

# **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT RECORD EASTERN INTERIOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Meeting Location:** Campbell Tract Facility, Anchorage, Alaska

**Meeting Date:** April 10, 2008

**Purpose:** Identify public issues and concerns with BLM managed lands in the Eastern Interior Planning Area.

**Number of public in attendance:** 11

**BLM personnel in attendance:** Lenore Heppler (Manager), Jeanie Cole (Planning), Darla Pindell (Socio-econ), and Rob Brumbaugh (Minerals).

## **Meeting format:**

**3-6 pm:** Open house with maps and other information on display. BLM staff discussed maps with the public and answered questions. The public had the opportunity to review maps of land status, PLO locations (mineral entry), Recreation opportunity spectrum, and OHV designation in the Steese and White Mountain subunits, and wildlife habitat and game management units.

**6-8 pm:** Attendees were introduced to why we are doing a new RMP, what an RMP does, and given examples of decisions that might come out of an RMP through a power point presentation. BLM staff answered questions. Participants were asked to express their concerns and issues with BLM-managed public lands.

**Handouts:** An Interested Party letter explaining the types of decisions made in the RMP and giving an overview of the initial steps in planning was available. In addition, a small map of the planning area, copies of the existing RMPs for the Steese, White Mountains and Fortymile, and brochures on the OHV management in the Steese and White Mountains were available. A scoping comment sheet that could either be filled out at the meeting or returned to BLM at a later date was also available.

## **Issues/Questions/Concerns:**

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers:**

- If BLM is going to consider adding new WSR, they should also consider undoing existing designations.
- What are the criteria for deciding if a river is eligible for designation?

### **Trails and OHV:**

- BLM needs to complete a full trails inventory, including 17b easements.
- Would BLM terminate 17b easements?

- It is hard to make specific comments on trails because no one knows all the trails. Maximize sustainable access for everyone's use rather than limiting use to appease a small group of people.
- Encourage cooperation among various trail user groups through signing, education, and common courtesy.
- Every trail that currently allows for motorized use should remain available for motorized use in the new RMP.
- BLM should provide or allow new motorized routes as well.

### **Withdrawals and Mining:**

- How large of withdrawals from mineral entry would BLM consider?
- Are there current mining claims? If withdrawals are put in place, can owners sell their existing claims (i.e.: would the new owner also be grandfathered in)?
- Will BLM address the below mean high water conflicts with mining on the Fortymile WSR? How does navigability fit with this situation?

### **Planning Process:**

- Is BLM doing the RMP in house, or contracting it?
- Has the Fairbanks North Star Borough joined as a cooperating agency?
- Was there a recent revision to the White Mountains RMP?

### **How to Comment:**

- Provide a framework on the BLM website with BLM guidelines for how to make useful comments. Describe how to comment. Define substantive comments.
- How does the public make proactive comments regarding allowing more access and opening up areas?

### **Consistency with other Plans:**

- To the extent possible, BLM should ensure that planning objectives are consistent with the State's Acceptable Uses.

### **Range of Alternatives:**

- Consider a maximum sustainable access alternative in the RMP/EIS. The main objective should be to open access for all users, even if motorized use parallels non-motorized trails.

### **Utility Corridors:**

- Full consideration should be given to designating a corridor along the Alaska Highway that would allow for future energy transmission needs to be met. It should allow for electric transmission lines, oil and gas pipelines and the lands and resources that might be needed to support these such as mineral materials (sand and gravel) and construction staging areas.
- If the timing of the RMP decision is determined to be incompatible with expeditious authorization of a gas pipeline project, consideration should be given to delaying the RMP.