

# How You Can Participate

The next milestone is publication of the Bay Draft RMP/EIS in September 2006. This document will be available for a 90-day public review and comment period from October through December 2006. During the comment period, BLM will hold public meetings in several communities throughout the planning area and in Anchorage. Watch your local media for dates and locations of public meetings during the comment period. You may also mail your comments about the document to the address below.

Individuals and groups receiving this newsletter will remain on the mailing list to receive a copy of the Bay Draft RMP/EIS, unless you request that your name be removed. The document will be available on CD-ROM or in printed form.

Contact Project Lead Patricia McClenahan to request a presentation if your group or organization would like to know more about the Bay RMP/EIS, or if you'd like to be added or deleted from the mailing list.



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# Bay Resource Management Plan

Bureau of Land Management  
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(Aerial view of Alagnak River in the Bay planning area. Top photo: BLM-administered lands near Lake Iliamna)



Gary Reimer

Patricia McClenahan

Dear Public Land User:

This is the first of several newsletters that will provide you with information about the Bay Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. We hope these newsletters and our web site will keep you informed of important steps throughout the planning process.

The Bay RMP/EIS will provide a comprehensive framework for managing and allocating uses of BLM-administered public lands and resources within the Bristol Bay and Goodnews Bay areas of southwest Alaska. The plan will also provide direction for site-specific activity planning in the future.

The planning area includes 1.2 million acres of unencumbered BLM lands (less than 5 percent of the planning area) and 1.3 million acres of State- and Native-selected lands, for a total of 2.5 million acres of BLM-administered lands (see map on page 2). Unencumbered lands are large blocks and small scattered tracts of land that will remain in BLM management in the long term. One of the goals of this plan is to make some of these small, remote blocks available for land exchange in an effort to consolidate noncontiguous blocks of lands.

BLM conducted extensive scoping throughout the planning area and worked with those most affected by the plan to craft a range of alternatives that considers the needs and concerns of all public land users. We consulted with Alaska Native organizations and other federal, state and local land managers throughout the planning area. Project lead Patricia McClenahan and I worked extensively with BLM land transfer liaison Dugan Nielsen of Dillingham to learn the issues and concerns of those who live within the region.

BLM received over 1,800 written and verbal comments during formal and informal scoping. These comments were carefully considered as we developed the draft alternatives described in this newsletter.

The Bay Draft RMP/EIS will be available for review and comment this fall (see timeline on page 3). I encourage you to review the document and provide comments. These are public lands and we need to hear from the users to make sure we have adequately addressed your issues and concerns.

We will schedule another round of public meetings this fall to discuss the management options contained in the draft plan. We look forward to hearing from you and know that with your help, we can create a land use plan that serves us well into the future.

Sincerely,

Gary Reimer, Anchorage Field Manager



# Bay RMP News

## What is a Draft RMP/EIS?

A resource management plan (RMP) provides comprehensive, long-term direction concerning the use and management of resources managed by BLM. An RMP identifies measures necessary to achieve a desired future condition of the resources within a management area covered by the RMP. Management direction is set forth in the form of goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines.

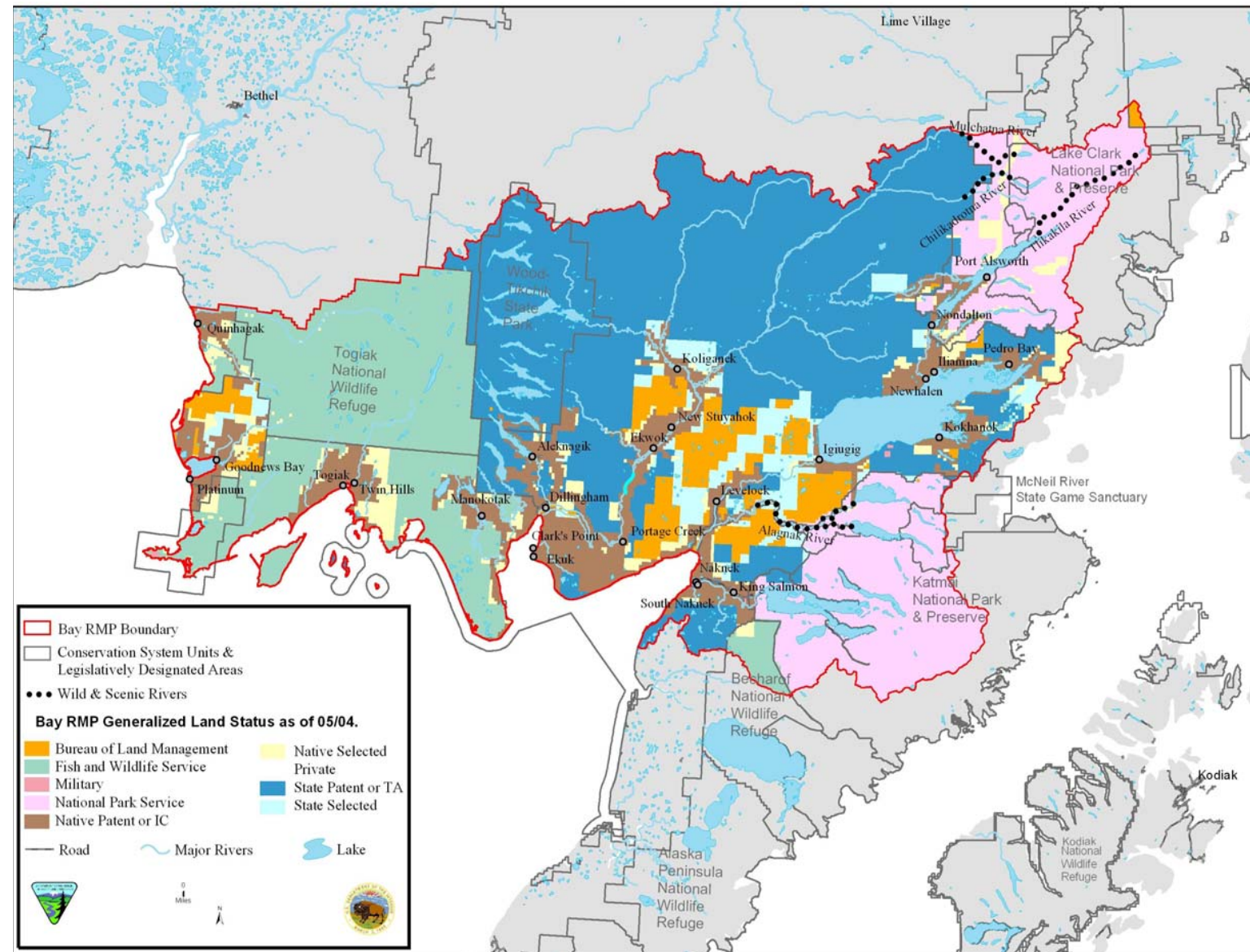
The Bay Draft RMP includes four alternatives: a No Action alternative (Alternative A), Alternative B, Alternative C, and BLM's preferred alternative (Alternative D).

## What are ANCSA (d)(1) Withdrawals?

The Bay planning area includes millions of acres designated as (d)(1) withdrawals. These lands were initially withdrawn under Section 17(d)(1) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, or ANCSA. The (d)(1) withdrawal designation allowed the BLM to temporarily close lands to many resource uses which included mining and mineral leasing. The overall intent of these withdrawals was to maintain the existing condition of the lands while agencies inventoried and assessed the resources and prepared Resource Management Plans.

## Issues & Management Concerns for the Bay Planning Area

- Land exchange, withdrawals, rights-of-way
- Areas open to fluid mineral leasing
- Areas open to locatable and salable minerals



- Resource management guidelines for off-highway vehicles
- Recreation experience opportunities
- Visual Resource Management classification
- Special Management Area designations:
  - Recreation Management Areas
  - Wild and Scenic Rivers
  - Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
  - Wildlife Habitat Management Areas

## Alternative A - Current Management

Alternative A describes the existing management of BLM lands in the Bay planning area. It would continue the present management practices and levels of resource use in the Goodnews Bay block based on the Southwest Management Framework Plan (1982) and on all BLM-managed lands in the planning area the management set forth in the Alaska Land Use Plan Amendment for Wildland Fire and Fuels Management (2005). Current levels and methods of multiple-use management of BLM land in the planning area would continue.

In general, few uses would be limited or excluded as long as they were consistent with State and Federal laws. Many actions would be handled on a case-by-case basis. Existing withdrawals, other than ANCSA (d)(1) withdrawals, that close parts of the planning area to mineral entry would remain in place.

## Alternative B

In this alternative, constraints to protect renewable resource values or habitat, cultural and paleontological resources would be implemented on a project-by-project basis rather than across the planning area or by special designations. All ANCSA (d)(1) withdrawals would be revoked on lands retained in long-term BLM ownership; withdrawals other than (d)(1) would remain in place. The result would be to open BLM lands to mineral exploration and development guided by Required

Operating Procedures and Stipulations. Travel and trail restrictions would be minimized. No Special Recreation Management Areas would be identified. In all areas, the focus would be on management of permits. No Special Management Areas would be identified.

## Alternative C

Two Areas of Critical Environmental Concern would be proposed. No Special Recreation Management Areas would be identified, and off-highway vehicle use would be limited to existing roads and trails. Several river segments would be recommended as suitable for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Most ANCSA (d)(1) withdrawals would be revoked, except those at sites of proposed Wild and Scenic River segments, which would be retained until Congress has an opportunity to consider them. Withdrawals other than (d)(1) would remain in place. Most BLM lands would be open to mineral exploration and development guided by Required Operating Procedures and Stipulations.

## Alternative D - Preferred Alternative

Alternative D, the BLM's preferred alternative at this time, represents the variety of actions that the BLM believes best resolves the issues and management concerns in consideration of all values and programs.

This alternative would designate one Area of Critical Environmental Concern but no Special Recreation Management Areas. No rivers would be recommended as suitable for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. This alternative would revoke ANCSA (d)(1) withdrawals, and withdrawals other than (d)(1) would remain in place. Most BLM lands would be open to mineral exploration and development guided by Required Operating Procedures and Stipulations. Off-highway vehicle use would be limited to existing roads and trails. This alternative describes long-term management strategies for potential parcels for land exchange.

