



**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

# **Summary Comprehensive Conservation Plan**

## ***Togiak National Wildlife Refuge***



**September 2009**



## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mission Statement**

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.*



## **National Wildlife Refuge System Mission Statement**

*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.*

*National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997*

The comprehensive conservation plan details program planning levels that are substantially greater than current budget allocations and, as such, is for strategic planning and program prioritization purposes only. This plan does not constitute a commitment for staffing increases or funding for future refuge-specific land acquisitions, construction projects, or operational and maintenance increases.

Cover photograph: USFWS. Pacific Walrus use beaches around Cape Peirce and on Hagemeister Island as haulout areas to rest between feeding forays. These beaches are surrounded by sheer cliffs giving the walrus protection from predators.



USFWS

Kagati Lake Region.

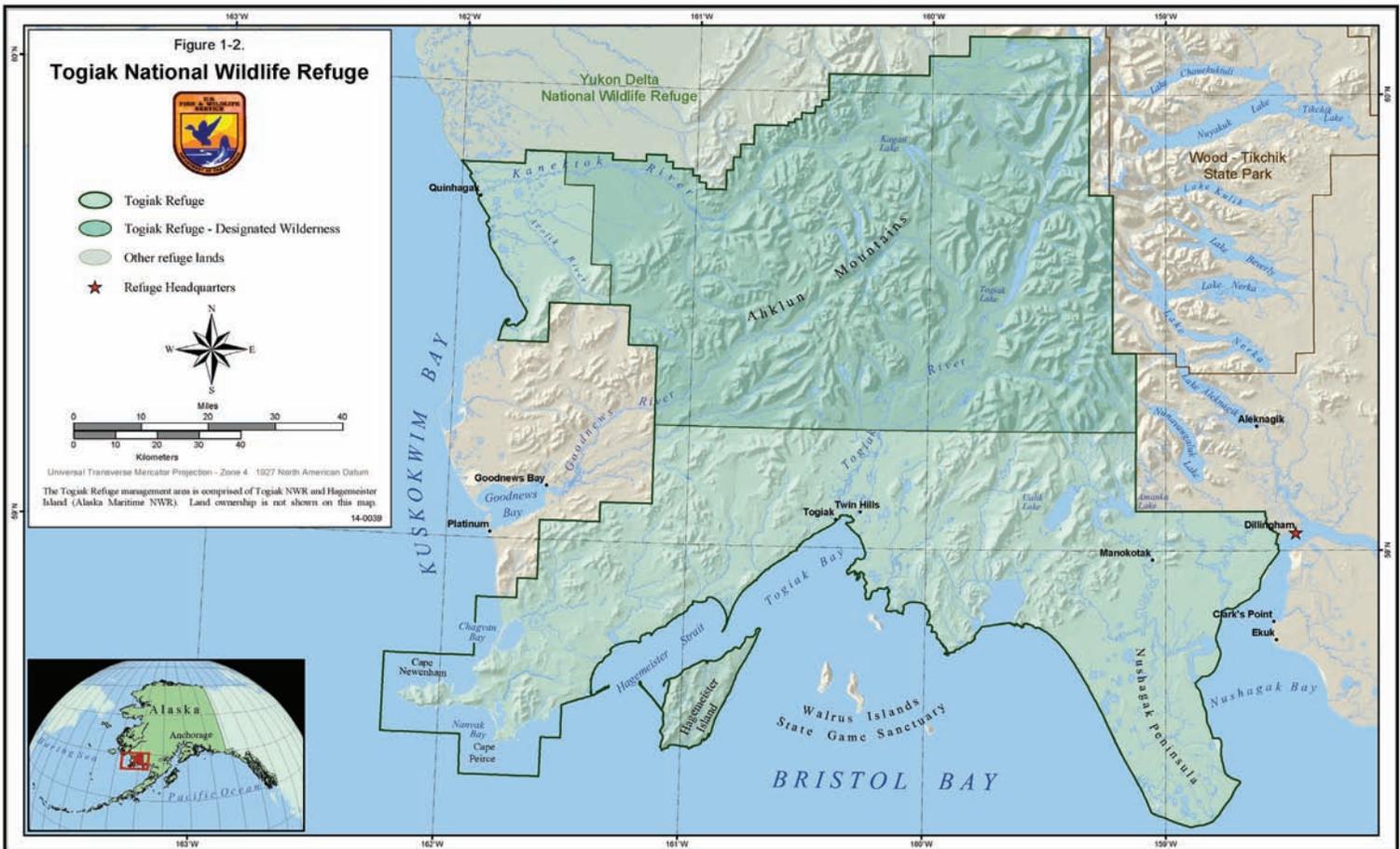
# Togiak Comprehensive Conservation Plan

Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) provide broad policy guidance and establish overall management direction. They ensure that management actions and refuge uses comply with the purposes for which a refuge was established and with other legal mandates such as the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. They define long-term goals and objectives toward which refuge management activities are directed.

ANILCA of 1980, as amended, directs us, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), to prepare and, from time to time, to revise a comprehensive conservation plan for each refuge in Alaska. In September 2008, Regional Director Thomas Melius signed the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the revised CCP for Togiak National Wildlife Refuge (Togiak Refuge, Refuge), adopting the Service's preferred Alternative 1. The revised CCP updates and replaces the management direction for the Refuge adopted in the 1987 CCP. The 2008 CCP will be in effect for the next 15 years. This document summarizes the 2008 revised CCP for Togiak Refuge. 🐟

## Refuge Description

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.





USFWS

*Common murrelets at Cape Peirce.*

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.



USFWS

*Salmon swimming upstream to spawn.*

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 mammal species are found on or near the Refuge because of the diversity of habitats from mountain ridges to ocean waters. These include caribou, brown bear, wolf, wolverine, lynx, arctic fox, Steller sea lion, harbor seal, and Pacific walrus.

More than 500 species of plants grow on the Refuge in a variety of habitats that include fresh and saltwater wetlands, open water, meadows, mountains, tundra, and forests of spruce and cottonwood.

Lands administered by the Togiak Refuge have been inhabited by Alaska Native peoples for thousands of years. Today, subsistence use of the Refuge remains important both in terms of the amount of use and its importance to local residents. The salmon runs are the driving force for the region's ecosystem and the basis for both commercial and recreational fishing activities. More recently, the Refuge has become widely known for outstanding angling and wildlife-viewing opportunities in a wilderness setting. 



USFWS

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

## Refuge Establishment

January 20, 1969, the Secretary of the Interior issued a Public Land Order (PLO), withdrawing approximately 249,022 acres to establish Cape Newenham National Wildlife Refuge. With this order, the Service assumed its first refuge management responsibilities in the area. With the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980, Cape Newenham was combined with other lands to form the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge.

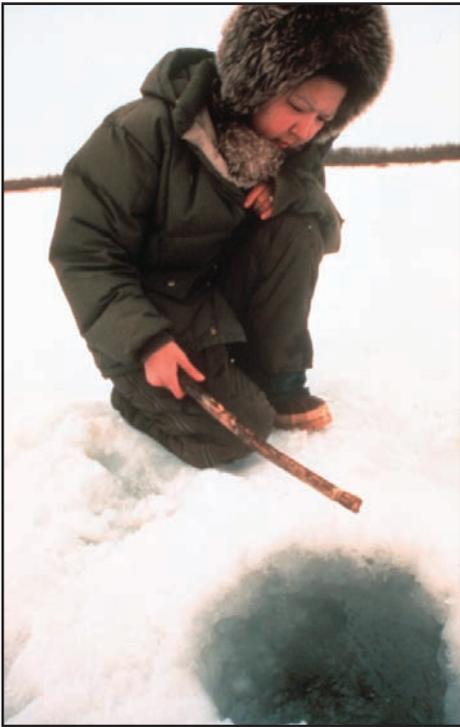
Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge encompasses 11 previously existing refuges and added public lands on islands, including Hagemeister Island. Management of Hagemeister Island has been transferred administratively to Togiak Refuge, which shares similar resources. This CCP applies to the Togiak Refuge and Hagemeister Island of the Alaska Maritime Refuge. In this summary, the two units will be referred to as Togiak Refuge or the Refuge. 🐟

## Refuge Purposes

The Cape Newenham National Wildlife Refuge designated in 1969 was given the broad purpose “. . . for the protection of wildlife and their habitat . . .” in Public Land Order 4583, dated Jan. In addition, Sections 303(1) (B) and 303(6)(B) of ANILCA set forth the purposes for which Alaska Maritime and Togiak Refuge (including the former Cape Newenham Refuge) were established and shall be managed, including the following:

- (i) To conserve fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity, including the following: [Alaska Maritime Refuge] marine mammals, marine birds and other migratory birds, the marine resources upon which they rely, bears, caribou, and other mammals; [Togiak Refuge] salmonids, marine birds and mammals, migratory birds, and large mammals (including their restoration to historic levels);
- (ii) To fulfill the international treaty obligations of the United States with respect to fish and wildlife and their habitats;
- (iii) To provide, in a manner consistent with purposes set forth in subparagraphs (i) and (ii), the opportunity for continued subsistence uses by local residents;
- (iv) [Alaska Maritime Refuge] To provide, in a manner consistent with subparagraphs (i) and (ii), a program of national and international scientific research on marine resources; and
- (v) [Alaska Maritime Refuge] (iv) [Togiak Refuge] to ensure, to the maximum extent practicable and in a manner consistent with the purposes set forth in paragraph (i), water quality and necessary water quantity within the Refuge.

The purpose of the **Togial Wilderness** area is 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 (Section 2(a) of the Wilderness Act of 1964). 🐟



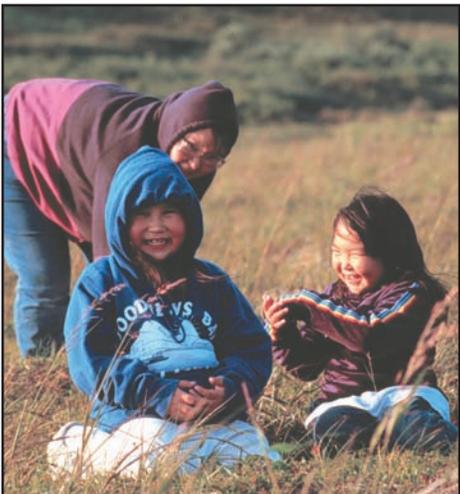
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*Fish are mainly caught using nets during the ice-free season. Other methods are ice fishing, rod and reel, and spears.*

## A Long History

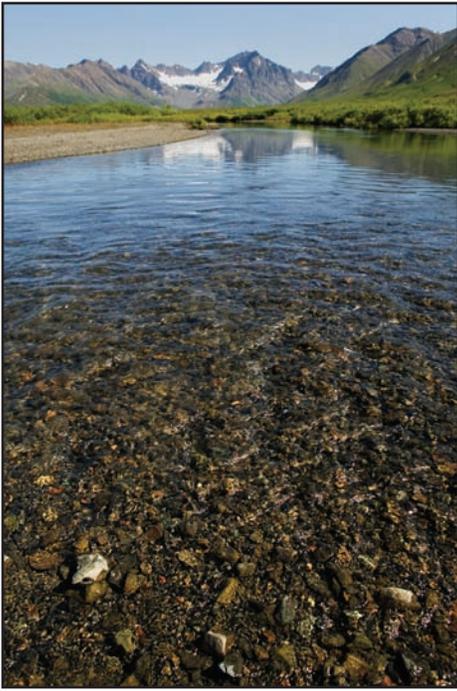
Archaeological evidence suggests that areas within Togiak Refuge have been continuously occupied for at least 2,000 years.

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.



Goodglick/USFWS

*Berry picking at Goodnews Bay.*



USFWS

River within the Togiak Wilderness area.

## Refuge Vision

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. 🐟

## Refuge Goals and Objectives

The Togiak Refuge vision statement and purposes provide the framework for developing management goals and objectives. Goals are broad statements of what we would like the Refuge to be in the future. Objectives are statements of what the Refuge wants to accomplish. The refuge staff developed six goals; several objectives were identified for each goal. Objectives identified for one goal often apply to other goals. To avoid duplication, each objective is listed under only one goal. The order of the objectives does not imply priority.

Cooperation with State and Federal agencies and other organizations is a critical component of most objectives. This cooperation can take many forms ranging from reviewing and revising study plans to cooperating on data collection and reports.

### **Goal 1. Ecosystem, Habitat, and Fish and Wildlife Management: Manage refuge habitats and wildlife to ensure the health and integrity of native ecosystems by developing long-term ecological inventory and monitoring programs and a collaborative research program, which incorporate data collection to evaluate the effects of climate change.**

#### **Objectives:**

1.1 Complete the Togiak Refuge Fish and Wildlife Inventory and Monitoring Plan within three years of adoption of this plan.

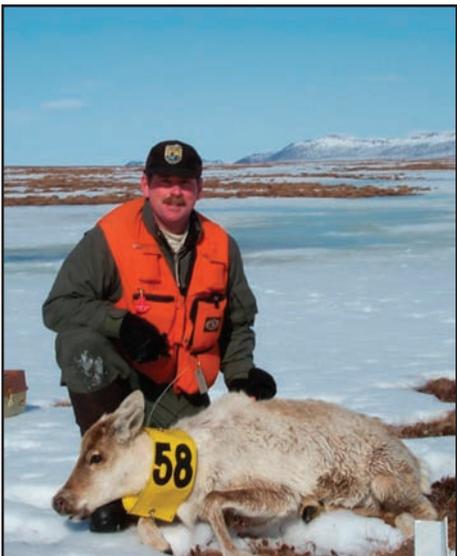
*Rationale:* The Togiak Refuge Fish and Wildlife Inventory and Monitoring Plan should be updated in three years to reflect new techniques, methods, protocols, and technology. Where possible, common approaches will be used to produce a synergistic effect in cooperation with ADF&G, Native organizations, and others.

1.2 Continue to update our Geographic Information System database management and mapping system with plant and wildlife communities and management layers.

*Rationale:* It is critical that we store and analyze data in such a manner that it will be available to a wide variety of users now and in the future.

1.3 By 2015, conduct an external biological review of the Refuge to determine if biological strategies in the Fish and Wildlife Inventory and Monitoring Plan are resulting in good science and sound management practices.

*Rationale:* The integrity of the Service and the confidence of the public in



P. Walsh/USFWS

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



USFWS

*Monitoring of refuge resources is particularly important during changing ecological conditions, including climate change.*

management decisions depend on conducting good science. A peer review of our biological program will provide an objective evaluation of our strengths and weaknesses.

1.4 Conduct annual reviews and evaluations of biological projects to determine their effectiveness in meeting refuge management and customer service needs.

*Rationale:* Changing ecological conditions, including global climate change, demand that we periodically review our biology program to make improvements, cease projects that are no longer needed, or add projects to address current situations.

1.5 Collect traditional ecological knowledge of historic wildlife occurrences to gain an understanding of past ecological conditions and provide a framework for current investigations.

*Rationale:* Local elders possess historical knowledge of species occurrence, abundance, and distribution which will help focus and direct future studies. The data will be incorporated into a searchable database that will be available to other agencies and Native organizations.

1.6 Conduct surveys of vertebrates, invertebrates, plant species, and habitat associations; and monitor priority species.

*Rationale:* A continuous flow of information is needed to ensure the maintenance of ecological health on Togiak Refuge. This is particularly important when ecological conditions appear to be in flux due to global climate change. Unknown ecosystem components must be inventoried and known components must be monitored for change. All ecological information will include a spatial aspect and will be maintained in the Refuge Geographic Information System.

1.7 Collect information on waterbodies within the Refuge needed to maintain the necessary water quantity and quality for fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

*Rationale:* Clean water in sufficient quantities is critical for all species of plants and animals (including humans) found on the Refuge. Nutrient recycling that occurs through refuge waterways is important to proper ecosystem functioning.

1.8 Complete a revision of the Togiak Refuge Fisheries Management Plan within two years of adoption of this plan to reflect management goals and objectives.

*Rationale:* The Togiak Refuge Fisheries Management Plan should be updated to reflect new techniques, methods, protocols, and technology. Where possible, we will work cooperatively with ADF&G, Native organizations, and others to produce a synergistic effect.

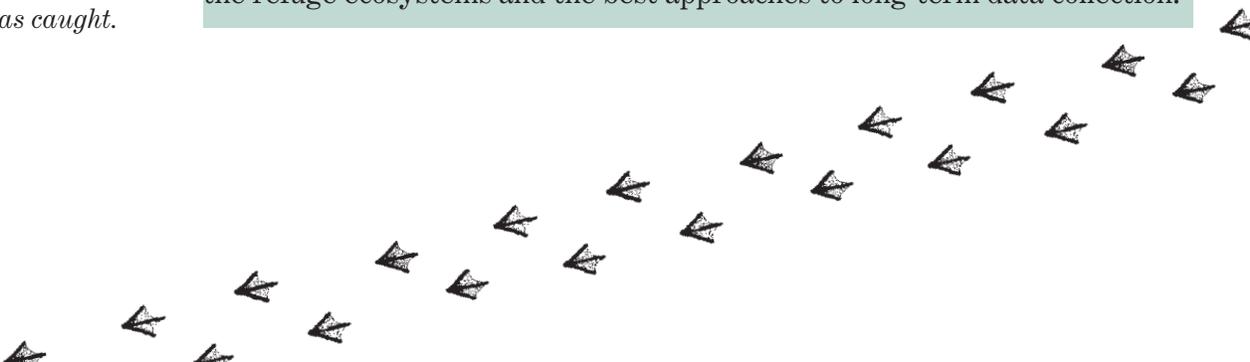
1.9 Develop an Environmental Monitoring Plan that incorporates an ecosystems model for the Togiak Refuge and its surrounding environment to better illustrate relationships among fish, wildlife, plant, habitat, and public use.

*Rationale:* Understanding climate change effects requires development of an Environmental Monitoring Plan that incorporates an understanding of the refuge ecosystems and the best approaches to long-term data collection.



L.Barnes/USFWS

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





Larry Barnes/USFWS

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

## **Goal 2. Public Use: Provide quality fish and wildlife oriented recreation, subsistence, and interpretive and educational opportunities that promote stewardship of southwest Alaska wildlife and its habitats.**

*Rationale:* Humans use the natural resources of the Togiak Refuge in a variety of ways, including subsistence hunting and gathering activities, commercial uses, and consumptive and non-consumptive recreational uses. All are legitimate uses authorized by various legal mandates, but all have the potential to negatively affect ecological health. Managers are charged with ensuring that human uses of Refuge resources do not result in long-term changes to ecosystem form, function, or structure. To this end, the Togiak Refuge will identify and monitor current human uses, analyze proposed uses, and monitor and manage these uses through education, regulation, and enforcement.



Scott Ayers/USFWS

*Subsistence gillnetting at Togiak Bay.*

### **Objectives:**

2.1 Complete revision of the Togiak Refuge Public Use Management Plan that will guide management of guided and unguided public use on the Refuge.

2.2 Complete a Public Use Monitoring Plan that will establish standards for social and biological impacts related to public uses. This plan should be completed within five years of adoption of the revised Public Use Management Plan.

*Rationale:* The Togiak Refuge Public Use Monitoring Plan should establish standards and the management actions needed to maintain those standards. It should reflect new techniques, methods, protocols, and information needs as use changes.

2.3 Provide the opportunity for rural residents engaged in a subsistence way of life to continue to do so.

2.4 Ensure that public use programs are consistent with maintaining the natural diversity of refuge resources and habitats.

2.5 Provide public use programs that minimize possible conflicts between and among subsistence, recreational, and commercial users.

2.6 Provide for a range of quality fish and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, including wilderness areas that emphasize naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation.



USFWS

*Refuge interpreter talks about birds with a headstart class.*



USFWS

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

2.7 Continue the development of a visitor contact station at the Dillingham Airport, including exhibits related to refuge resources, in partnership with local agencies and organizations.

*Rationale:* Refuge Rangers need a location to contact visitors in Dillingham before they visit the Refuge. Most non-local visitors fly through Dillingham on their way to the Refuge, some without ever leaving the airport. A contact station at the airport would facilitate providing information to refuge visitors about various themes and issues such as wildlife viewing, “Leave No Trace” camping, etc.

2.8 Develop and implement an environmental education program that will result in a greater understanding and appreciation of refuge flora, fauna, and habitats.

### Goal 3. Resource Protection: Protect the integrity of the natural and cultural resources of the refuge.

*Rationale:* The lands and waters of the Togiak Refuge are healthy. Ecological processes are relatively intact, and the impact of man is relatively minor. Therefore, rather than focusing on the restoration of altered ecosystems, the management of Togiak Refuge relates to protecting existing conditions. Togiak Refuge will continue to actively work to assure ecological health by monitoring the state of individual components, such as water resources, plant communities, fish and wildlife species and cultural resources. When threats develop that jeopardize elements of ecological health, management will work to mitigate those threats.



USFWS

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



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.

#### Objectives:

3.1 Identify and safeguard key areas.

*Rationale:* All parts of the Togiak Refuge are not equally important in terms of ecological value. Some areas, even if relatively small, have tremendous importance to various plant and animal species, and thus warrant special attention.



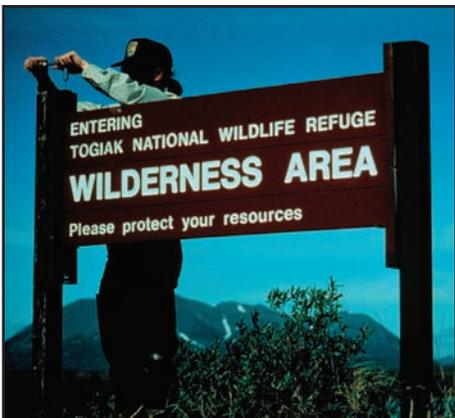
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*Caribou hunting in winter.*



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.*



USFWS

*River ranger installing the Togiak Wilderness Area boundary sign.*

3.2 Protect fish and wildlife resources to prevent changes from their natural species diversity and abundance.

*Rationale:* Human activities can have significant impacts on natural resources. Many people rely on refuge resources for their livelihood, from subsistence fisherman to big game guides. Protecting refuge resources from illegal harvest, over harvest, illegal guiding, and human induced degradation will help ensure that resources are available to use and enjoy in the future.

3.3. Conserve and interpret the cultural and historic resources of the refuge.

*Rationale:* Conserving and interpreting the cultural and historic resources of the refuge is not only required by law, but also allows the public to appreciate and value ancient and modern connections of humans to the land.

3.4 Seek funding to acquire lands that were identified as high priority in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Land Protection Plan (USFWS 2000) to improve resource protection.

3.5 Contribute to local, regional, and global efforts for conserving migratory species of fish and wildlife.

*Rationale:* The Togiak Refuge's role in conservation of natural resources extends beyond its borders. Togiak Refuge managers have a keen interest in the migratory pathways and the temporary destinations used by the transitory fish and wildlife species occupying the Refuge. The success of migratory species is a function of the weakest link in the chain of air, land, and water habitats through which they pass or reside. By maintaining the health and integrity of native ecosystems, Togiak Refuge will ensure its strength in this chain. The Refuge will assist larger efforts in migratory species management by monitoring the use of the refuge by those species and actively supporting monitoring throughout the migratory pathways.



USFWS

*Rafting is a common way for visitors to enjoy the Refuge.*

#### **Goal 4. Wilderness: Preserve the wilderness character of the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness area.**

*Rationale:* Togiak Refuge manages the second largest Wilderness area in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Wilderness areas enjoy special protection under Federal law and Service policy, all of which is focused on ensuring a continuation of truly natural conditions. The Togiak Refuge will actively pursue its wilderness management responsibilities and will



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.*

carefully consider the compatibility of all proposed access into or uses of the Togiak Wilderness area, including the administrative access by refuge staff.

### Objectives:

- 4.1 Within three years of adoption of this plan, complete a Wilderness Stewardship Plan for the Togiak Wilderness.
- 4.2 Promote environmental ethics and “Leave No Trace” techniques so that visitors will understand the value of wilderness, and future visitors will enjoy an unimpaired wilderness experience.
- 4.3 Perform minimum requirements analyses of all administrative activities planned to occur within the Togiak Wilderness area when such activities have potential to affect wilderness values.



USFWS

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

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

*Rationale:* Stewardship of Togiak Refuge’s natural resources requires a constantly changing infrastructure of personnel, material, and financial resources. This organizational structure has evolved over the past three decades, growing steadily as the demands on the Refuge’s resources have grown. Anticipating requirements is crucial to proactive management; thus, it is essential that the Refuge actively work to develop strategies to maintain support from both within and outside the Service and to maintain and appropriately modernize its infrastructure.

### Objectives:

- 5.1 Continue to fund the Refuge Information Technician program.
- 5.2 Continue a proactive safety program which surpasses legal requirements for administrative facilities and management operations at Togiak Refuge.
- 5.3 Provide regular technical training to develop and maintain the job



USFWS

*Refuge ranger helping anglers finding places on the map.*



USFWS

*The Togiak Cabin near its completion.*

competencies of all refuge staff.

5.4 Acquire and maintain adequate facilities, equipment, vehicles, watercraft, and aircraft to remain abreast of increasing demands from the public for information and services from Togiak Refuge.

5.5 Meet the refuge needs for pilots, biological staff, public contact staff, and administrative staff.

5.6 Direct construction of refuge field and headquarters facilities that foster efficient management of the Refuge and service to the public.

5.7 Maintain equipment and buildings used in all aspects of refuge management, including habitat, wildlife, and public use.

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

*Rationale:* The ecosystems comprising the Togiak Refuge do not end at the refuge borders; thus cooperation with surrounding land managers is essential. To this end, Togiak Refuge will continue to actively encourage the full participation of all interested parties in cooperative endeavors.

### Objectives:

6.1 Organize and participate in local, regional, state, national, and international partnerships, groups, and associations pursuing common natural resource management goals.

6.2 Coordinate refuge activities with public and private entities (including tribal governments; educational systems; Federal, state and local governments; and private industry) within and adjacent to Togiak Refuge. 🐟



USFWS

*Collaboration between stakeholders is crucial to successful refuge management.*

# Refuge Management

## Legal and Policy Guidance

Management of refuges in Alaska is governed by Federal laws including the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act and ANILCA, regulations implementing these laws, treaties, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Policy, and principles of sound resource management. These may address the potential activities that may occur on refuges. The Service developed management guidelines which apply to all Alaska refuges with some variation for specific areas.

Management of Togiak Refuge during the life of this plan will generally continue to follow the same course as under the 1987 Conservation Plan. The new vision statement and the goals and objectives developed by the refuge staff are incorporated into the management direction for Togiak Refuge.

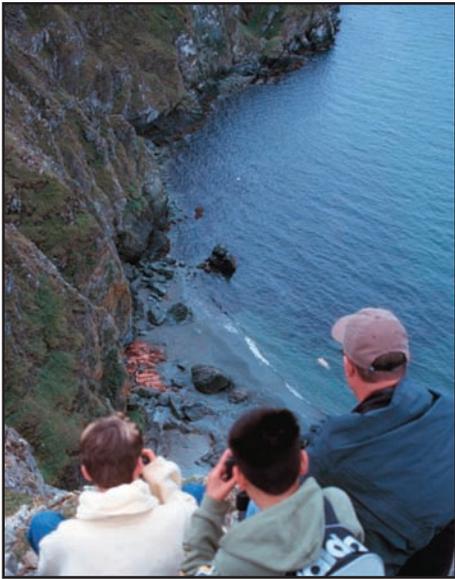
## Management Categories

A management category defines the level of human activity appropriate to a specific area of the Refuge. Two of the five management categories, Wilderness and Minimal Management, are applied to Togiak Refuge. Minimal management maintains the natural environment with very little



USFWS

*Fireweed along the Togiak River.*



USFWS

*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.*

evidence of human-caused change. Designated Wilderness is managed under the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the exceptions provided by ANILCA. Wilderness encourages having a broadened perspective of the refuge landscape, one that extends beyond just managing it as wildlife habitat. Wilderness is managed as an area “retaining its primeval character and influence”. Some activities are generally not allowed in designated Wilderness, including roads, motor vehicles, motorboats, motorized equipment, aircraft landings, structures, and most surface disturbing activities. Provisions of ANILCA, however, give exceptions for specific purposes, such as allowing snowmachines, motorboat and airplane access for traditional activities.

## Special Management

### Cape Peirce Wildlife Viewing Area

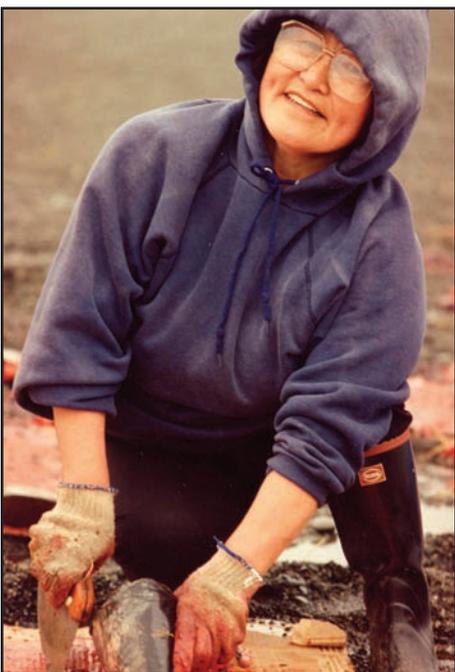
The 1991 Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Public Use Management Plan established the Cape Peirce Wildlife Viewing Area. This area is managed within the Minimal Management category, but has additional guidance regarding public use and facilities. Togiak Refuge will continue environmental education programs such as the Cape Peirce cultural camp. The River Ranger program and airport contacts will continue to provide interpretive and educational information to refuge visitors. Contact the Refuge for more information.

### Appropriate Use and Compatibility Determinations

Fish and Wildlife Service policy states that all uses of a national wildlife refuge which the Service has jurisdiction over must be determined to be appropriate uses. The following uses have been found appropriate: commercial transporter services, subsistence activities, commercially guided recreational fishing and hunting services, winter snowmachine trail marking and marker maintenance, Native allotment surveys, reburial of archaeological human remains, scientific research, State of Alaska management activities, and activities associated with priority public uses. The Refuge Administration Act required any use of a national wildlife refuge to be compatible with the Refuge System Mission and the purposes for which the refuge was established. Compatibility Determinations for the following activities are included in the Plan: subsistence activities; wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and environmental interpretation; recreational fishing and hunting; commercially guided recreational fishing and hunting services; trail marking and marker maintenance; Native Allotment Surveys; reburial of archaeological human remains; scientific research; State of Alaska activities; trapping; and helicopter use to support authorized activities by other government agencies.

### Subsistence

Providing the opportunity for continued subsistence use by local residents is one of the purposes of Togiak Refuge. Rural Alaska residents engaged in a subsistence way of life will be allowed to continue using resources within the Refuge for traditional purposes. These resources include fish and wildlife, house logs and firewood and other plant materials. Access to refuge lands by traditional means will be allowed for subsistence purposes, subject to reasonable regulation. Traditional means include snowmachines, motorboats, dog teams, and other means of surface transportation traditionally used by local rural residents.



USFWS

*Cutting salmon with a traditional Ulu knife.*



USFWS

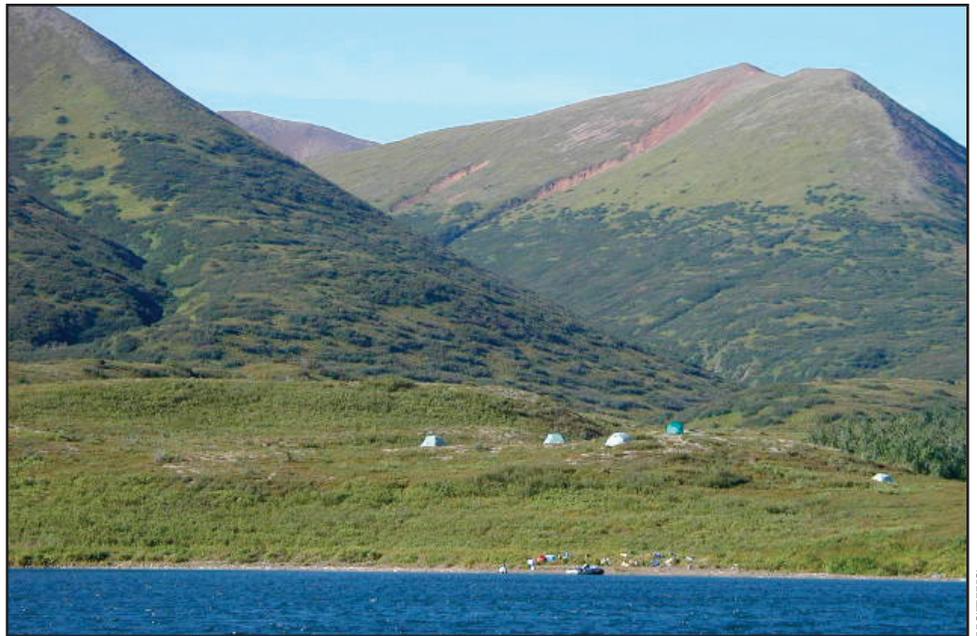
*Tundra vegetation in fall colors.*

## Helicopter Use

Helicopters may be authorized to land on refuge lands for a number of purposes such as geologic hazards evaluations, fisheries and wildlife management, and fire suppression. Generally, a permit is required for any helicopter landing. Helicopter landings for recreational purposes are not allowed on Togiak Refuge.

## Public Use Management Plan

A Public Use Management Plan (PUMP) was developed for the Refuge in 1991. That plan is being revised concurrently with the revision of the Comprehensive Plan and will be available as a separate publication.



USFWS

*Fishing camp along Goodnews Lake.*

## Management Activities Table

This table gives an overview, by management category, of activities, uses, and facilities that may be allowed in Minimal Management and in Wilderness. The table has been adapted to show only activities and categories that apply to Togiak Refuge. For the complete table and more detail refer to the full Comprehensive Conservation Plan or contact Togiak Refuge.

The following are definitions of terms used in the table:

**Allowed**—Activity, use, or facility is allowed under existing NEPA analysis, appropriate use findings, compatibility determinations, and applicable laws and regulations of the Service, other federal agencies and the State of Alaska.

**May be allowed**—Activity, use, or facility may be allowed subject to site-specific NEPA analysis, an appropriate use finding (when required), a specific compatibility determination (when required), and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations of the Service, other Federal agencies and the State of Alaska.

**May be authorized**—Activity, use, or facility may be allowed; a special use permit or other authorization is required.



Sue Matthews/USFWS

*Harbor Seal.*



USFWS

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

**Not allowed**—Activity, use, or facility is not allowed.

**NEPA analysis**—All activities, uses, and facilities proposed for a refuge that have the potential to result in significant effects on the environment require an analysis of potential environmental impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This analysis may be documented as a categorical exclusion (CE), an environmental assessment (EA), or an environmental impact statement (EIS), depending on the nature of the proposed project.

**Appropriate Use**—All uses over which the Service has jurisdiction must be determined to be appropriate following direction in Service Manual 630 FW 1. Hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation are considered appropriate by national policy with no further analysis required.

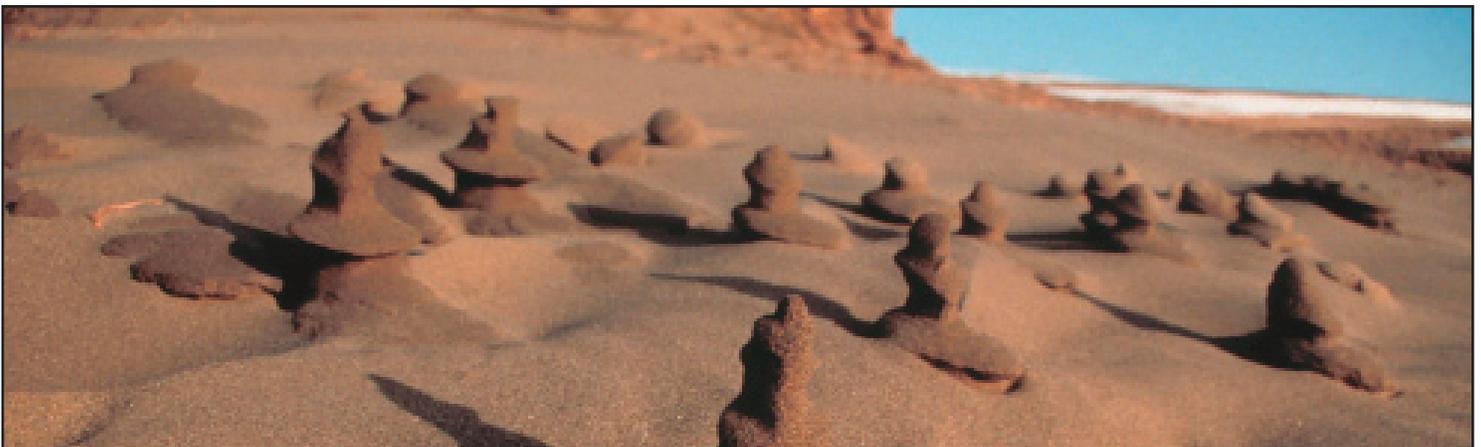
**Compatibility**—All activities, uses, and facilities allowed on a refuge, except management actions undertaken by or for the Service, must be compatible with the purposes of the refuge and the mission of the Refuge System. The analysis that occurs results in a refuge compatibility determination. Management 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 of the Service Manual).

**Regulations**—All activities, uses, and facilities allowed on a refuge must comply with any applicable regulations, as published in the Code of Federal Regulations. Regulations are developed by the Service through a public process to implement the legal authorities under which the Service manages the Refuge System. For some activities, other Federal agency and/or State regulations may also apply.

**Temporary**—A continuous period of time not to exceed 12 months, except as specifically provided otherwise. Special-use permits or other authorizations may prescribe a longer period of time, but the structures or other human-made improvements need to be readily and completely dismantled and removed from the site when the period of authorized use terminates.

**Area or time restrictions**—All activities and uses allowed on a refuge may be restricted in certain areas or at certain times at the discretion of the refuge manager and with the appropriate level of public involvement by emergency (short-term) or permanent regulation, if necessary, to protect refuge resources or human health and safety.

**Management emergencies**—Activities, uses, and facilities not allowed on a refuge or in specific management categories may be allowed if naturally occurring or human-caused actions adversely affect refuge resources or threaten human health and safety.



Lisa Haggblom/USFWS

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

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<b>ECOSYSTEM, HABITAT, AND FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT</b>		
<b>Ecosystem and Landscape Management</b>		
<b>Collecting Information on and Monitoring Ecosystem Components</b> Data gathering, monitoring, and maintaining a comprehensive database of selected ecosystem components (plants, animals, fish, water, air).	Allowed	Allowed*
<b>Research and Management</b> Access and collection of data necessary for management decisions or to further science by the Service.	Allowed	Allowed*
Access and collection of data necessary for management decisions or to further science by ADF&G.	Allowed	Allowed*
Access and collection of data necessary for management decisions or to further science by other researchers.	May be authorized	May be authorized*
<b>Research and Management Facilities</b> May be permanent or temporary structures or camps including weirs, counting towers and sonar counters.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Fish and Wildlife Habitat Management</b>		
<b>Describing, Locating, and Mapping Habitats</b> Development of quantitative, written, and graphic descriptions of fish and wildlife habitat including water, food, and shelter components.)	Allowed	Allowed*
<b>Habitat Management</b> Mechanical Treatment Activities such as cutting, crushing or mowing of vegetation; water control structures; fencing; artificial nest structures.  <i>Chemical Treatment</i> Use of chemicals to remove or control nonnative species.  <i>Manual Treatment</i> Use of hand tools to remove, reduce, or modify hazardous plant fuels or exotic plant species, or to modify habitats (e.g., remove beaver dams).	Not allowed; with exceptions  May be allowed  May be allowed	Not allowed; with exceptions*  May be allowed*  May be allowed*

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<b>Aquatic Habitat Modifications</b> Activities such as stream bank restoration, passage structures, fish barriers, or removal of obstacles that result in physical modification of aquatic habitats to maintain or restore native fish species.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Fire Management—Prescribed Fires and Wildland Fire Use</b> Fire ignited by management actions or planned use of naturally occurring fires to meet management objectives.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Fire Management—Fire Suppression</b> Management actions intended to protect identified resources from a fire, extinguish a fire, or alter a fire's direction of spread.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Nonnative and Pest Plant Control</b> Monitoring, extirpation, control, removal, and/or relocation and other management practices for pest and nonnative plant species.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Water Quality and Quantity Management</b> Monitoring of water quality and quantity to identify baseline data and for management purposes; includes installation of gauging stations.	Allowed	Allowed*
<b>Fish and Wildlife Population Management</b>		
<b>Reintroduction of Species</b> The reintroduction of native species to restore natural diversity of fish, wildlife and habitats.	May be allowed	May be allowed
<b>Fish and Wildlife Control</b> The control, relocation, sterilization, removal, or other management of native species, including predators, to maintain natural diversity of fish, wildlife and habitats; favor other fish or wildlife populations; protect reintroduced, threatened, or endangered species; or restore depleted native populations.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Nonnative Species Management</b> The removal or control of nonnative species (including predators).	May be allowed	May be allowed*

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<p><b>Pest Management and Disease Prevention and Control</b> Relocation or removal of organisms that threaten human health or survival of native fish, wildlife, or plant species. Management practices directed at controlling pathogens that threaten fish, wildlife, and people, such as rabies and parasite control.</p>	May be allowed	May be allowed *
<p><b>Fishery Restoration</b> Actions taken to restore fish access to spawning and rearing habitat, or actions taken to restore populations to historic levels. Includes harvest management, escapement goals, habitat restoration, stocking, egg incubation boxes, and lake fertilization.</p>	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<p><b>Fishery Restoration Facilities</b> Fisheries facilities may be permanent or temporary and may include hatcheries, fish ladders, fish passages, fish barriers, and associated structures.</p>	May be authorized	May be authorized*
<p><b>Fishery Enhancement</b> Activities applied to a fish stock to supplement numbers of harvestable fish to a level beyond what could be naturally produced based upon a determination or reasonable estimate of historic levels.</p>	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<p><b>Fishery Enhancement Facilities</b> May be permanent or temporary and may include hatcheries, egg incubation boxes, fish ladders, fish passages, fish barriers, and associated structures.</p>	May be authorized	May be authorized*
<p><b>Native Fish Introductions</b> Movement of native fish species within a drainage on the refuge to areas where they have not historically existed.</p>	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<p><b>Nonnative Species Introductions</b> Introduction of species not naturally occurring within the refuge.</p>	Not allowed	Not allowed
<b>SUBSISTENCE</b>		
<b>Subsistence Activities</b>		
<p><b>Fishing, Hunting, Trapping, and Berry Picking</b> The taking of fish and wildlife and other natural resources for personal consumption, as provided by law.</p>	Allowed	Allowed

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<b>SUBSISTENCE</b>		
<b>Subsistence Activities</b>		
<b>Collection of House Logs and Firewood</b> Harvesting live standing timber greater than 3 inches diameter at breast height for personal or extended family use.	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>Collection of Plant Materials</b> Harvesting trees less than 3 inches diameter at breast height, dead standing or downed timber, grass, bark, and other plant materials used for subsistence purposes.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Temporary Facilities</b> Establishment and use of tent platforms, shelters, and other temporary facilities and equipment directly related to the taking of fish and wildlife.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Subsistence Cabins – See Cabins</b>		
<b>Subsistence Access – subject to reasonable regulations under provisions of Section 810 of ANILCA</b>		
Use of snowmobiles, motorboats, and other means of surface transportation traditionally employed for subsistence purposes.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>ACCESS</b>		
Restrictions subject to provisions of Section 1110 of ANILCA as applicable; see also Subsistence Access section above.		
<b>Foot</b>	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Dogs and Dog Teams</b>	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Other Domestic Animals</b> Includes horses, mules, llamas, etc.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Nonmotorized Boats</b> Includes canoes, kayaks, rafts, etc.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Use of snowmachine, motorboats, airplanes and nonmotorized surface transportation methods</b> for traditional activities and for travel to and from villages and homesites.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Off-Road Vehicles (All-Terrain Vehicles)</b> Includes air boats and air cushion vehicles.	Not allowed; with exceptions	Not allowed; with exceptions
<b>Helicopters</b> Includes all rotary-wing aircraft.	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>PUBLIC USE, RECREATION, and OUTREACH ACTIVITIES</b> Also see ACCESS and Commercial Recreation sections.		
<b>Hunting, Fishing, Wildlife Observation, Wildlife Photography, Interpretation and Environmental Education</b> Note: All activities listed are priority public uses.	Allowed	Allowed

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<b>Trapping, Walking, Hiking, Camping at Undeveloped Sites, and Dog Sledding</b>	Allowed	Allowed
<b>General Photography</b> See also <b>COMMERCIAL USES</b> .	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Outreach Activities</b>	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Public Use and Recreation Facilities</b> – level of development is consistent with management intent of the category		
<b>Designated Off-Road Vehicle (All-Terrain Vehicle) Trails and Routes</b>	Not allowed	Not allowed
<b>Cleared Landing Strips and Areas</b> Includes unimproved areas where airplanes land. Minor brush cutting or rock removal by hand is allowed for maintenance.	May be allowed	Existing strips allowed to remain; new strips not allowed*
<b>Constructed Hiking Trails</b> Includes bridges, boardwalks, trailheads, and related facilities.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Designated Hiking Routes</b> Unimproved and unmaintained trails; may be designated by signs, cairns, and/or on maps.	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Boat Launches and Docks</b> Designated sites for launching and storing watercraft or tying up a float plane.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Visitor Contact Facilities</b> A variety of staffed and unstaffed facilities providing information on the refuge and its resources to the public; facilities range from visitor centers to kiosks and signs.	May be allowed	Generally not allowed*
<b>Hardened Campsites</b> Areas where people can camp that are accessible by vehicle or on foot but where the only facilities provided are for public health and safety and/or resource protection; may include gravel pads for tents, hardened trails, and/or primitive toilets.	Allowed	Allowed*
<b>Temporary Facilities</b> Includes tent frames, caches, and other similar or related facilities; does not include cabins. See also Subsistence, Commercial Uses, and Administrative Facilities.	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>Cabins</b> – also other related structures such as outdoor toilets, food caches, storage sheds, and fish drying racks		
<b>Public Use Cabin</b> A cabin administered by the Service and available for use by the public; intended only for short-term public recreational use and occupancy.	Existing cabins allowed to remain; new cabins may be allowed	Existing cabins allowed to remain; new cabins may be allowed*

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<b>Administrative Cabin</b> Any cabin primarily used by refuge staff or other authorized personnel for the administration of the refuge.	May be allowed	May be allowed
<b>Subsistence Cabin</b> Any cabin necessary for health and safety and to provide for the continuation of ongoing subsistence activities; not for recreational use.	Existing cabins allowed to remain; new cabins may be authorized	Existing cabins allowed to remain; new cabins may be authorized
<b>Commercial Cabin</b> Any cabin which is used in association with a commercial operation including but not limited to commercial fishing activities and recreational guiding services.	Existing cabins allowed to remain; new cabins may be authorized	Existing cabins allowed to remain; new cabins not allowed
<b>Other Cabins</b> Cabins associated with authorized uses by other government agencies.	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>Administrative Facilities</b>		
<b>Administrative Field Camps</b> Temporary facilities used by refuge staff and other authorized personnel to support individual (generally) field projects; may include but is not limited to tent frames and temporary/portable outhouses, shower facilities, storage/maintenance facilities, and caches.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>Administrative Field Sites</b> Permanent facilities used by refuge staff or other authorized personnel for the administration of the refuge. Includes administrative cabins and related structures (see Cabins) and larger multi-facility administrative sites necessary to support ongoing field projects, research, and other management activities. Temporary facilities to meet short-term needs may supplement the permanent facilities at these sites.	Use of existing sites allowed, including replacement of existing facilities as necessary; new sites may be allowed	Use of existing sites allowed, including replacement of existing facilities as necessary; new sites may be allowed*
<b>Hazardous Materials Storage</b> Sites, including appropriate structures and equipment necessary for the storage and transfer of fuels and other hazardous materials used for administrative purposes; must be in compliance with all federal and state requirements.	May be allowed	May be allowed
<b>Aircraft Hangars and Facilities for Storage of Aircraft.</b>	Not allowed	Not allowed*
<b>Boat Launches and Docks</b> Designated sites for launching and storing watercraft or tying up a float plane.	May be allowed	May be allowed*

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<b>Radio Repeater Sites</b> Sites used to maintain radio communications equipment; may include helispots for access.	May be allowed	May be allowed*
<b>COMMERCIAL USES</b> Except as noted, a special use permit or other authorization is required for economic use of a refuge.		
<b>Commercial Recreation</b> – includes all forms of guiding, including those operated by nonprofit, educational, and other noncommercial groups		
<b>Guiding and Outfitting</b>	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>Transporting</b>	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>Fixed-Wing Air Taxis</b>	May be authorized	May be authorized
<b>Helicopter Air Taxis</b>	Not allowed	Not allowed; with exceptions
<b>Mineral Exploration</b>		
<b>Surface Geological Studies</b> Includes surface rock collecting and geological mapping activities (includes helicopter or fixed-wing access).	May be authorized	Not allowed
<b>Geophysical Exploration and Seismic Studies</b> Examination of subsurface rock formations through devices that set off and record vibrations in the earth. Usually involves mechanized surface transportation but may be helicopter supported; includes studies conducted for the U.S. Department of the Interior.	May be authorized	Not allowed
<b>Core Sampling</b> Using helicopter transported motorized drill rig to extract subsurface rock samples; does not include exploratory wells; includes sampling conducted for U.S. Department of the Interior.	May be authorized	Not allowed
<b>Other Geophysical Studies</b> Helicopter-supported gravity and magnetic surveys and other minimal impact activities that do not require mechanized surface transportation.	May be authorized	Not allowed
<b>Mineral Development</b>		
<b>Oil and Gas Leasing</b> Leasing, drilling and extraction of oil and gas for commercial purposes. Includes all associated above and below ground facilities.	Not allowed	Not allowed

ACTIVITY	MINIMAL MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT of WILDERNESS
*All activities in designated Wilderness will be subject to a minimum requirements analysis.		
<p><b>Sale of Sand, Gravel, and Other Common Variety Minerals</b> Extraction of sand, gravel, and other saleable minerals for commercial purposes; includes commercial use by federal, state, and local agencies.</p>	Not allowed	Not allowed
<p><b>Other Mineral Leasing</b> Includes the extraction of coal, geothermal resources, potassium, sodium, phosphate, sulfur, or other leaseable minerals for commercial purposes. For cases of national need, see full Comprehensive Conservation Plan.</p>	Not allowed	Not allowed
<b>Other Commercial Activities</b>		
<p><b>Commercial Filming, Videotaping, and Audiotaping</b></p>	May be authorized	May be authorized
<p><b>Grazing</b></p>	Not allowed	Not allowed
<p><b>Commercial Fishery Support Facilities</b> At or below 1979 levels.</p>	Allowed	Allowed
<p><b>Commercial Fishery Support Facilities</b> Above 1979 levels.</p>	May be authorized	Not allowed
<p><b>Commercial Timber and Firewood Harvest</b></p>	May be authorized	Not allowed
<p><b>Commercial Gathering of Other Refuge Resources</b></p>	Not allowed	Not allowed
<p><b>Transportation and Utility Systems</b> Includes transmission lines, pipelines, telephone and electrical power lines, oil and gas pipelines, communication systems, roads, airstrips, and other necessary related facilities. Does not include facilities associated with on-refuge oil and gas development.</p>	May be authorized; would require a plan amendment	Must be authorized by Congress
<p><b>Navigation Aids and Other Facilities</b> Includes air and water navigation aids and related facilities, communication sites and related facilities, facilities for national defense purposes and related air/water navigation aids, and facilities for weather, climate, and fisheries research and monitoring; includes both private and government facilities.</p>	May be authorized	May be authorized*





*Rugged mountain tops and clear blue sky appear in vivid contrast.*

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## Implementation and Monitoring

The Togiak Comprehensive Conservation Plan will be implemented through specific objectives and various step-down plans. Each step-down plan has its own focus and revision schedule. Part of the implementation process is the involvement with partners to further the goals of the Refuge. Monitoring the outcome of implementation is accomplished by surveys, inventories, creel censuses, etc., and may lead to amendment or revision of the Plan.

### Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Adaptive Management

The goals adopted in the plan are intended to guide management of the Refuge for many years. The objectives and their associated strategies are concrete steps toward reaching those goals and are an essential part of implementing this plan. Changing environmental conditions, policies, budget constraints, new technologies, and opportunities for partnerships are only a few of the areas where flexibility in management is helpful. As objectives and strategies are met, opportunities and needs for others will arise. It is our intention that these sections of the CCP remain dynamic and responsive to changing management situations while also being a measure of real progress toward our goals.

### Key Step-Down Plans

Step-down management plans deal with specific management subjects. They describe management strategies and implementation schedules and provide details necessary to fulfill management goals and objectives identified in the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Step-down plans for the Refuges include the following:

#### Fisheries Management Plan

The Fisheries Management Plan describes the fishery resource, the ways in which humans have used the resource, the history of fisheries management on the Refuge, and major issues and concerns. The plan provides for continued use of fishery resources by subsistence, commercial, and recreational users. It provides direction to ensure the conservation of fishery resources and habitat. It describes objectives and tasks to address the issues and concerns and assigns priorities and costs for Federal tasks. The Togiak Refuge Fisheries Management Plan was completed in 1991 and is scheduled for review in 2010.

#### Wildlife Inventory and Monitoring Plan

A wildlife inventory and monitoring plan guides the annual program of wildlife related surveys conducted on the Refuge. This plan supports Service policy to collect baseline information, monitor critical parameters and trends, and base management on biologically and statistically sound data. This plan guides collection of data on species of management concern. A wildlife inventory plan for the Refuge was completed in 2008.

#### Public Use Management Plan

In 1991, the Public Use Management Plan for the Togiak Refuge was



*Fish weir at Goodnews River.*

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*Brown bears along the Kanoktok River.*

L.Barnes/USFWS



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*Caribou males and females carry antlers.*

completed and the Refuge began implementation. Since the implementation of the Public Use Management Plan, several studies have been completed, data have been collected, wildlife populations have changed, and public use of the Refuge has changed.

A draft revision of the plan was published in October 2007 in conjunction with the draft CCP. The final Public Use Management Plan revision is in progress.

### **Public Use Monitoring Plan**

Because of the complex nature of public uses within the Refuge, a detailed system for measuring change is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the public use program. The Refuge will work with cooperators to identify important indicators of subsistence and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities. The Public Use Monitoring Plan will establish standards for these indicators and identify management actions to be taken should these standards be exceeded. Techniques for measuring indicators will be identified through this step-down plan.

### **Cultural Resource Management Plan**

This plan provides guidance to refuge staff in protecting and managing cultural resources of the Refuge. The Cultural Resources Management Plan describes the current state of our knowledge of the prehistory and history of the region. It includes a list of projects that would fill in gaps in knowledge or would complete existing work. A cultural resource guide for the Refuge is scheduled for completion in 2010.

### **Environmental Monitoring Plan**

Refuge staff will develop an ecosystems model for the Togiak Refuge and its surrounding environment to better illustrate relationships among fish, wildlife, plant, habitat and public use. Based on this model, the Refuge will design and implement a comprehensive environmental monitoring program taking advantage of protocols and methods already accepted by the National Park Service and others in southwestern Alaska to address refuge questions and objectives. Upon review of available meteorological data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the refuge could establish National Weather Service stations and/or remote automated weather stations within or adjacent to the Refuge.

### **Fire Management Plan**

The Fire Management Plan describes the fire management activities that will occur on the Togiak Refuge. The Fire Management Plan is the framework for all refuge fire management decision-making. Service policy requires all refuges with vegetation capable of sustaining fire to develop a fire management plan. The Fire Management Plan describes the relationship to land management goals and fire policy, wildland fire management strategies and components, organization and budget, monitoring and evaluation, public safety, reviews and coordination/collaboration. Wildland fires occasionally occur within the Refuge and a fire management plan was completed in 2007.



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*Marmots typically occur in the alpine tundra.*



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*Rivers within the Refuge provide various levels of navigational difficulty.*

### Land Protection Plan

A land protection plan focuses on private lands within the refuge boundaries with the goal of identifying and conserving high-quality habitat on those lands. The plan guides the Refuge's land conservation activities and provides a framework for refuge and private landowner cooperation. Any action would require mutual consent between the Service and the private landowner. The plan does not obligate either the Refuge or the landowners to undertake any of the land-conservation measures identified. The Refuge must consider management goals, priorities, and the availability of funds when approached by private landowners with land-conservation proposals. The Refuge's land protection plan was completed in 2000, and is scheduled for review in 2015.

### Wilderness Stewardship Plan

This plan is a step-down management plan that provides detailed strategies and implementation measures for meeting the broader wilderness goals and objectives identified in the Conservation Plan. The Togiak Wilderness Stewardship Plan will be completed within three years of adoption of this plan.



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*Refuge biologist collecting water sample.*

### Visitor Services Plan

A visitor services plan guides the management of recreational and subsistence uses, including hunting, trapping, fishing, guiding, camping, photography, sightseeing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. It summarizes how the public was involved in developing issues and alternatives and describes the alternatives that were developed to manage public use. The previously completed (1991) Public Use Management Plan and the revision of that plan, which is in progress will be incorporated into the Visitor Services Plan. A Visitor Services Plan is scheduled to be initiated after completion of the Wilderness Stewardship Plan.

### Water Resources Plan of Study

A water resources plan guides collection of hydrologic data on waters within and draining onto the Refuge. Objectives of this plan are to document the occurrence, quantity, distribution, and movement of surface waters and to quantify instream water rights needed to maintain and protect fish and wildlife habitats. The plan describes the water bodies of interest and the goals, objectives, priorities, and methods of study needed. A water resources plan for the refuges was developed by the Water Resources Branch in 1997 and continues to be implemented.

Collection of water quality data was added after the initiation of the 1997 water resource plan. Measurement and analysis of physical, nutrient and inorganic chemical water quality variables occurred in conjunction with operating stream gages and was guided by the Water Resources Branch Quality Assurance Plan for Inorganic Water Quality Assessment in Alaska Refuges.

### Vegetation Inventory and Monitoring Plan

Present descriptions of the vegetation of Togiak Refuge are qualitative and general. A plan is needed to develop a quantitative understanding of the vegetation through field inventory. Such a plan includes: describing major coastal plant communities along representative gradients and identifying the main vegetation types. 🐟



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*Mountain tops arise above the fog.*

## Partnership Opportunities

Partnerships with other organizations are among the ways in which the Service fulfills its mission, “Working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”

The Refuge exists within a dynamic ecosystem. Fish, wildlife, and other resources, many of national and international importance, do not recognize artificial boundaries. In addition, the general public, various organizations, and other government agencies have interests in the Refuge. Implementation of many refuge programs requires community involvement and assistance.

Examples of existing, past, and potential partnerships include the following:

- Biologists of Togiak Refuge and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) routinely collaborate to assess status and trends of Mulchatna caribou, moose, salmon, Dolly Varden, and other species for which shared concerns for management exist.
- The Nushagak Peninsula caribou herd, which was reintroduced in 1988, is managed in partnership with the Nushagak Caribou Planning Committee with representatives from five village councils, one village corporation, Bristol Bay Native Association, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. These groups were instrumental in making the reintroduction successful. The committee meets to discuss herd management, harvest allocation, and other issues related to the herd.
- The Mulchatna caribou herd occupies range that in recent years has encompassed parts of the Togiak Refuge Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, the Yukon Delta NWR, and BLM land interspersed throughout the region. In addition to cooperating with ADF&G in the status assessment and management of this herd, the refuge partners with the other affected Federal agencies and refuges that share this resource.
- The Natural Resources Department of the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) works with the refuge in accomplishing a number of mutual objectives. Summer interns employed by BBNA provide valuable assistance on refuge projects. A traditional and ecological knowledge project undertaken by the refuge with funding provided by the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) has received broad support from BBNA including funding and staff time to complete the project. A partnership with BBNA to complete OSM funded subsistence projects has been undertaken in the past, and continues to be a component of any project for which the Refuge shares mutual objectives of information collection.
- The Togiak Refuge serves as the setting for a number of universities conducting studies on climate change. The Refuge has partnered with the University of Colorado, Northern Arizona University, Mt. Holyoke College, and the University of Chicago to conduct analysis and long term climate studies to help assess how flora and fauna may have changed over time in the region.
- Education and outreach continues to be a central component essential to successful management of the Refuge. Partnerships with Southwest Regional Schools, Dillingham School District, and the Lower Kuskokwim School District as well as all of the affected communities allow this to be successful. Some of the elements of this partnership include the Bristol Bay Salmon Camp, Cape Peirce Marine Science and



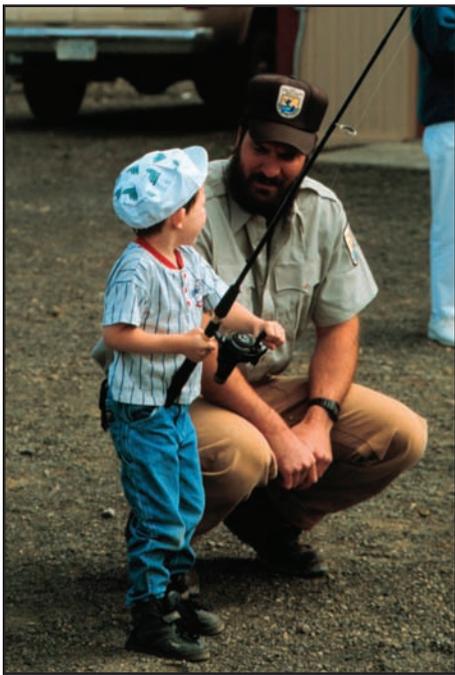
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*Alaska poppy.*



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*Refuge biologist collaring moose.*



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*Environmental education - fishing!*

Yup'ik Culture Camp, and the Ecology and Outdoor Skills Camp held each summer. Classroom visits by refuge staff are made periodically during the school year to conduct environmental education programs, generate interest for the science camps, provide migratory bird calendar contest information, and other purposes.

- A program of inholding acquisition has been taking place on the Refuge for a number of years. To implement this program the Refuge works with the Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership which includes an array of Native interests, commercial operators, conservation groups, land managers, and others working together to protect natural resources of Southwest Alaska.
- The common occurrence of moose on many parts of the Refuge is a fairly recent phenomenon. Refuge staff work in partnership with ADF&G and the villages of Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, and Dillingham through the Unit 17A Moose Management Working Group to monitor the status of the moose herd in that unit and develop management strategies. Work continues with the villages of Goodnews Bay, Platinum, and Quinhagak to develop management goals for expanding moose herds in drainages most used by those villages. 🐟

## Comprehensive Conservation Plan Amendment and Revision

Periodic review and revision of this Plan will be needed. As knowledge of the Refuge's resources and users improves, changes in management directions may be identified. Fish and wildlife populations, user groups, adjacent land uses, and other management considerations change with time, often in unforeseen ways. Challenges also may be encountered in implementing the Plan.

Revisions are a necessary part of the adaptive management approach used by the Refuge. This means that objectives and strategies to reach goals can be adjusted. Most of the resulting changes will fine-tune the plan. Minor changes will be addressed in the more-detailed refuge, step-down plans, and annual work plans. If a major change is required it will become necessary to develop a new plan.

To enable refuge users; adjacent landowners; local, state, and Federal agencies; and other interested parties to express their views on how the Refuge is being managed, the Refuge will periodically hold meetings or use other techniques to solicit comments. By encouraging continuing public input, the Refuge will be better able to serve the public, to determine potential problems before they occur, and to take immediate action to resolve existing problems.

Every three to five years, Refuge staff will review public comments, local and state government recommendations, staff recommendations, research studies, and other sources of information to determine if revisions to the Plan are necessary. If major changes are proposed, public meetings may be held and a new environmental assessment or environmental impact statement may be necessary. Full review and updating of the Plan will occur every 15 years. 🐟



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*Winter scene on Togiak Refuge*

**U. S. Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Region 7, Alaska**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan  
Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has completed the Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Plan) for the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. The draft revised plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) (herein incorporated by reference) describe the two alternatives for managing the Refuge and associated effects on the human environment. No substantive changes in the preferred alternative, Alternative 1, were made in response to public comments. Alternative 1 was selected for implementation.

**Alternatives Considered**

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires the Service to designate areas according to their respective resources and values and to specify programs and uses within the areas designated. To meet this requirement, the Alaska Region established management categories for the refuges including Wilderness; Minimal, Moderate, Intensive, and Wild River management. In the past, additional categories, including Cooperative Management were also used. Appropriate activities, public uses, commercial uses, and facilities are identified for each management category.

Two alternatives were considered in the environmental assessment. Alternative 1, the Proposed Action, includes implementation of updated management guidelines, converting lands in Cooperative Management into Minimal Management, and adds Refuge vision statement, goals and objectives. A number of potential activities are addressed which were not previously considered. Alternative 2, Current Management, maintains lands in Cooperative Management. No Refuge vision statement, goals, or objectives are included. Under either alternative, helicopter landings for recreational purposes would not be allowed.

**Public Review**

Public comments on the draft plan and EA were solicited from September 27, 2007, through January 18, 2008. During the public comment period meetings were held in Anchorage, Quinhagak, Goodnews Bay, Togiak and Dillingham.

**Revisions from Draft Plan**

Only minor revisions to Alternative 1, the preferred alternative, were made as a result of the public comments on the Draft Revised Togiak Plan.

Alternative 1, the preferred alternative, provides a realistic balance between public use of the

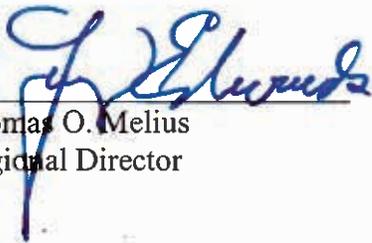
Refuge and the conservation needs of the Refuge. Alternative 1 best accomplishes refuge purposes, and best helps achieve the missions of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the Service. It provides long-term protection of fish and wildlife populations and their habitats while allowing for appropriate levels of fish and wildlife-dependent recreation, interpretation and environmental education, subsistence, and other public uses.

### **Analysis of Impacts**

The EA analyzed direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on refuge resources of fish and wildlife and on subsistence and wildlife dependent recreation, refuge facilities, cultural resources, the refuge environment, and the refuge communities. No significant effects were identified in the analysis.

### **Conclusions**

Based on review and evaluation of the information contained in the EA and revised plan, I have determined that there will be no significant individual or cumulative impacts to the human environment, within the meaning of section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. I have determined that the activities prescribed in this plan are not major Federal actions. Accordingly, the Service is not required to prepare an environmental impact statement.

for   
Thomas O. Melius  
Regional Director

  
Date

# STATE OF ALASKA

**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER**

**SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR**

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The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources hereby adopts the guidelines in Appendix C (pages C-9 through C-14) of the Revised Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Public Use Management Plan Environmental Assessment for state-owned shorelands in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River as a state land use plan under AS 38.04.065 and 11 AAC 55.010-.030. The Department of Natural Resources will manage state-owned shorelands within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River consistent with the guidelines identified in the revised plan and listed on the following three pages.

Those state-owned shorelands within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and lower Goodnews River were designated as Special Use Lands at 11 AAC 96.014(b)(8) in 2002. The Commissioner finds that this designation remains consistent with the Department of Natural Resources' management authority and that this action continues to be in the best interest of the state.

This action rescinds the previous Special Use Lands Designation for this area, signed May 10, 1991.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tom Irwin, Commissioner  
 Department of Natural Resources

*April 14, 2008*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

MANAGEMENT OF STATE SHORELANDS AND WATERS WITHIN THE  
TOGIAC 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. The Special Use Land Designation (SULD) was revised in 2008 in conjunction with the Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Public Use Management Plan revision process for the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. These revisions to the 1991 SULD were intended to clarify guidelines and language presented in the original version.

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.

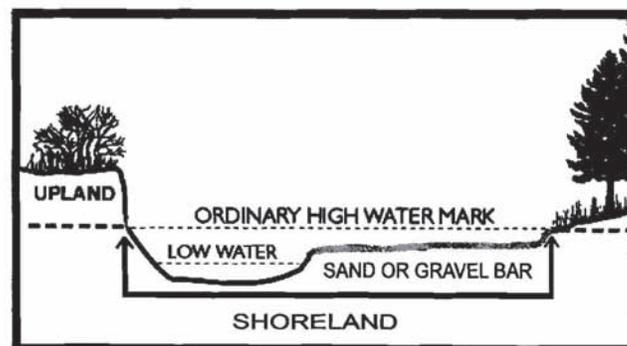


Figure 1: Delineation of State-Owned Shorelands

#### 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.

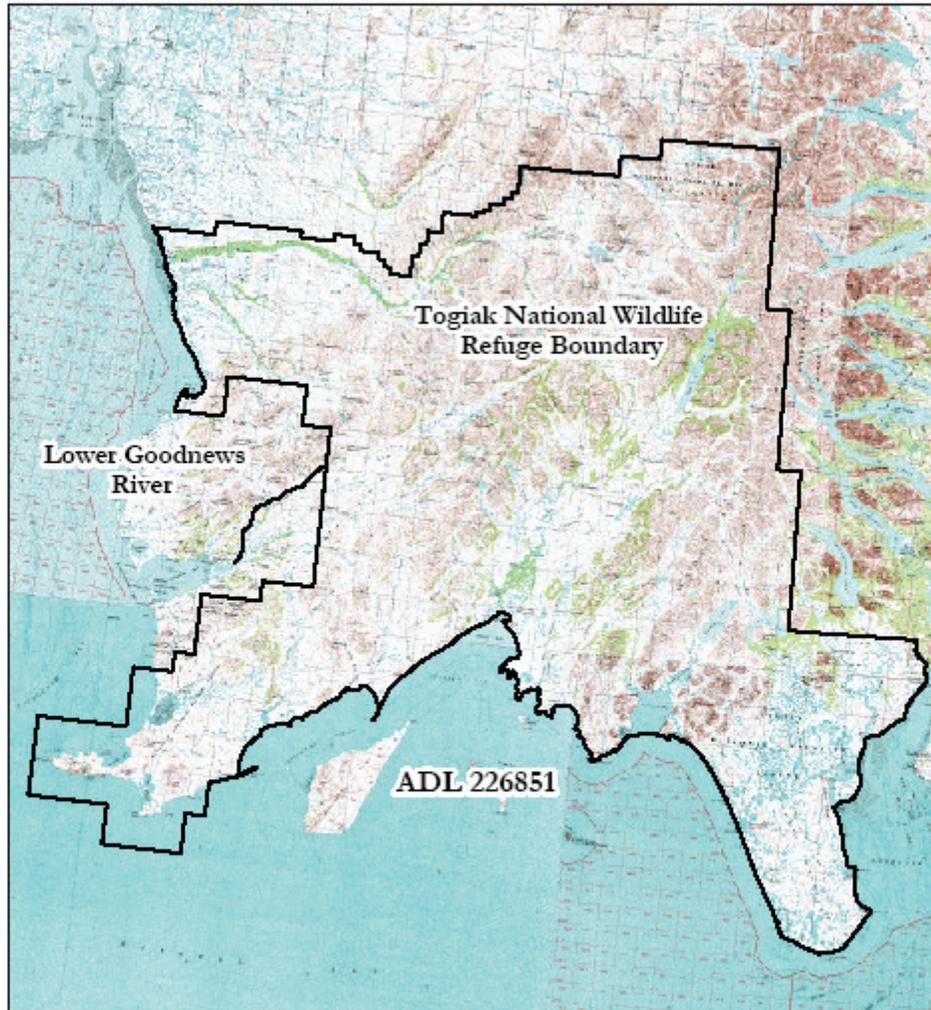
#### DEFINITIONS

*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

U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov>

September 2009



Requests for additional information about the Togiak Refuge and its Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan should be directed to:

Refuge Manager  
Togiak National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 270  
Dillingham, AK 99576

Headquarters Phone: 907-842-1063  
Headquarters Fax: 907-842-5402

E-mail: [togiak@fws.gov](mailto:togiak@fws.gov)

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

Requests for a CD-ROM or paper copy of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Togiak Refuge should be directed to the Refuge at the address above or to:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Division of Conservation Planning & Policy  
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS-231  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Division phone: 907-786-3357  
Division Fax: 907-786-3965

E-mail: [fw7\\_togiak\\_planning@fws.gov](mailto:fw7_togiak_planning@fws.gov)

Internet: <http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/planning/togpol.htm>