

**Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Interior Field Office (EIFO) Demientieff Land Donation**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**Acceptance of a Land Donation from Mr. Samuel S. Demientieff, within the White Mountains National Recreation Area**

For

U. S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Fairbanks District Office  
1150 University Ave.  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844

AKFF093987  
DOI-BLM-AK-F020-2015-0002-EA

Located in:  
Eastern Interior Field Office  
Within the  
White Mountains National Recreation Area  
Sections 30 and 31, Township 7N. Range 1W., Fairbanks Meridian

Prepared by:

U. S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Eastern Interior Field Office  
1150 University Ave.  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844

## **I. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action**

### Purpose and Need:

The BLM has received a request from Mr. Samuel S. Demientieff to accept a donation of 80 acres of land that he presently owns situated on the right bank of Beaver Creek. The area is locally known as the “Big Bend” and it is among the most recognizable and prominent landmarks along the National Wild River. Mr. Demientieff wishes the BLM to accept this land as a donation and has waived his right to compensation, appraisal, and exchange. Mr. Demientieff wishes only that the BLM accept the land and manage it.

As the intended recipient of the proposed donation, the BLM has an obligation to respond to Mr. Demientieff’s request. The parcel’s location (surrounded on all sides by the National Wild River Corridor and within the boundaries of the White Mountains National Recreation Area) makes it particularly desirable for acquisition. Failure to accept this donation will mean that the BLM will not be able to manage this land in any way. The parcel is located outside of any municipal boundary with planning and zoning authority. As such, if the parcel remains in private ownership, no process exists to provide governance, limitation, or input of any kind to restrict activities that may conflict with the management objectives of the White Mountains National Recreation Area and the Beaver Creek National Wild River.

BLM Decision to be Made: The BLM will decide whether or not to accept fee title to the land being offered by Mr. Demientieff, more specifically described as: US Survey No 9251, within the Fairbanks Recording District, Fourth Judicial District, State of Alaska, United States of America.

## **II. Potential Issues:**

Internal Scoping: Internal scoping was conducted in the normal manner for Environmental Assessments in the Eastern Interior Field Office. A Valued Environmental Components (VEC) matrix was compiled and contributed to by BLM specialists representing the comprehensive range of disciplines necessary to evaluate the proposed action (see Attachment C). The specialists, who are identified in section VII of this document, reviewed the project for potential impacts to the following environmental components: air quality, areas of critical environmental concern, cultural resources, environmental justice, essential fish habitat, farm lands, fire management, floodplains, hydrology, invasive species, mineral resources, Native American religious concerns, paleontological, land status, recreation, socioeconomic concerns, soil, subsistence, threatened/ endangered species, travel management, vegetation, visual resources, hazardous waste, water quality, wetlands/ riparian zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, wilderness characteristics, aquatic wildlife and terrestrial wildlife. The result of internal scoping was unanimous support for the proposed action across all disciplines. No negative effects associated with the proposed action were identified. Positive effects associated with the proposed action, when compared to the no action alternative, were anticipated in the following program areas: essential fish habitat, invasive species, recreation, subsistence, vegetation, visual resources, water quality, wetlands/ riparian zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, wilderness characteristics, aquatic wildlife and terrestrial wildlife.

External Scoping: The proposed action is within the boundaries of the White Mountains National Recreation Area and surrounded by the Beaver Creek National Wild River corridor. All of the land adjacent to the parcel and in its vicinity is BLM-managed. The addition of this 80-acre parcel within the surrounding approximately 1 million-acre National Recreation Area is unlikely to cause any public concern or controversy and therefore, no external scoping is planned.

### **III. Location, Land Status and Conformance with Land Use Plans:**

Location: The proposed donation is described as U.S. Survey No. 9251, within Sections 30 and 31 of Township 7 North, Range 1 West, Fairbanks Meridian, Alaska, containing 79.99 acres more or less, within the boundaries of the White Mountains National Recreation Area.

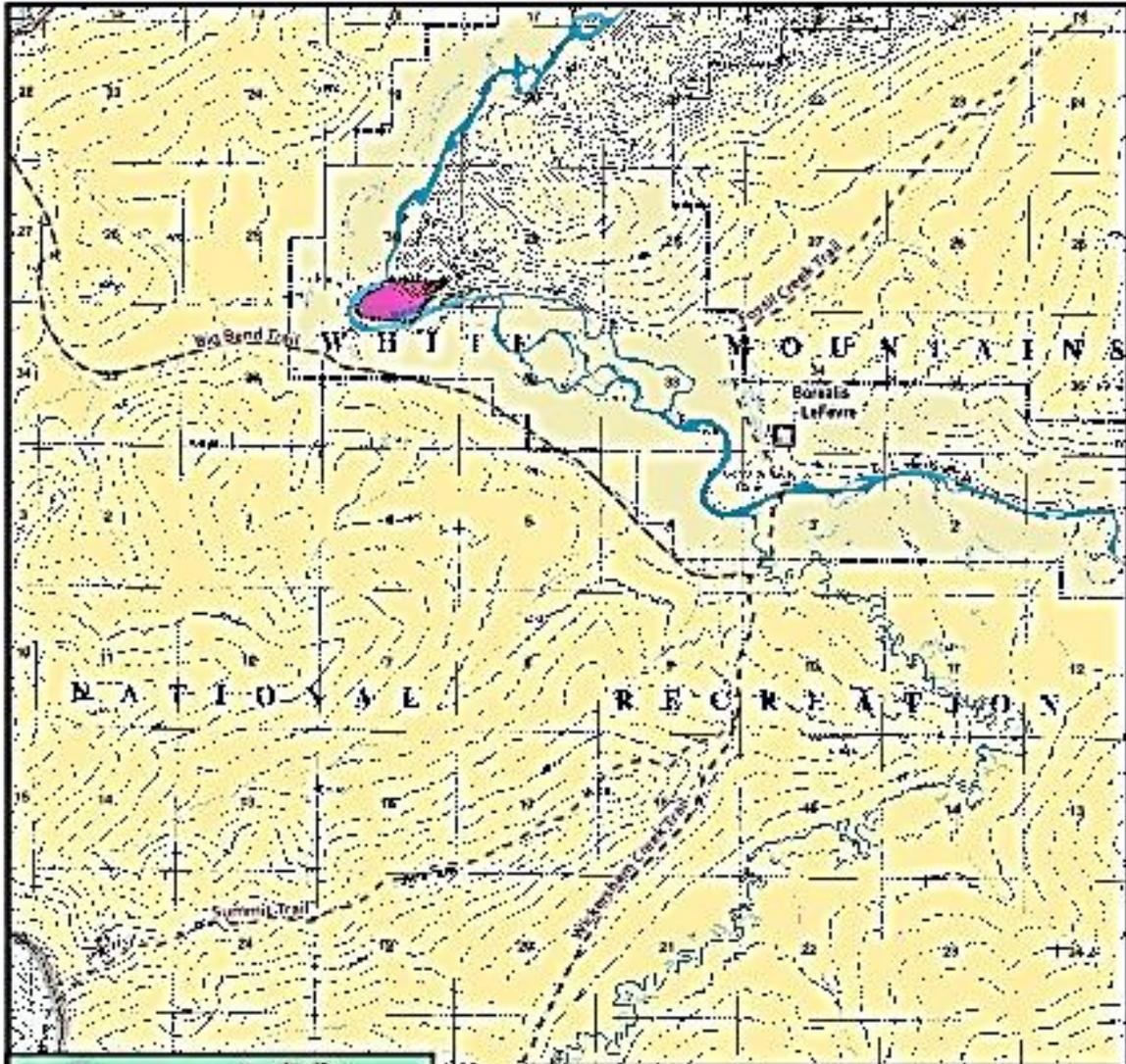
Land Status: Title to USS 9251 was vested to Samuel Demientieff from the United States and is otherwise unencumbered. The surrounding land is BLM-managed and within the Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The parcel is also situated within the boundaries of the White Mountains National Recreation Area.

Conformance with Land Use Plans: The Proposed Action is in compliance with the White Mountains National Recreation Area Resource Management Plan and the Beaver Creek River Management Plan. Authority to accept this donation is derived from Section 307 (c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 as amended (FLPMA).

### **IV. Proposed Action and Alternatives:**

#### Proposed Action Alternative:

The proposed action is to accept the donation of USS 9251 from Mr. Demientieff. After acquisition, the BLM will manage the donated land in a manner that is consistent with the management objectives of the White Mountains National Recreation Area and the Beaver Creek National Wild River. Due to its location along the river, the BLM may seek to have USS 9251 included in the Beaver Creek National Wild River corridor.




-  Proposed Land Donation
-  White Mountains National Recreation Area - BLM Managed Lands
-  State of Alaska
-  Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River Corridor

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

Land Status as of January 2014 14 NOV 2014

No Action Alternative:

The no action alternative will result in the BLM not accepting the donation of USS 9251. The BLM would not be able to manage the land. USS 9251 is not located within the boundaries of a municipality with planning or zoning authority. As such, no public process exists to govern or restrict activities that are inconsistent, or in conflict with the management objectives for the Beaver Creek National Wild River and the White Mountains National Recreation Area.

**V. Affected Environment:**

The surrounding land is BLM-managed and within the Beaver Creek National Wild River corridor. The parcel is also situated within the White Mountains National Recreation Area. No improvements have been made on the land.

**VI. Impacts – Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative:**

Internal scoping was conducted to identify impacts associated with the proposed action that would require further analysis; none were identified. Once this parcel is under BLM management, a public process will exist to govern activities on the parcel to ensure they are consistent with the management objectives for Beaver Creek National Wild River and White Mountains National Recreation Area. Positive effects associated with the proposed action, when compared to the no action alternative, were anticipated in the following program areas: essential fish habitat, invasive species, recreation, subsistence, vegetation, visual resources, water quality, wetlands/ riparian zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, wilderness characteristics, aquatic wildlife and terrestrial wildlife. These effects are described more fully in Appendix C of this document.

**VII. Consultation and Coordination:**

BLM Personnel Consulted

Jim Herriges	Wildlife Biologist	Invasive, Nonnative Species, Vegetation, Threatened/Endangered Species, Subsistence, Wildlife/Terrestrial, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern;
Jason Post	Fisheries Biologist	Essential Fish Habitat, Wildlife/Aquatic;
Robin Mills	Archeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns;
Tom Beaucage	Realty Specialist	Land status, Environmental Justice, Farm Lands;
Ben Kennedy	Hydrologist	Air Quality, Floodplains, Water Quality, Wetlands/Riparian, Soils;
Collin Cogley	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Fire Management;
Rebecca Hile	Physical Scientist	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid;
Victoria Kohn	Geologist	Mineral Resources;

