

Bering Sea–Western Interior RMP Scoping Meeting

Issue Summary

Lower Kalskag, Alaska November 8, 2013

These Issue summaries are created by the BLM after each community meeting. These documents summarize what was shared and are provided to each community for verification or revisions before being considered final.

Attendance:

25 residents attended the Lower Kalskag community scoping meeting. 5 BLM representatives provided a presentation, discussion time around maps, and a sharing session.

Issues and concerns raised:

“Where there was more, there is less and where there was less, there is more”

- This comment was expressed in relation to changes that elders and community members have noticed over time in regard to weather, fish, and wildlife.

BLM Land

- BLM land to the north of the community is rarely utilized at present, with the exception of Pike Lake, but its future availability is important for future subsistence use as local competition increases, especially if the AVCP proposed Yukon-Kuskokwim road is constructed.
- BLM land is important to our future generations.
- The community is interested in long-term viability of the lands and not short-term development and gain. The land is important to future generations.

Fish-related

- Lakes located northeast of the village on BLM land referred to as “Pike Lake” are important late winter/early spring fishery to some in the community. Usually travel there in snowmachines.
- Concern was expressed over locally harvested fish that, when dissected, had odd greenish and glowing colors. Community members expressed concern over possible contaminants related to the Fukushima Nuclear plant in Japan.
- Beaver population has increased and it has decreased the spawning habitat

Wildlife-related

- Support the reintroduction of Wood Bison and Muskox
- Mulchatna caribou migration patterns have changed and moved farther away from community to the south. There is wolf and hunting pressure on the herd. The herd has not been seen in many years in the Whitefish Lake area (south of town on USFWS land).
- Moose management: all the moose in the village can be a safety hazard to the children.
- Beaver trapping and range expansion: trappers farther west are seeing beavers where they didn't see them before.
- Trail use: Increased trail use and the GMU boundary is not aligned with the trail.
- Grizzly bear populations have increased.

Water-related

- Concerns were raised over the health of the river and watersheds if activities are allowed on the land that could harm their water.

Other

- Proposed Road - concerns raised over the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP)-proposed road from Kalskag to the Yukon River Paimut Slough. Community members were told that only business traffic would use the road and it would be closed to other travel, though they are concerned that it will not be patrolled and that has the potential to increase local fishing and

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hunting pressure. The community members desire access to the road, if built, for subsistence purposes.

- Reindeer herding occurred historically in the area and there is interest in future opportunities.
- Community members are interested in offering guided tours to visitors/tourists to visit a village and learn about rural village life, offer tours of the surroundings, to see wildlife and birds, possibly developing some type of ecotourism that would likely occur on lands close to the village (Native Corporation-owned or Fish and Wildlife Service-owned).
- Community members shared general information about burial grounds close to town and likely on Native Corporation lands but no specific location.
- Concerns were raised about air quality with local wildfires if they are managed to let the fire burn. A past fire was not suppressed and the community air quality was really bad.

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