



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Alaska State Office
222 West Seventh Avenue, #13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7504
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (020)

SEP - 4 2007

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Kobuk-Seward Peninsula. The Proposed RMP was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in consultation with the State of Alaska and other local governments. This Proposed RMP took into account public comments received during this planning effort and provides a framework for the future management direction and appropriate use of the Kobuk-Seward Peninsula planning area in northwestern Alaska. The document contains land-use planning decisions for a variety of resources and implementing decisions to facilitate management of off-highway vehicles and recreation. The Proposed RMP is open for a 30-day review and protest period that begins the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS in the *Federal Register*.

This Proposed RMP and Final EIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). The Proposed RMP is largely based on Alternative D, the preferred alternative in the Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS), which was released on May 5, 2006. This Proposed RMP contains the proposed plan, a summary of changes made between the Draft RMP/EIS and the Proposed RMP/EIS, predictable impacts of the proposed plan, a summary of the written and verbal comments received during the public review period of the Draft RMP/EIS, and BLM responses to the comments received.

Any person who participated in the planning process for this Proposed RMP and has an interest that is or may be adversely affected, may protest approval of this Proposed RMP and land-use planning decisions contained within it (see 43 Code of Federal Regulations 1610.5-2) during this 30-day period. Only those persons or organizations who participated in the planning process leading to the Proposed RMP may protest. The protesting party may raise only those issues submitted for the record during the planning process leading up to the publication of this Proposed RMP. These issues may have been raised by the protesting party or others. New issues may not be brought into the record at the protest stage.

Protests must be filed with the BLM Director in writing. Regular mail protests should be sent to: BLM Director (210), Attention – Brenda Williams, P.O. Box 66538, Washington, D.C. 20035.

Overnight mail should be sent to: BLM Director (210), Attention – Brenda Williams, 1620 L Street NW, Suite 1075, Washington, D.C. 20036. Email and fax protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, the BLM will consider the email or fax protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM with such advance notification, please direct emails to Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov and faxes to (202) 452-5112 (Attn: BLM Protest Coordinator).

All protests must be postmarked or received not later than 30 days after publication of the EPA's Notice of Availability in the Federal Register.

IMPORTANT: In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2, the protest must contain the information described in the following critical elements check list:

- The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person filing the protest.
- The “interest” of the person filing the protest (how will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of the resource management plan?)
- A statement of the part(s) of the Proposed RMP, and the issue(s) being protested. (To the extent possible, this should reference specific pages, paragraphs, sections, tables, maps, etc., which are believed to be incorrect or incomplete.)
- A copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that the protesting party submitted during the planning process OR a statement of the date they were discussed for the record.
- A concise statement explaining why the protestor believes the BLM State Director's proposed decision is incorrect.

All of these elements are critical parts of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (such as: meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). To ensure the completeness of your protest, use the checklist that appears following this letter. A printable protest check list is also available on-line at: <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.1.html>

The BLM Director will make every effort to promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

The BLM's practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire

comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

All submissions from organizations, businesses, or individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Implementing decisions generally constitute the BLM's final approval for allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Unlike land-use planning decisions, implementing decisions are not subject to protest under planning regulations, but are subject to administrative remedies and review, primarily through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals-Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA). Where implementing decisions are made as part of the land-use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations (43 CFR Part 4) after the BLM resolves the protests to land-use planning decisions and makes a decision to adopt or amend the RMP.

After resolution of any protests, the Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved RMP will be issued and CDs of the documents will be mailed to all who participated in the planning process. It is also available to the public on the Planning page of the BLM-Alaska website: (<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.1.html>) or CDs can be mailed on request. The RMP and ROD will include instructions for appealing implementing decisions in the ROD to the Office of Hearings and Appeals-IBLA.

Sincerely,



Thomas P. Lonnie
State Director

