

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement



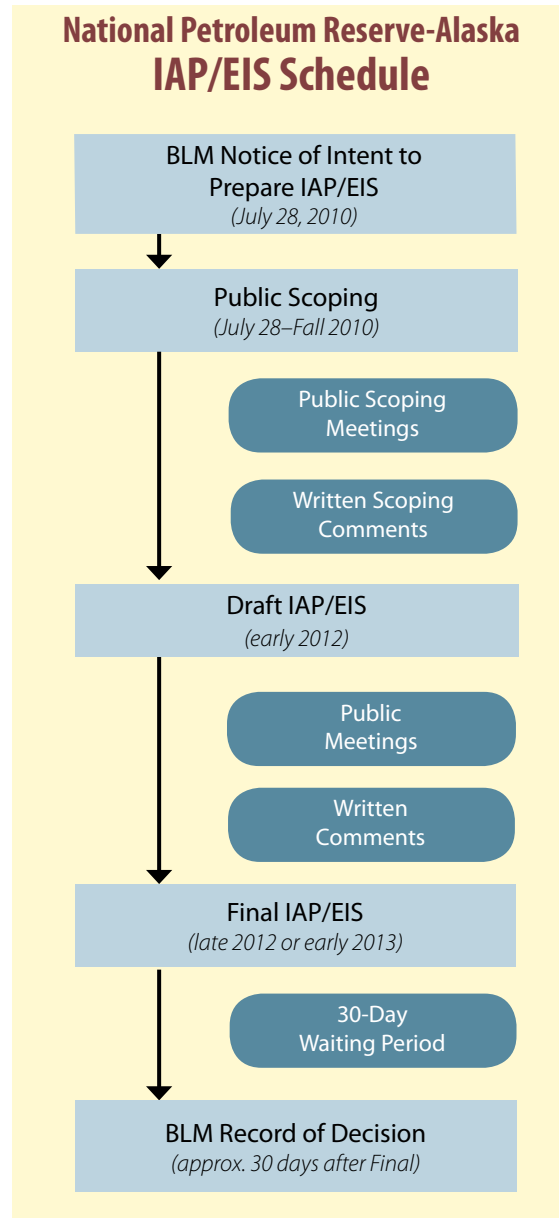
BLM Starts New NPR-A Plan

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is beginning a new planning effort for the more than 22 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A), located north of the Brooks Range in the Arctic. This will replace existing plans with a single plan that covers all lands within the reserve.

The new plan will incorporate the most current information and describe management goals, objectives, and actions that will be consistent across the entire NPR-A. The plan will also take into account emerging issues such as climate change and the listing of polar bears as a threatened species. This planning effort will help us identify management actions that are needed to mitigate impacts to resources from oil and gas leasing and other activities that may occur in NPR-A in the future.

The BLM is beginning its planning process by seeking input from the public, tribal governments, and other government agencies. To help us develop a range of alternatives, we're asking you to share issues that concern you and to offer ideas about how the land should be managed. We welcome comments during this scoping period, which will last at least 60 days.

As you submit comments, think about what is important to include in BLM's analysis of the impacts of activities in the NPR-A. Be as specific as you can — describe your concern, the resource and where it is located, and why you feel it is important. You can comment on the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan /Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) by:



1 Attending one of the scoping meetings in: Anaktuvuk Pass, Anchorage, Atkasuk, Barrow, Fairbanks, Nuiqsut, or Wainwright. For schedules and locations, watch our website.

2 Commenting through our website: <http://www.blm.gov/ak>



Questions & Answers

What is an Integrated Activity Plan?

An Integrated Activity Plan (IAP) is a type of land use plan developed to guide the BLM in appropriate management of the NPR-A. The Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976, as amended, encourages oil and gas leasing in NPR-A, and requires protection of important surface resources and uses.

What is Scoping?

“Scoping” is a process where the BLM asks for input from the public and interested parties on the range of alternatives and the nature and extent of issues and impacts to be addressed in the IAP/EIS. The formal

scoping period began when the *Federal Register* published the Notice of Intent on July 28, 2010, and scoping will continue for at least 60 days. We will announce the end date for the scoping period on our BLM website. During this scoping period, the BLM is holding public meetings in (or near) the planning area, as well as in Fairbanks and Anchorage. The BLM is also initiating consultation with tribal governments.

Scoping is not your only opportunity to provide input. The BLM will accept public comments at any time during the planning process, and will hold additional public meetings when the draft IAP/EIS is completed. Nonetheless, scoping is a great opportunity to provide early suggestions on issues you feel the plan should address.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Description of the Planning Area ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska traces its roots back to 1923, when President Warren Harding created the Naval Petroleum Reserve Number 4 (PET 4). This reserve was one of several national reserves

established to ensure sufficient petroleum for the Navy and other military operations in times of war. In 1976, Congress gave the NPR-A its current name and transferred its management to the BLM. In 1980,

Congress mandated a program of oil and gas leasing within the NPR-A, opening the reserve to future development.

The northern portion of the NPR-A is dotted with lakes, rivers, and bogs of the Arctic Coastal Plain. To the south, rolling, tundra-covered foothills give way to the higher alpine peaks of the Brooks Range. Much of the southern NPR-A is drained by the Colville River, which flows north into the Arctic Ocean. Several Inupiaq villages are located in and adjacent to the NPR-A. Residents of these and other northern Alaska communities use NPR-A's subsistence resources for their traditional way of life.

At 22.1 million acres (nearly the size of Indiana) the NPR-A is the largest single block of federally managed land in the United States.



What issues will the IAP/EIS include?

The list of issues is not yet fully developed, and additional issues may result through the scoping process. However, the following three issues will certainly figure prominently in the IAP/EIS.

Oil and Gas Leasing. Which areas will be available for oil and gas leasing, and when? What kind of mitigation measures will be required to protect the area's important surface resources and ensure opportunities for subsistence uses?

Special Areas. Several areas in the NPR-A have already been designated for special protection of caribou, waterfowl, raptors, and other resources. These special areas include lands near Teshekpuk Lake, Colville River, and Kasegaluk Lagoon, as well as the Utukok River uplands. Are these areas adequate or are modifications needed? Are the protections that we have for these areas appropriate?

Caribou. The southern NPR-A includes important calving and summer range for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. The Teshekpuk Caribou Herd normally calves in the northeastern part of NPR-A and migrates the rest of the year through other parts of the NPR-A. How can oil and gas exploration/development and other activities be managed to have the least possible impact on these caribou herds?



The Western Arctic Caribou Herd calves in the foothills of the Brooks Range in southern NPR-A.

Some other topics the IAP/EIS will include are:

- Long-term impacts from climate change
- Protection of threatened and endangered species
- Impacts to NPR-A's subsistence resources from possible off-shore oil and gas development in the Beaufort or Chukchi seas (for example, pipelines or other on-shore facilities supporting an off-shore field)
- Protection of important waterfowl and raptor habitats



A stream meanders through northeastern NPR-A.

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BLM-Alaska State Office
ATTENTION: NPR-A Planning Team
222 W. 7th Ave. #13
Anchorage, AK 99513



Learn more about the NPR-A Plan at one of our Scoping Meetings

This fall, the BLM will hold scoping meetings for the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement in these communities:

- **Anaktuvuk Pass**
- **Anchorage**
- **Atkasuk**
- **Barrow**
- **Fairbanks**
- **Nuiqsut**
- **Wainwright**

We will announce the meeting dates, times, and locations through the local media or call (907) 271-5960 for more information. The meeting schedule will also be available on our website.

Visit us:
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>



Like other NPR-A exploratory wells, the Pioneer 1 well was drilled in winter from a temporary ice pad to protect underlying tundra.