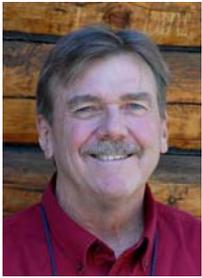


# Anchorage District Office

Gary Reimer, District Manager

BLM

## Glennallen Field Office news



This summer **Will Runnoe** was promoted to Glennallen Field Manager after serving the last four years as the Glennallen Visitor Services and Recreation Branch Chief. Runnoe will oversee several step-down plans for GFO-administered lands and looks forward to the opportunity to manage GFO lands after conveyances are finalized.

Before coming to Alaska, Runnoe served 21 years with Oklahoma State Parks, 5 years with Idaho Parks and Recreation, and 3 years with the Salmon-Challis National Forest. He's an avid fisherman, hunter, and hiker.

Scoping began July 15 for the **Delta National Wild and Scenic River** Plan Revision. The comment period will end Sept. 15. The Delta River Management Plan will contain three parts: (1) a revision of the 1983 Delta National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, (2) a Delta River Special Recreation Management Area Plan, and (3) an associated amendment to the East Alaska Resource Management Plan. The amendment is necessary because changes have been proposed to some of the recreation management decisions in the East Alaska plan. **Right: A trip down the Delta begins at Tangle Lakes.**



The Gulkana River Management Plan update identified the need for a **river information portal** at the Paxson boat launch site to address issues raised during planning. This month construction will begin on a river portal cabin, which will serve as a contact point to disseminate information to river users. BLM employees and volunteers will demonstrate "Leave No Trace" principles and educate river users about resource impacts within the river corridor.

As visitation increases, if a permit system is imposed per the revised Gulkana River Management Plan, the building will serve as a contact and control point for issuing and verifying river permits. The river portal will also provide a location for campsite registration, maps, brochures, interpretive panels, and other information to help achieve the goals and objectives of the revised river management plan.

GFO hosted an **interagency cooperative training and trail building** effort in June to construct a non-motorized trail near Tangle Lakes Campground. The trail creates a loop that begins at the campground and connects with a State of Alaska foot trail. Twenty-five participants received classroom and hands-on training. Several miles of trail required grueling vegetative mat removal and replanting. Emphasis was placed on understanding topography and layout of trails to complement landform and hydrologic features. The location of the trail will help mitigate impacts to archaeological resources within the Tangle Lakes Archeological District by encouraging hikers to stay within a defined route.



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GFO is issuing **federal subsistence permits** for the 2008/2009 hunting season for moose and caribou in Game Management Unit 13 and 13b. Qualified applicants provide evidence of residency within the hunting units, which is verified by photo ID and current Alaska resident hunting license. GFO staff traveled to Delta Junction in mid July to issue permits. They processed 1,168 permits for moose and caribou during the three days. The number of Delta Junction permits issued over the last few years continues to increase. Subsistence permits will be available

at GFO and the Fairbanks District Office from now until March 31, 2009. BLM anticipates issuing approximately 3,500 permits this season.

In July BLM issued a **Notice of Proposed Easements** under Section 17(b) of ANCSA for upcoming conveyances in the Ahtna region. Much of the land to be conveyed to the regional corporation and villages is located along major highways, creating high demand for access across the conveyances to public lands. BLM will hold a series of open house events around the state in September to acquaint the public with the easement process and provide them with an opportunity to ask questions and review maps. Final easement recommendations will be determined by the end of the year, which will enable BLM to proceed with conveyance in 2009.

This summer GFO removed a total of 30 **unauthorized structures** at remote locations via helicopter-supported landings. The structures included tent platforms, tent sites, cabins, and an old Nodwell tracked vehicle. Some structures slated for removal will require additional logistical analysis due to the terrain and their remote location. Property left on BLM lands without a permit is posted for one year and then removed by BLM. BLM evaluates each case independently and attempts to locate and work with responsible parties to resolve unauthorized use in a cooperative manner.



A **National Public Lands Day** event was held July 26 at Sourdough Creek Campground. The event focused on rehabilitating the campground trail that runs along Sourdough Creek. This year's event also emphasized youth participation and encouraged kids to "Take It Outside" and volunteer on public lands. Activities included Leave-No-Trace camping taught by the Wrangell Institute for Science and the Environment, a boat launch etiquette skit, and a free volunteer barbecue.

## Anchorage Field Office news

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**Jim Fincher** will soon be the new Field Manager at AFO. He is currently District Ranger for the Chugach Forest Glacier Ranger District in Girdwood. Jim brings 9 years of line officer experience both in Alaska and Oregon. He has also served as a soils scientist, ecologist, and a regional resource inventory manager. He holds a master's degree in soil science from the University of New Hampshire and a BS in forest resource management from the University of Montana. Jim will assume his new position Aug. 17.



**Photo right: BLM Director Jim Caswell and State Director Tom Lonnie talk with RAC members June McAtee and Amalie Couvillion during the Director's Alaska visit in July.**

AFO hopes to release the **Bay Record of Decision** and Approved RMP by Sept. 30 pending resolution of protests. BLM received four valid protests to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

AFO also plans to initiate the **Ring of Fire** plan amendment and supplemental EIS this fiscal year. AFO is preparing a *Federal Register* Notice of Intent for this effort and plans to hold public scoping meetings in Haines, Skagway and Anchorage this fall. The Ring of Fire Record of Decision, released in March 2008, states that BLM will reconsider the importance criteria for potential Area of Critical of Environmental Concern (ACEC) designation of the Haines block. BLM will also develop a Special Recreation Management Plan for the Haines block.

The Director has resolved protests to the **Kobuk-Seward Peninsula** Proposed RMP. BLM anticipates releasing the Record of Decision and Approved Plan in August. Approximately 3.5 million acres of the Kobuk-Seward Peninsula planning area lie within the boundary of AFO.

Work continues on a **programmatic EA for reindeer grazing** on the Seward and Baldwin peninsulas in western Alaska. A series of public meetings concluded in June. Project lead Laurie Thorpe is preparing the EA and will analyze information gathered during public meetings. AFO expects to complete the analysis in 2009. Herders are operating under a one-year permit at this time. When completed, the programmatic EA will be renewable annually for five years. **Photo right: Laurie met with reindeer herders in Wales in June 2008.**



This spring and summer, AFO Law Enforcement Ranger/Pilot Jeff Duhrsen continued **aviation patrols of BLM-administered lands**, primarily in the Knik drainage, the Bristol Bay region, along the Iditarod Trail, western Interior and the Seward Peninsula. Duhrsen uses a fixed wing aircraft from the DOI Aviation Management Directorate to monitor unauthorized activities on BLM lands around the state, often working with BLM Rangers in Fairbanks and Glennallen and, when appropriate, in cooperation with Alaska State Troopers.

Aviation patrols help BLM monitor lands and resources previously not patrolled due to their remoteness. Most patrols focus on BLM-administered lands where problems were identified during land use planning, and in western Alaska where maintaining a BLM presence is challenging due to distance and funding. **Left: Duhrsen with Cessna 206 at Rohn airstrip on the Iditarod National Historic Trail.**

AFO is expanding the Iditarod National Historic Trail web site to include additional **INHT Centennial** information for our web visitors. At the suggestion of RAC members June McAtee and Keith Tryck, AFO is including a “Profiles from the Past” section to offer interesting short bios and historic photos of lesser known explorers and early users of the trail system.

BLM will use Centennial funding to award a contract this month for an invasive weeds inventory at four BLM-managed sites along the Iditarod Trail. The effort is part of a nationwide effort to survey for noxious and invasive plant species on public lands.

**Right: Japanese musher Jujiro Wada and unidentified man at Dawson City in February 1903. Read Wada’s profile and view other historic photos at [www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sa/iditarod](http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sa/iditarod).**





AFO helped host the **Invasive Weeds Awareness Fair** June 17 in Anchorage. The event was a “ribbon cutting” to announce the recently formed Anchorage Cooperative Weed Management Area group (AFO is a charter member) and to raise awareness of invasive species and how citizens can get involved. Governor Sarah Palin signed HB330 Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plants into law during the fair and presented a proclamation supporting Invasive Weeds Awareness Week, June 23-28. The BLM Campbell Creek Science Center hosted educational activities for “weeds warriors” of all ages at the fair. AFO also organized a weed pull at Rohn Shelter Cabin on the Iditarod Trail in observance of Weeds Week. **Photo left: Young Piper Palin tackles a weeds trivia question from Campbell Creek Science Center educator coordinator Luise Woelflein during the weeds fair.**

Wildlife encounters in the Anchorage bowl this summer have generated heightened awareness of **bears in the urban environment** among residents and visitors to the Campbell Tract and adjacent Municipal Far North Bicentennial Park. AFO completed an annual review of our safety practices at Campbell Tract and the Campbell Creek Science Center. Each summer we also continue to strengthen the terms and conditions of the permit with the operator of Trailside Discovery Camp at the Science Center.

AFO is developing an additional information kiosk on Little Campbell Creek to further enhance visitor safety. We’re also open to working with the Municipality of Anchorage and Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game to develop a broader strategy for addressing the safety issues associated with bears in an urban setting.



AFO hosted the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive **National Trails Day** celebration at Campbell Tract on June 7. Some 75 volunteers who came out to help with outdoor projects were then treated to a “front row seat” (safe viewing area) to watch as BLM Alaska Fire Service smokejumpers completed annual training jumps at Campbell Tract Airstrip.

The AK Division of Forestry used the Campbell Tract Airstrip in early July to mobilize BLM smokejumpers to fight an Anchorage wildfire burning just two miles from the Campbell Tract. Smokejumpers assisted the Anchorage Fire Dept. in containing the 10-acre blaze by early evening. **Left: Smokejumpers prepare to depart from Campbell Tract Airstrip the morning of July 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

