

Central Yukon Resource Management Plan Public Scoping Summary Meeting Notes Hughes * December 16, 2013



Planning Team

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Questions and Comments during the Presentation:

Planning Area and Planning Process

How close to Hughes are the BLM lands? *BLM: Each township on the map is about 6 miles across and Hughes sits in the middle of a township that is all owned by your native corporation. Hughes is surrounded by BLM land about 6 miles away. It is a classic checker board pattern.*

I noticed there is Public Land Order 5150 - What is that? *BLM explained lands closed for selection in the Dalton Utility Corridor and the State's request for the BLM to make lands within the utility corridor available for selection.*

Does anyone have any maps of who owns what lands [the private property] besides the BLM? *BLM: On our website BLM has a link to SDMS, a big spatial data set – it is user friendly and you can pull up all the allotment owners.*

Invasive Species

Invasive plants- is it foreign weeds or those that are already there? *BLM: A lot came from Fairbanks – the white sweet clover is out-competing other plants and moving-off into burn areas. The goal is to keep the native vegetation; some species are more worrisome than others. There are about 21 plant species BLM is monitoring on the Dalton Highway.*

Minerals Management

Do they just leave it [mined sites] when they are done with it? *BLM: They can't just leave it, but each year certain things change – like right now topsoil is spread across and put back but they don't have to replant it right now. It might be possible in the future to replant and if they do they can get their bond back sooner. Right now we have a bond to cover it until it comes back to a certain condition. They have bonds with BLM to mine on the land? BLM: Right.*

If someone plans on mining in this area, do we get notification or do they just come in and start mining? *BLM: explained mining permitting, the public process, and Taiga mining that is going on the Hogatza River, and where it is located.*

Subsistence and Traditional Way of Life

We go caribou hunting up there by the Hog River, a caribou hunting area. *BLM: In the fall? No now, if we can go up there now, if they can get out there. We don't always take caribou, certain times, certain years.*

People have their own areas for cutting wood for their stoves – was wondering if that was on BLM land or private land? *BLM: It probably is on BLM land. Firewood harvest is an allowed use under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) on BLM lands under subsistence. It is something that should require a permit, but BLM finds that generally the communities do a good job managing it themselves.*

The City is going over a couple of wood boilers in the area and thinks that Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) has come up with a harvest plan. I just got the Draft Plan [TCC's Wood Harvest Plan]. *BLM: BLM should talk with them [TCC] so that BLM knows which areas are important to protect for harvest and fire protection. If there are any other goals like that that the community things the BLM can learn from please send them and let us know.*

NEPA/EIS Process

Does BLM just go to the villages [for meetings] or Fairbanks and Anchorage as well? *BLM: explained that there were meetings held for this plan in Fairbanks and Anchorage.*

When will BLM come back again on this Plan? *BLM: noted that there would be more public meetings after the Draft EIS stage.*

Fire Management

What is BLM doing about gathering information for wildfires? Do they prepare a plan like this every so often? *BLM: explained BLM's Fire Management Plan and the cooperative role with the Alaska Fire Service.*

Alaska Fire Service does a really good job around Native Allotments. Is there a certain time of year for fire management to request comments from the tribes? *BLM: When BIA or Doyon comes out – usually in the spring the all agencies have a meeting and review the plans.*

We got a letter requesting information about a Fire Management Plan. I've never seen it and I work for the Tribe so that is why I am curious. *BLM: I will try to find out about that– Kent Slaughter is the person I can check with and I will check to see their schedule and to see if they had already sent out letters.*

Do they do that annually [send letters about the Fire Management Plan]? *BLM: Yes, every year. A few years ago, the Hughes Village Council was not too interested in “firewise”. That might have changed now. Oh yeah we did [start to implement Firewise]. BLM: So we are always open to that –particularly if there are areas that can be cut closer to town.*

There are areas that could be cut for fuel reduction. *BLM: They can cut for fuel reduction and protection, and also can use it as timber harvest.*

Timber Management

There is an area here for biomass. They would want to go about 30 to 40 miles away to get it from Hughes. *BLM noted it was important to let them know which areas they would want to use and be open for biomass or timber harvest. The more input they can get the better. If the community wants an area to stay closed, let them know – even before this Plan is out for future use. BLM does not want to guess as they don't know it as well as the community does.*

In some areas the trees needed to be blazed.