

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

Land Exchange Proposed Near Two Lakes in Lake Clark National Park

Land owners with property on the corner of the Tlikakila River and Two Lakes proposed a land exchange with Lake Clark National Park and Preserve to prevent the changing path of the river from washing a cabin and outhouse into Two Lakes. The proposed exchange would be for land stated as equivalent in value and approximately equal in size. The U.S. Government property proposed for exchange is currently designated as wilderness and the obtained land would take on a wilderness designation so that the net wilderness acreage would remain the same. An environmental assessment on the proposed exchange is available for review until June 5, 2010.

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ROD on Doyon/Yukon Flats Exchange

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced availability of a record of decision for the proposed land exchange between Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge and Doyon, Limited. An environmental impact statement was prepared to evaluate this exchange. After analysis of environmental, social and economic factors, the agency chose the No Land Exchange Alternative.

The proposed exchange involved the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service obtaining

a minimum of 150,000 acres of Doyon land within the Yukon Flats refuge in exchange for 110,000 acres of refuge land with potential for oil and gas development. Doyon would have also received oil and gas rights to an additional 97,000 acres. While the agency and Doyon agreed on the exchange preliminarily, the NEPA process revealed that projected risks were too high to go through with the exchange. For more information on the decision, follow this [link](#).

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Kake-Petersburg Transmission Line Intertie Project

The U.S. Forest Service announced it will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for construction and operation of a new electric transmission intertie from Petersburg to Kake. This transmission line would run through the Tongass National Forest and transmit power at either 69 or 138 kilovolts. Two routes are being proposed, both of which follow existing logging roads for most of their length.

Studies on the feasibility of a transmission intertie project to Kake date back to the 1970s. The current system providing electricity to this community is very expensive and has caused social and economic burden to the people living there. The proposed project would connect Kake to the electric systems of Petersburg, Wrangell and Ketchikan. Surplus hydroelectric power would be transmitted to Kake and help offset the existing high cost diesel generation.

Comments on the scoping phase of this project should be submitted to:

Petersburg Ranger District,
Tongass National Forest
Attn: Kake-Petersburg Intertie Project
P.O. Box 1328
Petersburg, AK 99833

Via email to:
comments-Alaska-tongass-
petersburg@fs.fed.us

Fax: 907-772-5995

Notice of Application for Recordable Disclaimer of Interest: Tanana River

On March 10, 2006, the State of Alaska filed for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest with the Bureau of Land Management for lands underlying the Tanana River from its origin at the confluence of the Chisana and Nabesna Rivers to all points of confluence with the Yukon River. The State claims that the river was navigable at the time of Statehood, therefore making ownership belong to the State by the language in the Equal Footing Doctrine, the Submerged Lands Act of 1953, the Submerged Lands Act of 1988 and the Alaska Statehood Act. The public will have 90 days from the date of the notice to comment or until July 28, 2010.

For more information contact:

Callie Webber
Navigability Section Chief
907-271-3167
cwebber@blm.gov

Or visit:
www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/rdi.htm

Send comments to:

Branch of Survey Planning and Preparation
Division of Cadastral Survey, BLM
Alaska State Office
222 W. 8th Avenue #13
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599

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<http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/cacfa/index.htm>

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.

Comment Period Re-opening for Polar Bear Critical Habitat Designation

On May 5, 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced an additional open comment period for review of the proposed polar bear critical habitat. New information incorporated into this review includes a draft Economic Analysis, corrections to the proposed boundaries, and an amended required determinations section. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also intends to hold two public meetings with opportunities for public testimony.

In addition to topics the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requested comments on in the October 9, 2009 Federal Register notice, input was requested on the following:

- Information on whether the draft Economic Analysis identifies all Federal, State, and local costs and benefits attributable to the proposed designation of critical habitat and information on any costs inadvertently overlooked.
- Information on whether the draft Economic Analysis makes appropriate assumptions regarding current practices and any regulatory changes that likely may occur if critical habitat is designated.
- Information on the accuracy of methodology in the draft Economic Analysis for distinguishing baseline and incremental costs, and the assumptions underlying the methodology.
- Information on whether the draft Economic Analysis correctly assesses the effect on regional costs associated with land use controls that may result from the designation of critical habitat.
- Information on the likelihood of

adverse social reactions to the designation of critical habitat, as discussed in the draft Economic Analysis, and how the consequences of such reactions, if likely to occur, would relate to the conservation and regulatory benefits of the proposed critical habitat designation.

- Information on areas that the members of the public have recommended be excluded from or added to the proposed critical habitat.

To read the Economic Analysis and other related information, go to <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/mmm/polarbear/criticalhabitat.htm>.

Written comments must be submitted by July 6, 2010 to:

www.regulations.gov (docket no. FWS-R7-ES-2009-0042)

Or by mail to:

Attn: FWS-R7-ES-2009-0042, Division of Policy and Directives Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222
Arlington, VA 22203

Comments may also be made during the public hearings. One hearing will be held in Anchorage at the Z.J. Loussac Public Library (3600 Denali Street) from 7-10 p.m. on June 15, 2010. The second will be held in Barrow at the Inupiat Heritage Center (5421 North Star Street) from 7-10 p.m. on June 17, 2010.



Polar Bear
Photo Credit: Steven Amstrup, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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The primary course of the Tlikakila River changed due to a high run-off event in 2009 and the current flow pattern threatens structures on private property. While the future course of the river is not known for certain, the stream bank erosion potential, high sediment supply and poor recovery characteristics of this type of river led National Park Service Scientists to predict a real threat to the structures in the next 5-10 years. Since channel stabilizing techniques rate poor to fair for this stream type and rerouting the flow was deemed unrealistic and potentially ineffective, NPS and the private landowners have agreed to an exchange of land to both prevent damage to private property and pollution to the Lakes.

To read the Environmental Assessment in its entirety, visit the [Park Planning Website](#).

Final LEIS for Harvest of Gull Eggs

The National Park Service completed the final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS) to allow harvest of glaucous-winged gull eggs by the Huna Tlingit in Glacier Bay National Park. Harvest of gull eggs was prohibited in the 1960s with the implementation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. At the request of tribal leaders, NPS agreed to explore ways to allow this traditional activity.

The preferred alternative in the LEIS involves authorization of two annual egg harvests at five designated locations. The first harvest would occur on or before the 5th day following the start of egg-laying. The second harvest would occur within nine days of the

Public Meetings/Announcements

Front Country Planning Efforts in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park intends to begin early scoping meetings this summer for a front country management plan. Meetings will be in McCarthy/Kennecott. Watch the Park Service [website](#) for more information.

USFS Announces New Direction on the Tongass

The USDA Forest Service and USDA Rural Development are proposing a "Transition Framework" on the Tongass National Forest. This framework would move timber harvests out of old growth forests and into younger growth areas that already have roads.

The goal is to create jobs and increase economic stability in Southeast Alaska with more diverse economic opportunities. To view the project idea list, go to www.fs.fed.us/r10.



first harvest.

To read the notice, visit the Federal Register [website](#). A minimum of 30 days notice must be given prior to filing a Record of Decision. Egg harvest could only occur if this is approved by congress.



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/>