Bering Sea - Western Interior
Resource Management Plan




Desired Future Resource Conditions

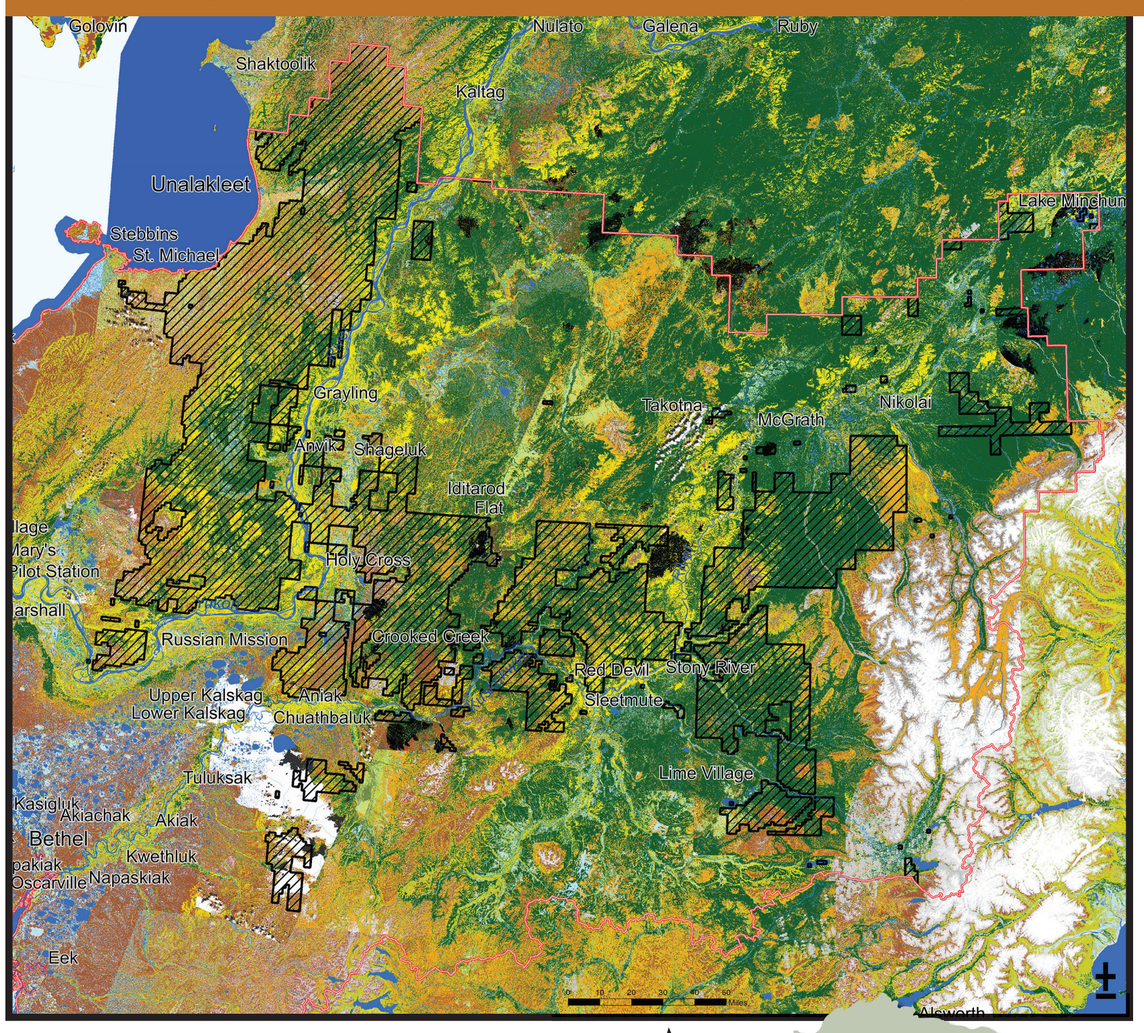
Desired Future Conditions

Resource Management Plans (RMPs) set broad management goals and objectives for future resource management.

RMPs describe the existing condition of resources as well as prescribe the desired future condition (DFC) of both natural and cultural resources. Some examples are provided below:

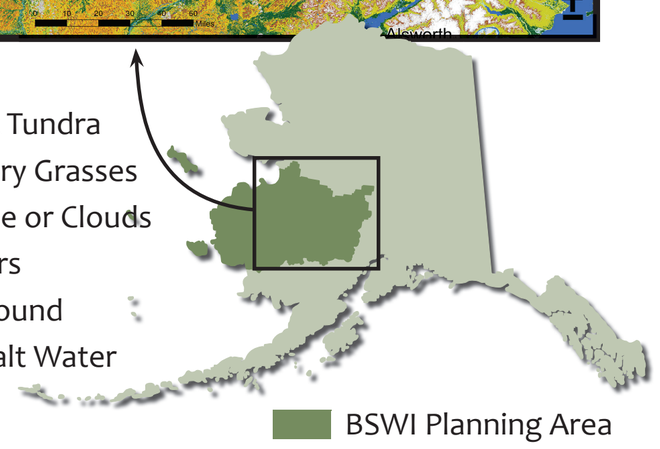
Resource Examples	Desired Future Condition (DFC) Examples
Air/Water	DFC: Meet regulatory air quality and water quality standards. HOW: Include land use activity permit restrictions that achieve air and water quality standards.
Vegetation, Fish & Wildlife Habitat	DFC: Provide desired habitat conditions in the major habitat types to support desired population levels for a wide variety of wildlife, migratory bird, and fish species. HOW: Identify habitat restoration opportunities, activity permit restrictions, and actions needed to achieve desired habitat conditions.
Cultural	DFC: Meet regulatory cultural resource protection and conservation goals to minimize affects to cultural resources. HOW: Identify restrictions for the location, timing, or method of development for resource uses or actitivities.
Visual Resources	DFC: Protect scenic values across the landscape according to visual resource management classes. HOW: Designate visual resource management classes and minimize visual impacts from development with avoidance areas, construction requirements, use restrictions, etc.
Wildfire Management	DFC: Identify the role of fire to support ecosystem processes, wildlife species habitat regeneration, and vegetation species composition goals across the landscape. HOW: Utilize fire suppression or non-suppression, fuel treatments, or post-fire restoration and rehabilitation activities to achieve species habitat DFC.

Vegetation Land Cover Groupings



Land Cover Groupings

- Evergreen Forest
- Deciduous Forest
- Lichen
- Low Shrub
- Tall Shrub
- Dwarf Shrub
- Herbaceous Wetlands
- Tussock Tundra
- Mesic/Dry Grasses
- Snow/Ice or Clouds
- Fire Scars
- Bare Ground
- Fresh/Salt Water



BSWI Planning Area

Climate Change & Potential Effects to Resources

Climate change refers to any significant change in the measures of climate lasting for an extended period of time. In other words, climate change includes major changes in temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns, among other effects, that occur over several decades or longer.

In the past 50 years, Alaska has warmed at more than twice the rate of the rest of the United States' average. Higher temperatures may contribute to earlier spring snowmelt, reduced sea ice, glacial retreat, and permafrost warming. Some examples of resource impacts are included below:

PERMAFROST

Permafrost melting in the planning area may increase. Thawing permafrost would likely alter hydrology and may result in lake draining in some places and wetland formation in other areas. It can also result in land subsidence (sinking) and thermokarsts (a type of landslide).

VEGETATION AND FIRE

The length of the summer season may increase with break-up occurring earlier and freeze-up occurring later. The frequency and extent of wildfire has increased in the past 40 years and that trend is predicted to continue. All of these effects may alter vegetation in the BSWIPA.

FOREST CHANGE

Current predictions suggest that deciduous or white spruce forests may increase at the expense of black spruce dominated forests.

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES HABITAT

Changes in vegetation communities may affect available habitat for animal species. Caribou habitat may be negatively affected due to increasing wildfire frequency that could diminish lichen abundance. Fishery populations may be affected by ocean acidification and changes in hydrology due to permafrost thaw.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Melting permafrost may cause increased erosion at archaeological sites along rivers and coastal shorelines resulting in potential impacts to cultural artifacts or traditional use areas.

Issues to Consider

It is important that the public share their vision for future resource conditions during public meetings or, by providing public comment.

- How would you like these resources managed in the future?
- Are there sensitive areas where a certain resource occurs that warrant special protections?
- How might climate change affect these resources?