



# Anchorage District Office RAC Report

April 2012

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## Glennallen Field Office News



**GFO Welcomes New Wildlife Biologist, Sarah Bullock.** Sarah came from southeast Alaska where she worked as a biological scientist for the Tongass National Forest. Sarah has a B.S. in Wildlife and Conservation Biology and an M.S. in Wildlife Management. Much of her focus has been working with ungulates and bears. Sarah is excited about opportunities at the Glennallen Field Office to study resource issues and explore cooperative management opportunities.

### **Response to Governor’s Consistency Review of Delta River**

**RMP:** On March 28, BLM issued a response to the Governor’s Consistency Review on the Delta River Special Recreation Management Plan. The Governor’s review identified potential inconsistencies of the RMP amendment with Federal statutes and regulations, but the review did not raise any inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies or programs. The BLM will change some wording in the final document to better clarify the BLM’s intent. The Governor has 30 days to appeal the BLM’s response to the Consistency Review.



**Tonsina Bluff Timber Sale:** GFO is issuing an 87-acre timber sale to Regal Enterprises for the harvest of approximately 391 million board feet of sawlogs and 147 cords of firewood. The sale contract will be in effect for a period of 36 months, with harvest activities occurring during winter months when adequate snow cover and subzero temperatures will reduce ground disturbance and accommodate mechanized equipment. Local public demand for commercial firewood and wood

products continues. Regal Enterprises is the only established local mill operator and is dependent upon forest resources to ensure continued mill operations and a supply of forest products and firewood for surrounding communities.

**Project Healing Waters:** GFO will team up again with the veterans’ group, Project Healing Waters, and Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment to offer a 3-day aquatic camp to wounded veterans and their families June 24-27 out of Tangle Lakes Campground. Project Healing Waters helps disabled active duty personnel and veterans overcome the obstacles associated with military service-related disabilities. Relearning the fine motor skills



required in fly fishing and fly tying has proven to be particularly effective in the overall rehabilitation of the disabled. The focus of this camp is to provide aquatic education and teach fly fishing to the wounded veterans and their families through a quality, family-oriented recreational and educational stewardship opportunity.

**GFO and Partners Host Youth Science Events and Activities:** Nearly 20 outdoor science events are planned between April and September to give kids hands-on exploration and career building outdoor science experiences. Programs include:



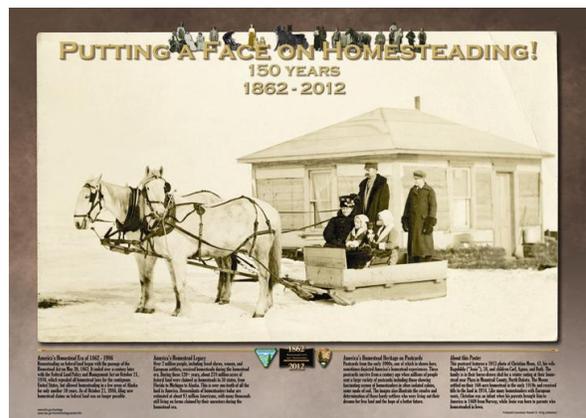
- Kid’s Ice Fishing Clinic (April)
- Earth Discovery Day and the Youth Environmental Summit (May)
- Copper River Stewardship Project, a 10-day exploration of a watershed for high-school students (June)
- Numerous youth outdoor skill hikes and camps throughout summer
- Aquatic Ecology Camp (July)
- Changing Seasons, a discovery of how animals, plants, and people prepare for the change in season for 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> graders (September)

High school and college students are employed and mentored as youth leaders to assist in scientific hands-on activities and demonstrations, where they become experts in the materials they present and learn to become outdoor leaders.

Partners include Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Copper River Watershed Project, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and several other organizations, agencies and villages.

**National Public Lands Day and Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Homestead Act:**

Come celebrate National Public Lands Day and the 150th Anniversary of the Homestead Act with the BLM Glennallen Field Office and the Slana community on July 28, 2012, in Slana, Alaska! The BLM, the Slana community, and several other partners will put our hands to public lands and clean up debris left over from homesteading activities where the last federal homesteading took place. A slideshow of homesteading in Alaska will be presented by BLM archaeologist, Robert King. Posters and pamphlets commemorating the Homesteading Act will be available. There will also be fun homesteading games for all ages!



**Bering Glacier Research Camp:** GFO will not operate the Bering Glacier Research Camp this year. Potential partners have all been contacted and were not able to secure adequate funding to participate.

## Anchorage Field Office News

**TERRA Northwest EA Released:** On March 20, 2012, the Anchorage Field Office released an environmental assessment for the TERRA Northwest project. The EA analyzes right-of-way applications for microwave repeater sites and a buried fiber optic cable on BLM-administered lands in northwest Alaska. AFO anticipates issuing a decision in April following a 30-day public review period. If approved, construction would occur in 2012 and 2013. The project will connect with the TERRA Southwest route to extend broadband Internet service from Grayling to Nome. **Above: Otter Creek repeater site on BLM-administered lands between Grayling and St. Michael**



**Red Top Mine Cleanup Complete:** AFO received a “cleanup complete” letter from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation on March 13, 2012, for the Red Top mill site. Red Top is a former mercury retort site on the Wood River near Aleknagik. AFO will publish a cleanup complete notice in the Dillingham newspaper and notify tribal, city and Native corporation officials. Cleanup of the abandoned Red Top Mine site spanned two decades. The site now meets the State’s cleanup criteria and is available for conveyance to Aleknagik Natives, Ltd (surface) and Bristol Bay Native Corporation (subsurface estate).



**Iditarod Ceremonial Start:** On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, an estimated 4,000 mushing fans watched the Iditarod Sled Dog Race Ceremonial Start at the BLM Campbell Tract Facility. Some 1,500 of these visitors also dropped in at the Campbell Creek Science Center to meet Centennial Musher Dan Seavey and enjoy educational activities for families and

children at the center. The BLM Campbell Tract is Checkpoint 1 of the Iditarod Sled Dog Race and an increasingly popular venue for mushing enthusiasts to watch the first leg of the race.

**BLM to host NPR-A April Science Series:** The BLM will present a series of talks during April about the 22.8-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. The series takes place Thursdays at 7 p.m. at the BLM Campbell Creek Science Center (Anchorage). The talks will cover an overview of NPR-A, the history and prehistory of the area, efforts to find and develop the area’s oil resources, and the unique bird life of the NPR-A, including species that merit special conservation concern.

**Land Use Planning:** AFO is working with the State Office to finalize the Ring of Fire Draft Amendment and Supplemental EIS for lands in the Haines planning block. The draft is scheduled for Washington Office review this spring.

AFO will begin scoping activities for the Bering Sea/Western Interior planning area in fiscal year 2013. This plan will address management of approximately 10 million acres of BLM-administered lands in western Alaska.



**Campbell Creek Science Center Expands Title I Programming:** The BLM Campbell Creek Science Center teamed up with the Anchorage School District in February and March to host after school programs for 660 economically disadvantaged students. Thirteen Anchorage area schools are designated 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers through the U.S. Department of Education. These schools work with public and nonprofit agencies and organizations to offer expanded learning opportunities for Title I students and families outside of regular school hours. The students learned snowshoeing and teambuilding skills in the outdoor environment of the Campbell Creek Science Center over a two-week period.

**Corporate Donations to Science Center:** The Friends of the Campbell Creek Science Center recently received grants totaling \$35,000 from three different corporations. Anglo American US (Pebble) LLC donated \$15,000 for scholarships, bus transportation, and coats and boots for economically disadvantaged students attending programs at the Science Center. BP donated \$15,000 for three purposes: \$5,000 to be used for Super Saturdays programming for Title 1 schools, \$5,000 to be used as matching funds for the Friends group’s endowment, and \$5,000 for special educational and trails events at the Science Center. ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc. donated \$5,000 to support energy education programming.

**Alaska Job Corps Lends a Hand at Campbell Tract:** Students from the Alaska Job Corps electrical, carpentry and facilities programs are gaining work-based job training helping the BLM demo and remodel office space at the Campbell Tract Facility. The students started April 2<sup>nd</sup> and will help the BLM



Facilities Branch for 4-6 weeks. AFO has partnered with the Alaska Job Corps Center in Palmer since 2009 to offer students hands-on work experience in heavy equipment operation, carpentry, electrical work, facilities and trails maintenance, and administrative skills.

