



Yukon Tanana Area Plan Planning Update No. 1

April 2010



Overview

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has completed the public scoping phase of the planning process for the Yukon Tanana Area Plan (YTAP). The official public scoping period for comments ended on July 10, 2009. During the scoping period DNR held seven public meetings (Nenana, Manley Hot Springs, Minto, Lake Minchumina, Fairbanks, Healy, and Cantwell) over the summer of 2009.

The purpose of these meetings was to solicit public input on use, resources, and issues within the YTAP, both now and into the future. Planning staff and representatives from the various Divisions within DNR were present at the meetings, along with representatives from Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), to meet with community councils/government, stakeholder groups, and individuals with interest in the planning process. Each meeting began with an informal map review; followed by staff introductions; a formal presentation on the YTAP process; a question and answer period, then specific issue related discussions.

In addition to the input received at scoping meetings, individuals, groups, government, and organizations were encouraged to submit written comments on the development of the YTAP, and meet with planning staff to discuss and identify any issues before development of the plan.

This planning update documents the issues heard at each scoping meeting, as heard from the meeting discussions. Some comments were specific to an issue and/or use within the YTAP, while others were more general in nature. The written comments available online and the meeting summaries below constitute the issues identified during the public scoping period.

The Meetings: “What we heard”

Planning staff received numerous comments during the scoping period related to state land in the YTAP planning area. Topics of interest that were identified include:

- Maintaining and/or improving access to state land across federal/native land, and improving access to public recreation areas;
- Realities of alternative energy for use by individuals and utilities, continued coal development, and geothermal exploration;
- The availability/location of Settlement land;
- Maintaining and/or increasing Agricultural land;
- ADF&G game management, access to hunting areas, and plans/regulations related to the Minto Flats State Game Refuge;

- Access to forest resources for community harvest, increased timber availability, local fire protection in Minto, and questions regarding the personal/commercial use of harvest in the Tanana State Forest; and
- Increase state recreation areas, identification of recreational use areas.

Planning staff has produced a complete list of the questions, comments, and issues that were voiced during the scoping period. This list is available for download at:

http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/areaplans/ytap/pdf/ytap_issues.pdf.

What happens next?

The Department will continue to gather information, and begin to develop an agency review draft using the information received during the scoping period, along with information gathered and produced from the agencies and planning staff. This draft will take several months to complete, due to the multiple uses that occur within the Basin, and the large geographical area (approximately seven million acres of State land).

The purpose of this draft is to receive internal feedback, as to the overall management direction proposed in the plan, and address any internal issues and/or concerns early in the process. A Public Review Draft (PRD) will then be developed and released to the public. The public will then have the opportunity to review and comment on the PRD for a period of 60 days. Public meetings will also be held during the public comment period.

How do I become involved in the process?

It is not too late to become involved in the planning process for the YTAP. **You are encouraged to:**

- Familiarize yourself with the information provided on the state website for the YTAP web address: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/areaplans/ytap/>;
- Submit general comments online at the YTAP website or mail them to the address provided below or just subscribe to the mailing list;
- Attend public meetings; and
- Review information, maps and draft planning documents provided for public review.

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Visit the YTAP website at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/areaplans/ytap/> to get information on planning, management, and upcoming events.