

**EAST ALASKA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
RECORD OF DECISION
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

1. Why was the existing plan revised?

- *The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) states: “The Secretary shall, with public involvement...develop, maintain and, when appropriate, revise land use plans...”*
- *Plan revisions are underway nationally to provide updated guidance to federal land managers looking to adequately address changing demands for public land use.*
- *With land selections in place for the remaining Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) entitlements, land ownership patterns are emerging that reveal what lands will remain BLM-administered after the land transfer program is completed. The BLM is developing land use plans that will help determine long-term management objectives for lands that will remain in the public domain.*

2. Are there any significant changes in this plan?

- *BLM has allowed for the eventual conveyance by the State of Alaska of 82,500 acres that is currently withdrawn through Public Land Order 5150. This acreage lies in the northern portion of the East Alaska Management area (see map #6 in the Record of Decision and approved plan).*
- *Existing trails within the Delta and Gulkana National Wild and Scenic River corridors have been designated as the appropriate routes for travel within these corridors, assuring their long-term management.*
- *The Bering Research Natural Area has been designated. Its designation protects glacial habitats and the retreating glacier and supports continued research opportunities. It protects wetlands that provide important habitat for migrating birds. BLM will manage the area to continue to provide a primitive recreation experience, conduct research activities in a manner that is least obtrusive to the area, and to protect anadromous fisheries habitat to support continued, long term subsistence use.*

3. Why are ANCSA “d-1” withdrawals being lifted? ANCSA authorized the Secretary to withdraw and reserve lands for study and classification. This was done through a series of Public Land Orders issued from 1972-1975 under Section 17(d)(1). This action closed the lands to disposal and appropriation under public land laws, including mining and mineral leasing.

- *The withdrawals kept the lands unencumbered for selection by ANCSA corporations, and prevented the creation of new third-party interests that would interfere with land conveyance.*
- *The withdrawals also allowed the BLM time to study and classify the lands*

- 4. Will the lifting of a portion of the PLO 5150 withdrawal affect subsistence harvests?** *Only 16% of the total acreage of PLO 5150 managed by the BLM Glennallen Field Office(GFO)is being modified to allow for conveyance at this time. According to annual harvest data collected since 1994, less than 10% of the moose and 5% of the caribou harvest has previously occurred in these areas, leaving a viable and accessible unit available for rural priority and federal harvest on the remainder of BLM-managed lands where the federal subsistence priority has been implemented.*
- 5. Do you expect increased mining or oil and gas leasing applications as a result of lifting the withdrawals included in this plan?** *Lands currently under selection by the State and Native corporations are segregated from mineral leasing to avoid potential encumbrances on selected lands prior to conveyance. These lands comprise approximately 5.5 million acres out of the 7.1 million acres currently managed by BLM. Therefore decisions made within this land use planning effort to “open” areas for mineral leasing by revoking withdrawals would not go into effect unless lands are retained for long-term federal ownership.*
- 6. Have any trails been closed to off highway vehicle (OHV) use?** *Existing trails have not been closed, but travel is now limited to these existing trails in order to achieve goals established through the revised Resource Management Plan. Where lands are to be managed by BLM for the long-term, OHV use will be limited to existing trails and in some cases, to designated trails in order to comply with 43 CFR part 8340-8342, that states that BLM will manage no areas as “open.” OHV use will be limited to existing trails on State and Native selected lands, with a few exceptions. (See pages 46 – 55 of the ROD for detailed information).*
- 7. Why is BLM designating trails?** *Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act allows OHV use in Conservation System Units (such as Wild and Scenic River Corridors) if OHVs are on designated routes (43 CFR 36.11). BLM has updated their management policy within this plan revision to address the Code of Federal Regulations and ANILCA on this issue.*
- 8. Is this the only plan that guides management for these areas? Or are there specific plans that address smaller areas more directly?** *The East Alaska Resource Management Plan is the overarching plan for this management area and addresses issues broadly. Within this plan, areas have been identified that will require further planning in the form of “implementation level” plans or “step-down” plans, if they remain in long-term BLM management. These step-down plans include the Gulkana National Wild River, Delta Wild and Scenic River, Tangle Lakes Archaeological District, Tiekel, Slana, Denali Highway, and the Delta Range.*

- 9. Will the public be invited to participate in implementation level plans?** *Yes, for instance the Gulkana River Management Plan has already gone through a plan revision prior to the East plan with an extensive public and agency review. Other implementation level plans will be conducted and the public will be invited to participate. Persons interested in participating in future step-down plans are encouraged to contact the BLM Glennallen Field Office at 907-822-3217 and ask to be placed on their mailing list.*
- 10. How can I get a copy of the Record of Decision(ROD) for the East Alaska Resource Management Plan(EARMP)?** *All documents for the ROD are available on-line at www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning/east_alaska_plan.html. A copy of the ROD can also be obtained by contacting the BLM Glennallen Field Office at 907-822-3217.*