



Summary of the Draft Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan and the Public Use Management Plan *Togiak National Wildlife Refuge*

Planning for the Togiak Refuge

We are revising the Comprehensive Conservation Plan and the Public Use Management Plan which guide the management of Togiak Refuge. The Comprehensive Plan was approved in 1985 (1988 for Hagemeister Island) and needs to be updated to reflect changes in laws and policies. The Public Use Plan was approved in 1991 and needs revision to make some decisions which were postponed and to consider other management options.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources has also drafted a revision of their 1991 Special Land Use Designation for State lands within the Togiak Refuge and lower Goodnews River. The original Special Land Use Designation was published in the Public Use Management Plan.

All three of these documents are available for public review and comment until January 18, 2008. 



Samson Mann/USFWS

Mountains with numerous interspersed lakes are one of the features of Togiak Refuge.



USFWS

The Pacific Walrus is one of 48 mammal species occurring on Togiak Refuge.

What will you find in this summary?

Within this summary you will find a brief overview of:

- The resources of the Refuge
- The Comprehensive Plan including:
 - Refuge vision statement;
 - Refuge goals and objectives;
 - Differences between the existing plan and the proposed new plan;
- The Public Use Plan including:
 - Description of the issues;
 - Management alternatives;
 - Potential impacts of the alternatives;
- The Alaska Department of Natural Resources Special Land Use Designation. 

The refuge

Togiak Refuge covers 4.7 million acres, including the 2.3 million acre Togiak Wilderness which Congress designated to preserve the pristine character of the land and the wildlife that depend on it.

The Togiak Refuge includes coastal areas in Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Bay. Mountainous upland areas define watersheds for several major river systems. The diversity and abundance of the fish and wildlife resources within Togiak Refuge make this area unique and a valuable part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

There are more than 1,500 miles of streams and rivers and many deep, clear lakes providing abundant fish habitat within the refuge. Five species of Pacific salmon return from the ocean to the streams where they hatched within Togiak Refuge. Chinook arrive first, starting in April or May. Coho close the season with a last run in October. More than a million salmon spawn here each year. Dolly Varden also move between saltwater and the freshwater streams within the refuge where they spawn and spend the winter.

Many other kinds of fish spend their entire lives within the refuge, including rainbow trout, arctic char, arctic grayling, northern pike, lake trout, Alaska blackfish, sticklebacks and several kinds of whitefish.

Birds flock to Togiak Refuge from four continents to nest and raise their young or feed and rest while migrating. Some birds, such as the willow ptarmigan, bald eagle, northern hawk owl and common raven, stay all year.

Nearly half of Alaska's 105 land and marine mammals are found on the refuge because of the diversity of habitats from mountain ridges to ocean waters. These include caribou, brown bears, wolf, wolverine, lynx, arctic fox, Steller sea lion, harbor seals, and Pacific walrus.



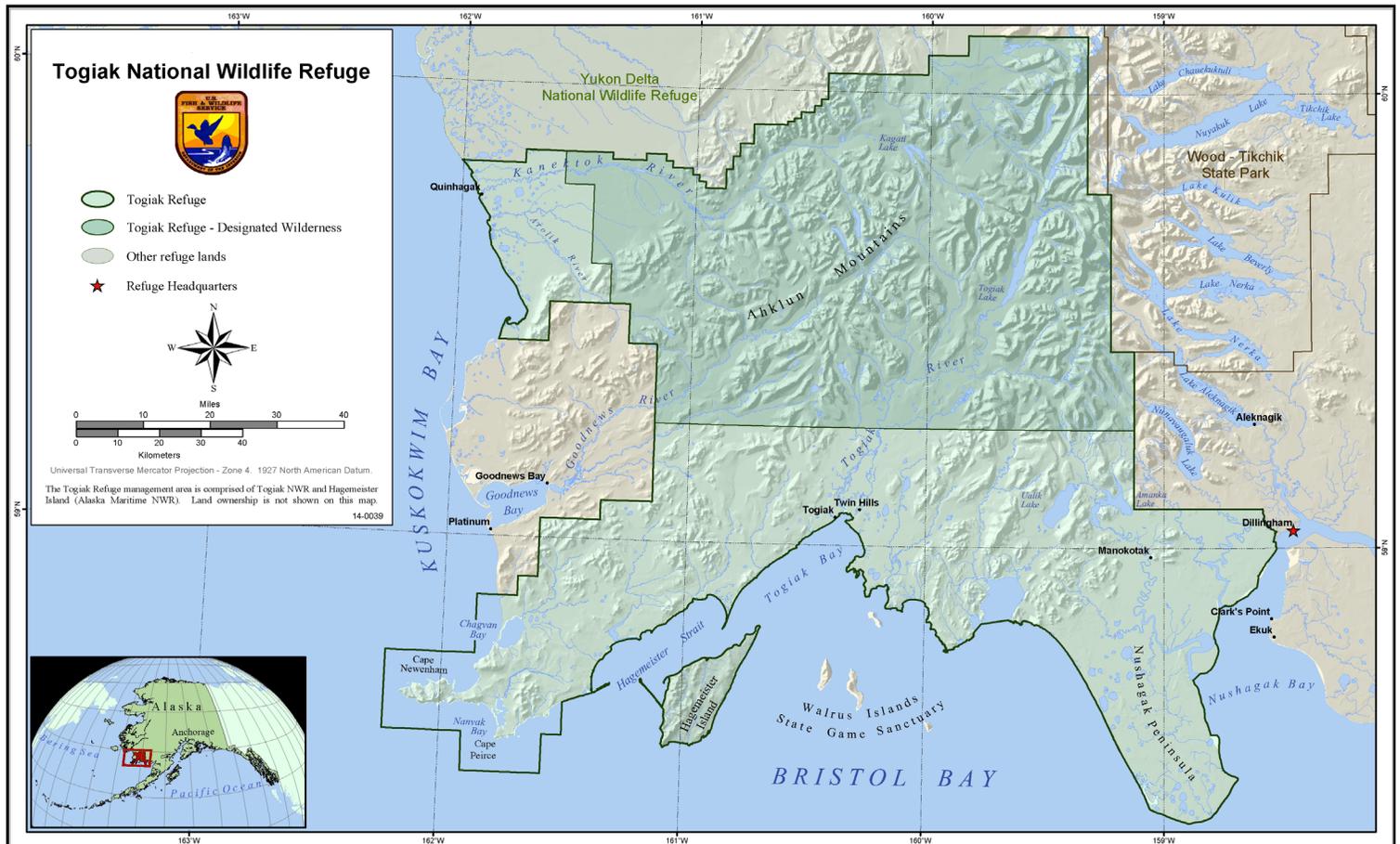
Mark Lisac/USFWS

Togiak Refuge contains prime habitat for several fish species. Rainbow trout are year-round residents of the refuge.



Rob McDonald/USFWS

Sightings of these Northern Hawk Owl chicks near Dillingham helped confirm for the first time that this bird species breeds in this area.

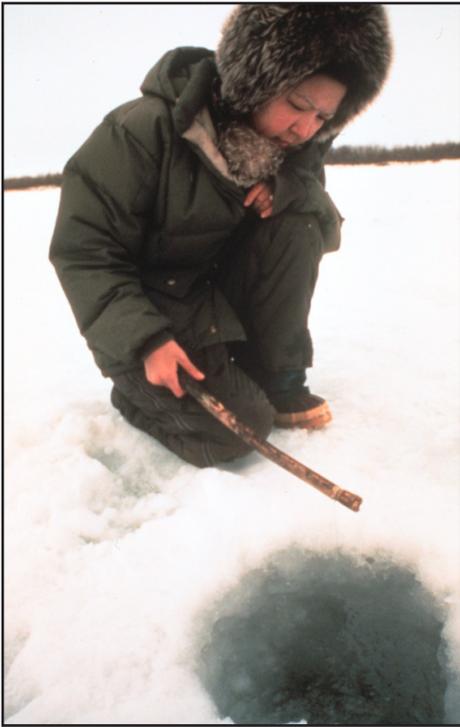


Subsistence use

More than 4,000 people from 9 communities live within and near the refuge. While local residents enjoy benefits of a cash economy as a result of the commercial fishing industry, most local people also rely economically and culturally on fish and wildlife through subsistence activities. One of the purposes of the refuge is to continue to provide subsistence opportunities for local residents.

Residents fish and hunt mainly along the rivers near communities and on traditionally used coastal sites. In the summer, many families move to camps at commercial salmon set net sites. In the fall, families go upriver to lakes to fish, and to hunt river otter, caribou, moose, and brown bear.

Fish are the mainstay of the subsistence lifestyle. Five Pacific salmon species, whitefish, char, smelt, pike, rainbow trout, herring and other fish are harvested. 



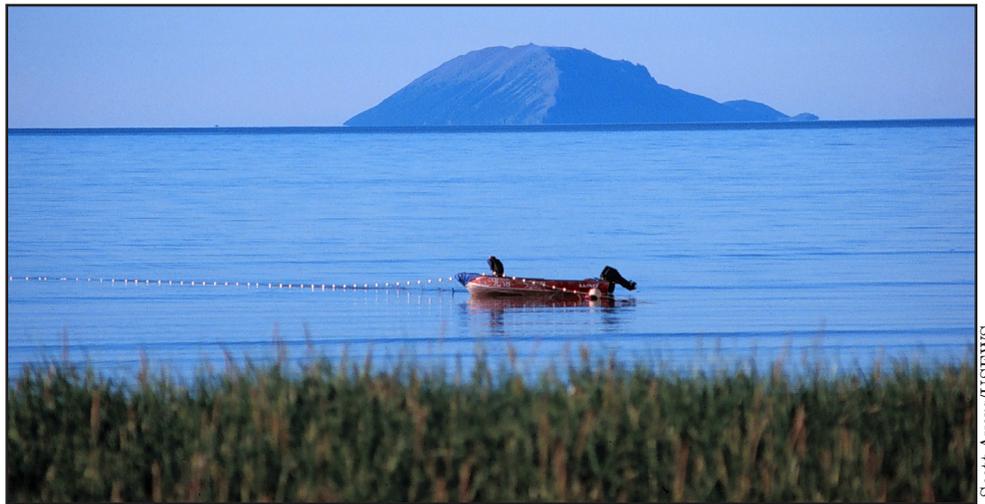
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Fish are mainly caught using nets during the ice-free season. Other methods are ice fishing, rod and reel, and spears.

A long history

Archaeological evidence suggests that areas within Togiak Refuge have been continuously occupied for at least 2,000 years.

Today, the local Native peoples, collectively known as Yup'ik Eskimos, continue the traditions of their ancestors by maintaining their cultural beliefs and following a subsistence hunting and gathering way of life. 



Scott Ayers/USFWS

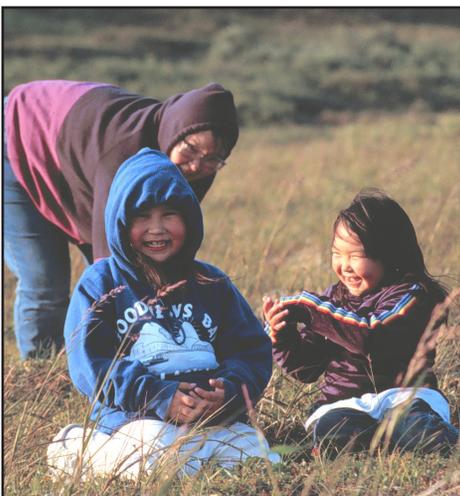
Subsistence gillnetting at Togiak Bay.



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Caribou hunting in winter.

Togiak Refuge is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.



Goodlick/USFWS

Berry picking at Goodnews Bay.

Recreation

Togiak Refuge provides many opportunities for wildlife dependent recreational activities including hunting and fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and education and interpretation. It is fishing in a wilderness setting, however, that attracts the vast majority of visitors.

The rivers within Togiak Refuge attract anglers from around the world. The Kanektok, Goodnews, and Togiak River systems are the most popular fishing areas on the Refuge. The headwaters and upper stretches of these rivers are located within the remote Togiak Wilderness—which, for many visitors is an attraction equal to the opportunity to catch fish. Commercial recreational support services, including guiding, outfitting, and air taxis are well established on the Refuge. Most recreational visitors rely on guides or air taxis for access.

Another popular activity is wildlife observation at Cape Peirce. Demand for this opportunity began to increase in 2001, but since about 2005, visitation has dropped as a result of smaller numbers of walrus at the site, and a reduction of commercial eco-tourism operations in the area. 🐟



Rafting is a common way for visitors to enjoy the refuge.



Sport fishing occurs at different times of the year, but mainly during the summer when adult salmon are returning to spawn.



Togiak Refuge provides outstanding opportunities for wildlife viewing.

Refuge purposes

- (i) To conserve fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity;
- (ii) To fulfill the international treaty obligations of the United States with respect to fish and wildlife and their habitats;
- (iii) To provide the opportunity for continued subsistence uses by local residents;
- (iv) To ensure water quality and necessary water quantity within the Refuge;

And, for the Togiak Wilderness Area, to secure an enduring resource of wilderness, to protect and preserve the wilderness character of areas within the National Wilderness Resource Preservation System, and to administer this wilderness for the use and enjoyment of the American people in a way that will leave it unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. 🐟



Visitors often travel by airplane on floats to access remote areas in the refuge.

How will refuge management change if the proposed Comprehensive Conservation Plan is adopted?

The proposed new plan for the refuge would include a refuge vision, and goals and objectives to guide management. The current plan does not include these elements. It would also include updated management guidelines.

Proposed refuge vision

Our vision describes how we believe refuge purposes will best be fulfilled:

“The Togiak Refuge will continue to be a healthy functioning ecosystem where fish and wildlife populations and their habitats exist in an environment primarily affected by the forces of nature. Current and future generations will have opportunities to participate in a variety of fish and wildlife dependent activities that emphasize self-reliance, solitude, and a close relationship with the environment. The public will gain an understanding of the refuge on natural, cultural, and scientific levels in order to appreciate the importance of its protection and preservation for future generations.” 



Chris Wilker/USFWS

Common Murres at Bird Rock.



USFWS

Izavieknik River above Togiak Lake.

Refuge goals

Goal 1: Manage refuge habitats and wildlife to ensure the health and integrity of native ecosystems by developing a long-term ecological inventory and monitoring program and a collaborative research program.

Objectives include: managing refuge habitats and wildlife, completing inventory and monitor plans, updating a geographic information system, conducting reviews of biological programs, collecting traditional ecological knowledge, conducting surveys of and monitoring important species, and collecting information on waterbodies.

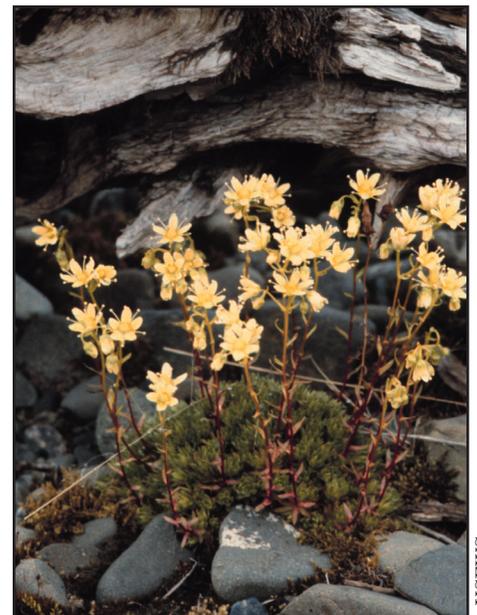
Goal 2: Provide quality fish and wildlife oriented recreation, subsistence, interpretive, and educational opportunities that promote stewardship of southwest Alaska wildlife and their habitats.

Objectives include: completing a public use monitoring plan, providing the opportunity for subsistence activities, providing public use programs that minimize conflicts between user groups and maintain the natural diversity of the refuge, providing a range of quality recreational opportunities, developing a visitor contact station, and providing environmental education programs.

What are goals?

Goals are broad descriptive statements of desired future conditions. Goals for the refuge will direct work at carrying out its mandates and achieving the purposes defined by ANILCA and the Wilderness Act.

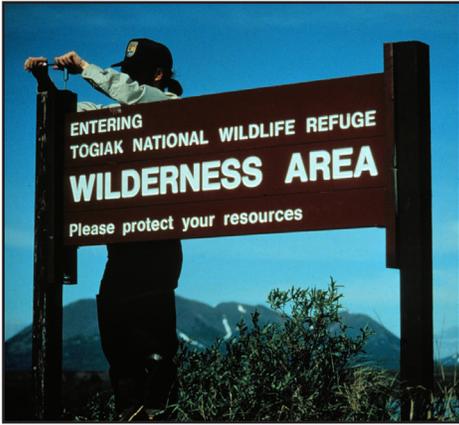
Togiak Refuge developed goals to guide management toward meeting the vision statement and purposes of the refuge. 



USFWS

Spotted Saxifrage. Over 500 species of plants have been identified at Togiak Refuge.

Refuge goals, continued



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River ranger installing the Togiak Wilderness Area boundary sign.



P.Walsh/USFWS

Refuge biologist fitting a caribou calf with a radio collar. Transmissions from collars help determine answers to many population and behavior questions.



USFWS

Refuge interpreter talks about birds with a headstart class.

Goal 3: The integrity of the natural process and cultural resources of the refuge are protected.

Objectives include: identifying and safeguarding key areas, protecting natural species diversity and abundance, protecting archaeological and historical sites on the refuge, implementing the land protection plan, and working to conserve migratory species.

Goal 4: The wilderness character of the Togiak Wilderness Area is maintained.

Objectives include: developing a wilderness stewardship plan for the Togiak Wilderness Area, promoting environmental ethics and “Leave No Trace” techniques, and conducting minimum requirements analyses of all administrative activities within the Togiak Wilderness.

Goal 5: Develop and maintain support mechanisms and infrastructure to achieve management goals.

Objectives include: continuing the Refuge Information Technician program, continuing a proactive safety program, providing regular technical training for refuge staff, acquiring and maintaining adequate facilities and equipment for the refuge, and maintaining adequate staffing for the refuge.

Goal 6: Maintain a leadership role in the management of native ecosystems in southwest Alaska.

Objectives include: participating in partnerships and associations pursuing common natural resource goals and coordinating refuge activities with other public and private entities. 🐟



L.Barnes/USFWS

Refuge biologists tagging fish. When fishermen catch a tagged fish, they are encouraged to return the tag with information about where and when the fish was caught.

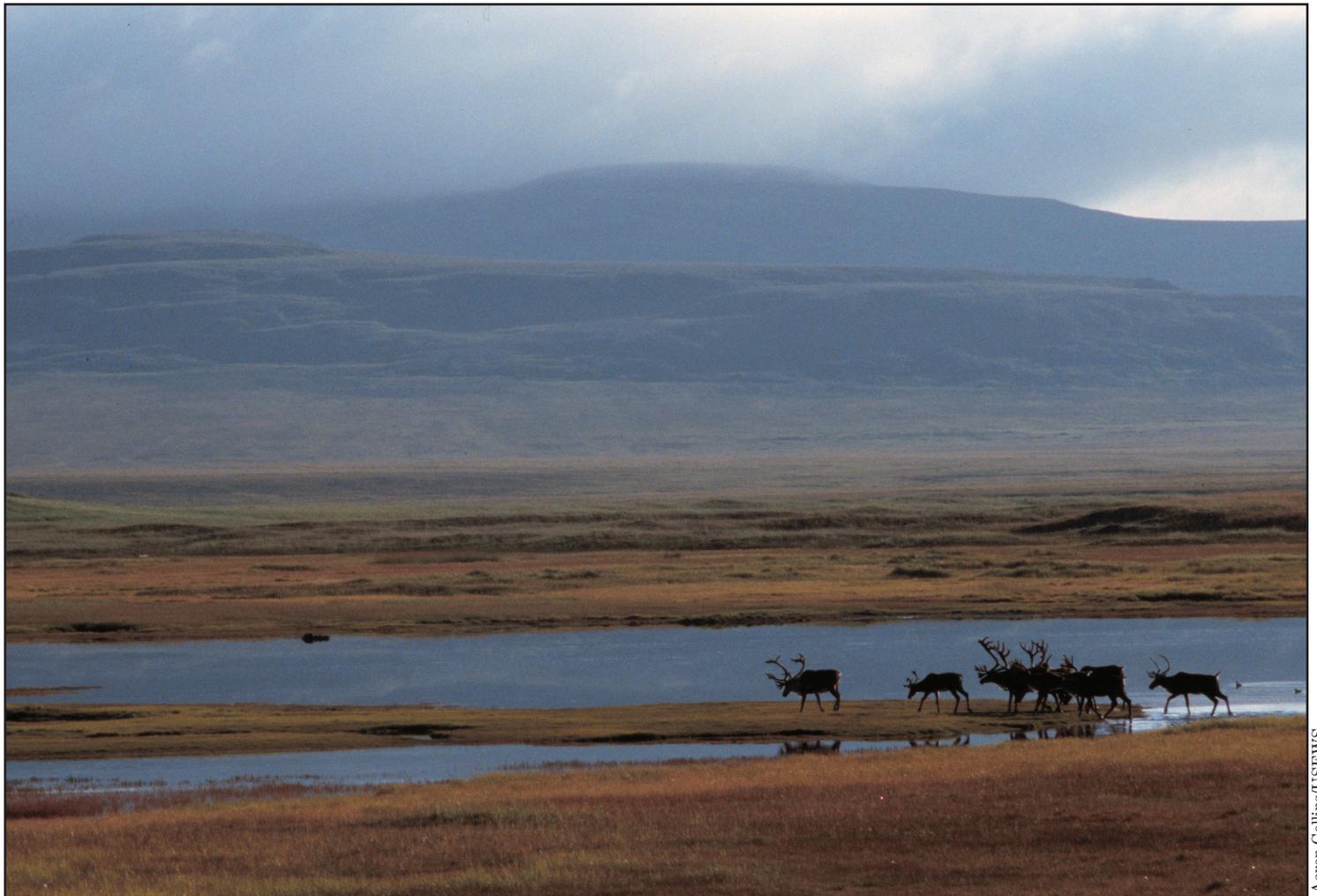
Comprehensive Conservation Plan alternatives

Alternative 1, (Proposed Action) of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan revision, updates the management guidelines for the refuge, which were established in the 1985 plan and which are displayed as Alternative 2 (No Action). The following table describes the differences in management guidelines between the two alternatives.

| Topic | Alternative 1 (Proposed Action) | Alternative 2 (No Action) |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Nonnative Species Management | May be allowed. Use least intrusive methods | Not addressed |
| Bicycles | Allowed | Not addressed |
| Highway Vehicles | Not Allowed | Not addressed |
| Snowmachines | Defined by weight (1,000 pounds or less) | Defined by size (40 inch width or less) |
| Boating and Snowmachining | Allowed | Not addressed |
| Cleared Landing Strips and Areas | May be allowed Not allowed (Wilderness only) | Not addressed |
| Boat Launches and Docks | May be allowed | Not provided |
| Visitor Contact Facilities | May be allowed consistent with management category (Minimal Management) Generally not allowed (Wilderness) | Not provided |
| Hardened Campsites | Allowed consistent with management category | Not provided |
| Temporary Facilities | Allowed | Not addressed |
| Public Use Cabins | May be allowed | Not Provided |
| Administrative Cabins | May be allowed consistent with management category | Not addressed |
| Subsistence Cabins | May be allowed | Not addressed |
| Commercial Cabins | May be authorized (Minimal Management) Not allowed (Wilderness) | Not addressed |
| Other Cabins | May be allowed consistent with management category | Not addressed |
| Radio Repeater Sites | May be allowed consistent with management category | Not addressed |

Comprehensive Conservation Plan alternatives, cont.

| Topic | Alternative 1 (Proposed Action) | Alternative 2 (No Action) |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| Other Geophysical Studies | May be authorized (Minimal Management) Not allowed (Wilderness) | May be Allowed |
| Commercial Filming, Videotaping, and Audiotaping | May be authorized | Not addressed |
| Commercial Fishery Support Facilities (above 1979 levels) | May be authorized. (Minimal Management) Not allowed (Wilderness) | Not permitted |
| Commercial Gathering of Other Refuge Resources | Not allowed | Not addressed |
| Navigation Aids and Other Facilities | Existing and new facilities allowed. | Not addressed |



Aaron Collins/USFWS

Caribou from two different herds depend on habitats within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. Local people, in turn, depend on moose and caribou as a high quality source of food.

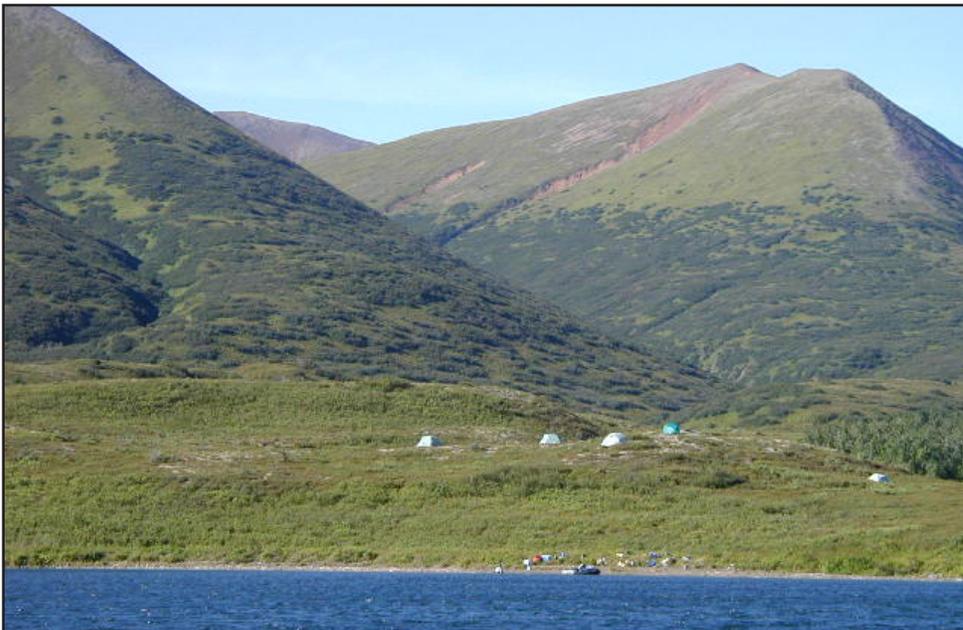
Public Use Management Plan revision

Since the implementation of the Togiak Refuge Public Use Management Plan in 1991, several studies have been completed, data have been collected, wildlife populations have changed, and public use of the refuge has changed. The refuge staff felt that some areas of the current plan needed to be revised and updated. The issues dealt within the plan revision include:

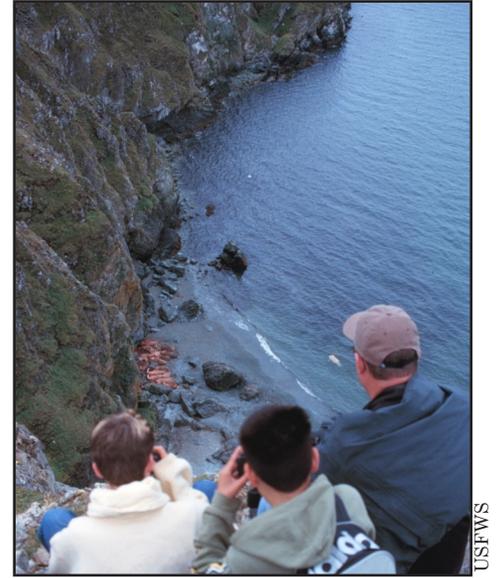
1. Public use within Cape Peirce Wildlife Viewing Area and public facilities at Sangor Lake;
2. Unguided recreational opportunities in the Kanektok and Goodnews River watersheds;
3. Waste management; and
4. Commercial sport fish guiding in the Goodnews, Togiak, Osviak and Matogak river watersheds. 🐟



Fishing along the Arolik River.



Fishing camp along Goodnews Lake.



Wildlife viewing is becoming increasingly popular. Here, Dillingham Boy Scouts observe Pacific Walrus at Cape Peirce as part of an environmental education camp sponsored by Togiak NWR.

What are alternatives and how did we come up with them?

Alternatives are different approaches to dealing with the issues. In order to get a wide range of ideas, we invited local tribal organizations and the State of Alaska to participate on our core planning team. The core planning team described the issues and developed the alternatives. 🐟



Cloudberrries.

Comparison of the Public Use Management alternatives

| | Alternative A (current management) | Alternative B | Alternative C (Preferred Alternative) | Alternative D | Alternative E |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| Issue 1. Public Use at Cape Peirce Wildlife Viewing Area and Public Facilities at Sangor Lake | <p><i>Management Direction</i>—Emphasize wildlife viewing that complements the research and study of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.</p> <p><i>Visitation</i>—Maximum one flight per day and six people at one time.</p> <p><i>Allocation</i>—Permits for all visitors issued on first-come, first-served basis.</p> <p><i>Facilities</i>—No facilities constructed. An outhouse could be constructed to protect natural resources and public health.</p> | <p><i>Management Direction</i>—Same as Alternative A</p> <p><i>Visitation</i>—Same as Alternative A</p> <p><i>Allocation</i>—50 percent commercially guided and 50 percent general public; unused permits available through a common pool.</p> <p><i>Facilities</i>—Same as Alternative A</p> | <p><i>Management Direction</i>—Facilitate wildlife viewing that complements the protection and preservation of the area’s natural and cultural resource values.</p> <p><i>Visitation</i>—Additional opportunities for as many as two flights per day and 12 people at one time. Guide or refuge staff may accompany. At low use levels refuge manager may waive permits.</p> <p><i>Allocation</i>—Same as Alternative B</p> <p><i>Facilities</i>—Minimal facilities for as many as 12 people to ensure public health, and safety (i.e., tent platforms, food storage, outhouse).</p> | <p><i>Management Direction</i>—Emphasize a structured wildlife viewing experience.</p> <p><i>Visitation</i>—Same as Alternative C</p> <p><i>Allocation</i>—100 percent commercially guided use.</p> <p><i>Facilities</i>—Moderate facilities to accommodate as many as 12 people, (i.e., one cabin, tent platform, and outhouse).</p> | <p><i>Management Direction</i>—Emphasize wildlife viewing and educational and outreach programs that focus on cultural and natural significance of the area.</p> <p><i>Visitation</i>—Same as Alternative C</p> <p><i>Allocation</i>—30 percent commercially guided and 70 percent general public (accompanied by Refuge staff); unused permits available through a common pool.</p> <p><i>Facilities</i>—Same as Alternative D, plus accommodations for interpretive cultural and natural history programs (i.e., large cabin with meeting area and outhouse).</p> |

| | Alternative A (current management) | Alternative B | Alternative C (Preferred Alternative) | Alternative D | Alternative E |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| Issue 2. Unguided Recreational Opportunities: Kanektok and Goodnews River Watersheds | No limits | Kanektok—One trip every other day; maximum four boats and 12 people per trip Goodnews—Limit to existing level of use. | One trip every other day and, on the Goodnews River only, two trips on weekends during peak use seasons (June 25–July 15; August 10–September 7); maximum four boats and 12 people per trip. Permits required. At low use levels refuge manager may waive permits. | Voluntary trip registration available all season. | One trip every three days; maximum three boats and nine people per trip. |
| Issue 3. Waste Management | Bury waste 100 feet from surface waters on public lands only; outhouses at Kagati and Goodnews lakes. | If monitoring suggests standards are at risk of being exceeded, require all float groups to carry out solid human waste on the Kanektok River. | In addition to actions in Alternative B, work with partners to facilitate the construction and voluntary use of DEC-approved disposal sites for packing out human waste. | Same as Alternative B | Implement human-waste pack-out program for all users as DEC-approved disposal sites become available and accessible. |

Comparison of the Public Use Management alternatives, continued

| | Alternative A (current management) | Alternative B | Alternative C (Preferred Alternative) | Alternative D | Alternative E |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| Issue 4 Commercial Sport Fish Guiding | Goodnews River North Fork | Same as Alternative A | <i>Motorized</i> —One boat and three people per day. <i>Float</i> —One trip per week (with option of using Middle Fork); maximum four boats and 12 people per trip. | <i>Motorized</i> —Temporary camp; maximum nine motorboats and 27 people per day. <i>Float</i> —One trip every other day; maximum four boats and 12 people per trip. | Same as Alternative A |
| | Middle Fork | <i>Motorized</i> —One temporary camp, three boats and 10 people per day. <i>Float</i> —None | <i>Motorized</i> —Same as Alternative A <i>Float</i> —One trip per week (with option of using North Fork); maximum four boats and 12 people per trip. | <i>Motorized</i> —One temporary camp; three motorboats and 10 people per day. <i>Float</i> —One trip every week; maximum four boats and 12 people per trip. | Same as Alternative A |
| | Osviak and Matogak Rivers | Same as Alternative A | Same as Alternative A | <i>Motorized</i> —One trip per week (either river); maximum two boats and six people per trip. | Same as Alternative A |
| | Togiak River | Same as Alternative A | Same as Alternative A | <i>Motorized</i> —Maximum 14 motorboats and 42 people per day <i>Float</i> —Two trips per week maximum two boats and eight people per trip. | Same as Alternative A |

Management activities undertaken by the Service, or by volunteers, cooperators, or contractors working for the Service, with limited exception, are exempt from compatibility review [Part 603, Compatibility, of the Service Manual (Draft)].

The term “temporary” refers to any structure or other human-made improvement that can be readily and completely dismantled and removed from the site when the period of authorized use terminates.

Management of activities occurring on navigable waters will be coordinated with the appropriate state agency.



What would the outcome be for different alternatives?

Public use at Cape Peirce Wildlife Viewing Area and public facilities at Sangor Lake

All of the alternatives would protect sensitive wildlife species by keeping disturbances low. Alternatives C (the preferred alternative), D and E would provide more wildlife-viewing opportunities. Alternatives A (no action) and B would keep wildlife-viewing opportunities about the same. Alternatives A (no action), B, and E and would provide the most visitor safety and comfort through facilities development. Alternatives A (no action) and D would not even out the opportunity to visit Cape Peirce between private individuals and wildlife-viewing guides because any needed permits would continue to be given on a first-come-first-served basis.



Rocky cliffs line the southwestern coast of Togiak Refuge providing nesting areas for up to 1.5 million seabirds and protecting isolated beaches ideal for marine mammal haulouts.

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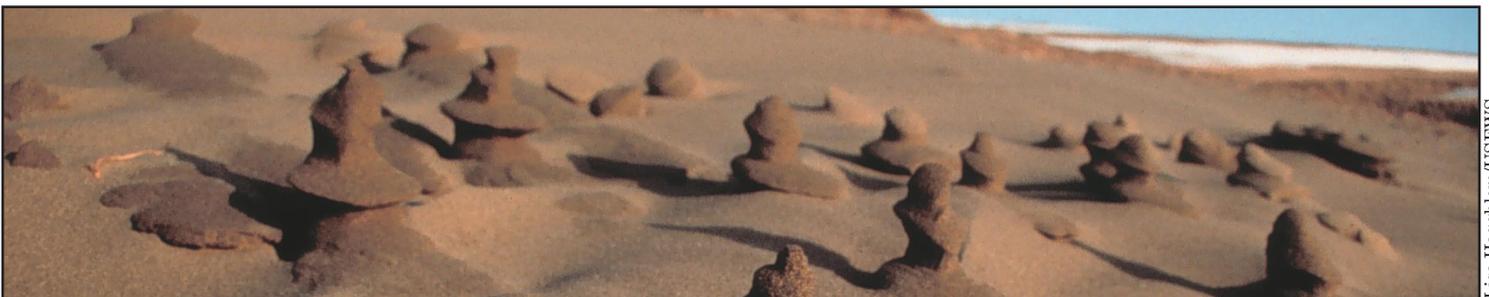


View of the Togiak River from Kashiak Mountain.

USFWS

Waste management

Alternative E would immediately reduce impacts from improper disposal of human waste and would best address this issue over the short and long term. Alternative C (the preferred alternative) may avoid additional regulations and improve conditions within the Togiak Refuge in the long-term. Alternatives B and D also address the issue over the long term through more monitoring and established standards, but would only implement increased visitor education and outreach in the short term. Alternative A (no action) is least effective in responding to this issue through more education and outreach.



Interesting shapes are formed in the sandy beaches around Cape Peirce through the combined action of rain, wind, and waves.

Lisa Haggblom/USFWS

What would the outcome be for different alternatives? continued



L. Barnes/USFWS

Brown bears are frequently sighted along rivers in the refuge.

Commercial sport fish guiding in the Goodnews, Togiak, Osviak, and Matogak River watersheds

Alternative D provides the most commercially guided sport fishing opportunities by adding special use permits for the Goodnews, Togiak, Osviak and Matogak river watersheds. Alternatives A (no action) and E keep the current opportunities. Alternative B provides only a few more opportunities than Alternative A (no action). Alternative C (the preferred alternative) provides a moderate number of additional commercial sport fishing opportunities. 🐟



Sue Matthews/USFWS

Harbor Seal.

Unguided recreational opportunities in the Kanektok and Goodnews River watersheds

Alternative E has the most opportunities for wilderness solitude, but also has the fewest number of recreational opportunities overall. Alternatives A (no action) and D would provide several more recreational opportunities, but would provide the fewest opportunities for outstanding wilderness solitude because of more visitors and also motorized use within the Togiak Wilderness Area. Alternatives B and C (the preferred alternative) maintain current wilderness conditions and opportunities for wilderness solitude, but there would be slightly fewer added recreational opportunities in the future. Current recreational opportunities would be maintained as part of Alternatives B and C (the preferred alternative).



USFWS

Dunlin typically nest in wet meadow tundra with low ridges, vegetation hummocks, and nearby ponds. During migration and winter, they prefer mudflats, but can also be seen on sandy beaches and coastal grasslands.



Alternatives were developed by a group that included representatives from local tribes, the State of Alaska, and refuge staff.

USFWS

We would like to hear your comments!

We would like to know what you think about our revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan, the revised Public Use Management Plan and the State Department of Natural Resources Special Land Use Designation.

For example:

- What do you think about our proposed vision, goals, and objectives for the next 15 years?
- Which alternative do you prefer for maintaining quality experiences on the rivers within the refuge?
- How would you like to see Cape Peirce managed?
- The full plan gives details about permitted and authorized uses which have changed in some small ways since the 1985 plan. We would like to hear your comments about the new management guidelines.

The full-length Togiak draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan is available online at <http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/planning/ccp.htm>. Please contact us if you would prefer a paper-copy or a compact disk. We will also host several public meetings (time and place will be announced). For more information about the refuge you may view <http://togiak.fws.gov/>.

Please send us your questions and comments before **January 18, 2008**.

Comments and requests for compact disks or further information about the plan should be directed to:

Maggi Arend, Planning Team Leader
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 1011 East Tudor Road, MS 231
 Anchorage, AK 99503
 907/786-3393
fw7_togiak_planning@fws.gov

Requests for further information about the refuge should be directed to:

Paul Liedberg, Refuge Manager
 Togiak National Wildlife Refuge
 Post Office Box 270
 Dillingham, AK 99576
 907/842-1063

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Togiak National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 270
Dillingham, AK 99576

Phone: 907/842-1063

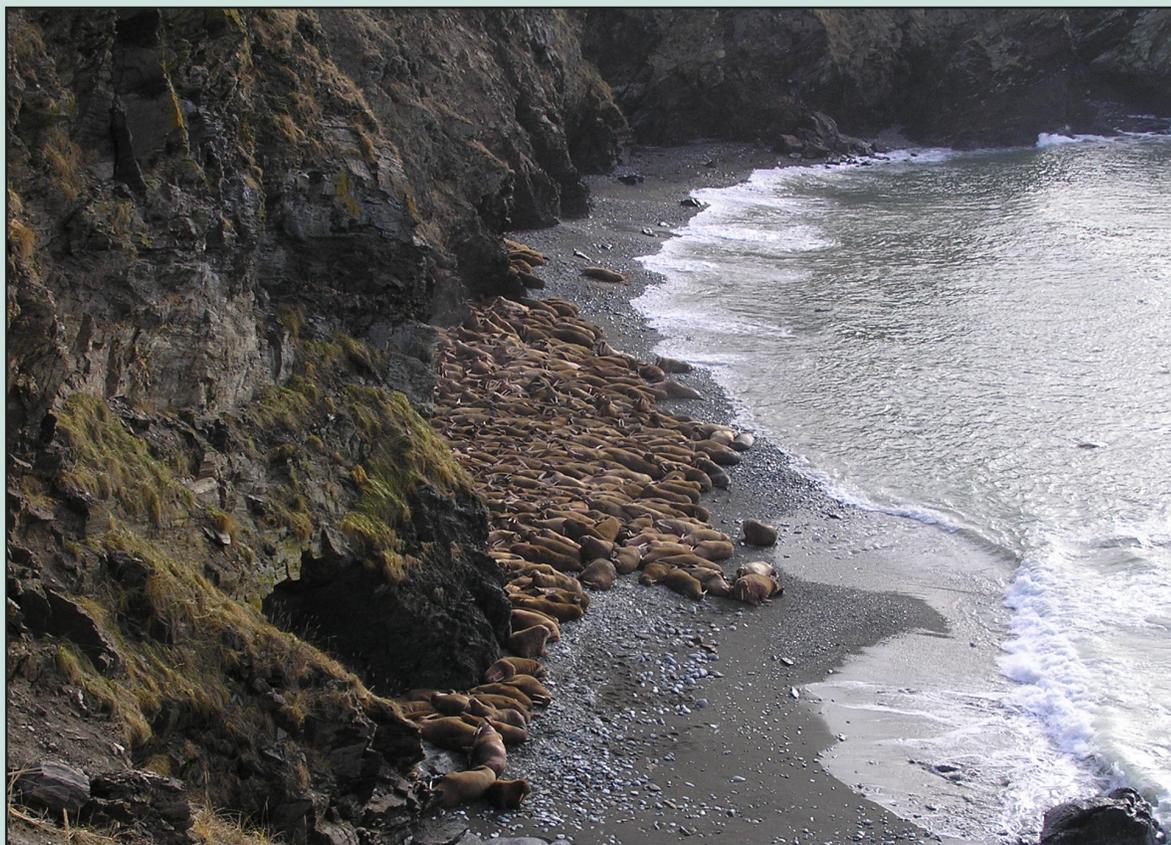
Fax: 907/842-5402

Web: <http://togiak.fws.gov/>

e-mail: fw7_togiak_planning@fws.gov



*Pacific Walrus
use beaches
around Cape
Peirce as
haulout areas
on which to
rest between
feeding
forays. These
beaches are
surrounded
by sheer cliffs
affording
the walrus
protection
from
predators.*



Adult walrus bulls often approach 2 tons in weight, and the females may exceed 1 ton.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT & DEVELOPMENT SECTION

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April 23, 2007

Dear Alaskan

This Notice of Availability announces the release of a public review draft by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to adopt proposed revisions to Special Use Land Designation (SULD) ADL 226851, for management of state shorelands and waters within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River. This notice coincides with the release of the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) public review draft.

The 1991 SULD is being revised to clarify certain guidelines and language, including definitions for the "Outlet of Kagati Lake" and "Temporary Facilities," along with more detailed explanations for camping term-limits, trespass and human waste guidelines. The revised SULD also includes a map showing affected lands and waterbodies and a diagram that illustrates the definition of "Ordinary High Water." These changes to the 1991 SULD may assist DNR in promulgating regulations, if determined to be necessary, at some point in the future.

The revised SULD is included in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan as Appendix C, which is currently being distributed for public review. A copy of the SULD is also available at DNR's Public Information Centers located in Anchorage at 550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1260, and in Juneau at 400 Willoughby Avenue. Comments must be received by 5pm on January 18, 2008.

To submit comments or request information, please contact:

Sara Taylor, Natural Resource Specialist
Division of Mining, Land and Water
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1050
Anchorage, AK 99501
Tel (907)269-8528 / Fax (907)269-8915
Email: sara_taylor@dnr.state.ak.us

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MANAGEMENT OF STATE SHORELANDS AND WATERS WITHIN THE
TOGIK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AND LOWER GOODNEWS RIVER
ADL 226851

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources has been engaged in a cooperative planning process with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to revise the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan. The Department of Natural Resources has prepared this appendix to describe the current management guidelines for the State of Alaska shorelands and waters within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River. The State of Alaska reserves the right to amend or change this portion of the plan as conditions change or future needs develop.

BACKGROUND

The State of Alaska originally adopted the guidelines in Chapter III of the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Public Use Management Plan as a State Land Use Plan in May of 1991. At the same time, the state-owned shorelands in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River were administratively designated as Special Use Lands, and later adopted as regulations in 2002.

These shorelands are designated Special Use Lands based on their special resource values. This designation authorizes restrictions on some uses and requires a permit for certain activities that would otherwise be considered “Generally Allowed” under 11 AAC 96.020. In this case, the Special Use Lands designation allows managers to implement the management guidelines as outlined within this Appendix.

The State of Alaska has special duties and management constraints with respect to waters, tidelands and shorelands (the lands underlying inland navigable waters) which arise from the Alaska Constitution and its principles commonly known as the public trust doctrine. The public trust doctrine requires the State to exercise authority to ensure public use of navigable waters for navigation, commerce, recreation, and other related purposes.

The Alaska Constitution (Article VIII, Sections 1, 2, 3, 6, 13 and 14) and Alaska Statutes (AS 38.05.126-.128) provide the legal basis for applying the public trust doctrine in Alaska. The Constitution states “free access to the navigable or public waters of the State, as defined by the legislature, shall not be denied any citizen of the United States or resident of the State, except that the legislature may by general law regulate and limit such access for other beneficial uses or public purposes.”

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is the agency entrusted with responsibility for managing state lands and waters. To meet the intent of the public trust doctrine, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources will manage state shorelands in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and on the lower Goodnews River under the guidelines outlined below.

SPECIAL USE LAND

As provided in regulation (11 AAC 96.014), the Department of Natural Resources has determined that these lands have special recreational and other special resource values warranting additional protections or other special requirements. State of Alaska shorelands within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River are therefore designated as Special Use Lands.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF STATE OWNED SHORELANDS

Management of state shorelands in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and on the lower Goodnews River will be consistent with the Alaska Constitution, laws, regulations, and management guidelines included in this document. The following guidelines apply:

Generally Allowed Uses on State Shorelands

11 AAC 96.020 provides a list of uses that are “Generally Allowed” on state lands (including shorelands) without a permit. Modifications to these generally allowed uses for Special Use Lands in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and on the lower Goodnews River are established per regulation 11 AAC 96.014 (b)(8) and are detailed in this Appendix.

Short-term Camping on State Shorelands

Consistent with 11 AAC 96.020(a)(4)(A), camping is generally allowed on state-owned lands for personal, noncommercial purposes for no more than fourteen days at one site, using a temporary facility that can be readily dismantled and removed. For these Special Use Lands, camping is limited to three consecutive days at any one site per 11 AAC 96.014 (b)(8). Moving the entire camp at least two miles starts a new three-day period. Camping on state shorelands within ¼ mile (1,320 feet) of the outlet of Kagati Lake is restricted to one night per party every seven days.

Long-term Camping on State Shorelands

Permits may be issued for long-term camping necessary for fish and wildlife management, resource management and scientific research. Other long-term camping on state shorelands will not be permitted within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and on the lower Goodnews River unless specifically authorized by the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, Southcentral Regional Office.

Human Waste

Human waste shall not be disposed of on state-owned shorelands, in accordance with AS 46.03.800 - 810. Human waste may be disposed of in a cathole at least 100 feet away from the Ordinary High Water Mark of streams, rivers, or lakes in accordance with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) regulation 18 AAC 72.020 (see also “Activities on Adjacent Private Uplands”). On privately-owned uplands, human waste may only be disposed of with the concurrence of the owner.

Identification of State Shorelands

Defining the location of the Ordinary High Water Mark, which delineates the boundary of state-owned shorelands, is often difficult and may require technical expertise. The Ordinary High Water Mark can usually be identified by the vegetation line along the bank or shore, or by other distinctive signs. It is defined as the mark along the bank or shore where the presence and action of the water are so common as to leave a natural line on the bank or shore. That line may be indicated by erosion, shelving, changes in soil characteristics, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other distinctive physical characteristics.

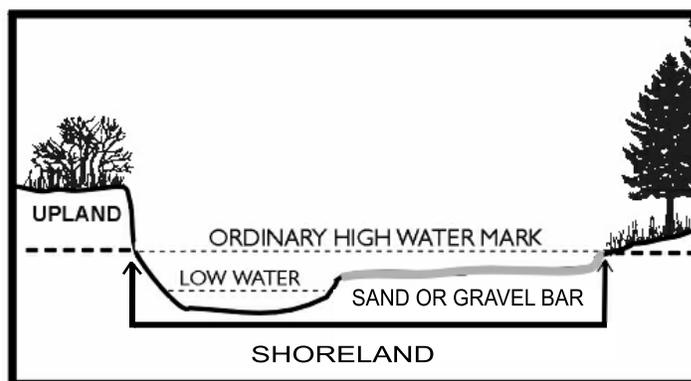


Figure 1: Delineation of State-Owned Shorelands

ACTIVITIES ON ADJACENT PRIVATE UPLANDS

Nothing in this document authorizes trespass on, or use of, adjacent privately-owned uplands. It is the responsibility of the river user to acquire all applicable permits prior to use of adjacent privately-owned uplands. Authorization to use privately-owned uplands may or may not include disposal of human waste. If a permit for disposal of human waste on adjacent private uplands is not secured, it is the responsibility of the river user to transport human waste to an ADEC-approved facility for disposal.

MODIFICATION AND AMENDMENT OF GUIDELINES

The Special Use Land Designation does not preclude any future land management action deemed by the State to be in the public interest. The development of any future regulations for the Special Use Land will require additional public involvement. The regulations will be reviewed and updated periodically as new data and technologies become available, and as changing social or economic conditions place different demands on state land.

SAFETY AND EDUCATION

The Department of Natural Resources discussed issues related to boating safety on the Goodnews River with local residents, river users and resource managers. As a result of these discussions and review of pertinent information, several methods of addressing boating safety have been considered, including: motorized restrictions, courtesy signage on the adjacent uplands, brush removal, and increased boater education and safety training. In addition to the management guidelines listed above, the Department of Natural Resources will continue to promote safe use of state waters by local residents, commercial operators and guided and unguided users. This can be accomplished through various means, including: boater safety and education programs offered by the State, brochures, and increased enforcement of existing state laws.

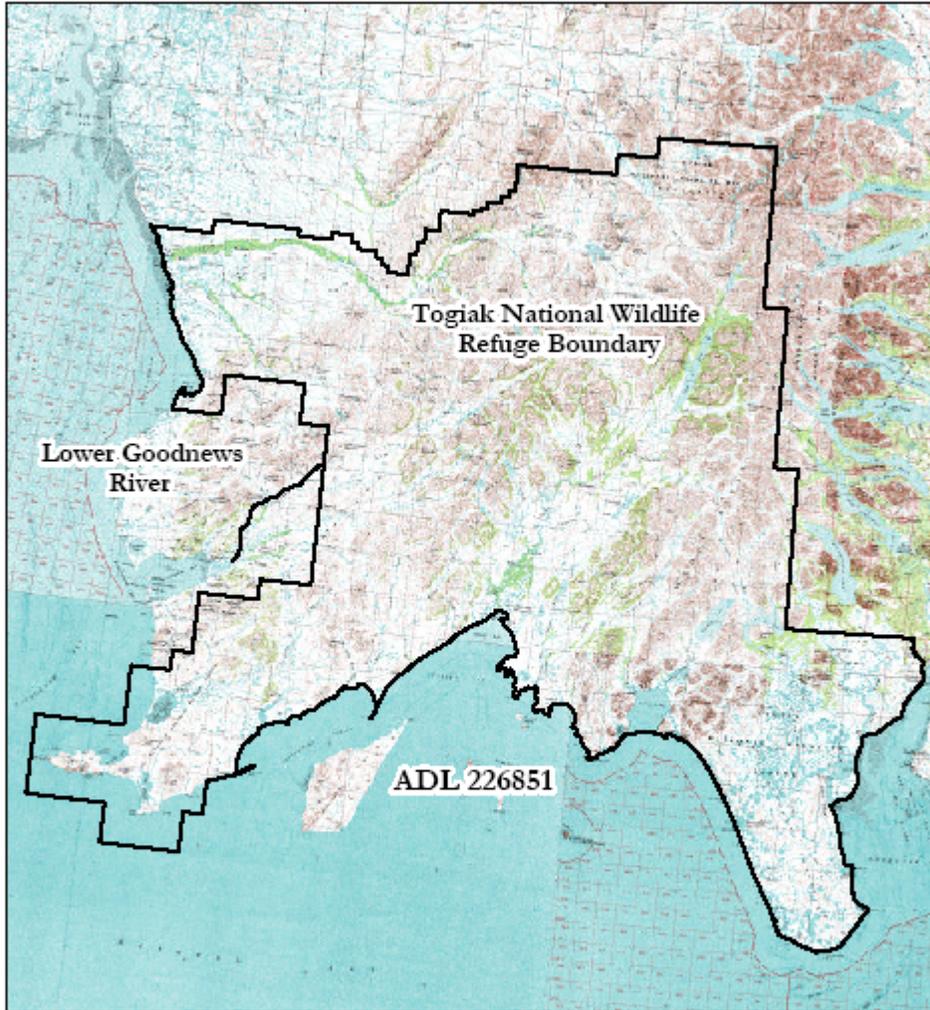
DEFINITIONS

Outlet of Kagati Lake. The confluence of Kagati Lake, and adjoining Pegati Lake, with the Kanektok River. Seward Meridian T. 003S R. 062W Section 33.

Temporary Facility. For the purposes of this Special Use Land Designation, temporary facilities are manmade structures that can be disassembled within 48 hours and must be removed and the site restored to its natural state at the end of the term of use. Examples of temporary facilities are frame, dome, or pup tents.

Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and Lower Goodnews River Special Use Area

Authorized: May 10, 1991



Legend

-  Special use lands include all shorelands within Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and along the Lower Goodnews River



Alaska Department
of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water

Map Created On October 16, 2002