Scoping Report

for the

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

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Prepared by
Alaska State Office
and
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Bureau of Land Management

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I. Introduction

a.) Overview

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) initiated the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) to determine the appropriate management of all BLM-managed lands within the NPR-A. The BLM undertook scoping in part to help it refine the purpose of the plan. The BLM will use issues the public raised during scoping to help determine the range of the management questions to address in the plan. While the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (NPRPA), as amended, provides the legal basis for BLM management of the NPR-A, the BLM has indicated during scoping that, consistent with federal regulations (40 CFR 1502.14(c)), it would consider whether the plan should address alternatives that are not consistent with its current administrative jurisdiction.

Under the NPRPA, the Secretary of the Interior has the authority to conduct oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A (42 U.S.C. § 6506a(a)). The NPRPA also provides that the Secretary of the Interior "shall assume all responsibilities" for "any activities related to the protection of environmental, fish and wildlife, and historical or scenic values" (42 U.S.C. § 6503(b)). In addition, the Secretary is authorized to "promulgate such rules and regulations as he deems necessary and appropriate for the protection of such values within the reserve" (42 U.S.C. § 6503(b)). Furthermore, the NPRPA, as amended, contains special provisions that apply to any exploration or development activities within areas "designated by the Secretary of the Interior containing any significant subsistence, recreational, fish and wildlife, or historical or scenic value" (42 U.S.C. §§ 6504(a)). There are four such areas: the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area (TLSA), the Utukok River Uplands Special Area (URUSA), the Colville River Special Area (CRSA), and the Kasegaluk Lagoon Special Area (KLSA). Any oil and gas exploration or development within a special area "shall be conducted in a manner which will assure the maximum protection of such surface resources to the extent consistent with the requirements of [the] Act for the exploration of the reserve" (42 U.S.C. §§ 6504(a)). Finally, oil and gas activities must include or provide for "conditions, restrictions, and prohibitions as the Secretary deems necessary or appropriate to mitigate reasonably foreseeable and significantly adverse effects on the surface resources of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska" (42 U.S.C. § 6506a(b)). This IAP/EIS will fulfill these statutory mandates.

b.) Description of the Planning Area

The planning area includes all lands and only such lands as are managed by BLM within the NPR-A. The BLM-managed lands total approximately 22.1 million acres of surface and subsurface estate and an additional 200,000 acres of subsurface estate under ANCSA village corporation surface estate. The plan does not address surface or subsurface estates if owned by Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) regional or village corporations, the

surface lands within certified Native Allotments owned by private individuals, the surface lands within the airstrip at Umiat (owned by the State of Alaska), lands owned by the North Slope Borough (NSB) near Cape Simpson, or the subsurface oil and natural gas estate of the NSB near Barrow. (Map 1)

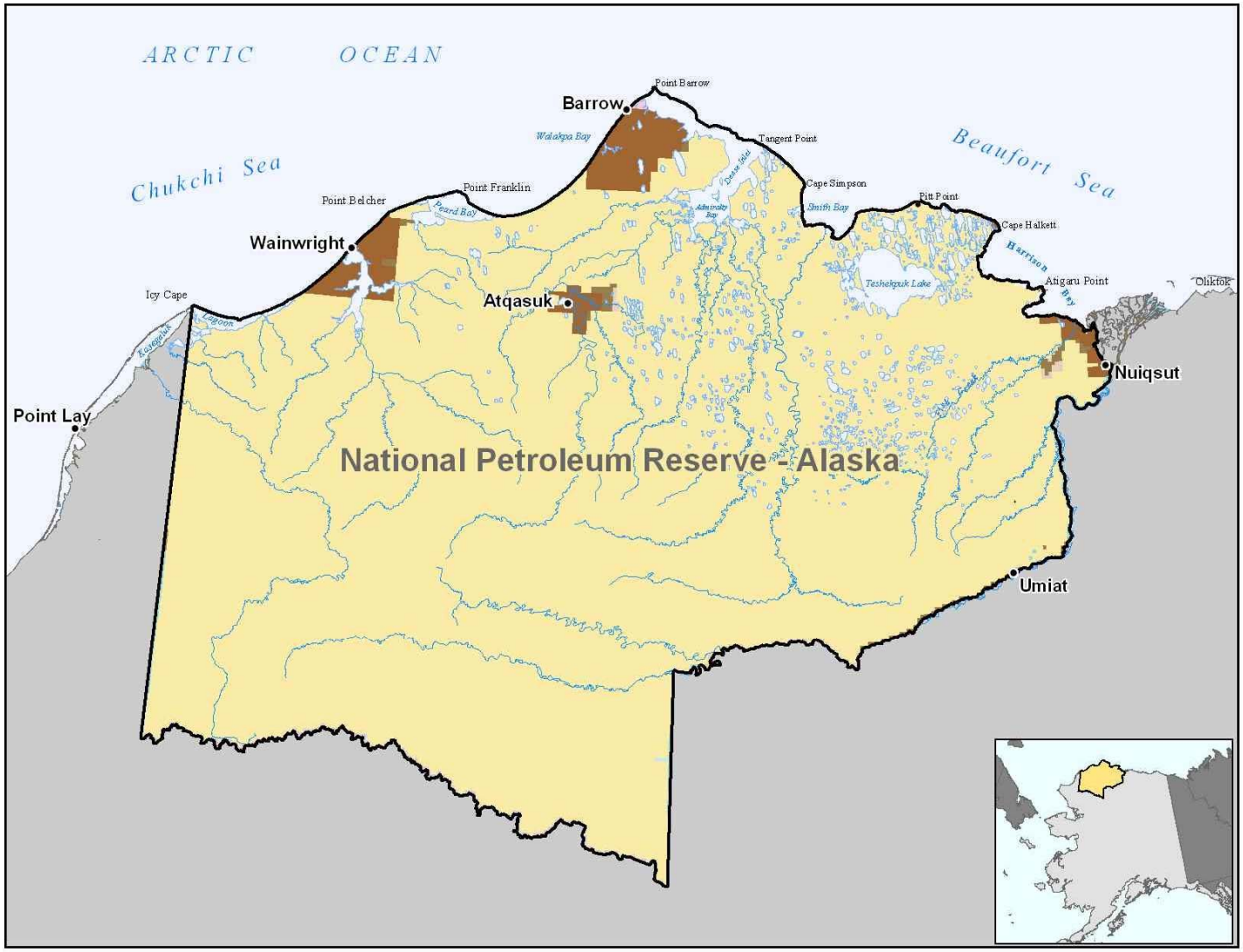
A few considerations regarding the boundary of the NPR-A are worth mentioning. The northern portion of the eastern boundary of the NPR-A is along the western bank of the Colville River. That boundary is defined in Executive Order (EO) 3797-A as the "highest highwater mark . . . on the [western] bank," which the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska construed to be "on and along the bank at the highest level attained by the waters of the river when they reach and wash the bank without overflowing it" (Alaska v. U.S.; case no. A78-069 Civ. December 7, 1984). Thus, neither the Colville River nor its banks immediately adjacent to the river below approximately longitude 156°08' are in the NPR-A. The southern part of the eastern boundary of NPR-A is a line at approximately longitude 156°08' from the Colville River south to the crest of the Brooks Range. The southern boundary of NPR-A boundary lies along the crest of the Brooks Range to approximately longitude 161°46', which composes NPR-A's western boundary from the Brooks Range to the Chukchi Sea at Icy Cape. The northern NPR-A boundary encompasses outlying islands and the bays, lagoons, inlets, and tidal waters between NPR-A's outlying islands and the mainland. The U.S. Supreme Court (in U.S. v Alaska; No. 84, Orig. decided on June 19, 1997) determined that the NPR-A included these tidally influenced waters and that those waters and the submerged lands underlying them did not transfer to the State of Alaska at statehood.

c.) Description of the scoping process, meetings and contacts

Formal scoping began on July 28, 2010, with the publication in the *Federal Register* of a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. (Appendix A) The NOI notified the public of the beginning of the scoping process, described that process, identified preliminary issues for analysis in the planning process, and provided information on means to submit scoping comments. The BLM launched a website for the plan on July 28 on which it furnished the public with background information on NPR-A, past planning efforts in NPR-A, and additional information on how to submit scoping comments. The agency also mailed a flyer on the planning effort to approximately 2,500 individuals on its NPR-A mailing list; the Bureau followed up with a postcard to approximately 990 individuals within commuting distance of communities in which scoping meetings were held to provide specific information on the time and place of meetings.

The BLM received scoping comments by mail (70), fax (5), e-mail (approx. 147,000), through its ePlanning website's comment form (2), and through public scoping meetings. (Some commenters provided identical written comments by several different means and some individuals sent multiple e-mails.) Through the assistance of the NSB, which is a cooperating agency in the planning effort, the BLM held six scoping meetings in the North Slope communities of Barrow (September 9), Anaktuvuk Pass (September 14), Nuiqsut (September 16), Wainwright (September 20), Atqasuk (September 21), and Point Lay (September 27). The agency also held scoping meetings in Fairbanks (September 13) and Anchorage (September 23).

Map 1


ARCTIC OCEAN
Chukchi Sea
Beaufort Sea
Point Barrow
Barrow
Walakpa Bay
Tangent Point
Point Franklin
Point Belcher
Peard Bay
Cape Simpson
Smith Bay
Pitt Point
Cape Halkett
Harrison Bay
Wainwright
Atqasuk
Teshekpuk Lake
Atigaru Point
Oliktok
Icy Cape
Lagoon
Kasegaluk
Nuiqsut
Point Lay
National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska
Umiat

d.) Cooperating Agencies/Invitees

The BLM invited the NSB; the State of Alaska; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement (BOEMRE); the U.S. National Park Service (NPS); and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to participate as cooperating agencies. The NSB, the State, the USFWS, and BOEMRE accepted the invitation and have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) or in the process of developing an MOU with BLM describing the responsibilities of the cooperating agencies and BLM as the lead agency.

e.) Collaboration and Consultation with Tribes

To initiate the government-to-government consultation process, the BLM on August 5, 2010, sent letters to the following 43 tribes whose members could be affected by NPR-A management actions. This initiated the government-to-government tribal consultation process.

Native Village of Barrow
Village of Wainwright
Native Village of Point Hope
Native Village of Nuiqsut
Native Village of Kivilina
Native Village of Kotzebue
Noorvik Native Community
Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope
Native Village of Point Lay
Village of Atqasuk
Village of Anaktuvuk Pass
Native Village of Noatak
Native Village of Kiana
Native Village of Ambler
Native Village of Shungnak
Native Village of Selawik
Native Village of Shishmaref
Native Village of Brevig Mission
Native Village of Council
Nome Eskimo Community
Native Village of Elim
Native Village of Kobuk
Native Village of Deering
Native Village of Wales
Native Village of Teller
Native Village of White Mountain
Chinik Eskimo Community
Native Village of Shaktoolik
Native Village of Koyuk
Native Village of Unalakeet
Village of Kaltag
Koyukuk Native Village
Hughes Village
Organized Village of Grayling
Stebbins Community Association
Native Village of Buckland
Native Village of St. Michael
Nulato Tribal Council
Huslia Village
Allakaket Village
Galena Village (aka: Louden Village)
King Island Native Community
Village of Solomon

The Native Village of Point Hope requested consultation and a meeting is scheduled for November.

II. Issue Summary

a.) Overview

The public expressed a wide range of ideas for the future management of NPR-A. Major themes included subsistence; protection of surface resources, including permanent protection designations; oil and gas leasing and development; and access to hardrock minerals and coal. There also were other suggestions that fall outside of these major topics.

Subsistence

Subsistence is the primary concern of the residents of the North Slope. Letters from the NSB, State of Alaska, and the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and speakers at public meetings on the North Slope all emphasized the importance of the subsistence tradition to the physical well being of residents of northern and northwestern Alaska and the social and cultural importance of those traditions. Area residents were skeptical of any development—e.g., oil and gas or mining activity or road construction—or of any surface protection measures—e.g., Wilderness or W&SR designation—if they have the potential to adversely impact subsistence resources, particularly caribou herds, or the residents' access to hunting and fishing areas in order to harvest these animals. Environmental groups noted that surface protection measures that they advocate, including no leasing areas, continued closure of the reserve to mining, and wilderness and other protective status designations offer protection for subsistence resources. North Slope stakeholders and environmental groups particularly cited the importance of protecting the calving, insect relief, and movement corridors of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WAH) and Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Herd (TLH). Other measures mentioned to protect subsistence wildlife resources included consolidating research projects and requiring quieter machinery (e.g., prohibit airboat use during spill training) to reduce disturbance, while measures to minimize impacts to subsistence users included requiring user-friendly access to oil field development areas, reduction in aircraft use, particularly during prime subsistence hunting times, and requiring setbacks from cabins and camps used for subsistence activities. For their part, proponents of development, particularly oil and gas development, argued that development can occur in a manner that is not detrimental to subsistence.

Surface Protection

Commenters discussed a wide range of surface protection measures. Advocates of development stated that substantial surface protections are already required and have resulted in environmentally sound development on the North Slope, and in the case of mining, generally in the United States. Industry proponents supported adaptive management approaches that allow flexibility necessary for development while protecting resources. They, along with the State of Alaska, opposed any recommendations for Wilderness or W&SR designation; many pro-development commenters also opposed new Special Area designations, while the Alaska Miners Association suggested reducing the size or eliminating existing Special Areas.

Most environmental organizations advocated that the plan make recommendations for Wilderness and W&SR designation and enlarge existing and/or create new Special Areas. Some organizations were open to other means short of designation to provide enduring

protection to wilderness and other surface values, while some individuals suggested that all of NPR-A be designated as Wilderness or made into a National Wildlife Refuge. The North Slope Borough, also, supported creation of additional Special Areas and expressed itself open to designations if they do not restrict residents' use of the land and if they protect areas critical to key wildlife populations, environmental values, and important subsistence and cultural sites. Areas consistently identified as especially important to receive protection were the waterfowl and caribou habitat surrounding Teshekpuk Lake; the calving, insect relief, and movement routes of WAH; and the Colville River area. The portion of the Colville River in currently planned portions of NPR-A was regularly cited for its importance for raptors. The upper parts of the river, along with the upper portions of the Utukok River, and their tributaries and surrounding drainage in the DeLong Mountains and foothills were also commonly considered particularly good candidates for wilderness protections and for W&SR designation. Other areas commonly recommended for special protection were in the coastal plain in the vicinity of the Ikpikpuk River, Dease Inlet, Peard Bay, and Kasegaluk Lagoon. The Wilderness Society advocated that the ten-year deferral in northwestern NPR-A be extended ten more years, while the NSB opposed leasing in either currently deferred area. The NSB and some environmental organizations sought restricted flexibility of protective measures; the NSB, for example, would require that no exceptions be allowed to address technological infeasibility or economic concerns. Scoping comments also suggested a range of specific resource protection, such as two-, ten-, or twenty-mile setbacks of facilities from the Colville River, no surface occupancy restrictions in critical polar bear habitat and walrus haulout areas, and monitoring of air, water, and other resources with strong provisions for BLM to restrict operator activities depending upon the results of monitoring.

Oil and Gas

Proponents of oil and gas leasing in NPR-A, including the State of Alaska, pointed to the purpose of NPR-A to provide oil and gas for the nation; the national, state, and local economic benefits of oil and gas production, including employment, government revenues, and an improved balance of trade; and the need to find and produce more oil for the continued viability of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline as reasons for development of a plan that will allow leasing of the most prospective areas for oil and gas within NPR-A. Proponents noted that development has occurred on the North Slope while preserving resources of the area and that modern technology allows exploration and development with even more benign impacts on the environment than those of the past. Moreover, they point out, that if energy is not developed in the heavily regulated North Slope, it will likely be produced in other countries and involve heavier environmental costs and that the United States' reliance on foreign oil, including from nations with unfriendly governments, weakens the United States diplomatically. Some commenters also added that in addition to making lands available for leasing on a regular and dependable schedule, other actions including providing industry with incentives, coordinating government planning to address all road-blocks to development, and identifying transportation corridors and/or supporting road construction in NPR-A will bolster the chance that industry will be able to convert leases into production. In addition, some residents of the area supported development of coalbed natural gas to provide local energy at prices that may be substantially below their current supplies.

Opponents of oil and gas development in NPR-A and those who would place strong restrictions on where leasing could occur and under what restrictions, emphasized the

environmental and subsistence trade-offs. They placed strong emphasis on the importance of maintaining critical habitats intact, especially at a time of an evolving climate that places extra stress on species. They also argued that even if developed, NPR-A would make only a small contribution to the nation's energy needs and that the nation needs to shift to a renewable energy future. While some commenters who emphasized the need to protect the environment advocated no oil and gas leasing or development in NPR-A, others advocated restricting such leasing and development to varying degrees to areas outside of areas of particularly high surface values. Many of those areas, however, correspond closely with areas considered most prospective for oil and gas, including the Teshekpuk Lake area and other areas in the northern coastal plain.

Hardrock and Coal

The State, mining interests, and industry organizations advocated that through the planning process BLM develop a recommendation for legislation that would allow mining hardrock and coal in NPR-A. Studies have shown the extreme southern portion of NPR-A to have deposits of lead, zinc, and silver and mining proponents point to successful mining of similar deposits west of NPR-A at Red Dog. NPR-A also has bituminous coal, with the largest deposits concentrated in the west; ASRC has been examining opportunities to develop the coal resources on its lands just to the west of the reserve. Proponents of mining pointed out that mining these resources could provide jobs and revenue and reduce America's dependence on foreign resources. They argued that given these resources within the reserve, consideration of mining is a reasonable alternative.

The NSB, the WACHWG, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, and environmental organizations opposed consideration of any alternative that would recommend legislation to open NPR-A to mining. The NSB argued that mining infrastructure would likely be in addition to most or all infrastructure that would be built for oil and gas development, and the Borough expressed special concern for any mining in large areas of high value habitat for the WAH. Others also argued that the WAH and other wildlife, including grizzly bears, could be severely impacted by mining and pointed to environmental issues that have been raised about impacts from the Red Dog mine, impacts that could be more severe if development were to occur in the permafrost laden and wet environment in parts of NPR-A, lands which also would require substantial surface disturbance to unearth and transport minerals and coal from remote undeveloped areas of the reserve to ports and markets. The National Parks Conservation Association expressed concern that mining in NPR-A could have significant adverse impacts on the adjacent Noatak National Preserve and the nearby Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

Select Other Topics

- Determine transportation corridors and port facilities to facilitate development
- Plan for roads to facilitate development and public access
- Conduct geological and geophysical mapping to better understand NPR-A's mineral potential
- Describe actions to manage recreational and accessibility opportunities
- Coordinate recreation permitting with nearby NPS units

- Clean up legacy wells, old Air Force installations, and abandoned drums from past government oil and gas exploration
- Identify and prevent invasive species
- Consider climate change impacts and manage for a changed environment by, for example, ensuring corridors for animal migration through appropriate habitats and vegetation shifts
- Develop baseline environmental information to better measure the impacts of development and the effectiveness of mitigation, and to better differentiate between impacts related to climate change and those related to development
- Address potential public health issues and provide for mitigation
- Establish local working groups to discuss management of Special Areas
- Provide a means for young people of the area to learn about the environment and land management

b.) Public meeting comments

The BLM held eight public scoping meetings between September 9 and September 27, 2010. The meetings were held in:

Barrow—Barrow is the largest community and government and business hub of the NSB. Approximately a dozen people spoke at the public meeting on September 9 and over twenty attended the meeting. Speakers expressed a wide range of concerns, including the need to protect subsistence resources and access, potential pollution from development, public health, and climate change.

Anaktuvuk Pass—Anaktuvuk Pass is a NSB community south of NPR-A in the Brooks Range. Nearly thirty people attended the meeting and about a dozen spoke. The speakers expressed concerns about fire impacts (a large fire had burned near the village in 2007), and the impacts on subsistence of development not only in NPR-A but from the road being considered to Umiat and a potential road and coal mining south of the village.

Atqasuk—Atqasuk is in the heart of NPR-A on the Meade River. Approximately thirty adults and ten children attended the meeting. Residents expressed concerns with the negative impacts of overflights, the potential impacts of offshore drilling, their desire to get natural gas to Atqasuk from local sources or by pipeline from Wainwright, and the need for studies of the Meade River because of its extraordinary low water and the decline in the burbot catch.

Nuiqsut—Nuiqsut is closest to existing oil and gas infrastructure, including some on lands owned by the village ANCSA corporation. Approximately two dozen people attended the meeting and about half that number spoke. Speakers indicated that there was a growing consensus in favor of development with very strict protections. They focused comments on impacts to subsistence, including the detrimental effects of overflights, sagging pipelines causing impediments to animal movement, water withdrawals endangering fish survival, restrictions on access to existing oil fields east of NPR-A, and the need for strict enforcement of oil and gas setbacks from important subsistence habitats. Nuiqsut speakers also expressed support for development with use of roads (provided that they are not allowed to introduce hunting competition) because they reduce the impacts of overflights and because they can offer economic opportunities to the village and its residents.

Point Lay—Point Lay is to the west of NPR-A and was added to the initial list of scoping meetings at the village's request. Three dozen people attended the meeting and half of them spoke. Meeting attendees expressed a general consensus that they did not want to see industrial development in their region and they were particularly concerned regarding BLM's future management within the Kasegaluk Lagoon east of Icy Cape.

Wainwright—Wainwright is on the coast in the western NPR-A. The village has profited from Shell's work on its offshore oil and gas leases and is poised to derive economic benefits if Chukchi Sea oil and gas development occurs. Speakers expressed that they accepted oil and gas development in NPR-A with very strict mitigation to protect subsistence resources.

Fairbanks—Fairbanks is the second largest city in Alaska and the home of a major university campus and agencies and individuals active on the North Slope. Nearly forty people attended the meeting and a dozen spoke. All speakers advocated protection for NPR-A, including recommendations for designation of Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers, naming of new Special Areas, and strong protections of existing and new Special Areas. Speakers also emphasized the need for analysis of climate change and the adoption of adaptive management to address the unknowns associated with climate change.

Anchorage—Anchorage is the state's largest city and the home of many government agencies, industries interested in North Slope development, and environmental and industry organizations. A dozen people spoke at the meeting, which was attended by 33 members of the public. Most speakers supported oil, gas, and, in some cases, locatable mineral and coal development, emphasizing the economic benefits of development and that NPR-A was set aside to meet the nation's energy needs. Representatives of environmental groups urged protection of wildlife and wilderness values, clean up of legacy wells, and opposition to any recommendation for legislation that would allow hardrock or coal development.

c.) Written comments

The BLM received written scoping comments by mail (70), fax (5), e-mail (approx. 147,000), and through its ePlanning website's comment form (2). Some commenters provided identical written comments by several different means and some individuals sent multiple e-mails.

Most communications were the product of campaigns. There were internet-based e-mail commenting campaigns launched by numerous environmental organizations. Prominent among the e-mail campaigns were those by the Alaska Wilderness League, Audubon Alaska, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Endangered Species Coalition, Natural Resource Defense Council, Sierra Club, and the Wilderness Society. Pro-development groups, most prominently Alaska's Resource Development Council, promoted a mailing and e-mail campaign among supporters. (See Appendix B for text suggested by these organizations.)

In addition to the normally uniform messages received from these campaigns, prominent officials and organizations provided substantive, thoughtful, and frequently lengthy comments. These comments included those of:

State of Alaska—Governor Sean Parnell strongly endorsed leasing the entire NPR-A, writing that over 2 billion barrels of oil could be recovered from the area, the ability of current technology to do so with minimal environmental impacts, and the need for more oil to maintain the viability of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. The State, a cooperating agency, also

strongly supported a planning effort that leads to a recommendation for Congress to open NPR-A to hardrock and coal mining and opposed any Wilderness or Wild and Scenic River consideration. The State made recommendations for protection of surface resources. Its letter suggested creation of a Special Area to contain the calving area of the WAH; that mitigations to protect the herd be flexible and established with local community approval and cooperation; and that particular care be taken in investigating the potential for hardrock and coal mining or for development in the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area or any development in the calving, insect relief, of migratory corridors of the TLH. The State suggested that during planning BLM conduct workshops on subsistence, caribou, and waterbirds to discuss potential impacts and to recommend mitigation measures. The State also urged studies and monitoring. For example, it advocated monitoring of baseline air quality in NPR-A and development of a long-term monitoring regime for animal populations. It also offered assistance with evaluation of potential impacts to public health.

North Slope Borough—The NSB, a cooperating agency, supported oil and gas leasing and development in NPR-A provided that it is done in a manner that protects healthy wildlife populations and critical habitats, subsistence opportunities, and other ecosystem values. It opposed consideration of hardrock or coal mining in the plan and any designation of lands that would restrict residents' use of the area. It wrote that it does not want oil and gas leasing to occur on lands that prior plans made unavailable or deferred from leasing or weakening of protections of resources provided in the former plans. The Borough also opposed oil and gas development within primary calving (90% kernel analysis) or critical insect relief habitat (75% kernel analysis) for the WAH, the TLH, and the Central Arctic Herd. In addition, the NSB advocated creation of new Special Areas at Peard Bay and the Dease Inlet-Meade River area. (The NSB did not provide a map, so the geographic limit of these areas is not yet known.) It opposed allowing exceptions to permitting requirements because of technological infeasibility or economics and advocated that site-specific multi-year studies that BLM currently requires prior to development to help protect waterfowl and caribou be expanded to address fish populations dependent on ephemeral streams. It also urged that the plan describe a research strategy to acquire more ecosystem data to inform future management decisions, that the plan require post-development research and monitoring, and that, based upon the results of these studies, BLM have the ability to require significant alterations of operators' facilities and operations. The Borough advocated that the plan include a schedule for cleaning up hazardous material sites and legacy wells. It supported health impacts analysis in the plan, including the potential risks posed by hydraulic fracturing; a risk assessment for caribou populations similar to that conducted in the USGS's Griffith et al. in 2002; and prohibiting surface facilities around subsistence cabins and camps. The NSB urged BLM to conduct a cumulative effects analysis focusing not only on potential development and other activities within the NPR-A, but also considering impacting activities occurring outside of the Reserve.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—The EPA made suggestions on a broad range of environmental issues to be considered in the plan, offered assistance on air quality issues, and asked that the plan describe actions to manage recreational and accessibility opportunities.

Central Flyway Council—The Central Flyway Council represents ten states from Texas and New Mexico north to North Dakota and Montana, as well as Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories. The council's letter emphasized the importance of the area north and east of Teshekpuk Lake for waterfowl and urged that the BLM place high value on the preservation of this critical habitat.

Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group—The WACHWG represents communities and other non-governmental groups interested in the WAH. It recommended that BLM provide permanent protection for "all seasonal core habitats" of the WAH and TLH and prohibit resource extraction activities in primary calving, insect relief, and migration corridors in the planning area. The WACHWG opposed consideration of recommendations for Congress to open NPR-A to hardrock or coal mining. The group asked that BLM continue to work cooperatively with state and other Federal agencies in inventorying and monitoring the herds and habitats and that BLM conduct a risk assessment for caribou populations similar to that conducted in the USGS's Griffith et al. in 2002. The WACHWG also asked that, if any industrial activities are allowed in the sensitive caribou habitats mentioned above, the plan require monitoring with thresholds identified to trigger specific management actions.

Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope and others—The Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS) jointly with the Native villages of Point Hope and Point Lay, Resisting Environmental Destruction on Indigenous Lands (REDOIL), and the Alaska Wilderness League emphasized the need to address land management in the context of an environment undergoing climate change. They encouraged BLM to increase existing buffer areas and otherwise manage the lands to maintain corridors for animal and plant migrations responding to a changing climate. They opposed any consideration for recommendation of legislation to allow hardrock or coal mining but encouraged consideration of Wilderness and W&SR designation recommendations to Congress. They opposed leasing in the Special Areas and urge strong protections for Peard Bay, Dease Inlet-Meade River, Ikpikpuk River, DeLong Mountains, and the Arctic Foothills. (The organizations' letter did not include a map, so the geographic limit of these areas is not yet known.) They encouraged monitoring of water levels, invasive species, and weather and the use of traditional knowledge. Their letter included a resolution of the Native Village of Point Hope opposing oil and gas leasing and development, mining, and other industrial activities in the calving and migratory routes of the WAH.

Audubon Alaska and others—Audubon Alaska, jointly with the Alaska Wilderness League, Natural Resource Defense Council, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, and The Wilderness Society recommended a range of protective measures. They opposed any recommendation for lifting withdrawals on hardrock or coal mining and urge nominating W&SRs and Wilderness areas. They specifically mentioned the rivers of the DeLong Mountains and foothills areas as worth W&SR consideration and the lands of these mountains and foothills as potential wilderness. They noted that designation would not preclude subsistence activities. They promoted no leasing in: 1.) Teshekpuk Lake and the surrounding goose-molting habitat, 2.) the caribou calving, insect relief, and migration habitats of the WAH and the TLH, and 3.) a Kasegaluk Lagoon Special Area enlarged to the south to encompass additional high value habitat. They suggested creation of new Special Areas at Dease Inlet-Meade River, Peard Bay, Ikpikpuk River

and its delta, and the DeLong Mountains and Arctic Foothills. (The organizations' letter did not include a map, so the geographic limit of these areas is not yet known.) They urged that the ten-year deferral in the northwestern part of the NPR-A be extended another ten years. They advocated deferring leasing or at a minimum require no surface occupancy (NSO) in polar bear critical habitat, that coastal lands significant for walrus also have NSO protection, that there be a two-mile no development setback from the Colville River, and that seven Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network candidate sites be deferred for at least ten years while information on these sites and their value is obtained. They made numerous other recommendation to protect surface values, including requiring processing near production to avoid long multi-phase pipelines; requiring all produced water and muds and cuttings be injected; prohibiting permanent infrastructure for exploratory drilling and winter water withdrawals from rivers, streams, and fish-bearing lakes; requiring water sampling and air monitoring pre-exploration, pre-production, post-construction, and during production; and requiring performance standards for restoration with an established "enforcement plan" which may include surety or personal bond or other mechanism to plug wells, dismantle and remove infrastructure, and restore the land. Monitoring programs, they advocated, should include control areas. They urged BLM to plug wells no longer in service and to treat all development in the analysis as an irretrievable commitment of resources and not factor in restoration. The organizations urged consideration of a range of climate change scenarios, analysis of oil and gas production in the context of overall energy consumption and projected demand, and a range of resource analysis questions pertinent to plan development.

Center for Biological Diversity—The CBD recommended that hardrock and coal mining restrictions remain and that development not be allowed in the existing Special Areas, that the BLM impose strong protections on the other areas, including the Dease Inlet-Meade River area, Peard Bay and adjacent wetlands, the Ikpikpuk River and adjacent wetlands and the DeLong Mountains and Arctic Foothills. (The CBD's letter did not include a map, so the geographic limit of these areas is not yet known.) The CBD advocated that the plan consider making the entire NPR-A a wilderness area, or alternatively identify significant areas in which leasing would not be allowed. The CBD emphasized the need for BLM to analyze the impact of its decisions on climate change and climate change's impact on NPR-A and its resources, including impacts of coastal erosion, the loss of arctic ponds, and of soot (black carbon).

Ducks Unlimited—Ducks Unlimited asked that BLM protect important waterfowl and wetland habitats, particularly those north and east of Teshekpuk Lake, in the Ikpikpuk River delta, and the Kasegaluk Lagoon. They opposed leasing north and east of Teshekpuk Lake.

National Parks Conservation Association—The NPCA was most interested in protecting the Noatak National Preserve and the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and strongly urged that BLM declare hardrock and coal mining outside the scope of the plan.

The Nature Conservancy—TNC urged BLM to evaluate potential alternatives for their ability to maintain habitat connectivity for species, use climate change modeling in its planning analysis, examine on-site and off-site mitigation, and consider a phased approach to energy development based on ecological needs and impacts and reflecting explicit

development and production goals. TNC opposed lifting current restrictions on hardrock and coal mining in NPR-A, supported maximum protection as provided by law for the existing Special Areas, and advocated creation of additional Special Areas at Barrow/Dease Inlet, Peard Bay, Judy Lowlands, and Lisburne. (See Figure 1 at http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/alaska/files/aya_update_13.pdf for the location of these areas.) TNC informed BLM of ongoing TNC projects and recommended that BLM utilize them in the planning process.

Northern Alaska Environmental Center—The NAEC proposed a range of protective measures, primarily exclusions of oil and gas leasing. These measures included 1.) expanding the existing Special Areas and adding new ones for Peard Bay, Ikpikpuk River, Dease Inlet, and the DeLong Mountains and Arctic foothills (NAEC's letter included a map, identical to that submitted by TWS, of proposed expansions and new Special Areas.), 2.) prohibiting leasing, exploration, and development within all Special Areas, 3.) prohibiting leasing in lands currently unavailable or deferred from leasing, 4.) prohibiting leasing in lands not currently planned (i.e., lands not in the Northeast or Northwest NPR-A planning areas), and 5.) prohibiting leasing in the primary calving ground, critical insect-relief habitat, and migration routes for the WAH and the TLH. The NAEC opposed any recommendation for legislation to lift hardrock and coal mining withdrawals. The organization advocated consideration of wilderness designation, including lands identified for their outstanding wilderness resources in the 105c studies (See *105(c) Final Study* (April 1979), Vol. 1, Plate 7) and W&SRs reviews for at least the Colville and Utukok rivers and their upper tributaries. The NAEC supported non-discretionary stipulations, not required operating procedures that do not attach to leases. They advocated an accelerated clean up of contaminated sites and wells and a "comprehensive inventory program with a related monitoring and evaluation program." The organization asked that the plan include mapping of all seismic lines by year, that it include site-specific impact analysis of a series of potential development scenarios, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the current stipulations and required operating procedures, including any modifications or waivers, and the effectiveness of current monitoring and compliance.

The Wilderness Society—TWS advocated protection of wilderness characteristics in all alternatives and for BLM to explore varied means of providing enduring protection, including but not limited to recommendations for wilderness designation. Rather than starting from scratch in inventorying wilderness values, TWS suggested that BLM adopt the inventory completed in the 105c studies. In addition to identifying means of protecting wilderness values as a part of the plan, TWS advocated that the plan also require that any NEPA undertaken to address a proposal in NPR-A include consideration of means to protect wilderness character. TWS urged consideration of W&SR suitability for all rivers identified in the 105c studies as having outstandingly remarkable values and recommended that the plan provide enduring protection for existing, expanded, and new Special Areas. (TWS's letter included a map, identical to that submitted by NAEC, of proposed expansions and new Special Areas.) TWS recommended that no alternative consider oil and gas leasing in the Special Areas or in the WAH calving and insect relief areas or that any alternative consider lifting withdrawals on hardrock and coal mining in the NPR-A. TWS advocatee that the plan's purpose and need be modeled on that of the 1998 Northeast NPR-A plan. The organization recommended a number of measures to

protect raptor and grizzly bears, suggested the use of control areas as a part of an adaptive management and monitoring strategy to separate the impacts of climate change from those of industrial activities, and urged that BLM undertake a survey of the planning area to discover the existence of special status plants. TWS asked that the plan describe past water consumption rates from oil and gas activities, compile a list of violations of protective measures on the North Slope, map all past seismic lines by year, and evaluate the effectiveness of stipulations, including the frequency and reasons for modifications or waivers.

Wildlife Conservation Society—The WCS urged the BLM to apply no lease provisions and thus provide permanent protection of the Teshekpuk Lake, Colville River, and Utukok River Uplands Special Areas. They also asked that BLM evaluate the biological importance and the potential for establishment of new Special Areas near Peard Bay, Dease Inlet, and the portion of the Kasegaluk Lagoon within NPR-A. (WCS's letter did not include a map, so the geographic limit of these areas is not yet known. Note: The Kasegaluk Lagoon within NPR-A was placed in a Special Area as part of the Northwest NPR-A's Record of Decision in 2004.) Designation of any of these areas as Special Areas, WCS recommended, should provide permanent protection of the lands from development. The WCS also advocated the creation of an independent science advisory panel to evaluate the sufficiency of the Special Areas, develop protections in the Peard Bay and Dease Inlet regions, and develop a cumulative effects analysis.

Alaska Miners Association, Inc.—The AMA asked that the plan make all of NPR-A available to oil and gas leasing, recommended Congressional legislation to allow hardrock and coal mining in all of NPR-A, and supported the removal of all land withdrawals in NPR-A. (Note: While parts of the AMA's letter makes these recommendations, other parts suggest less sweeping measures, such as making "the highest prospective areas" available for oil and gas leasing and opening all lands to coal leasing that are "outside the very highest value 'special areas.'") The organization urged "an infrastructure development process that will readily accommodate future resource discoveries" and desired that the plan include roads "at various locations across NPR-A" so the public can visit the area. The AMA suggested that the plan consider reducing the size or entirely eliminating Special Areas, oppose any consideration of new restricted use areas, and commit to "geophysical and geological mapping of 100% [of] NPR-A." The organization urged that the plan evaluate each alternative in terms of its contribution to national security and its economic benefits to the state and nation. In alternatives in which resource development in prohibited to protect high priority subsistence and recreation values, AMA suggested that the plan explain why resource development would not be compatible with those other uses.

ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.—CPAI supported the adaptive management philosophy embodied in the current NPR-A plans' performance-based stipulations and required operating procedures. The flexibility of this approach, CPAI stated, "provides incentives for operators to improve their operational efficiency while maintaining the highest levels of environmental and social responsibility" and "is a critical component to the continued development of new technology and the successful exploration and development" of NPR-A.

Resource Development Council—The RDC urged BLM to allow oil and gas leasing, exploration, and development across NPR-A's most prospective lands near the coast and that the plan encourage access and expansion of important infrastructure into the reserve. The Council argued that doing so will reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, strengthen our economy and national security, and help maintain the viability of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Given the large mineral and coal values in NPR-A, the RDC urged that the plan include a recommendation for Congressional legislation to open NPR-A to hardrock and coal mining and provisions for transportation corridors to facilitate development.

Other organizations and individuals also contributed original ideas to the planning effort. Some of these included:

- Provide incentives to encourage development within NPR-A
- Prohibit tourists, photographers and researchers from disturbing wildlife
- Identify transportation corridors and port sites to facilitate access
- Involve all public and private stakeholders and decision-makers on the planning team to better address current roadblocks to development
- Expand the CRSA to include the right bank of the Colville River between Etivluk River and Umiat
- Charge higher user fees
- Coordinate recreation management with the National Park Service in southern NPR-A to have consistent management with adjacent parks and preserves
- Phase out all fossil fuel extraction from Alaska
- Make NPR-A a National Wildlife Refuge
- Recommend designation of the TLSA, URUSA, and CRSA as wilderness

IV. Summary of Future Steps in the Planning Process

The BLM, with the help of cooperating agencies, will be taking the following steps to complete the plan. For updates on the status of the plan, visit the project website at www.blm.gov/ak.

The BLM greatly appreciates the offer of the cooperating agencies to assist in this planning effort. Readers should understand that BLM, as the lead agency, is responsible for the plan. The cooperating agencies may not agree with some or all alternatives or with the environmental analysis in the Draft or Final IAP/EIS or in BLM's Record of Decision.

Describe the Affected Environment: BLM's team of resource specialists along with specialists in the cooperating agencies will describe the existing environment in the planning area. This work is underway.

Formulation of Alternatives: The BLM, working with the cooperating agencies, will develop alternatives. The range of alternatives will include a no action alternative that reflects current management of NPR-A. Alternative formulation will begin in late 2010.

Analysis of Effects: Once the alternatives are developed, the effects of each alternative on the human environment will be analyzed using the NEPA process. The BLM expects to begin this process in the first half of 2010.

Publish the Draft RMP/EIS and Public Comment: The BLM will publish a Draft IAP/EIS in early 2012 and a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* announcing the publication and identifying a comment period. Comments will be taken through public meetings, mail, fax, and through BLM's website, www.blm.gov/ak.

Issue the Proposed Final IAP/EIS: Following analysis of comments received on the Draft IAP/EIS, the BLM, working with the cooperating agencies, will reevaluate its alternatives and analysis and issue a Final IAP/EIS. The BLM anticipates that the Final IAP/EIS will be issued in late 2012 or early 2013.

Issue the Record of Decision (ROD): Following a 30-day waiting, the BLM will issue its decision.

Appendices

Appendix A: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

Appendix B: Comment campaign message texts

Appendix A

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

DATES: The workshop will be held on August 12, 2010, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The workshop will be held at the Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th Street, Denver, Colorado 80202. Register online at: *http://www.doi.gov/osdbu.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark Oliver, Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, 1951 Constitution Ave., NW., MS–320 SIB, Washington, DC 20240, telephone 1–877–375–9927 (Toll-Free).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the Small Business Act, as amended by Public Law 95–507, the Department has the responsibility to promote the use of small and small disadvantaged businesses for its acquisition of goods and services. The Department is proud of its accomplishments in meeting its business goals for small, small disadvantaged, 8(a), woman-owned, HUBZone, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses. In Fiscal Year 2009, the Department awarded 56 percent of its $2.6 billion in contracts to small businesses.

This fiscal year, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization is reaching out to our internal stakeholders and the Department's small business community by conducting several vendor outreach workshops. The Department's presenters will focus on contracting and subcontracting opportunities and how small businesses can better market services and products. Over 3,000 small businesses have been targeted for this event. If you are a small business interested in working with the Department, we urge you to register online at: *http://www.doi.gov/osdbu* and attend the workshop.

These outreach events are a new and exciting opportunity for the Department's bureaus and offices to improve their support for small business. Additional scheduled events are posted on the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Web site at *http://www.doi.gov/osdbu.*

Mark Oliver,

Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

[FR Doc. 2010–18425 Filed 7–27–10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210–RK–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLAK930000.L16100000.DF0000]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the National Petroleum Reserve—Alaska

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Alaska State Office, Anchorage, Alaska, intends to prepare an Integrated Activity Plan (IAP) with an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR–A) planning area. This notice announces the beginning of the scoping period to solicit public input and comments.

DATES: The public scoping period will begin upon publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. Formal scoping will end no sooner than 60 days from publication of this notice; a final end date will be announced through a press release and the BLM–Alaska Web site, *http://www.blm.gov/ak.* Comments on management decisions, resources to be addressed, and issues for analysis will help define the proposed actions and alternatives for the NPR–A IAP/EIS. You can submit comments in writing to the addresses listed below. The BLM will announce all public meetings, times, and locations through the local news media and on the agency Web site. The BLM will hold public scoping meetings in Anaktuvuk Pass, Anchorage, Atqasuk, Barrow, Fairbanks, Nuiqsut, and Wainwright. The BLM may hold additional public scoping meetings in other communities if there is strong community interest.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Web site: http://www.blm.gov/ak.*
- *Fax:* 907–271–5479.
- *Mail:* BLM Alaska State Office, Attention—NPR–A Planning Team, 222 West 7th Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513–7599.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Ducker, 907– 271–3130; e-mail: *jducker@blm.gov;* or by mail: Bureau of Land Management, 222 West 7th Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513–7599. You may also request to be added to the mailing list. Documents pertinent to this plan may be examined at the following Web site: *http://www.blm.gov/ak.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This document provides notice that the BLM intends to prepare an IAP with an associated EIS for the NPR–A planning area. The NPR–A IAP/EIS will consider management of BLM-administered lands within the NPR–A. The lands in the NPR–A total approximately 22.1 million acres of surface and subsurface lands, and an additional 200,000 subsurface-only acres underlying Native Corporation-owned surface lands.

The Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6501, *et seq.*), as amended, excludes the NPR–A from the application of Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701, *et seq.*), as amended, which is the basis for the BLM's Resource Management Plans. The BLM conducts its planning within NPR–A through IAPs. The BLM complies with all applicable laws in the preparation of an IAP, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine the management decisions and resources to be addressed and the issues for analysis. This information will influence the development of the proposed action and alternatives, and guide the environmental analysis.

You may submit written comments on management decisions and resources to be addressed and issues for analysis to the BLM at any of the public scoping meetings, or use any of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. The result of this planning effort will supersede the current plans for the Northwest (2004) NPR–A, Northeast (2008) NPR–A, and Colville River Special Area (2008). Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment-including your personal identifying information-may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. BLM personnel, through discussions within the BLM and with other agencies, individuals, and outside groups, have identified preliminary issues for analysis and the proposed scope of this plan. Most issues relate to management of oil and gas activities and the protection of resources and residents

of the region from those impacts in the NPR–A. Of special note are impacts to the resources and uses of the area near Teshekpuk Lake and to the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. The BLM has developed the following preliminary criteria for developing the proposed actions and alternatives:

- The plan will consider the lands and waters administered by the BLM within the NPR–A.
- All decisions in the plan will be consistent with the Naval Petroleum Reserve Production Act of 1976, including the requirements to manage the NPR–A consistent with the total energy needs for the Nation and to protect the environmental, fish and wildlife, and historical and scenic values of the NPR–A.
- The existing plans defer oil and gas leasing in approximately 1.57 million acres in northwestern NPR–A and 430,000 acres north and east of Teshekpuk Lake. The lands in northwestern NPR–A are deferred from leasing until 2014 and the lands near Teshekpuk Lake until 2018. The new plan will make management decisions for these areas that will become effective at the expiration of their respective deferral periods.
- Action alternatives will be consistent with requirements for protection of spectacled and Stellar's eiders described in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 2008 Biological Opinion for the northern NPR–A planning areas and any new Biological Opinion received as a part of this planning effort.
- The plan will address oil and gas leasing and will use scoping to identify other management decisions and resources to be addressed.
- The resource protection measures applied to oil and gas authorizations will be as consistent as possible in all areas covered by the plan, recognizing the differing values within the NPR–A.
- The BLM will consider subsistence resources and users and minimize adverse impacts to subsistence uses in accordance with Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).
- The plan will protect valid existing rights.
- The BLM will consider plans and policies of adjacent land owners/managers.

Julia Dougan,

Acting State Director.

[FR Doc. 2010–18469 Filed 7–27–10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–JA–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CACA 47740, LLCAD07000, L51030000.FX0000, LVRAB109AA01]

Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Imperial Valley Solar, LLC Project, California and the Proposed California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Imperial Valley Solar, LLC (IVS) Project and by this notice is announcing its availability.

DATES: The BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions described in the regulations may protest the BLM's Proposed RMP Amendment. A person who meets the conditions must file the protest within 30 days after the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its notice of availability in the **Federal Register.** The BLM will also be accepting additional public comments on the RMP/EIS within 30 days after the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availibility in the **Federal Register**. Comments can be sent to Jim Stobaugh at the addresses given below. All substantive comments will be reviewed and responded to in the Record of Decision.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS are available for public inspection at the El Centro Field Office, 1661 S. 4th Street, El Centro, California 92243. Interested persons may also review the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS on the following Web site: *http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/elcentro/nepa/stirling.html.* All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular mail	Overnight mail
BLM Director (210), Attention: Brenda Williams, P.O. Box 66538, Washington, DC 20035.	BLM Director (210), Attention: Brenda Williams, 1620 L Street, NW., Suite 1075, Washington, DC 20036.

All comments must be in writing and sent to Jim Stobaugh, BLM Project Manager, by mail at Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520; or by e-mail at *Jim_Stobaugh@blm.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Stobaugh, BLM Project Manager, by telephone at (775) 861–6478; through mail at Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520; or by e-mail at *Jim_Stobaugh@blm.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Stirling Energy Systems (SES) filed right-of-way (ROW) application CACA–47740 for the SES Solar Two Project. Afrter merging with Tessera Soar the applicant changed its name to Imperial Valley Solar, LLC. The project name, SES Solar Two, has also been changed to the Imperial Valley Solar, LLC project. The proposed IVS Project is a concentrated solar electrical generating facility capable of generating 709 megawatts (MW) of renewable power. The entire project encompasses approximately 6,144 acres of BLM-managed lands. The project site is in Imperial County, California, approximately 4 miles east of Ocotillo and 14 miles west of El Centro. Generally, the site is bounded on the north by the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System/San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway and on the south by Interstate Highway 8. The eastern boundary is approximately 1.5 miles west of Dunaway Road and the western boundary is the westerly section line in Section 22 in Township 16 South, Range 12 East. An additional 110-acre laydown construction area is proposed east of Dunaway Road.

IVS proposes to use SunCatcher technology on the site. A SunCatcher is a 25-kilowatt solar dish designed to automatically track the sun and collect and focus solar energy onto a power conversion unit (PCU), which generates electricity. The system consists of a 38-foot high by 40-foot wide solar concentrator in a dish structure that supports an array of curved glass mirror facets. These mirrors concentrate solar energy onto the solar receiver of the PCU.

The project also includes an electrical transmission line, water supply pipeline, and access road. A new 230-kilovolt (kV) substation would be constructed in approximately the center of the project site near a main services complex that is also part of the proposal. The substation would be connected to the existing San Diego Gas and Electric Imperial Valley Substation by a 10.3-mile long, double-circuit 230-kV transmission line. Approximately 7.6 miles of this new line would be outside

Appendix B
Alaska Wilderness League suggested text from website

(http://www.capwiz.com/alaskawild/issues/alert/?alertid=16403506)
captured September 2, 2010

I urge the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to give strong consideration to the many important resource values, including wildlife, wilderness, subsistence, and recreational values, in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve) as they develop the new management plan for the Reserve.

The wildlife resources in the Reserve include numerous migratory birds such as waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds, and some of the densest populations of nesting raptors in the world. In addition, people across the country see these migrating birds in their backyards, and hunters rely on the waterfowl that breed in the Reserve. Many mammals also call the Reserve home, including walrus, beluga whales, caribou, wolverines, brown bears, and the Arctic fox. Additionally, several species listed under the Endangered Species Act rely on the Reserve's habitats, including polar bears, Spectacled Eiders, Steller's Eiders, and bowhead whales.

The Reserve contains Special Areas, which Congress recognized and directed the BLM to provide with "maximum protection." These Special Areas include Teshekpuk Lake, Kasegaluk Lagoon, the Colville River, and the Utukok River Uplands. Additional areas of importance and deserving of protection are Dease Inlet, Peard Bay, Ikpikpuk River, and the DeLong Mountains and Foothills.

The Reserve already has 3 million acres of land leased for oil and gas development. There remains an opportunity to provide balance in the Reserve by protecting the above-listed key special areas that are so biologically important.

Accordingly, I urge BLM to identify the special areas within the Reserve that have exceptional biological, subsistence, and wilderness values. These areas should be designated as no oil and gas development areas with further recommendation to Congress to enact permanent protections for these special areas.

By keeping certain areas off limits to oil and gas development, and by recognizing biological, subsistence, and wilderness values, BLM can find the necessary balance in managing the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska to both address energy needs and conserve incredible ecological regions of America's Arctic.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Appendix B (cont.)
Audubon Alaska suggested text from September 3, 2010 e-mail

As the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) develops a new management plan for the entire National Petroleum Reserve--Alaska (Reserve), I urge that BLM give balanced consideration to all important resource values--this includes the Reserve's exceptional wildlife, subsistence, wilderness, and recreation values, in addition to oil and gas potential.

Congress has recognized that certain parts of the Reserve should be protected and conserved. Congress directed BLM to provide "maximum protection" for Special Areas in the Reserve including Teshekpuk Lake, Kasegaluk Lagoon, the Colville River, and the Utukok River Uplands.

To ensure the new Area-wide Plan is appropriately balanced, I ask that the BLM designate No Lease Areas to protect the exceptional biological values in the Reserve. Further, I ask that BLM recognize the importance of special areas by making recommendations to Congress to permanently protect key areas.

The National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska is the largest single tract of public land in the nation with 3 million acres of land presently leased for oil and gas development. The opportunity remains to provide for balance in the Reserve by protecting key special areas with extraordinary biological value.

The designation of No Lease Areas, together with recommendations that Congress permanently protect key parts of the Reserve, is essential to ensure a proper balance between oil and gas development to address energy needs and the conservation of extraordinary ecological areas in America's Arctic.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Appendix B (cont.)
Center for Biological Diversity suggested text from website

(http://action.biologicaldiversity.org/o/2167/t/5243/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=4777) captured September 27, 2010

The NPR-A, or Western Arctic Reserve, comprises the largest unprotected tract of public land in the United States. It provides habitat for a wide variety of Arctic species, and its wilderness values are second to none. As the BLM develops the new Area-wide Plan for the reserve, I urge you to provide "maximum protection" for areas with high value habitats. The new plan should consider important values in the reserve, including the area's unparalleled wildlife, subsistence, wilderness and recreation values. Furthermore, the BLM should consider protecting the entire western Arctic as a wilderness area.

Congress has required that "maximum protection" be given to "special areas" in the reserve. These areas include:

- Teshekpuk Lake, the third largest lake in Alaska, which lies at the heart of one of the single most productive and wetland complexes in the circumpolar Arctic. The area surrounding Teshekpuk Lake provides important habitats for waterbird nesting, molting and staging, as well as critical caribou calving and insect relief areas for the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd.

- The Colville River is the largest river draining the North Slope of Alaska and one of the most important raptor nesting areas in the world, accounting for approximately 100 pairs of peregrine falcons, as well as numerous pairs of gyrfalcons, rough-legged hawks and golden eagles.

- Kasegaluk Lagoon provides a unique barrier island ecosystem located along the northwestern coast of the reserve. Up to 3,500 beluga whales gather in the lagoon to feed and bear their young, and the area is also important for spotted seal as a haulout area. Kasegaluk Lagoon is an important feeding area for both polar bears and grizzly bears.

- The Utukok River Uplands in the southwestern part of the reserve contain the heart of the calving area of the 490,000-animal Western Arctic caribou herd, the largest caribou herd in Alaska. The Utukok Uplands Special Area also provides important habitat for wolves and supports an unusually high density of wolverines.

Other important areas within the Reserve also deserve strong protection under the new Area-wide Plan. These include: the Dease Inlet-Meade River area that provides important wetland habitat for waterfowl, loons and shorebirds; Peard Bay and adjacent wetlands that provide high-density shorebird and waterfowl habitat as well as denning for polar bears; and the Ikpikpuk River and adjacent wetlands, which have exceptional values for fish and wildlife and a high-density nesting area for peregrine falcons in the headwaters.

In addition to protecting these important "special areas," the BLM should consider protecting the entire Western Arctic Reserve as a wilderness area. As the BLM develops the new Area-wide

Plan, I urge that the BLM identify and analyze a full range of management alternatives that include the strongest possible protections for the Western Arctic Reserve.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Appendix B (cont.)
Defenders of Wildlife suggested text from website

(https://secure.defenders.org/site/Advocacy?pagename=homepage&page=UserAction&id=1891&autologin=true&s_src=3WDW10123TVXX&s_subsrc=092110_hp1)
captured September 27, 2010

As a supporter of Defenders of Wildlife and someone who cares about our wildlife and wild places, I urge you to provide maximum protection for all areas of exceptional habitat value as you develop the new Integrated Activity Plan for the for the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (Western Arctic Reserve).

The Western Arctic Reserve has exceptional value for many species of fish and wildlife, including millions of migratory birds, Alaska's largest caribou herd, brown bears, wolverines, and marine mammals such as walrus, beluga whales, spotted seals and endangered polar bears.

The BLM has recognized several "special areas" within the Western Arctic Reserve including Teshekpuk Lake, the Coleville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Utukok River Uplands. These areas are part of the large wetland complex of lakes, ponds, rivers and streams on the coastal plain which is globally recognized for its ecological importance. This region provides vital nesting and molting habitat for millions of Arctic birds, insect relief and calving habitat for caribou, haul-outs for marine mammals, and feeding grounds for polar and brown bears.

Other areas of exceptional value for wildlife also deserve strong protection under the new plan. These include: the Dease Inlet-Meade River; Peard Bay and adjacent wetlands; and the Ikpikpuk River and adjacent wetlands.

I urge the Bureau of Land Management to provide maximum protection for all areas of exceptional habitat value by putting these areas off limits to oil and gas leasing. The BLM must balance oil and gas development with conservation of wildlife, and preservation of subsistence, wilderness and recreation values in the new plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix B (cont.)
Earthjustice suggested text from website

(https://secure.earthjustice.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1033) captured September 27, 2010

As the Bureau of Land Management develops a new management plan for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, I urge the BLM to strongly consider all resource values this area holds, including wildlife, wilderness, subsistence and recreation, and in particular to consider ways to provide permanent protection for its most valuable lands.

The varied landscapes of the Reserve support unequaled populations of wildlife including caribou, polar and grizzly bears, wolves, fish, and migratory birds. The fragile wildlife habitat in the Reserve faces unparalleled threats from impacts caused by climate change and in the near future wildlife populations and the people who depend on them will be forced to survive in a markedly changed landscape.

Congress already recognized the biological importance of areas within the Reserve including Teshekpuk Lake, Kasegaluk Lagoon, the Colville River, and the Utukok River Uplands, by directing BLM to provide "maximum protection." These areas, and other key areas, such as Peard Bay, Dease Inlet, and the Ikpikpuk River should be set aside as No Lease Areas and their values and habitats protected in the BLM plan. In addition to special BLM management, BLM should consider options and make recommendations for permanent protection of these key areas by Congress.

The Bush administration opened vast tracts of these fragile lands to oil and gas development over the course of the previous eight years. The need to restore a balance between our country's energy needs and environmental protection is undeniable. In particular, given the changes caused by a rapidly warming Arctic climate, BLM must act in a precautionary way to ensure that lands and habitats needed in future years remain protected. In addition, in designing protection strategies, BLM must carefully consider cumulative impacts to the Reserve from potential development on its borders, onshore and in the Arctic Ocean, including effects from proposed pipelines and other access across Reserve lands.

As BLM proceeds with its new management plan for the Reserve, the multiple resource values of this area should be recognized, and vital wildlife habitat should be preserved. With this opportunity, BLM can achieve the essential balance between energy development and conservation.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Appendix B (cont.)
Endangered Species Coalition version 1 suggested text from website

(http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6014/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=4180) captured September 27, 2010 (Note: Site offered alternative language for numerous words and phrases that did not change the general meaning.)

I am convinced that the Bureau of Land Management must provide "maximum protection" for one of our continent's last, largely untouched tracts of wilderness and wildlife habitat located in the Western Arctic Reserve. The new plan should protect the area's superb wildlife, subsistence, wilderness and recreation values. In addition, the BLM should consider protecting the entire western Arctic as a wilderness area.

A large number of species which fall under the Endangered Species Act rely on the Reserve's habitats, such as polar bears, Spectacled Eiders, Steller's Eiders, and bowhead whales. The wildlife resources in the Reserve include numerous migratory birds, among them waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds, and some of the densest populations of nesting raptors in the world. In addition, citizens across the country are able to see these migrating birds in their back yards, and hunters rely on the waterfowl that breed in the Reserve. Many mammals also call the Reserve home, including wolverines, caribou, brown bears, and the Arctic fox.

The Reserve already has several million acres of land earmarked for oil and gas development. We have a rare and critical opportunity to keep balance in the Reserve by protecting the above-named key special areas that are so biologically important.

For these reasons, I urge the Bureau of Land Management to identify these special areas in the Reserve that have exceptional biological, subsistence, and wilderness values. These lands should be designated as no oil and gas development areas. You should then urge Congress to enact permanent protections for these special areas.

I appreciate your listening to my opinion.

Appendix B (cont.)
Endangered Species Coalition version 2 suggested text from website

(http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6014/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=4180) captured September 28, 2010 (Note: Site offered alternative language for numerous words and phrases that did not change the general meaning.)

I urge the Bureau of Land Management to provide maximum protection for special areas in the Western Arctic Reserve. This is, in fact, the largest unprotected tract of public land in our country. In fact, I believe the BLM should think about protecting the entire western Arctic as a wilderness area.

Here is one such "special area":

The Colville River is the largest river draining the North Slope of Alaska and one of the most important raptor nesting areas in the world, accounting for approximately 100 pairs of peregrine falcons, as well as numerous pairs of gyrfalcons, rough-legged hawks and golden eagles.

The National Petroleum Reserve Alaska already has 3 million acres designated for oil and gas development. There remains an opportunity to keep balance in the Reserve by protecting the above-named key special areas that are so biologically important.

I add my voice to those asking the Bureau of Land Management to respect these special areas in the Reserve. These areas should be designated as no oil and gas development areas. Congress should then enact permanent protections for these special areas.

Thank you for listening to my opinion.

Appendix B (cont.)
Endangered Species Coalition version 3 suggested text from website

(http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6014/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=4180) captured September 29, 2010 (Note: Site offered alternative language for numerous words and phrases that did not change the general meaning.)

The BLM should allow "maximum protection" for areas with high value habitats in the new integrated Activity Plan for the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (Western Arctic Reserve). The Reserve contains Special Areas, which Congress has already decided should enjoy "maximum protection." These Special Areas include Teshekpuk Lake, Peard Bay, and the DeLong Mountains and Foothills Special Areas.

A number of species which are included in the Endangered Species Act require the Reserve's habitats, such as bowhead whales and Steller's Eiders. The wildlife species in the Reserve include many migratory birds such as waterfowl and shorebirds. Many mammals, such as brown bears and beluga whales, also call the Reserve home.

By keeping some areas off-limits to oil and gas development, and by recognizing wilderness values, BLM can find the necessary balance in managing these 23.5 million acres. The Bureau of Land Management can in this way address our nation's need for energy while at the same time conserving fantastic ecological regions of America's Arctic.

Thus, I urge the Bureau of Land Management to identify these special areas. They should be designated as no oil and gas development areas with further recommendation to Congress to enact permanent protections for these special areas.

I appreciate your taking my opinion into consideration.

Appendix B (cont.)
Natural Resource Defense Council suggested text from September 20, 2010 e-mail

As you begin to prepare the Integrated Activity Plan for the entire 23.5-million-acre Western Arctic Reserve (formally known as the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska), I urge you to provide strong protection for the Reserve's rich ecological resources, especially from oil and gas development.

The Western Arctic Reserve is renowned for its abundant and diverse wildlife, subsistence areas for the Inupiat Native Alaskans, and vast wilderness and recreational resources. The Reserve's vast resources support many migratory birds including waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds and one of the densest populations of nesting raptors in the world. It is also home to marine mammals such as polar bears, walrus, beluga whales, bowhead whales, spotted seals and land mammals such as caribou, brown bears, wolverine and the Arctic fox. Some of these species -- such as the Polar bear, Spectacled Eider, Steller's Eider and bowhead whale -- are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

I strongly urge your agency to provide maximum protection for the Citizen and BLM Special Areas within the Western Arctic Reserve, including: the Colville River, Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Kasegaluk Lagoon, Dease Inlet, Peard Bay, Ikpikpuk River and the DeLong Mountains and Arctic Foothills Special Areas. BLM should study all these Special Areas in order to devise protectionist administrative measures for the plan, undertake a Wilderness Review of the Special Areas, and make recommendations to Congress for permanent protection as Wilderness and other kinds of conservation system units. There are appropriate lands between the Special Areas suitable for precautionary oil and gas development that will provide a better balance between conservation and development.

Appendix B (cont.)
Sierra Club suggested text from September 21, 2010 e-mail

I urge the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to give strong consideration to the many important resource values, including wildlife, wilderness, subsistence, and recreational values, in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve) as they develop the new management plan for the Reserve.

The wildlife resources in the Reserve include numerous migratory birds such as waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds, and some of the densest populations of nesting raptors in the world. In addition, people across the country see these migrating birds in their backyards, and hunters rely on the waterfowl that breed in the Reserve. Many mammals also call the Reserve home, including walrus, beluga whales, caribou, wolverines, brown bears, and the Arctic fox. Additionally, several species listed under the Endangered Species Act rely on the Reserve's habitats, including polar bears, Spectacled Eiders, Steller's Eiders, and bowhead whales.

The Reserve contains Special Areas, which Congress recognized and directed the BLM to provide with "maximum protection." These Special Areas include Teshekpuk Lake, Kasegaluk Lagoon, the Colville River, and the Utukok River Uplands. Additional areas of importance and deserving of protection are Dease Inlet, Peard Bay, Ikpikpuk River, and the DeLong Mountains and Foothills.

By keeping certain areas off limits to oil and gas development, and by recognizing biological, subsistence, and wilderness values, BLM can find the necessary balance in managing the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska to both address energy needs and conserve incredible ecological regions of America's Arctic.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Appendix B (cont.)
Wilderness Society suggested text from website

(https://secure.wilderness.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=2170) captured September 27, 2010

Please protect sensitive bird and wildlife habitat in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska, the "Western Arctic Reserve". Teshekpuk Lake has been recognized as a special area that should be protected from oil and gas development, but there are other special areas of the Reserve that are also essential habitat for the animals that thrive in the western arctic. We urge you to give these areas the highest protections so that fish and wildlife habitat is not despoiled or fragmented by development.

Given the dangerous history of oil drilling on Alaska's Arctic slope, we ask that you keep Teshekpuk Lake and all of the other BLM and citizen-nominated special areas permanently off-limits to oil drilling. Polar Bears, caribou and millions of songbirds, waterbirds, and waterfowl breed in the Reserve. Please make wildlife preservation a priority of your planning for the Western Arctic and the NPR-A.

Wilderness Society suggested text through Change.org from September 13, 2010 e-mail
(Note: symbols were part of the messages)

We, the undersigned, urge you to continue to protect sensitive bird and wildlife habitat in the National Petroleum Reserve â€“ Alaska, the â€œWestern Arctic Reserveâ€ .

Given the dangerous history of oil drilling on Alaskaâ€™s Arctic slope, we ask that you keep wildlife-rich and environmentally-sensitive areas such as Teshekpuk Lake and all of the other BLM and citizen Special Areas permanently off-limits to oil drilling. Polar Bears, caribou and millions of songbirds, waterbirds, and waterfowl breed in the Reserve. Many of these bird species make the long flight from Alaskaâ€™s Arctic to parks, refuges, and backyards throughout the nation every year. We want these ancient migrations to continue for generations to come.

The only safe drilling for these birds and other wildlife is no drilling at all â€“ please keep the sensitive habitats of the Reserve off-limits to oil and gas drilling.

Appendix B (cont.)
Pro-development flyer mailed to BLM-Alaska

9/15/10

NPR-A Alert – Your letter is needed!

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has begun a new ***Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS)*** for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The eastern portion of NPR-A has been the subject of several plans over the past 15 years. Those plans allowed limited of oil & gas development but did not address mineral development.

Your business and personal comment letters are needed to make the case for expanded oil & gas development and mineral entry for metals and leasing for coal! The **Comment Deadline is Mon, Sept 27.** Send to:

BLM Anchorage State Office FAX 907-271-5479
Attention – NPR-A Planning Team
222 W. 7th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99513 or NPRAscoping@blm.gov or online at http://www.blm.gov/ak

Talking points for you to consider:

1. Open all of NPR-A to oil & gas leasing. America needs the oil & gas and the past 30 years have proven that industry can responsively develop in the Arctic.
2. NPR-A is an opportunity for development of domestic oil & gas that is not subject to blackmail by rogue nations and it will provide jobs here in the USA.
3. Recommend to Congress that it open all NPR-A to mineral entry (staking mining claims) for development of metals.
4. Recommend to Congress that it open all NPR-A for leasing of coal and industrial minerals. America is considered the Saudi Arabia of coal, in large part due to the coal in NPR-A; now is the time to begin leasing that coal.
5. Do not recommend any further "Wilderness" designations.
6. Do not recommend any additional restricted use areas. Alaska already has more conservation system units than the entire rest of the country combined.
7. NPR-A should be managed as multiple-use so it can contribute to the US economy.
8. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA) placed 104 million acres, that area is the size of the State of California, in National Parks, Preserves, Refuges, Monuments, and Wilderness designations. No more restricted set-asides!
9. Include transportation corridors and development of port sites to facilitate access for offshore oil & gas development.
10. Include transportation corridors and development of port sites to facilitate coal and mineral resource development.