



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Eastern Interior Field Office
1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

January 2, 2015

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (LLAKF02000)

Dear Reader:

We are pleased to provide this Notice of Availability of Additional Information on Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Associated Use Limitations Identified in the Draft Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement for your review. This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on January 2, 2015, which begins a 60-day review of the new information on Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in the Eastern Interior Planning Area.

On February 24, 2012, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published a Notice of Availability of the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public review and comment in the *Federal Register*. BLM planning regulations require the BLM to notify the public of proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and specify the resource use limitations which would occur if the ACECs were formally designated through approval of the Eastern Interior RMP.

Based on public comment on the Draft RMP, the BLM proposes the reconfiguration of the Fortymile ACEC and proposes a new ACEC on the Mosquito Flats. These specific proposed ACEC boundaries were not noticed in the Draft RMP/EIS. Thus, the BLM has published an additional notice in the *Federal Register* and is providing a public comment period for these two proposed ACECs.

The following documents are included in the attached review package:

- Summary of each proposed ACEC
- Maps
- Notice of Availability of Additional Information on Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern published in the *Federal Register* on January 2, 2015
- Press Release

These documents are also on our website at: www.blm.ak/eirmp

You may submit comments related to the new ACEC information in this notice until March 3, 2015, by any of the following methods:

1. Email: EasternInterior@blm.gov
2. Fax: 907-474-2282
3. Mail: Eastern Interior Field Office, Attention—Eastern Interior RMP, Bureau of Land Management, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lenore Heppler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lenore Heppler
Field Manager

Additional Information Regarding Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan

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Introduction

On February 24, 2012, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published a Notice of Availability of the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public review and comment in the *Federal Register*. BLM planning regulations require the BLM to notify the public of proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and specify the resource use limitations which would occur if the ACECs were formally designated through approval of the Eastern Interior RMP. Based on public comment on the Draft RMP, the BLM is considering changing the boundary of the proposed Fortymile ACEC and designating a new ACEC on the Mosquito Flats, also in the Fortymile region. These specific proposed ACEC boundaries considered in the Draft RMP/EIS. Thus, the BLM has published an additional notice in the *Federal Register* and is providing a public comment period for these two proposed ACECs.

ACECs are defined as areas within the public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and provide safety from natural hazards. The Federal Land Policy Management Act requires that the BLM give priority to designation and protection of ACECs, which are identified, evaluated, and designated through the land use planning process.

In order to be considered a potential ACEC, the areas being considered must meet both of the following criteria:

1. **Relevance:** The presence of a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value; a fish or wildlife resource or other natural system or process; or natural hazard.
2. **Importance:** The above described value, resource, system, process, or hazard shall have substantial significance and values. This generally requires qualities of more than local significance and special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern.

Fortymile ACEC

Background: Various configurations of the Fortymile ACEC were considered in three alternatives (Alternatives B, C, and D) in the Eastern Interior Draft RMP/EIS, which was released for public comment in February 2012. The BLM is now proposing a modification of the Fortymile ACEC boundary presented in Alternative B in the Draft RMP/EIS. The modified boundary would improve manageability by including additional small parcels between the calving/post-calving habitat and the Fortymile National Wild and Scenic River Corridor.

Name of ACEC: Fortymile ACEC

Nominators: BLM

Area nominated: Caribou calving and postcalving habitat for the Fortymile Caribou herd and Dall sheep year-round habitat (685,000 acres).

Does the nominated area meet the Relevance Criteria?

Yes, the area meets the relevance criteria for wildlife. The proposed Fortymile ACEC includes essential habitats, including mineral licks (salt licks), for Yukon-Tanana Uplands populations of Dall sheep and caribou. The ACEC includes habitat that supports several isolated populations of Dall sheep. The Fortymile caribou herd is one of the most important subsistence game populations in Interior Alaska, and calving and postcalving habitats are considered the most sensitive seasonal habitats. The ACEC contains large portions of the recent calving and postcalving habitat for the Fortymile herd. The ACEC was delineated using caribou telemetry data collected from 1992 to 2008. The BLM lands in the proposed Fortymile ACEC includes about a third of the most concentrated recent calving habitat.

Does the nominated area meet the Importance Criteria?

Yes, for Dall sheep and caribou.

Alaska is the only state that harbors Dall sheep. In Canada, Dall sheep are found only in portions of Yukon and Northwest Territories, while Stone sheep (a Dall sheep subspecies) occur in portions of Yukon and northern British Columbia. Within Alaska, Dall sheep are most abundant and widespread in the large mountainous areas—Brooks Range mountains and Alaska Range/Chugach/Wrangell mountains. The Yukon-Tanana Uplands are non-typical Dall sheep habitat, supporting small scattered populations of sheep in isolated areas of rugged terrain. Much of the habitat is just above treeline, and sheep often make use of areas below treeline. Occurring as small populations, these sheep are relatively more susceptible to local population extinction. Climate change could result in decreasing area and quality of the low-elevation habitats.

Wild sheep are susceptible to human disturbance, especially when located at some distance from rugged escape terrain. Dall sheep in many of these areas utilize low-security habitats for foraging (by necessity) and so are more susceptible to disturbance. The discontinuous nature of escape terrain also may result in extensive flight distances by sheep to reach the next suitable escape terrain. In addition, many of the mineral licks used by Yukon-Tanana Uplands sheep occur at low elevation and frequently require long distance travel through low-security habitats (e.g., tussock tundra and lowland black spruce forest and woodland). Sheep in these situations may be already stressed and susceptible to predation; human activities may cause additional stress, add to predation risk, or result in abandonment or avoidance of the area. Heavy use of mineral licks by Dall sheep (especially in early summer) is considered indicative of the importance of these licks to the population, so mineral licks are usually considered crucial habitats. Dall sheep make intensive, regular use of relatively small areas. Thus, protection of sheep habitat involves applying restrictions to relatively little area.

The Fortymile Caribou herd is one of the most important subsistence resources in east-central Alaska. Once estimated to number more than 500,000 animals, the herd is also an international resource, with a considerable portion of the historical range occurring in Canada. A precedent-setting cooperative planning process focuses on the goal of recovery of the herd in numbers and range. The habitats considered most sensitive for this herd are calving and postcalving, and the Fortymile Caribou Herd Planning Team recommended these be given the highest priority maintenance of habitat value. During calving and postcalving caribou are concentrated in specific habitats that are limited in extent.

Population declines in caribou have occurred as a result of overuse of calving/summer ranges. Studies of Prudhoe Bay oil development have indicated that calving caribou avoid oil field roads and facilities; distribution of calving has shifted away from oil fields. In addition, those caribou cows that do continue to use the oil field area during calving appear to have lower reproductive success. Although the degree of impact on caribou from a given level of development in calving habitats cannot at this time be predicted with any certainty (only in retrospect, and perhaps not

then), the prioritization of these areas for use as caribou habitat will help to ensure future healthy caribou populations.

Climate in the planning area is predicted to become warmer, with increases in precipitation not keeping pace with increases in evapotranspiration. Treeline will likely slowly rise. These changes are likely to increase the importance of specific alpine and subalpine habitats for Dall sheep and calving and postcalving caribou. In addition state and private lands within caribou calving and postcalving habitats and sheep habitats are likely to experience mineral development and development of roads and trails. These developments will increase the importance of the other lands for maintenance of caribou and Dall sheep populations. The BLM-managed lands are generally of lower potential for occurrence of minerals than state or private lands.

Congress directed that caribou range should be a special value in management of the Steese National Conservation Area. At the time, much of the Steese had long been utilized for calving by Fortymile caribou. In recent years, caribou have concentrated in habitats located more to the south and east—areas contained in the proposed Fortymile ACEC. Adoption of this ACEC will provide protection to much of the recent calving and postcalving habitats of the Fortymile Herd. In addition, the ACEC will maintain habitats often heavily used at other times of year, including habitat used for summer foraging, insect relief, and rutting.

Does the area require special management?

Yes. Measures are needed to ensure that the quality, quantity, and effectiveness of caribou (especially calving and postcalving) and Dall sheep habitats are maintained.

BLM proposed use limitations in the ACEC: Close the ACEC to locatable mineral entry and mineral leasing, subject to valid existing rights. Set a Limited off-highway vehicle (OHV) designation. Place a seasonal limitation on uses within 1 mile of mineral licks. Apply protective measures to permitted activities within the ACEC.

Mosquito Flats ACEC

Background: During the public comment period for the Eastern Interior RMP, the BLM received two nominations for an ACEC on the Mosquito Flats in the Fortymile region. Mosquito Flats is a large wetland complex unique to BLM lands in the planning area; it consists of a wetland basin situated in the upper portion of the Fortymile drainage, at relatively high elevation (~2250 feet), and surrounded by mountains. Mosquito Flats provides unique wetland and aquatic habitats and supports a variety of wildlife species. Mosquito Flats is an important moose calving area and summer habitat for the regional moose population. The area also supports short-eared

owls and nesting trumpeter swans, both BLM-Alaska sensitive species. It may also support other BLM-sensitive species, including olive-sided flycatcher, rusty blackbird, and blackpoll warbler.

Name of Proposed ACEC: Mosquito Flats

Nominators: Two individuals from the public

Rationale for nomination provided by nominators: The individuals nominating this area provided the following reasons for designation.

“I ask you to consider the Fortymile Subunit as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. If the entire subunit cannot be designated, then at a minimum the Mosquito Flats area deserves this protection because of the massive, contiguous and pristine wetlands found there that are so important to many types of wildlife (and those that depend of wildlife resources) from waterfowl to moose.”

“The Mosquito Flats is by far the largest area of contiguous wetlands in the surrounding area. It is the only one of any real size. Until 2005 it was almost completely pristine undisturbed wetlands. Since that time the amount and rate of the degradation is alarming. It provides critical habitat for waterfowl both as a nesting area and as a resting area for mass amounts of birds migrating through in the spring and fall.

It is the largest and most heavily used calving area for moose in all of the [Game Management Unit] 20E. These are just two of the real glaring reasons to protect this area of critical habitat. There are many more. This area is extremely fragile and easily destroyed. It cannot sustain much if any mechanized travel without suffering significant damage.”

Area nominated: Fortymile Planning Subunit and Mosquito Flats. No map provided by nominators.

BLM Proposed use limitations in the ACEC: Close the ACEC to locatable mineral entry and mineral leasing, subject to valid existing rights. Limit off-highway vehicle (OHV) use by season with no summer use, except by permit.

Table 2. Evaluation of Relevance and Importance Criteria for the Mosquito Flats ACEC

Resource	Relevance	Importance	Proposed Use Limitations
Cultural & Historical	No. There are not enough known cultural or historical sites in the proposed ACEC to meet relevance criteria.	No. The few known sites are not substantially significant.	Not applicable (N/A)

Resource	Relevance	Importance	Proposed Use Limitations
Scenic	Yes. The area is classified as visual resource inventory class II.	Not evaluated	N/A
Fish	No. Mosquito Flats likely provides habitat for common, wide-spread species such as Arctic grayling, northern pike, and whitefish species, but there is no fish inventory for the area.	No. Fish likely to inhabit Mosquito Flats are common and widespread in distribution.	N/A
Wildlife & special status species	Yes. High-density moose calving area that contributes significantly to the moose population. Moose are an important subsistence species in the area. Suitable waterfowl nesting and rearing habitat.	Yes. Important moose calving and summer habitat for the regional moose population. Importance to waterfowl unknown except it supports multiple nesting trumpeter swans and is used by short-eared owls (BLM sensitive species). Likely supports other BLM sensitive species.	The proposed use limitations (above) would reduce disturbance of nesting waterfowl and calving and postcalving moose.
Vegetation & rare plants	Yes. Large complex of floating bog wetland vegetation encircled by mountains. Habitat is favorable for several rare plants on BLM lists.	Yes. This is the only large wetland complex on BLM lands in the planning area. Likely an important component of habitat diversity in the area. Large wetland complexes surrounded by high elevation forest and alpine communities are atypical in Alaska. Mosquito Flats also supports most of the wetland obligate waterfowl in the subunit.	The proposed use limitations (above) would prevent physical impairment of wetlands
Wetlands	Yes. This is a unique wetland complex. Distinct sand beds of the Mosquito Fork River provide aquatic habitat unique to eastern Interior Alaska. In low-relief wetland environments of Interior Alaska stream beds are dominantly dark organic-rich silt. However, in the Mosquito Flats wetlands the Mosquito Fork flows over continuous sand beds that	Yes. The distinct sand beds of the Mosquito Fork River provide unique aquatic habitat essential for maintaining habitat diversity within the planning area. The surface hydrology of the Mosquito Flats wetland area is sensitive to damage by summer use of Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV), either through thermokarst action where the	The proposed use limitations (above) would protect surface hydrology of the Mosquito Flats wetlands and associated unique aquatic habitat.

Resource	Relevance	Importance	Proposed Use Limitations
	are uncharacteristically clean, light colored, well-sorted, and low in organics, suggesting origin of the sand is likely from a past depositional environment, possibly related to eolian deposits of Pleistocene or later age reported by Reger and others (2011).	vegetation mat is broken or by repeated stream crossing over easily erodible sand banks and channels. OHV tracks through the wetlands would alter surface water flow paths to the Mosquito Fork as well substantially increase input of silt and organics to the stream.	

Literature cited

Reger, R.D., Hubbard, T.D., and Carver, G.A., 2011. Surficial geology of Alaska Highway Corridor, Robertson River to Tetlin Junction, Alaska: Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys Preliminary Interpretive Report 2009-6A, 53 p., 4 sheets, scale 1:63,360. DOI:10.14509/19741

Appendix A: Maps of Proposed ACECs

Proposed Mosquito Flats ACEC (30,000 acres)

Wild Scenic River Corridor

Trails

State Identified Historic Trails (RS2477)

Land Status (January 17, 2014)

BLM

State of Alaska

Private / Native Allotment

Eastern Interior Proposed RMP/Final EIS
Bureau of Land Management - Alaska



0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

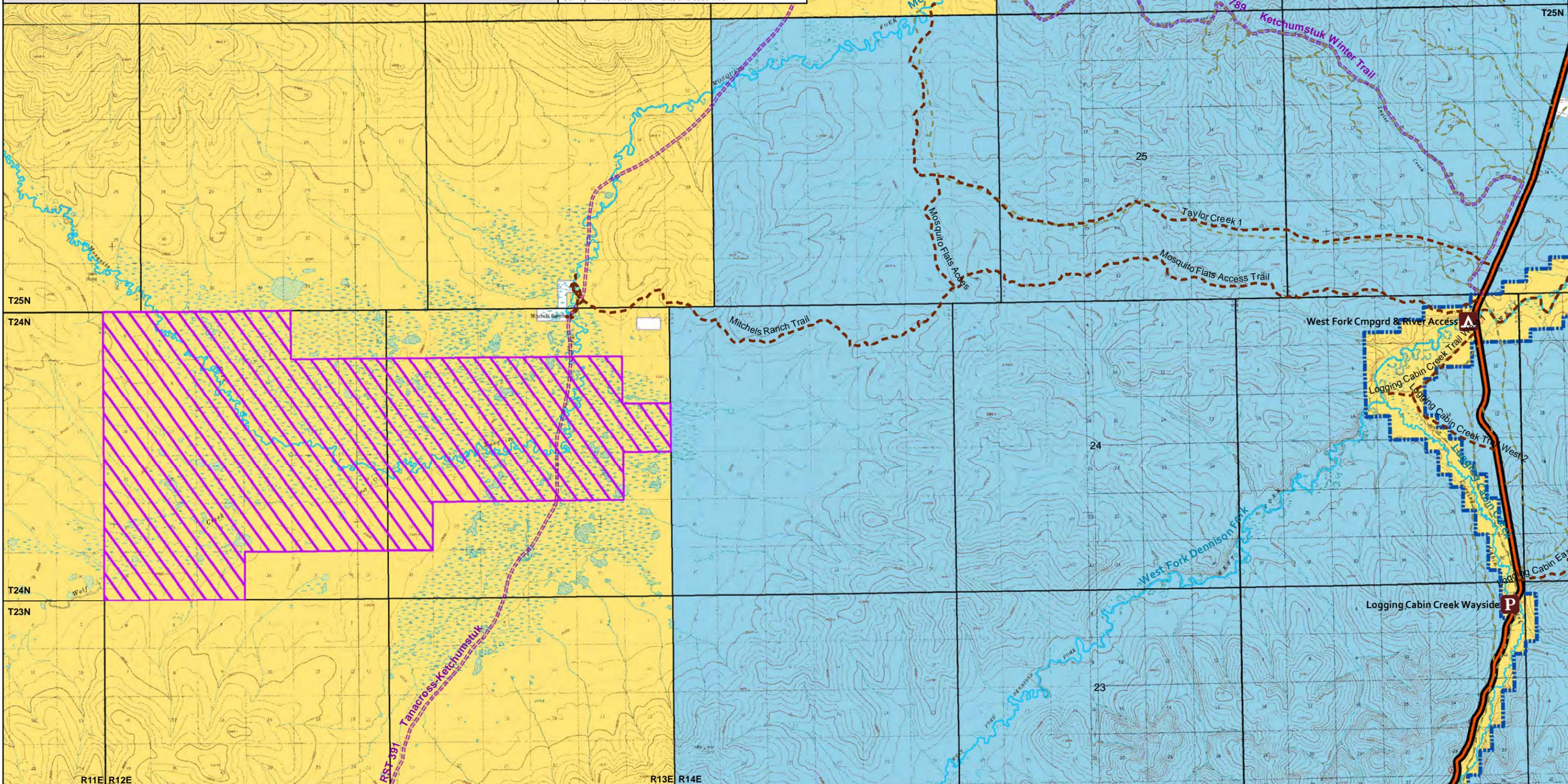
Projection: Albers Conic Equal Area referencing NAD83

Source: USDOI-BLM, 2014

The information displayed on this map should be used for graphic display only. For official land status information, refer to Cadastral Survey Plats, Master Title Plats, and case files.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Fortymile Subunit

16JUL2014



Appendix B: Federal Register Notice

- Effects on wildlife habitat, plants, and animals including threatened, endangered, and sensitive species (especially sage-grouse)
- Potential effects to JBLM YTC military training operations
- Effects to visual resources and existing view sheds
- Effects to cultural resources
- Effects to soils and water from surface-disturbing activities
- Social and economic effects
- Management and control of invasive plant species
- Public health and safety

The Supplemental Draft EIS analysis identified several advantages associated with the New Northern Route Alternative and they include:

- Reduced overall transmission line length; approximately 22-miles shorter than the DEIS Agency Preferred Alternative. The reduced transmission line length provides reduced resource impacts for several issues compared to the original DEIS Agency Preferred Alternative.
- Reduced overall transmission line length across non-federal lands; The New Northern Route Alternative occurs primarily on federal lands and therefore has less impacts on land use, public health and safety, and other issues compared to the DEIS Agency Preferred Alternative.

- Reduced overall disturbance footprint; the New Northern Route Alternative is consolidated in an existing transmission line corridor (approximately 200-foot centerline-to-centerline separation) for the majority of the proposed routing. The reduced disturbance footprint thus reduced resource impacts such as impacts to wildlife habitat (especially Sage-Grouse), military training, soils, water resources, invasive species spread, and others issues compared to the DEIS Agency Preferred Alternative.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware 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 your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Please note that public comments and information submitted, including names, street addresses, and email addresses of persons who submit comments, will be available for public review and disclosure at the above address during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10.

Daniel C. Picard,

Spokane District Manager.

[FR Doc. 2014–30597 Filed 12–31–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–33–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[14XLLAKF02000.L16100000.
DQ0000.LXSS094L0000]

Notice of Availability of Additional Information on Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Associated Resource Use Limitations Identified in the Draft Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Alaska

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: On February 24, 2012, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public review and comment in the **Federal Register**. BLM planning regulations require the BLM to notify the public of proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and specify the resource use limitations which would occur if the ACECs were formally designated through approval of the Eastern Interior RMP. Based on public comment on the Draft RMP, the BLM proposes the reconfiguration of the Fortymile ACEC and proposes a new ACEC on the Mosquito Flats. These specific proposed ACEC boundaries were not noticed in the Draft RMP/EIS. Thus, the BLM is providing this notice and public comment period for these two proposed ACECs.

DATES: You may submit comments related to the new ACEC information in this notice until March 3, 2014.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments related to the new ACEC information by any of the following methods:

- Email: easterninterior@blm.gov.
- Fax: 907–474–2282.
- Mail: Eastern Interior Field Office,

Attention—Eastern Interior RMP, Bureau of Land Management, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeanie Cole, telephone 907–474–2340 or email j05cole@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the

deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments on the Draft RMP/EIS received from the public and internal BLM analyses on ACECs were reviewed and considered for incorporation into the proposed plan. As a result, the BLM now proposes the addition of the 30,000 acre Mosquito Flats ACEC and reconfiguration of the Fortymile ACEC to 685,000 acres. It is unnecessary to issue a supplement to the Draft EIS pursuant to 40 CFR 1502.9 because the proposed land management direction for these ACECs was within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS. The following description details the information for these two proposed ACECs. Maps of both ACECs are available on the BLM's Eastern Interior RMP Web site at www.blm.gov/ak/eirmp.

Mosquito Flats ACEC (30,000 Acres)

During the public comment period for the Eastern Interior RMP, the BLM received two nominations for an ACEC on the Mosquito Flats. The proposed Mosquito Flats ACEC is a large wetland complex unique to BLM lands in the planning area; it consists of a wetland basin situated in the upper portion of the drainage, at relatively high elevation (~2250 ft), and surrounded by mountains. Mosquito Flats provides unique wetland and aquatic habitats and supports a variety of wildlife species.

The proposed ACEC is comprised of a complex of floating bog wetland vegetation partially surrounded by mountains. The Mosquito Fork River flows over continuous sand beds that are uncharacteristically clean, light colored, well-sorted, and low in organics. These sand beds provide unique aquatic habitat essential for maintaining diverse species within the planning area.

Mosquito Flats is an important moose calving area and summer habitat for the regional moose population. The area also supports short-eared owls and nesting trumpeter swans, both BLM-Alaska sensitive species. It may also support other BLM-sensitive species, including olive-sided flycatcher, rusty blackbird, and blackpoll warbler.

Proposed Use Limitations: Closed to locatable mineral entry and mineral leasing, subject to valid existing rights. Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use is

limited by season with no summer use, except by permit.

Fortymile ACEC (685,000 Acres)

The BLM proposes modifying the boundary of the Fortymile ACEC that was presented in Alternative B in the Draft RMP/EIS to improve manageability by including additional small parcels between the calving/post-calving distribution and the Fortymile National Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The Fortymile ACEC is proposed to maintain effective caribou and Dall sheep habitat and mineral licks. The Fortymile caribou herd is an important subsistence resource in interior Alaska and calving and postcalving habitats are considered the most sensitive seasonal habitats.

Proposed Use Limitations: Closed to locatable mineral entry and mineral leasing, subject to valid existing rights. Limited OHV designation: Seasonal limitation on uses within 1 mile of mineral licks.

Consistent with 43 CFR 1610.7-2, the BLM is providing this notice and public comment period for these two proposed ACECs. (Supplemental information can be found in the original Notice of Availability (NOA) published in the **Federal Register** and on the Eastern Interior RMP Web site at www.blm.gov/ak/eirmp).

You may submit comments related to the new ACEC information on this notice until March 3, 2014 using any of the methods listed in the **DATES** section above.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware 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 your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Bud C. Cribley,
State Director.

Authority: 43 CFR 1610.7-2

[FR Doc. 2014-30598 Filed 12-31-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-JA-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

[Docket No. BOEM-2014-0077]

Extension of Comment Period on the Environmental Assessment for Virginia Offshore Wind Technology Advancement Project on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Virginia

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Interior.

ACTION: Extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: BOEM is extending the comment period on an Environmental Assessment (EA) that considers the reasonably foreseeable environmental consequences associated with approval of wind energy-related research activities offshore Virginia as proposed by the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME). BOEM is seeking public input on the EA, including comments on the completeness and adequacy of the environmental analysis. BOEM will consider public comments on the EA in determining whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), or conduct additional analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act.

DATES: Comments on the EA will now be accepted until January 16, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michelle Morin, BOEM Office of Renewable Energy Programs, 381 Elden Street, HM 1328, Herndon, Virginia 20170, (703) 787-1340 or Michelle.Morin@boem.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Please refer to the notice published in the **Federal Register** (79 FR 71446) on December 2, 2014, for further information. The notice and the EA can be found at: <http://www.boem.gov/VOWTAP/>.

Comments: You may submit your comments by one of two methods:

1. Electronically: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the entry entitled, "Enter Keyword or ID," enter BOEM-2014-0077, and then click "search." Follow the instructions to submit public comments and view supporting and related materials for this notice.

2. In written form, delivered by hand or by mail, enclosed in an envelope labeled "Approval of the Virginia Offshore Wind Technology Advancement Project on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Offshore Virginia" to: Program Manager, Office of Renewable Energy, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, 381 Elden Street,

HM 1328, Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817. Comments must be received or postmarked no later than January 16, 2015. All written comments received or postmarked during the comment period will be made available to the public. Comments already submitted in response to the December 2, 2014, notice do not need to be resubmitted.

Authority: This notice is published pursuant to 43 CFR 46.305.

Dated: December 22, 2014.

Walter D. Cruickshank,
Acting Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

[FR Doc. 2014-30767 Filed 12-31-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MR-P

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Permits Issued Under the Antarctic Conservation Act

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice of permits issued Under the Antarctic Conservation of 1978, Public Law 95-541.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is required to publish notice of permits issued under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978. This is the required notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Li Ling Hamady, ACA Permit Officer, Division of Polar Programs, Rm. 755, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230. Or by email: ACApermits@nsf.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 25, 2014 the National Science Foundation published a notice in the **Federal Register** of a permit application received. The permit was issued on December 25, 2014 to: Ashley Perrin, Permit No. 2015-016.

Nadene G. Kennedy,
Polar Coordination Specialist, Division of Polar Programs.

[FR Doc. 2014-30730 Filed 12-31-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[NRC-2014-0276]

General Use of Locks in Protection and Control of Facilities and Special Nuclear Materials, Classified Matter, and Safeguards Information

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Draft regulatory guide; request for comment.

Appendix C: Press Release



BLM NEWS

Fairbanks District Office

For Immediate Release
Date: January 2, 2015
Contact: Craig McCaa, 907-474-2231, cmccaa@blm.gov
News Release No. AK15-01

BLM Alaska Opens Public Comment on Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern in the Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

FAIRBANKS , AK – Based on public comment on the Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is considering changing the boundary of the proposed Fortymile Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and designating a new ACEC on the Mosquito Flats, also in the Fortymile region.

The BLM is providing additional information on the proposed ACECs for public review and comment in a Federal Register notice published today.

The proposed Mosquito Flats ACEC (30,000 acres) provides unique wetland and aquatic habitats and supports a variety of wildlife species. Mosquito Flats is an important moose calving area and summer habitat for the regional moose population. The area also supports short-eared owls and nesting trumpeter swans. The proposed ACEC would be recommended to be closed to new mineral entry and leasing. Off-highway vehicles (OHVs) would be limited by season with no summer use allowed except by permit.

The Fortymile ACEC (685,000 acres) boundary presented in the Alternatives of the draft RMP/EIS was reconfigured to improve manageability and maintain effective caribou and Dall sheep habitat and mineral licks. The ACEC would be recommended to be closed to new mineral entry and leasing and to have a limited OHV designation with seasonal limitations on uses within one mile of mineral licks.

A 60-day public comment period for the proposed ACECs begins tomorrow, January 3, 2015. The public is invited to provide comments related to the new ACECs. Comments may be submitted using any of the following methods:

- Email: EasternInterior@blm.gov
Fax: 907-474-2282
- Mail: Eastern Interior Field Office, Attention-Eastern Interior RMP, Bureau of Land Management, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709, Attn: Jeanie Cole

Comments must be received by March 3, 2015 to be considered. For maps and information about

the proposed ACECs, visit the Eastern Interior RMP website at www.blm.gov/ak/eirmp or contact the BLM at (907) 474-2340 or (800) 437-7021 (within Alaska).

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2013, the BLM generated \$4.7 billion in receipts from public lands.