision-making process can be confusing and frustrating for people who are not familiar with NEPA and the steps involved in developing a NEPA document. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has developed [A Citizen's Guide to the NEPA](#) to help citizens and organizations effectively participate in federal agencies environmental reviews under the act.

The CEQ guide, which can be accessed through the link above, explains the NEPA process and how it is implemented. It also tells the reader when and how to get involved, along with other helpful information.



Proposed Action for Management of KENNECOTT Mines National Historic Landmark

The National Park Service (NPS) is proposing to revise the 2001 Interim Operations Plan outlining management strategies for the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark (KMNHL) within the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The 2001 Interim Operations Plan was intended to provide guidance for management of the KMNHL for a five-year period. A revision is needed to document the work that has been accomplished at the site in the last 10 years and to address new issues. A revised plan will describe NPS goals for management of the site and will present the NPS vision and specific recommendations for structural stabilization, circulation and access, vegetation management, interpretation, and



partnerships. Included under structural stabilization will be the proposal to stabilize and repair the two most iconic buildings in the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark: the 14-story Concentration Mill and the 23,000 square foot Leach Plant. The NPS also plans to abate known hazardous asbestos; install fire protection; and replace a deficient potable water system. The general goal for management of lands in and around the NHL is to conserve the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife habitat and to provide for the enjoyment of the same by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of the future generations. The focus for management of the Kennecott National Historic Landmark is to stabi-

lize, preserve, and interpret the key patterns, relationships, and remaining structures and features that define the historic, cultural and natural character of the NHL.

Public review of the proposal and comments will be accepted through August 31, 2011. At that time, NPS will compile public comments and use them to change or refine proposed actions and to develop management alternatives. Then, the proposed actions and alternatives will be analyzed in an Environmental Assessment (EA). A public review EA is anticipated to be available by mid-November, 2011. At that time, the public will have another opportunity to comment. A Final EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), scheduled for December 31, 2011, will describe the selected alternative or combination of alternatives and will result in the new Kennecott Operations Plan. For more information and to review the plan documents, the National Park Service maintains a Planning, Environmental and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/wrst>. The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve has a website at: <http://www.nps.gov/wrst/parkmgmt/planning.htm>; and the Friends of Kennicott website at: <http://www.friendsofkennicott.org>.

Comments on this proposed action package may be submitted to the park in writing to: Bruce Rogers, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, P.O. Box 439, Copper Center, Alaska, 99573. Comments may also be e-mailed to: Bruce.Rogers@nps.gov or Elizabeth.Schafer@nps.gov. Comments may also be submitted electronically on the PEPC site.

KENNECOTT or KENNICOTT from the "[Friends of Kennicott](#)" website

Naturalist Robert Kennicott, who worked on the trans-Pacific telegraph line in the 1880s, was the original namesake of the Kennicott Valley, including the glacier and river which also bear the name. Oscar Rohn, who worked for the USGS, named the glacier, river and valley in Kennicott's honor. When Kennecott Mining Company was formed, a mistake was purportedly made on some paperwork and the company name was forever spelled with an "e". Today all the natural features of the area still carry the original spelling, while man-made features associated with the old mining "camp" are spelled Kennecott. When the residents are collectively referred to, the spelling Kennicott is usually (and colloquially) used.

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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.

Draft Outfitter and Guide Management Plan Released

The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD) on the Tongass National Forest has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan. The DEIS proposes four alternatives for allocating outfitter and guide permits on the KMRD.



The action alternatives would allocate between 34,900 and 74,000 service days annually to outfitters and guides for recreational use on National Forest System Lands with the KMRD. The no-action alternative would allocate approximately 24,200 service days to outfitters and guides based on the highest use by area between 2005 and 2009. The preferred alternative, Alternative B, the Proposed Action would allocate approximately 54,000 service days.

There is a 45-days comment period for the DEIS which closes August 22, 2011. Comments on the DEIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the proposed alternatives. Written, oral and electronic comments will be accepted. The DEIS can be found [at this link](#). Send written comments to: Jeff DeFreest, District Ranger, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, 3031 Tongass Avenue, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901. Send comments via e-mail to: comments-alaska-tongass-ketchikan-mistyfiord@fs.fed.us. Put KMRD O/G DEIS in the subject line. For more information contact: Sue Jennings, Project Team Leader Petersburg F.S. office at 907-772-5864.

Endangered Species Act Regulation Issue to Delay Wood Bison Release

In the fall 2010 issue of *Wood Bison News* Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced that spring 2012 was the target date to release wood bison in the Innoko area. Due to a delay in completing regulations under the Endangered Species Act the release of the wild will be delayed until 2013 or beyond. The final federal regulations have to be in place before wood bison can be released. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the last two years to develop a rule under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. The 10(j) rule would designate wood bison in Alaska as a nonessential experimental population, provide protections for other land users and resource development and allow the state to have the lead role in managing wood bison populations. It appeared that the draft regulations would be published in the Federal Register, accomplishing their central purpose of ensuring that releasing a new species onto the landscape would not interfere with other resource activities. For more information or to get a copy of the Wood Bison News contact Bob Stephenson, Wood bison biologist at 459-7236, email at bob.stephenson@alaska.gov.



<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=woodbison.resources>

Nabesna ORV Final EIS - continued from page 1.

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be released for public review in late July 2011, will be posted on the Planning Environment and Public Comment website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov> and on the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve website at <http://www.nps.gov/wrst>. Based on the public comments received, the Final EIS will analyze a sixth alternative which combines elements of **Alternatives 4 and 5** from the Draft EIS. Basic elements of **Alternative 6** include:

- Improvement of the nine trails to a maintainable level;
- Permitting recreational ORV use on improved trail in the National Preserve;
- Subsistence use would continue, subject to monitoring of unimproved trails and off-trail use. Additionally, subsistence ORV users would be required to stay on designated trails in the wilderness, with allowance for game retrieval.
- Some construction of non-motorized

trails.

When the Final EIS is printed, a Notice of Availability (NOA) will be published in the Federal Register. In addition, NPS will alert interested publics regarding the release of the Final EIS. NPS must wait 30 days after the NOA is published in the Federal Register before releasing a Record of Decision. The Record of Decision is the decision document for an EIS and describes the agencies decision and rationale for it.

The final EIS will also include NPS responses to all substantive comments. Once released, the final EIS will be available in hard copy or CD form by contacting: Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
Attention Bruce Rogers
P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573
Phone 907-822-7276
E-mail Bruce_rogers@nps.gov

Notice of Establishment and Call for Nominations for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Advisory Committee

The Department of the Interior announced on July 1, 2011 in the [Federal Register, the establishment of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Advisory Committee](#) (21CSC). The Committee is being formed, along with a call for qualified nominees, in response to recommendations made in the report to the President on "America's Great Outdoors: A Promise to Future Generations."

The 21CSC will focus on helping young people, including low-income, underserved, and diverse youth, gain valuable training and work experience while accomplishing needed conservation work on and near public lands.

The purpose of the Committee will be to provide recommendations on: (1) Developing a framework, program components, structure, and implementation for the 21CSC, as well as accountability and success measures; (2) the development of certification criteria for 21CSC providers and members; (3) strategies to overcome existing barriers to successful 21CSC program implementation; (4) identifying part-

nership opportunities with corporations, private businesses or entities, foundations, and non-profit groups, as well as state, local, and tribal governments, to expand support for conservation corps programs, career training and youth employment opportunities; (5) and developing pathways for 21 CSC participants for future conservation engagement and natural resource careers.

The Department of the Interior is seeking nominations for individuals to be considered as Committee members. Mem-

bers of the Committee shall include representatives from among a diverse group of entities with a vested interest in youth services, youth employment and training organizations, from Schools, Universities, Corporations and or Industry invested in Youth Services, Outdoor Recreation, Conservation, Environmental, Hunting and Fishing, Cultural and Historic Groups as well as Labor Organizations and Trade Groups.

Nominations to serve on the committee will be accepted until Monday, August 1, 2011; and should describe and document the proposed member's qualifications for membership to the Committee, and include a resume listing their name, title, address, telephone, e-mail, and fax number.

For further information and to send nomination, please contact: Gabrielle Horner, Partnerships Coordinator, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW., Mailstop 3559, Washington DC 20240; Gabrielle.Horner@ios.doi.gov, (202)208-5904.



Lake Clark National Park and Preserve General Management Plan Amendment

Lake Clark National Park and Preserve (LCNPP) is 4 million acres spanning the Alaska Range from Cook Inlet to the Bristol Bay region "...set aside to preserve unimpaired a region of dynamic geologic and ecological processes that create scenic mountain landscapes, unaltered watersheds supporting Bristol Bay red salmon, and habitats for wilderness dependent populations of fish and wildlife, vital to 10,000 years of human history." (The purpose of LCNPP as stated in the 2009 Foundation Statement). During the summer of 2011 the National Park Service (NPS) planning team is beginning the work necessary to amend the 26-year-old general management plan (GMP). The GMP is the basic foundation for decision making and detailed planning for Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. The GMP provides a vision for resource preservation and visitor use during the next 15 to 20 years.



The staff at Lake Clark is interested in hearing from the public, other land managers and neighboring communities on such topics as:

- Why Lake Clark is important to you;
- Appropriate levels of development necessary to support visitor use, for example, trails, cabins and/or campgrounds;
- Management of commercial services;
- Strategies to protect the things that are most important about the park such as wild rivers;

- Evaluating areas of the park and preserve for possible inclusion in the national wilderness preservation system;
- Identifying how to address threats to the park that have arisen since 1984.

Share your comments at a Park sponsored local meetings or open houses as follows:

- July 12, 4-7p, at AK Lands and Ocean Visitor Center in Homer;
- July 13, 4-7p, the Donald E. Gilman River Center in Soldotna;
- July 14, 4-7p, the Susitna Rm, Sheraton Hotel Anchorage;
- July 26, 4-7p, Community Building, Nondalton;
- July 27, 4-7p, Community Building, Pedro Bay;
- July 28, 4-7p, the LCNPP Visitor Center, Port Alsworth;
- July 29, 4-7p, the Iliamna Community Building, Iliamna and Newhalen.

Share your comments electronically at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/lacj>; follow the links to "General Management Plan" then "Open for Public Comment"; by email at LACL_Planning@nps.gov; or mail your comments to: Lake Clark NPP – GMP Amendment, 240 W. 5th Ave., Suite 236, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. **Deadline for comments is Sept. 1, 2011.**

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, Alaska

<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/>