



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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ALASKA PUBLIC LAND OPENINGS EXCEED RESERVATIONS

Openings and restorations of public lands in Alaska during the Eisenhower Administration to date have greatly exceeded withdrawals and reservations, the Department of the Interior announced today.

Commenting on the affect of the reservation of some 11.2 million acres in three new national wildlife ranges, the Department noted that some 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ million acres in Alaska have been opened to various forms of public use and mining and mineral development in the last few years.

In addition, the Administration and the Department have recommended and supported legislation that would open an added 24 million acres in far northern Alaska to mineral development by abolishing the Navy's Petroleum Reserve No. 4, the Department said.

In all of Alaska, the Department has opened or recommended the opening of more than 47 $\frac{1}{2}$ million acres to various forms of entry and use. Withdrawals have totaled approximately 11.9 million acres under the McKay-Seaton Administration, many of which did not close the lands to all forms of use and entry. Wherever possible, the Department said, compatible uses have been permitted--for example, the three new wildlife ranges will be open to mineral leasing, development, and as recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Service the 1.8 million acre Kuskokwim National Wildlife Range will be open to the staking of mining claims.

For the last three years the Department's Bureau of Land Management has been carrying on an intensive review of public land withdrawals and reservations to abolish obsolete reservations and reduce withdrawals to the minimum size needed, the Department said. In addition, BLM is attempting to modify existing withdrawals wherever possible to permit compatible uses.

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