

Some special places on Alaska's Public Lands



Campbell Tract

Nestled in the heart of Anchorage (Alaska's largest city), the 730-acre Campbell Tract is a wildlife and recreational oasis for half the residents of Alaska. Here you can observe moose, bear, coyotes, lynx, grouse, raptors, and spawning salmon. It is accessible by a network of trails and is a popular scenic spot for hiking, horseback riding, bicycling and jogging in the summer. Visitors are treated to brilliant fall colors of aspen and birch for about three weeks each September. Winter soon follows and recreation shifts to dog mushing and cross-country skiing. The Campbell Creek Science Center, located on the tract, provides outdoor education opportunities for young and old alike all year long.

White Mountains National Recreation Area

The White Mountains National Recreation Area, 30 miles north of Fairbanks, is named for the unusual limestone peaks of the White Mountains, an area distinctly different from the rest of Interior Alaska. This rugged, remote and roadless million-acre area is growing in popularity as people discover its outstanding opportunities for both winter and summer recreational activities.



In winter, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers and dog mushers take advantage of 12 public recreation cabins and more than 200 miles of groomed winter trails. Here you can escape to the solitude of a wonderland of white; you may even see the northern lights paint a winter sky.

During the summer, the White Mountains gateway at Nome Creek provides two campgrounds, access to Beaver Creek National Wild River, and backcountry hiking opportunities in an outstanding alpine area near Mount Prindle. Along Nome Creek, you can fish for arctic grayling (catch and release only) or pan for gold in a designated section of this historic mining area. The White Mountains NRA is the only national recreation area in Alaska and the only one managed by BLM in the nation.



Denali Highway

The unpaved 135-mile Denali Highway connects Paxson and Cantwell and was once the only travel route to Denali National Park. Today, this highway is often overlooked by many motorists who take the more direct Parks Highway to Denali. The Denali Highway rewards the traveler who has time to spare with spectacular views of the Alaska Range, access to the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic Rivers, and best of all, glimpses of Alaska as it used to be — wilderness in all directions. For here you can still be surprised by an unanticipated vista, an unexpected wildlife sighting, or an unplanned adventure along an unmarked trail.



The Bureau of Land Management, or BLM, is an agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior. BLM was created in 1946 when the U.S. Grazing Service merged with the General Land Office. In Alaska, BLM also has the responsibilities once undertaken by two other agencies: the Reindeer Service and the Alaska Fire Control Service.

Today, BLM provides multiple-use management for about 270 million acres of public lands, primarily in 12 western states. Approximately 87 million of those acres are in Alaska.

Teams of resource specialists at BLM field offices are the key to helping the bureau manage the day-to-day activities occurring on public lands. In Alaska, field offices are located in Fairbanks, Glennallen and Anchorage. Smaller offices in Nome, Kotzebue, Chicken, Bethel, Toksook Bay and Dillingham provide additional public service.

The Joint Pipeline Office, with staff in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Valdez, helps ensure the safe operation of the trans-Alaska pipeline system.

Staff at the Juneau-John Rishel Mineral Information Center undertake specialized work in minerals management.

The BLM Alaska State Office in Anchorage provides support for specialized functions such as land conveyances, cadastral survey, mapping sciences and information management.

All BLM management actions must be consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the National Environmental Policy Act and other laws that govern the use of public lands.

(photo above) Dalton Highway near MP208 (©Edward Bovy)
(cover) Brooks Range, Dalton Highway. (BLM/Dennis R. Green)

THE PUBLIC LANDS include the original public domain lands obtained by the United States government through treaty or purchase. As our nation developed, more than one billion acres were transferred to private ownership. Other federal lands were designated as national parks, national wildlife refuges or national forests, or withdrawn for military reservations.

The remaining areas, once described as "the lands nobody wanted," are now recognized as valuable national assets. These are known as BLM-managed public lands.

These lands contain a wealth of minerals, fossil fuels, wildlife habitat, wilderness, timber and forage. They also provide opportunities for watershed protection, recreation and scientific study. All Americans share in the benefits gained from the wise management of our public lands.

Anchorage Field Office

The Anchorage Field Office manages approximately 16 million acres of public lands throughout southwest, south-central and southeast Alaska. These lands are among the most culturally, politically and biologically diverse in the nation.

About three quarters of all Alaskans live within Anchorage Field Office boundaries. You'll also find national forests, wildlife refuges, national parks, nine Alaska Native regional corporations, 152 village corporations, and 149 of Alaska's 229 federally recognized tribes.

Major resource programs include realty, wildlife, fisheries, recreation, cultural resources and mining.

The Iditarod National Historic Trail stretches from Seward to Nome. Each March, world attention is focused on the famous Iditarod sled dog race as mushers and their dog teams battle time, each other, and the bitter cold to reach the finish line in Nome.



(left) Bering Glacier

trations of breeding trumpeter swans. Ducks, geese and other birds use a vast network of remote lakes and streams near Glennallen to raise their young during the short summer. Visitors can glimpse this marvel of nature by floating the Gulkana National Wild River or the Delta National Wild and Scenic River.

Glennallen Field Office

The Glennallen Field Office manages public lands in South-central Alaska from Cantwell to the Wrangell Mountains.

Major resource programs include recreation, fisheries, wildlife, cultural resources, subsistence, and rights-of-way management.

The unpaved 135-mile Denali Highway connects Paxson and Cantwell and provides summer visitors with access to two BLM-managed Wild and Scenic rivers, spectacular scenery and prime wildlife habitat (see sidebar at left).

The Copper River basin hosts one of Alaska's largest concen-



Beaver Creek and Limestone Jags, White Mountains NRA

Fairbanks District Office

Public lands managed by BLM's Fairbanks District Office stretch from the Alaska Range to the Arctic Ocean and from the western coast near Nome east to the Canada border. These lands comprise more than 80 percent of the public lands managed by BLM in Alaska.

Major resource values on these lands include internationally important waterfowl habitat; calving grounds and summer habitat for Alaska's largest caribou herd; high-density nesting habitat for raptors; internationally significant archaeological and paleontological sites; an amazing variety of recreational activities; and extensive reserves of oil, gas, coal and minerals.

Salmon from BLM-managed rivers are important to sport, commercial and subsistence fisheries. Native villages in northern Alaska also depend on

the harvest of game and other resources on nearby public lands for subsistence.

The staff manages several nationally designated areas, including the White Mountains National Recreation Area, the Steese National Conservation Area, the 27-mile Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail and Fort Egbert National Historic Site. The staff is also responsible for managing Birch Creek, Beaver Creek and the Forty-mile River, components of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

The 23-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska on the North Slope is the largest single block of public land in the United States. It contains valuable deposits of oil, gas, minerals and coal; important wetland habitat for migratory birds that nest and rear their young in the summer; and critical habitat for the resident caribou herd.

Alaska Fire Service

The core mission of the Alaska Fire Service is to provide wildland fire suppression services in Alaska for all Department of the Interior and Native corporation lands.

Supporting this highly complex mission requires a myriad of full-time and seasonal professional personnel including: aviation; wildland firefighters; smoke-jumpers; medics; logisticians; cooks; safety; fuel handlers; mechanics; computer operators; communications; financial; administrative and public information.

The AFS National Cache Ware-



Prescribed burn, Alphabet Hills

house ensures that field personnel are adequately supplied. The Alaska Interagency Coordination Center dispatches overhead aircraft, crews and equipment in support of wildland fire and all-risk incidents across the state and the Lower-48.

In addition to suppressing wildland fires, AFS has other statewide responsibilities including: fire management policy interpretation; oversight of the BLM Alaska Aviation program; planning, implementing, and monitoring fuels management projects; disposing of hazardous materials; and operating and maintaining advanced communication systems and the Alaska Lightning Detection System.

Since its formation in 1982, the Alaska Fire Service has continued to serve Alaskans and our Nation by protecting life and property in the last frontier.



Joint Pipeline Office

The Joint Pipeline Office was established in 1990 to co-locate representatives from eight state and federal agencies with oversight responsibilities for the trans-Alaska oil pipeline. Cooperative agreements allow these agencies to share staff, information, equipment and office space, saving money and creating one-stop service for anyone who needs to interact with the staff.

JPO also provides a critical link in oil spill preparedness and response training. The office has



(top) Corrosion inspection, trans-Alaska Pipeline
(above) Juneau - John Rishel Mineral Information Center

been nationally recognized for improving government operations and has received several awards from the State of Alaska and the federal government.

Juneau - John Rishel Mineral Information Center

The Juneau - John Rishel Mineral Information Center is located on picturesque Mayflower Island near Juneau. Staff geologists and mining engineers conduct mineral surveys, produce economic feasibility reports, oversee airborne geophysical surveys, and have participated in abandoned mine inventories. The center also has displays of Alaska rocks, minerals and mining artifacts.

The library at the center contains a unique collection of more than 20,000 geologic and mineral publications. These materials are available for review and limited circulation to the public. The library also provides on-line computer access to federal land status information for Alaska, the U.S. Bureau of Mines mineral property files, and other specialized geophysical, mineral and economic data.

BLM in Alaska

BLM

Alaska



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



Managing land...

Alaska's 365 million acres were purchased by the federal government from Russia in 1867 for about 2 cents an acre. Most of this land was at one time administered by BLM's predecessor agency, the General Land Office.



Alaska has new landowners! Legislation such as the Alaska Statehood Act (1958), the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971) and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (1980) radically changed the land ownership

patterns of Alaska forever. These laws allocated more than 104 million acres of public lands to the state government and about 44 million acres to Native village and regional corporations. National parks, monuments, preserves, wildlife refuges and forests have been established on more than 100 million acres.

After all conveyances are completed, the remaining 70+ million acres of public lands will be administered by BLM under the principles of multiple use for the long-term benefit of the American people.

The history of the land is on file with BLM. BLM is the custodian of the nation's real estate records. Master Title Plats show any leases, rights-of-way, withdrawals and public land actions in effect on public lands.

Anyone can review the legal history of a parcel of land during the period it was under federal ownership by visiting a public information center at a BLM office.



It's the greatest survey project in history. Boundaries of all lands to be transferred, plus those of any inholdings, must be surveyed by BLM before the new owners can receive patent. BLM and contract survey crews carefully locate and establish survey monuments, often called "brass caps," to physically tie the land to its legal description.

How can people obtain land from the federal government? In general, they can't. Congress has directed that most remaining public lands be retained in federal ownership. All laws relating to homesteading in Alaska expired in 1986. Public lands are no longer sold for cabins, homes or businesses.

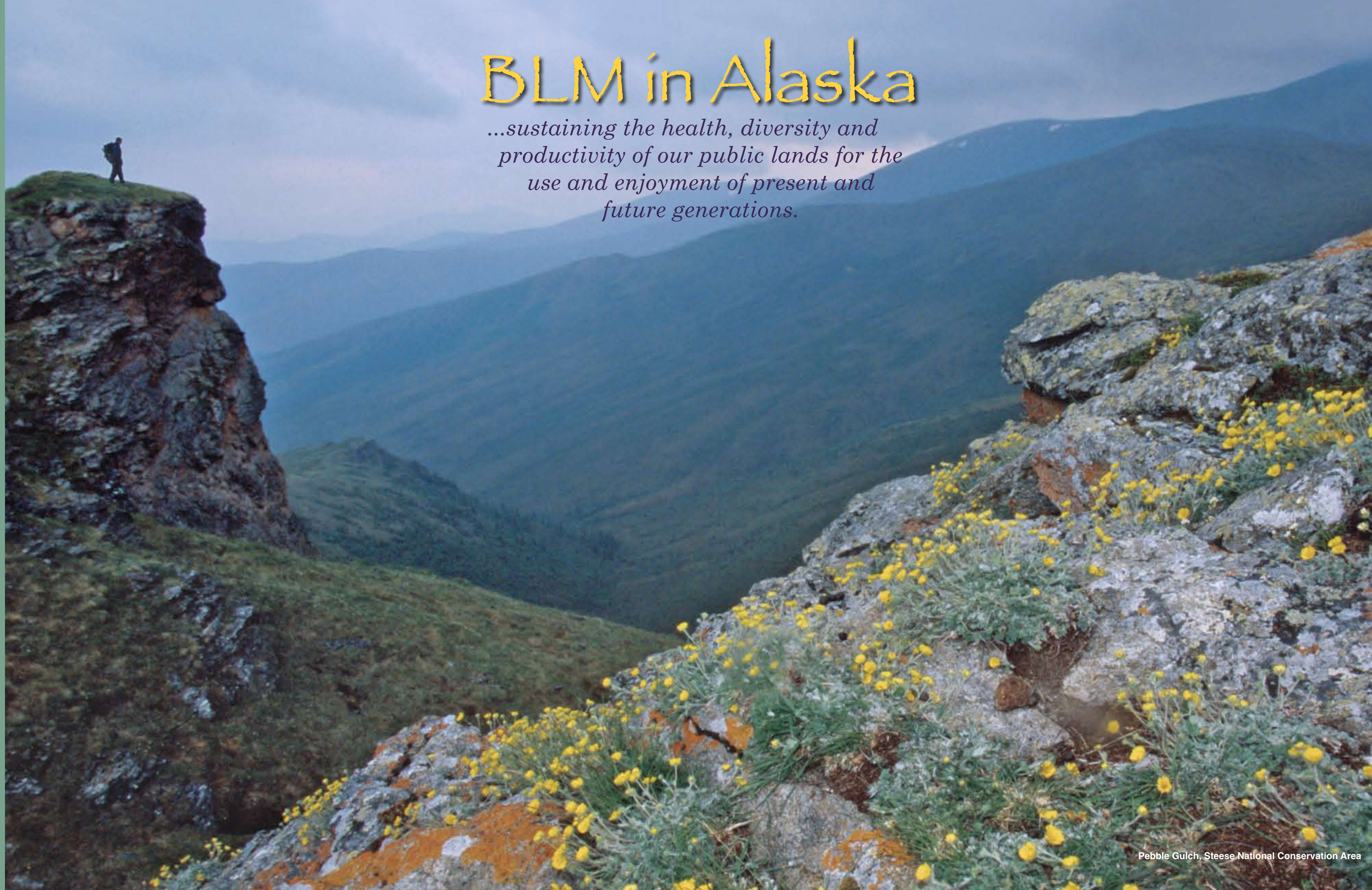
However, under specific circumstances, some public lands can be transferred to private ownership. For example, in Alaska individual Alaska Natives can receive patent for parcels up to 160 acres if they meet the requirements of the 1906 Native Allotment Act (now expired; no new claims are being accepted).



What are public lands used for? Public lands are frequently used by others even though ownership is retained by the federal government. BLM administers rights-of-way for hundreds of miles of roads, electric transmission lines, pipelines, fiber optic cables and other uses. BLM also issues permits for a variety of reasons such as recreational events, airstrips, storage facilities, long-term camping, and filmmaking. Unless specifically prohibited in a given area, the public can camp, hunt, hike, boat and otherwise enjoy public lands.

BLM in Alaska

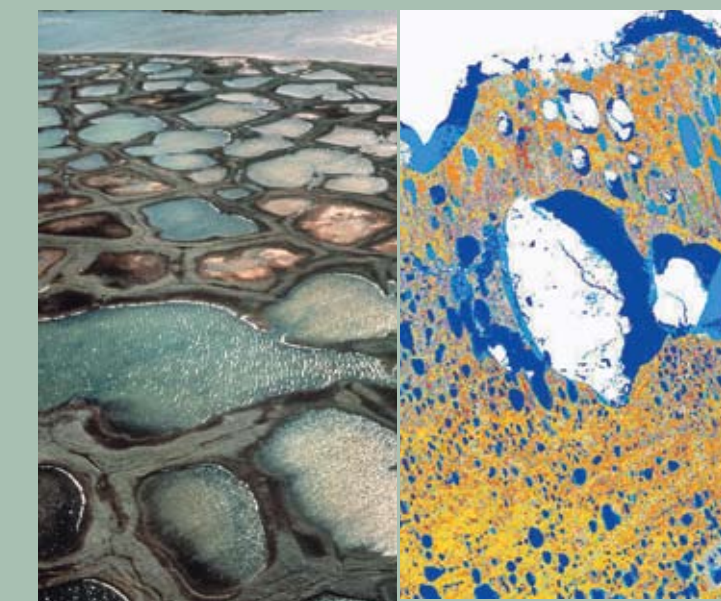
...sustaining the health, diversity and productivity of our public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.



Pebble Gulch, Steese National Conservation Area

...with technology.

Blocks of public land in Alaska vary in size from parcels of only a few acres to those the size of some states. Gathering information about these lands and their resources could be expensive and time-consuming if done by traditional methods. Today, BLM-Alaska makes use of state-of-the-art technology wherever possible to get the job done quickly and efficiently.



Satellites aid mapping wetlands from space. More than 450 species of birds from six continents come to Alaska to take advantage of its incredible habitat. For example, the North Slope contains millions of lakes and some of the most stable wetlands in North America.

BLM, in cooperation with Ducks Unlimited, is developing a detailed vegetation inventory. The project begins with a large satellite image covering about 8 million acres. Field crews use GPS (global positioning system) technology to travel to pre-selected sites to verify computerized classifications. The final product will help managers make many decisions that benefit people and animals alike.

It would be difficult to find a better example of using technology to lower the costs of data collection. Traditional mapping methods would have cost an estimated \$6 an acre; this method averages only 5 cents an acre.

The remote Bering Glacier

is tucked away along Alaska's remote Gulf Coast about 65 miles southeast of Cordova. Spectacular doesn't begin to describe North America's largest glacier, one that holds about 15 percent of Alaska's total glacier ice in its 118-mile-long, 2,200-square-mile mass. The glacier has surged at least five times during the 20th century alone. A rapid retreat followed the most recent surge in 1995, revealing a dynamic landscape of invertebrate fossils, lake sediments and remnants of previously overrun forests. Scientists from around the world are studying this remarkable area to unlock secrets of earth dynamics and change.



Arctic dinosaurs? Public lands are becoming increasingly important as a place for studying the earth's history through paleontology and geology. The first Alaska North Slope dinosaur bones were discovered in the mid-1980s and were from the "duck-billed" Edmontosaurus. Fully-grown adults were about 10 feet tall and weighed as much as 3 tons. Since then, 13 other species have been discovered in Alaska; all lived here about 68 to 72 million years ago.

How these reptiles survived so far north is the subject of intense study. One theory speculates that the dinosaurs migrated, but another more likely explanation is that they stayed all year, living in long-gone river systems that supported lush summer vegetation. Enough seasonal plant matter may have grown during the 24 hours of daylight in summer to last during the cool, short days of winter. Winters at that time were much warmer and the North Slope was probably grassland instead of tundra.



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We're online! Are you? Learn more about your public lands every day at:

www.blm.gov/ak

...and resources...

Public lands in Alaska possess natural resources of enormous value. Traditional resources such as coal, oil, zinc, timber and fish are traded worldwide to make life more comfortable for people everywhere. In the future, other resources such as gas hydrates, coalbed natural gas, wind energy, and even the tides may be developed.

Today, opportunities in the realm of historical, cultural, scientific and recreational resources are assuming new importance to the Alaska of the future. People come from all corners of the world to enjoy Alaska's scenery, wildlife and open space.



Susan Shambaugh

BLM manages the habitat of the plants and animals that live on America's public lands, placing special emphasis on species such as the arctic peregrine falcon (which now has been restored to healthy populations in the arctic).

BLM also cooperates with other agencies to monitor population levels so scientists can predict how environmental changes will affect the species. Research projects in Alaska seek to understand the needs of birds of prey, caribou, moose, migratory waterfowl, marten, and fish.

(top left) Arctic Warbler (left) bird banding, North Slope (top right) drill rig, National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (right) historic gold dredge



Alaska's mineral wealth has been known for more than a hundred years. Gold mining continues today near Nome, Fairbanks and the Fortymile country near Canada.

BLM surface protection specialists and geologists work with miners who have claims located on public lands. These specialists help miners meet the legal requirements necessary to retain their claims and advise them on techniques that will minimize surface disturbances and make reclamation easier.

BLM has responsibilities for onshore oil and gas produc-

tion in producing fields, such as those on the Kenai Peninsula, as well as oversight responsibilities for the trans-Alaska pipeline system.

BLM also manages the 23-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska on the North Slope, an emerging new source for America's petroleum needs.

(left) gold pan, (right) Canyon Rapids, Gulkana River



Dog mushing, Campbell Tract, Anchorage



Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail

There are unlimited recreation opportunities on BLM-managed public lands in Alaska. People come to Alaska from all parts of the world seeking the adventure of a lifetime or a week of solitude amid scenic grandeur. Public lands offer outstanding opportunities for sightseeing, hiking, photogra-

phy, wildlife observation, fishing, hunting, snow machining, dog mushing, river floating and other pursuits. BLM provides a variety of helpful information at visitor centers and on the internet to help people have safe and enjoyable visits to their public lands.