Box River Treeline RNA

Nulato Hills

Size: 13,331 acres
Elevation: 1,345–1,500 feet

Area Description

Box River forms the upper watershed boundary and divide between the Yukon River drainage and that of the Bering Sea.

The area burned in the late 1950s. Three major unburned remnants contain lush lichen flora and a white spruce forest.

The RNA includes unstable geological features caused by permafrost degradation and ground subsidence.

Features of Significant Research Value (Animal, Plant and Geologic)

Animal: Caribou use of lichen-rich plant communities

Plant: Community types characteristic of treeline, such as open white spruce forest (*Cladonia* lichen and dwarf birch types); paper birch-alder-willow; balsam poplar (mixed with willow-alder-*Clamagrostis* grass); dwarf birch closed low shrub; sagebrush-juniper open low shrub (steep rocky sites)

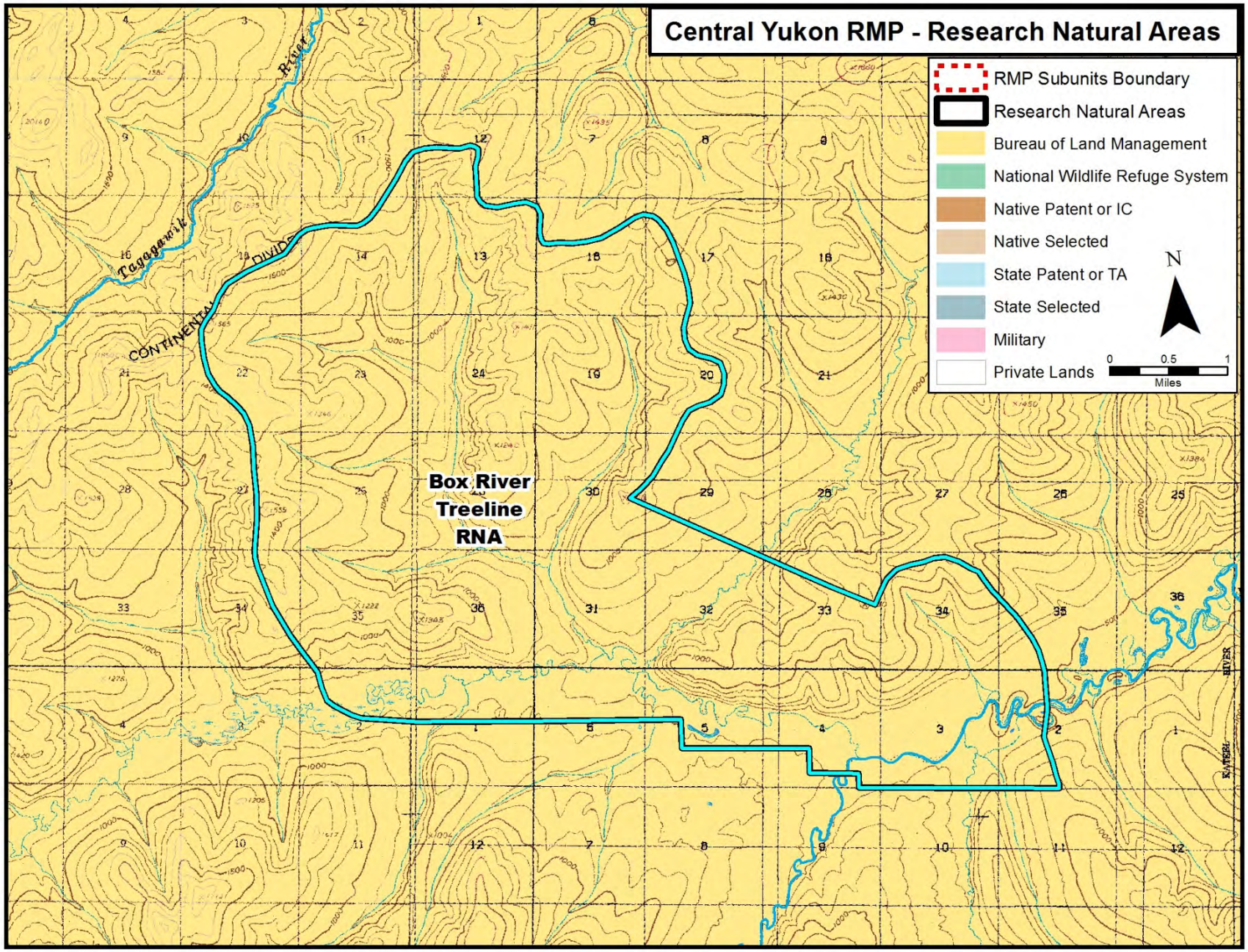
Geologic: Unstable features caused by permafrost degradations such as massive ground ice exposures and slump surfaces

Additional Features

The area's most expansive tundras are at higher elevations along the watershed divide.

A remnant white spruce forest of trees with a krumholtz base (stunted and deformed at the base) and more normal tree growth at the top indicates changing climate factors from the mid-1800s and the advance of the treeline.

Source: Glenn P. Juday, 1983, Proposed Box River Treeline Natural Research Area. Report prepared for the Bureau of Land Management – Alaska.


Central Yukon RMP - Research Natural Areas
RMP Subunits Boundary
Research Natural Areas
Bureau of Land Management
National Wildlife Refuge System
Native Patent or IC
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Box River
Treeline
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