

Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan Upper Black River Area

Historic Place for Alaska Native Culture, Subsistence

The Upper Black River area, located within the Eastern Interior, is of significant importance to the local people who have lived there for thousands of years. The Black River is an important area for subsistence and water resources, but is also celebrated as a historic place for Alaska Native culture. It is an important traditional area for the Gwich'in people and a critical subsistence resource to villages in Interior Alaska. A new management plan will soon determine what is and is not allowable activity in the area. BLM released the Draft Resource

Resource Management Plan Considerations

Mineral Withdrawals	Water Quality
Climate Change	Air Quality
Subsistence	Wildlife
Wildfire	Right-of-Ways
Co-management	Mineral entry

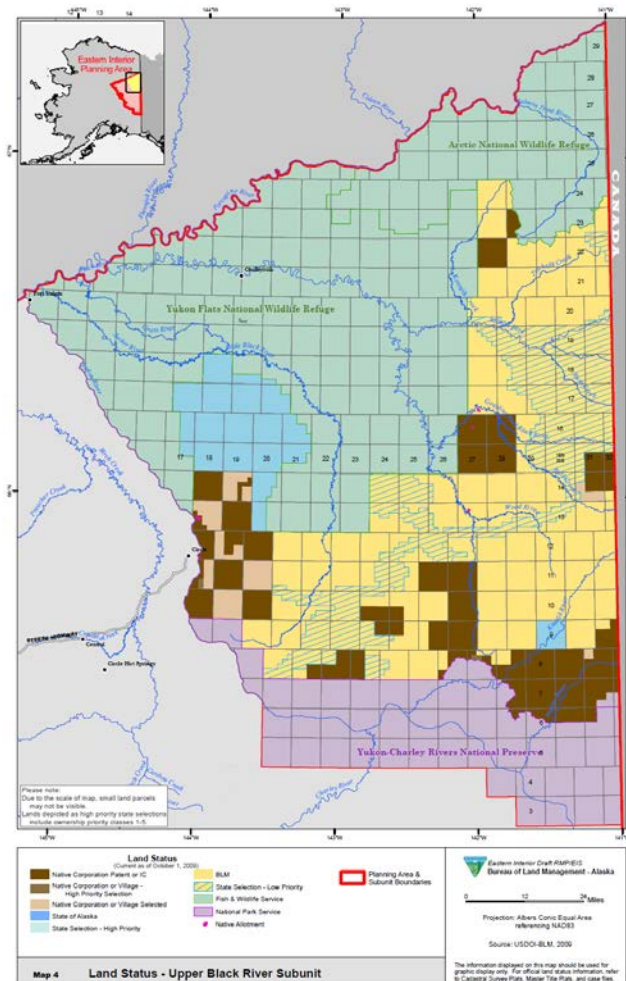
Management Plan for public comment

February 24, 2012, providing a 150 day comment period.

The Upper Black River area is a cultural, subsistence and historical area for the villages of Fort Yukon and Chalkyitsik. Through the public planning process, we have the opportunity to tell BLM the importance and significance of the area and to implement protective management decisions to preserve and protect the health of the area for future generations.

Management Recommendations

- Climate change needs to be incorporated into the discussion in each section of the plan for each subunit, not just in a standalone section within the plan. This is the most significant



The Upper Black River subunit encompasses 7.8 million acres with approximately 2.4 million acres currently managed by the BLM.

factor affecting changes to the landscape, water, habitat and wildfire over the next thirty years.

- The Salmon Fork Area of Critical Concern (ACEC) needs to include the original recommendation from Chalkyitsik and Alaska Wilderness League to protect the headwaters and tributaries of the Black River. An ACEC as an area “within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.”
- The Black River should be managed as a municipal water supply for the Village of Chalkyitsik. The area on or near the river should be withdrawn from mineral entry and water quality should be maintained at or above drinking water standards.
- Due to lack of existing information about the area, BLM must utilize Traditional Ecological Knowledge and consult closely with tribal authorities to determine the uses and protections necessary for the Upper Black River.
- The entire Upper Black River subunit should be managed to protect the wilderness characteristics.
- Fire management needs to be reevaluated: there have been noticeable decreases in moose habitat due to the ‘let it burn policy,’ existing management does not adequately address air quality issues for village residents, and climate change impacts that are likely to increase the occurrence of fire need to be evaluated.
- The management focus for the area should be on traditional and current uses – incompatible development should be prohibited.



Public Comment Period is Open Now!

The Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement was released February 24, 2012. The comment period is 150 days from the release of the draft.

Comment Period Update!

The BLM is drafting a supplement to the White Mountains section of the plan to include an analysis of a mineral leasing program. Once the draft supplemental is released the comment period deadline will be extended another 90 days for the entire plan.

You can submit comments online, at public hearings or mail them into the BLM field office. You can read the [Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan](#) online. Just click on [Eastern Interior Draft Resource Management Plan](#).

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Alaska Wilderness League

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