

# Bering Sea - Western Interior Resource Management Plan



## Newsletter #3 - November 2015



*The BSWI RMP Team consults with Crooked Creek Traditional Council in March 2015.*

Thank you for your continued interest in the Bering Sea-Western Interior Resource Management Plan (BSWI RMP).

Earlier this year, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) conducted outreach on the Preliminary Alternatives for the BSWI plan. Our goal was to present concepts for management alternatives that address the issues identified during internal and external scoping. We then invited the public to comment on the alternatives, or to suggest new ones. These Preliminary Alternatives were exploratory and served as a starting point to formulate a range of alternatives.

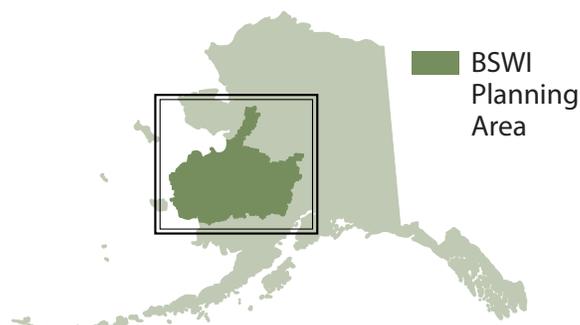
Nationally the BLM is looking at ways to improve the land use planning process. A BLM initiative called Planning 2.0 encourages BLM offices to provide new and enhanced opportunities for collaborative planning with the public and our partners from tribes, local, state and federal agencies, and non-government organizations.

The Preliminary Alternatives Outreach Period gave the public and our partners the opportunity to help shape the range of alternatives for the BSWI plan. We received many thoughtful comments and suggestions during this outreach (see page 2 of this newsletter for more details). We are carefully considering these comments as we craft a full range of alternatives for the Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.

Meanwhile, I invite you to stop by and visit with the BLM during the **BIA Provider's Conference in December** and again during the **Alaska Forum on the Environment in February 2016**. You may also visit the project website to stay informed as we continue the BSWI planning process.

Your comments are welcome at any time throughout this planning effort. Please remain involved so together we can build well-informed decisions for the BSWI Resource Management Plan.

Alan Bittner  
Anchorage Field Manager



## Preliminary Alternatives Outreach

The BLM held public meetings in the communities of Aniak, Bethel, Chuathbaluk, Crooked Creek, Grayling, Holy Cross, Kalskag, Kaltag, Lower Kalskag, McGrath, Nulato, Russian Mission and Unalakleet as part of our outreach on the Preliminary Alternatives earlier this year. The BLM also held one public meeting in Anchorage and hosted an Online Open House where all meeting materials were available for review and comment.

The BLM received 893 oral and written comments addressing approximately 30 issues. The following topics generated frequent comments:

- **Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC):** Comments about existing or new ACECs, protections or restrictions associated with ACECs, Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) concerns, and ACEC nominations for specific resources within the BSWI planning area.
- **Subsistence:** Importance to rural communities, decline of subsistence resources, and competition with other uses.
- **Minerals and Mining:** Historic mining activities, reclamation and restoration, current and future minerals exploration, and natural resources development.
- **Travel Management:** Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use, vehicle use of tundra trails, tundra damage, vehicle weight and width limits, seasonal restrictions, and potential road routes and corridors.
- **Fish, Wildlife and Forestry Resources**



*The BSWI RMP Team meets with Kaltag Tribal Council members.*

The BLM published a Preliminary Alternatives Comment Summary Report in August 2015 on the BSWI project website. This report offers more detail about specific issues and includes comments compiled by community, issue, and alternative. This format allows readers to easily locate comments about the issues most important to your community or organization.

The BSWI planning team has reviewed the report and will consider the comments as we continue to refine the range of alternatives during the coming months.

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*“When we last met, we said it was very important to preserve our land and our Native culture. We are saying it again.”*

*– Oral comment during community meeting, March 26, 2015*

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The BLM will identify a range of alternatives and a preferred alternative in the Draft RMP/EIS for public comment.

Please continue to engage in this planning effort by attending a public meeting or providing comments on the Draft RMP.

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*“The Preliminary Alternatives are significantly slanted toward preservation, and do not reflect the ‘multiple use’ mandate of the BLM as directed by FLPMA.”*

*– Written comment, May 28, 2015*

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*The BSWI RMP Team and Chuathbaluk tribal and community members discuss preliminary alternatives for the planning area.*



# BSWI Planning Process



## PROCESS MILESTONES

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Notice of Intent to Prepare RMP	2013	Notice published in Federal Register
Public Scoping	2013-2014	180-day Public Scoping Period Public Scoping Meetings/Online Open House Tribal Consultations
ACEC Nomination Period	2014	120-day Nomination Period
Preliminary Alternatives	2015	
Preliminary Alternatives Outreach	2015	120-day Public Comment Period Public Meetings/Online Open House Tribal Consultations
Refine Alternatives <i>We are here now</i> →	2015-2016	
Prepare Draft RMP	2016-2017	
Notice of Availability of Draft RMP/EIS	2017	Notice published in Federal Register 90-day Public Comment Period Public Meetings/Online Open House Tribal Consultations ANILCA 810 Hearings
Revise RMP	2017-2018	
Notice of Availability of Proposed RMP/Final EIS Protest Period Governor's Consistency Review	2018	Notice published in Federal Register Online Availability 30-day Protest Period 60-day Governor's Consistency Review
Record of Decision and Approved RMP	TBD	Online Availability

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Anchorage, AK 99507



## BSWI Vision

The Anchorage Field Office vision for the Bering Sea-Western Interior planning area is to sustain the diverse and intact ecosystems that support traditional subsistence lifestyles while recognizing the importance of BLM-managed public lands to rural economies.

## Important BSWI dates:

**December 3, 2015**

BLM presentation at  
BIA Providers Conference

**February 8-11, 2016**

BLM presentation at  
Alaska Forum on the Environment  
(exact date TBD)

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