



Izembek

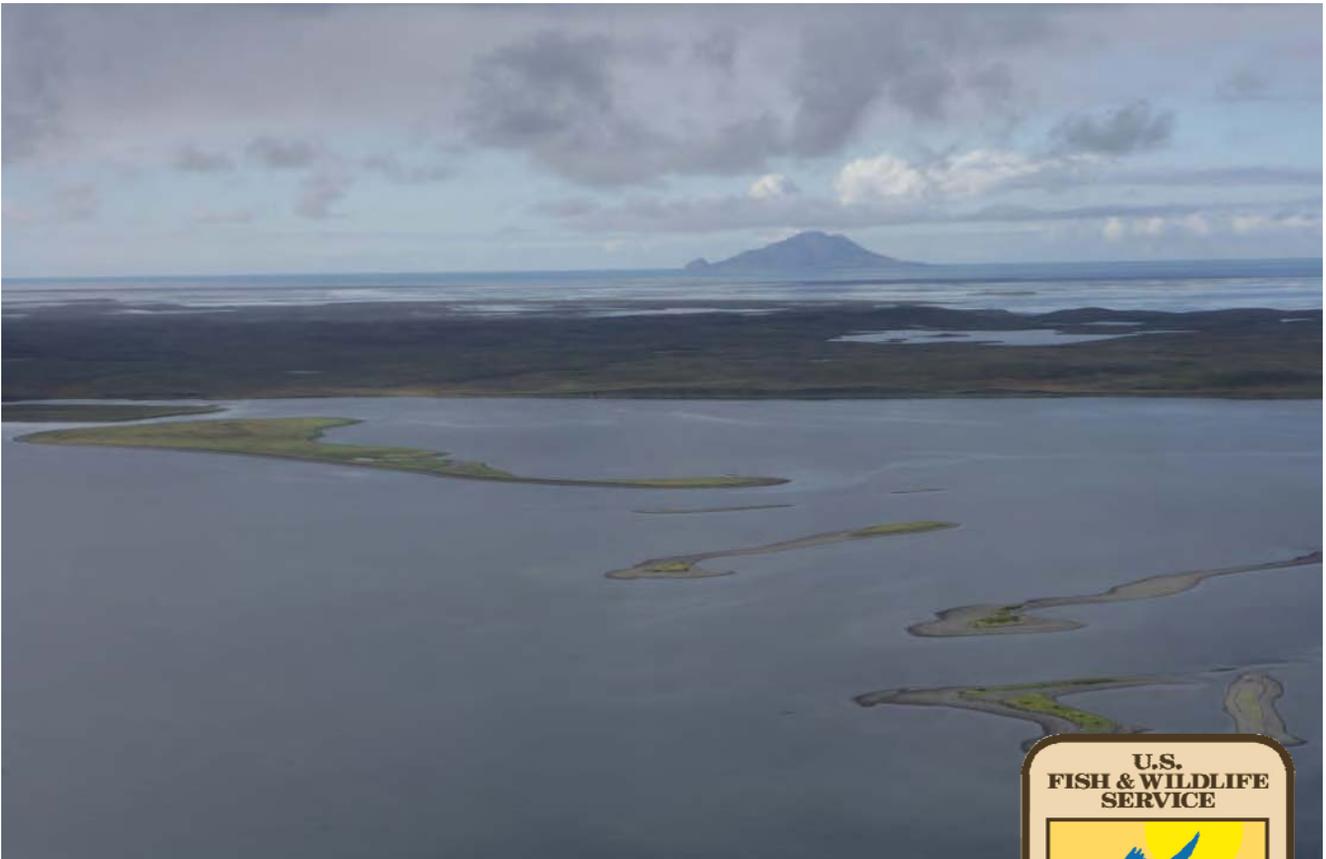
National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange/Road Corridor

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Appendix C Scoping Report



APPENDIX C
Scoping Report
September 14, 2010



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska
Proposed Land Exchange/Road Corridor
Environmental Impact Statement

Scoping Report

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List of Acronyms

Act	Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009
ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Service	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
SOCs	Statements of Concern
Tribe	Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove

1.0 Introduction

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is the lead federal agency preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposed land exchange and the potential construction and operation of a road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. Lands owned by the State of Alaska and lands owned by the King Cove Corporation would be exchanged for federal lands within the Izembek Wilderness, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, and lands within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on Sitkinak Island. Refer to Section 1.2 for a more detailed description of the proposed project.

Cooperating Agencies for the project include:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, coordinating for the State of Alaska agencies
- Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove (Tribe)
- Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council
- Aleutians East Borough
- City of King Cove
- King Cove Corporation.

In addition, the Western Federal Lands Highway Program of the Federal Highway Administration may also become a cooperating agency for the project.

The Service published a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register on August 6, 2009 to announce the preparation of an EIS. A Revised Notice was published on February 24, 2010 to announce the public scoping meeting dates, inviting suggestions on the scope of issues to be addressed in this EIS along with dates, times, and locations of upcoming public meetings. A project newsletter was sent by the Service in January 2010 to the project mailing list that explained the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the EIS process and how to participate in the project.

The Service has completed the formal scoping process; the scoping period closed on April 30, 2010. Comments received through May 21, 2010 are summarized and presented in this document. Comments received later will be considered during the development of the EIS, but are not part of this report. This document is a public record of the scoping activities conducted for the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange/Road Corridor EIS.

A series of appendices compile the supporting materials for the summaries provided in this report. Materials regarding public notice and outreach, meeting materials, and the Comment Analysis Report are provided in the appendices.

1.1 Scoping Overview

The Service hosted scoping meetings in Washington, DC; Anchorage, Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon and Sand Point, Alaska during March and April, 2010. Details on the locations and times can be found in Table 1 and a link to the scoping meeting transcripts and notes can be found on the project website: <http://izembek.fws.gov/eis.htm>

Table 1: Scoping Meetings, Locations and Dates

Location	Date	Time & Place
Anchorage, Alaska	March 4, 2010	5 pm Wilda Marston Theatre, Loussac Library
Washington, DC	March 11, 2010	1 pm Sydney R. Yates Auditorium
Sand Point, Alaska	April 26, 2010	4 pm City Chamber Room
Cold Bay, Alaska	April 27, 2010	7 pm Cold Bay Community Center
Nelson Lagoon, Alaska	April 28, 2010	1 pm Nelson Lagoon Community Center
False Pass, Alaska	April 28, 2010	3 pm False Pass Community Center
King Cove, Alaska	April 29, 2010	3 pm King Cove Multi-purpose Building

1.2 Project Description

In response to direction provided in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (the Act), an EIS is being developed for a proposed land exchange “for the purpose of constructing a single lane gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska.” The Act further states the road “shall be used primarily for health and safety purposes (including access to and from the cold Bay Airport)” and the road would be used for noncommercial purposes (with the exception of taxis and public transportation.)

In accord with the provisions of the Act, the Service proposes to exchange:

- approximately 206 acres within the Izembek Wilderness and Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and
- approximately 1,600 acres of Federal land within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on Sitkinak Island.

These approximately 1,806 acres of land would be removed from Federal ownership and the title vested in the State of Alaska. In return, the Service would receive approximately 43,000 acres of lands owned by the State of Alaska and approximately 13,000 acres owned by the King Cove Corporation. If the land exchange is approved, an estimated 43,000 acres of land that is transferred to the Service would become wilderness.

In addition, the land exchange would require King Cove Corporation to relinquish land selections totaling about 5,430 acres in the Izembek NWR in the vicinity of the northeast corner of Cold Bay. Thus, King Cove Corporation would forego approximately 18,430 acres of land currently owned and valid selections in return for the single lane gravel road on lands that would be owned by the state.

In accord with Section 6402(b)(2)(B) of the Act, the EIS will analyze the impacts of the proposed land exchange and the potential construction and operation of a single lane gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. A specific road corridor and a reasonable range of alternatives will be identified for analysis. As identified in the Act, the State of Alaska, Aleutians East Borough, City of King Cove, and the Tribe, and the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council would be involved in the identification of the proposed road corridor. In

addition, federal agencies with permitting jurisdiction would be involved in the identification of the road corridor to be evaluated and the range of alternatives. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a Cooperating Agency. The Western Federal Lands Highway Division of Federal Highway Administration is considering becoming a Cooperating Agency.

Two Notices of Intent were published in the *Federal Register*; one notice was published in August 2009 to announce the preparation of the EIS and a revised notice was published in February 2010 to announce the public scoping meetings. The Service has completed the formal scoping process.

The EIS will include a technical study to address preliminary conceptual engineering for the proposed road corridor. Preliminary design features to be considered in the EIS will be evaluated by the Service and Cooperating Agencies in accord with the provisions of the Act and the respective regulatory authorities of the Cooperating Agencies. The EIS will include a functional values assessment of the entire land exchange – providing a comparison of ecological integrity or values of the separate parcels. Additional design and environmental features will be developed as additional phases of the project are initiated by the permit applicant(s).

Preliminary alternatives that have been identified to date are:

Alternative A – No Action. No land exchange or new road construction would take place. An estimated 56,000 acres of state and King Cove Corporation land would not be added to the Izembek NWR. No lands would be removed from Federal ownership. The estimated 5,430 acres of valid King Cove Corporation selections within the Izembek Wilderness could be transferred to King Cove Corporation ownership. Existing conditions would be maintained.

Alternative B – Proposed Action. As outlined in the Act, the land exchange would take place for the purpose of constructing and operating a single land gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska.

Additional alternatives will be considered, based on scoping comments, the regulatory requirements of the federal agencies with permitting jurisdiction, and input from the Cooperating Agencies.

The EIS will identify and disclose direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts for all resource issues by alternative, including access to and use of subsistence resources and other scoping issues selected for detailed evaluation. The proposed land exchange involving lands within Alaska Maritime, Alaska Peninsula, and Izembek National Wildlife Refuges will be evaluated as will the construction and operation of the specific road corridor through the Izembek Wilderness within Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and any subsequent alternatives based on information from the Cooperating Agencies, stakeholders, and public comments.

1.3 History of the Project and Public Involvement

The cities of King Cove and Cold Bay are located at the western end of the Alaska Peninsula, approximately 625 miles southwest of Anchorage. Both are located on the Pacific Ocean side of the peninsula. The Cold Bay Airport has one of the longest civilian runways in Alaska at 10,415 feet, and the only crosswind runway in the region. The King Cove Airport has a 3,500 foot gravel runway and is restricted to small aircraft operating under visual flight rules. Residents of King Cove feel that safe and reliable access to the Cold Bay Airport is essential.

In 1999, Congress passed the King Cove Health and Safety Act (Section 353) of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Public Law 105-277) which provided the Aleutians East Borough with funds to construct a year-round marine-road

transportation system between the cities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. This King Cove Health and Safety Act also appropriated funding for improvements to the King Cove medical clinic and airport. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was the lead federal agency, and the Service was a cooperating agency in this effort. The two agencies determined that an EIS was required for the King Cove Access Project. A road corridor through Izembek Wilderness and Izembek National Wildlife Refuge was discussed and analyzed, but was included in the 2003 EIS for comparison purposes only due to a legislative mandate that authorized a marine transportation system.

The Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2003 that examined six alternatives for access between King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. An alternative was selected that provided a hovercraft connection between the two communities. Approximately 11,800 people provided electronic comments during scoping; they were notified by email that the Draft EIS and Appendices were available on the project website.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided formal written notice to 310 local, state, federal and Native entities, conservation and business organizations, news media, and individuals. Approximately 200 copies of the Draft EIS in hard copy and electronic format were distributed. Approximately 6,343 organizations and individuals provided comments on the Draft EIS by the close of the comment period on September 23, 2003. Approximately 96 percent of all submissions were form letters. Public hearings were held in Cold Bay, King Cove, and Anchorage.

Resulting from the 2003 EIS, the Aleutians East Borough has operated a commercial hovercraft service between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay since August 2006. Due to high operating costs, the hovercraft schedule has been limited to three days per week, rather than the original intent of daily service.

As previously stated, in 2009 Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to prepare an EIS that includes an analysis of a proposed land exchange with the Service, the State of Alaska and the King Cove Corporation “for the purpose of constructing a single lane gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska.” The Act further states the road “shall be used primarily for health and safety purposes (including access to and from the Cold Bay Airport)” and the road would be used for noncommercial purposes (with the exception of taxis and public transportation.). As a condition of the land exchange, the Secretary of the Interior must determine that the land exchange and the road corridor are in the public interest.

The Service published a notice in the *Federal Register* on August 6, 2009, inviting suggestions on the scope of issues to be addressed in this EIS. A project newsletter was sent by the Service in January 2010 to the project mailing list that explained the NEPA process and how to get involved. The Notice of Intent was published on February 24, 2010 announcing the scoping period end date (May 1, 2010), along with dates, times, and locations of upcoming public meetings. Scoping meetings were held in Anchorage, Washington DC, Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon and Sand Point during March and April, 2010.

2.0 Scoping Mechanisms

The following section describes the mechanisms used to solicit and capture public comment in accordance to Council on Environmental Quality guidance (40 CFR 1501.7).

2.1 Scoping Announcements and Newsletters

General Public Notification

As described in Section 1.1, the Service published the Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on August 6, 2009 and a Revised Notice on February 24, 2010 to announce the public scoping meeting dates and invite comment about issues to be addressed in this EIS. Both can be found in Appendix A.

Several public notification techniques were used to notify the public of the proposed EIS project and scheduled public meetings in order to solicit public comment. Advertisements placed in the *Anchorage Daily News* ran February 27–March 4, 2010; for a copy of the advertisement, see Appendix A. An announcement for the Anchorage scoping meeting was broadcast on KSKA public radio. The Service also distributed public notices via press release, email, website, flyers, and the newsletter; samples of the notices are available in Appendix A.

In addition to the notifications provided by the Service, cooperating agencies and individuals posted notifications of the scoping meetings and EIS process. The Service provided a scoping announcement to cooperating agencies for website posting, which was adapted by the Aleutians East Borough and the communities. In addition, the Aleutians East Borough provided verbal notifications and postings in the affected communities of the borough. Private individuals also have posted information about the project, such as <http://izembekeis.info> (Appendix A). Non-governmental organizations were also active in notifying constituents of the project and the EIS process.

Agency Coordination and Consultation

The Service began an informal consultation process to assist and promote coordination with cooperating agencies and regulatory or permitting agencies. These agencies include:

- Federal Highway Administration (Western Federal Lands)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- State of Alaska
 - Alaska Department of Fish and Game
 - Alaska Department of Natural Resources
 - Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
 - Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Aleutians East Borough – Coastal Zone Management Consistency Determination

Formal consultation is being initiated with agencies having jurisdiction within the project study area regarding resources potentially affected. Preliminary consultation strategy letters were sent to these agencies to initiate that process. These agencies include:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (Section 7 Endangered Species and Essential Fish Habitat)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Section 7 Endangered Species)
- State Historic Preservation Office (Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act)

Alaska Native Tribal Government Notification and Consultation

In compliance with Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, the Service initiated government-to-government consultation with twelve potentially affected Federally Recognized Tribes (Table 2). On March 2, 2010, the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove indicated that President Etta Kuzakin and Della Trumble are representatives for the tribe during the EIS process.

Letters were sent to the Federally Recognized Tribes on June 16, 2010 stating that public scoping recently occurred and the Service would be glad to conduct separate meetings to explain the proposal and hear their thoughts. The letters asked if the tribes had any thoughts on the topics of cultural, traditional, or religious sites that could be affected; any known graves or archaeological sites in the project area; any formal tribal positions on the proposal; any information on fish and wildlife that may be affected and any other input the tribe would like to contribute. One Tribal consultation meeting was held on August 25, 2010 with representatives from the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove and the Native Village of Belkofski. In addition, President Etta Kuzakin and Della Trumble from the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove and President Simeon Kuzakin from the Native Village of Belkofski provided oral comments at the King Cove public scoping meeting.

Table 2: List of Federally Recognized Tribes Engaged in the Government to Government Consultation Process

Etta Kuzakin, President and Della Trumble	Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove
Simeon Kuzakin, President	Native Village of Belkofski
Roy Atchak, President	Chevak Native Village
Ruth Hoblet, President	Native Village of False Pass
David Bunyan, President	Native Village of Hooper Bay
Paul Gundersen, President	Native Village of Nelson Lagoon
Moses Carl, President	Newtok Village
Frank Napoleon, President	Native Village of Paimiut
Amber Karlsen, President	Pauloff Harbor Village

Frank Aguchak, President	Native Village of Scammon Bay
David Osterback, President	Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point Village
John Foster, President	Native Village of Unga

Newsletters

The first project newsletter was mailed in January 2010 providing a basic introduction to the project, schedule, and opportunities to comment during scoping. The newsletters were sent to the mailing list including individuals, agencies, businesses, interest groups and elected and appointed officials. The newsletter provided notification of the scoping meetings and opportunities for public participation. The project website address was included in the newsletter, which had a link for scoping comment submissions.

Project Website

The project website (<http://izembek.fws.gov/eis.htm>) was launched in January 2010. It includes project information, such as *Federal Register* notices, the scoping meeting presentation, scoping meeting transcripts and notes, newsletters, fact sheets, and press releases. The website includes a mailing address for submitting comments, izembek_eis@fws.gov; many scoping comments were submitted electronically. Project documents, as they are developed, will continue to be posted on the website as the project progresses.

2.2 Public Scoping Meetings

Seven public scoping meetings were conducted in March and April 2010 with the dates and locations detailed in Table 1. The scoping meeting format and the information presented was the same at each public meeting.

During the open house session, attendees had the opportunity to view maps that displayed project information and were able to ask questions of the project team. During the presentation portion of the meeting, a PowerPoint presentation was given that included an introduction to the Act, an introduction to the NEPA process and schedule, a description of the proposed land exchange, list of the cooperating agencies, and background on Izembek Wilderness area and its resources as well as information about the cities of Cold Bay and King Cove.

The public question and comment period followed with public testimony. A court reporter recorded public testimony at the meetings in Anchorage, Alaska and Washington, DC. The Service took notes of public testimony and accepted written comments and testimony during the meetings in Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point, Alaska. Comment forms were available at all public meetings so that attendees could submit written comments during the meeting or mail them in at a later date.

The public scoping meeting held in Anchorage had approximately 80 people in attendance with 18 people providing oral testimony. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting in Washington DC with 14 people giving oral testimony. These meetings were held as scheduled in March 2010.

The Service hosted five scoping meetings in the communities surrounding the refuge in late April 2010. The first community meeting was held on April 26 in Sand Point with approximately 15 people in attendance. Of these, 10 people presented oral testimony. The Cold Bay community meeting was held on the following evening with approximately 40 people in attendance, eight of which presented oral testimony. Nelson Lagoon community meeting was held on April 28; attendance was approximately ten people, of which seven provided oral testimony.

Due to impending weather conditions, the Service, with the advice of the City of King Cove and Aleutians East Borough, moved the community meeting for King Cove from Friday, April 30 to Thursday, April 29. Therefore, the community meeting at False Pass was tentatively moved to

Wednesday April 28 in the afternoon, weather dependent. After the Nelson Lagoon meeting, Service personnel flew to False Pass for the scoping meeting. Three people attended the meeting with two people giving oral testimony. Approximately 80 people attended the King Cove scoping meeting on April 29, of which 28 spoke.

Supporting information for the public scoping meetings, including the scoping power point presentation, maps, sign-in sheets, and a sample comment form is included in Appendix B.

3.0 Summary of Comments Received

Public scoping comments were received via:

- Oral discussion or testimony at the public scoping meetings.
- Written comments received by mail, email, or fax.

There were a total of 31,568 submissions submitted during the scoping period. A submission is the entirety of a written or oral entry. A total of 31,454 form letters were received from four different sources (Defenders of Wildlife, The Wilderness Society, Audubon, and National Wildlife Refuge Association). There were 114 unique submissions.

Comments are discrete concepts conveyed in submissions. Comments were assigned subject category codes to describe the content of the comment. The issue categories and codes are listed in Table 3. The issues were grouped by general topics, including effects, purpose and need, proposed action and alternatives, and regulatory compliance. The relative distribution of comments by issue is shown in Figure 1, which displays the analysis of unique comments, which includes one of each form letter.

Group affiliations of those that submitted comments included: federal agencies, Tribal governments, state agencies, local governments, businesses, special interest groups/non-governmental organizations, and individuals. The complete text of public comments received is included in the Administrative Record for the EIS.

All unique submissions were read and analyzed for substantive comments. Substantive comments were assigned a single *Issue Code* in the Comment Analysis System database. Each comment coded also received an automatic tracking number (Comment ID) by the Comment Analysis System database.

The public comment submissions generated 640 coded comments, which were then grouped into *Statements of Concern* (SOCs). SOCs are summary statements intended to capture the different themes identified in the substantive comments. Every substantive comment was assigned to an SOC; 149 SOCs were developed. Each SOC is represented by an issue category code followed by a number: the Service will use the SOCs to develop alternatives and mitigation measures in the EIS, as appropriate.

3.1 Issues Identified

The comments received during the scoping period were coded into 28 issue categories, described as follows:

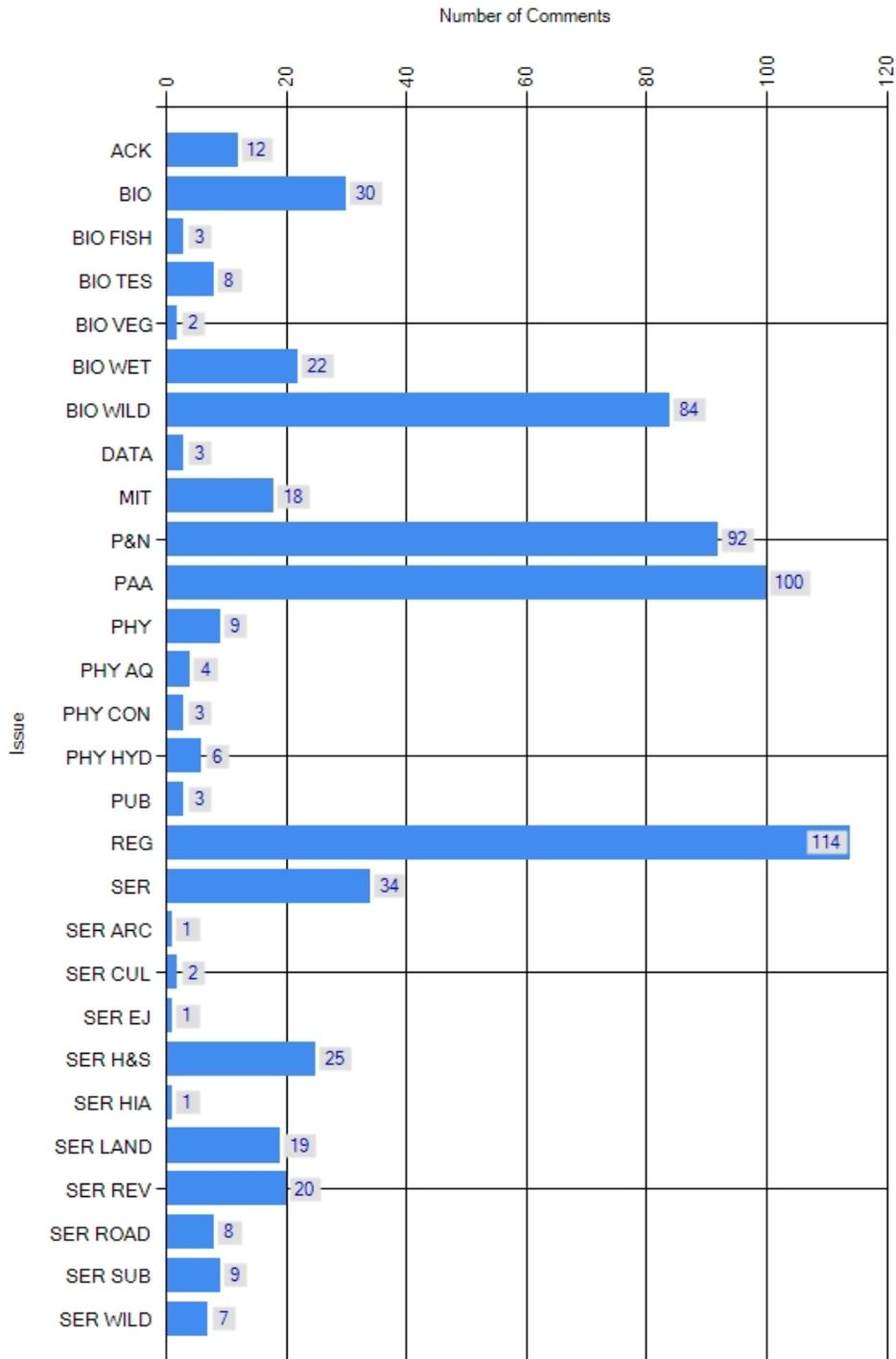
Table 3 - Issue Category Codes

Group	Issue Category	Issue Code	Issue Summary
Regulatory Compliance	Federal/State Permits, Approvals, Laws, Regulations, and Policies	REG	Comments related to past legislation, compliance with regulations, and the purpose/mission of wilderness and refuge areas, and the equity of the land exchange.
	Public Involvement and Scoping Process	PUB	Comments on compliance with the NEPA process for public scoping.
Purpose and Need	Purpose and Need of the Action	P&N	Comments on the construction of the purpose and need of the project; including the health and safety of the people, and the transportation that is currently in place.
Proposed Action, Alternatives, and Mitigation Measures	Proposed Action and Alternatives	PAA	Comments on the proposed alternatives (including "no action") and their practicality/feasibility, as well as other alternatives to consider.
	Mitigation Measures	MIT	Suggested measures to reduce the impact of the proposed action and alternatives.
Affected Environment: Comments about each resource environmental consequences: potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.	Biological Resources - General	BIO	General comments regarding impacts of the road on fish, wildlife, waterfowl and their habitat.
	Biological Resources - Fish	BIO FISH	Comments about the impacts to essential fish habitat and salmonids.
	Biological Resources - Threatened & Endangered Species	BIO TES	Comments about the impacts to threatened and endangered species in the project area.
	Biological Resources - Vegetation	BIO VEG	Comments regarding impacts to vegetation from construction of road stream crossings (e.g. siltation and erosion).
	Biological Resources - Wetlands & Aquatic Communities	BIO WET	Comments regarding the impacts to wetland habitat and aquatic species.
	Biological Resources - Wildlife	BIO WILD	Comments about impacts from road construction and operation to terrestrial and marine wildlife including the introduction of invasive species.
	Physical Resources	PHY	General comments on the impacts of the physical road construction compounded with cumulative impacts associated with other development around the refuge.
	Physical Resources - Climate & Air Quality	PHY AQ	Comments related to air quality impacts (criteria pollutants) and emission of greenhouse gases.
	Physical Resources - Environmental Contaminants & Ecological Risk Assessment	PHY CON	Comments related to the possible accidental release of hazardous materials and the need for an ecological risk assessment.
Physical Resources - Hydrology	PHY HYD	Comments about potential hydrological changes from the proposed road construction.	

Table 3 - Issue Category Codes

Group	Issue Category	Issue Code	Issue Summary
	Socioeconomic Resources	SER	Detailed comments on factors to consider as part of a “cost-benefit analysis”.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Archeological/Cultural Resources	SER ARC	Comments related to impacts to historic properties and cultural resources.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Cultural Values	SER CUL	Comments on how the road may bring cultural changes and that traditional knowledge should be used as part of the analysis.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Environmental Justice	SER EJ	Comments that the impacts should include an environmental justice analysis.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Health and Safety	SER H&S	Comments related to safe travel; perspectives that the current (no action) options are hindering medical care, while the proposed road (action) could cause even more driving-related injury.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Health Impact Assessment	SER HIA	Impacts of the road to rural communities it serves (e.g. disease, drugs, education).
	Socioeconomic Resources - Land Use, Public Use, Recreation, Visual Resources	SER LAND	Comments on the potential change to land use because the road would increase access thereby impacting scenic, wildlife resources.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Public Revenue and Fiscal Considerations	SER REV	Comments related to the use of public/taxpayer money for the project, the funding source for road construction and operation, as well as the overall impacts to the region’s economy.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Road Design, Bridges, Transportation, Planning and Transportation Systems (air, water and road)	SER ROAD	Comments on the details of the road design and its connection to other roads.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Subsistence	SER SUB	Comments on both the benefits of the road to the communities and the impacts to natural resources and subsistence activities.
Socioeconomic Resources - Wilderness	SER WILD	Comments on the loss of wilderness value to the Izebek National Wildlife Refuge due to the land exchange and proposed road.	
General	Data and Available Information	DATA	Recommended studies and reports for the Service to review.
	Comment Acknowledged	ACK	Submissions without substantive comments and/or duplicate submissions.

Figure 1 – Comments by Issue



3.2 Summary of Public Comments

All comments received during the public scoping period were assigned to issue categories, as previously discussed, and based on the content of the comment. The summarized comments, grouped by issue, are in the Comment Analysis Report in Appendix C. Table 4 contains a very brief summary of SOCs; it is recommended to review the Comment Analysis Report to understand the range of issues identified during scoping. The most frequently coded topics were related to the proposed action and alternatives, regulatory issues and purpose and need. However, as illustrated in the Comment Analysis Report, a broad set of issues was identified during scoping, including concerns regarding potential impacts to biological resources, particularly wildlife; socioeconomic impacts related to health and safety; and public revenue and fiscal considerations. Several individual submissions included extremely detailed information.

Table 4 - Summary of Statements of Concern by Issue Category

Group	Issue Category	Summary of Statements of Concern
Process: NEPA, Permits, this EIS, Consultation and Coordination	Regulatory	There were 19 SOCs generated for REG that are related to a variety of issues including the formation of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge; Alaska Claims Settlement Act; Direction from Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009; Wilderness designation; Wilderness requirements; compliance with NEPA, ESA, and other legislation.
	Public Involvement and Scoping	The 3 SOCs identified for PUB are related to stakeholder engagement and identification; including the desire for local residents to participate in the process by having the opportunity to review and provide comments during the EIS process.
Purpose and Need	Purpose and Need of the Action	The 14 SOCs generated for P&N are divergent. Concern was expressed that there is not a need for the proposed action as the issue of transportation for medical emergencies has been solved by use of the hovercraft. Several SOCs express concern that the hovercraft has not solved the issue of safe and reliable transportation and that a road is the only solution. Other SOCs were developed regarding the need for a clear and concise purpose and need statement as required by NEPA and NEPA compliance.
Proposed Action, Alternatives, and Mitigation Measures	Proposed Action and Alternatives	The 21 SOCs developed for PAA are divergent. Several SOCs express support of the proposed action, while other SOCs support a no action alternative. Additional SOCs suggested the continued use of the hovercraft operation; subsidizing the hovercraft, construction a small boat harbor in Cold Bay to facilitate hovercraft use; improvements to the dock at Cold Bay to support hovercraft operations; selecting the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative; use of a helicopter for medical evacuations; and construction of a hospital at King Cove. SOCs in this category also expressed concern for issues associated with road construction, operations, traffic volumes, and long-term costs of various proposed alternatives.
	Mitigation Measures	The 10 SOCs developed for MIT suggest a variety of mitigation measures for consideration that could be considered including design considerations, and enforceable measures to avoid or minimize impacts of the proposed alternative and road construction.

Table 4 - Summary of Statements of Concern by Issue Category

Group	Issue Category	Summary of Statements of Concern
<p>Affected Environment: Comments about each resource Environmental consequences: potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.</p>	<p>Biological Resources - General</p>	<p>The 7 SOC's developed for BIO included consideration of impacts to the biological environment from the proposed alternative from construction and long-term impacts of a road and potential impacts to fish, wildlife, waterfowl; fragmentation and loss of habitat; impacts from construction of stream crossings and effects on habitat including eel grass; impacts from vehicle and wildlife collisions; Effects of increased access on wildlife; long-term impacts evaluation and issues that should be evaluated in a cumulative impacts analysis. One SOC suggests and evaluation of the fill required for road construction and associated direct and indirect impacts to ecological values was recommended for analysis.</p>
	<p>Biological Resources - Fish</p>	<p>The 2 SOC's developed for BIO FISH are related to examining impacts to salmon habitat and Essential Fish Habitat and considerations of impacts to spawning and passage as a result of proposed road construction.</p>
	<p>Biological Resources - Threatened & Endangered Species</p>	<p>The 2 SOC's identified for BIO TES encourage the Service to address the potential impact to threatened and endangered terrestrial and marine species and their habitat according to the ESA and MMPA, including appropriate consultations. The EIS should consider particularly impacts to impacts to Steller's eiders, black brant, emperor geese and dunlin.</p>
	<p>Biological Resources - Vegetation</p>	<p>The 1 SOC developed for BIO VEG relates to how road dust could impact adjacent vegetation and habitats (such as the eel grass beds) as well as the existing gravel road network from Cold Bay to the shores of Izembek Lagoon.</p>
	<p>Biological Resources - Wetlands & Aquatic Communities</p>	<p>The 5 SOC's generated for BIO WET are related to how the EIS should evaluate effects on wetlands and aquatic communities from the proposed road as well as the existing gravel road access from Cold Bay. Concern was expressed that this evaluation needs to be in sufficient detail that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be able to make its required findings under a Section 404 application and compliance with other statutes and guidance.</p>
	<p>Biological Resources - Wildlife</p>	<p>The 11 SOC's developed for BIO WILD are varied. Several SOC's express the concern for various impacts to wildlife that could occur as a result of the proposed land exchange and road construction. SOC's for this category are related to species including brown bear, caribou, waterfowl, migratory birds, and marine species. Concern was also expressed regarding the impacts to wildlife from the introduction of invasive species.</p>
	<p>Physical Resources</p>	<p>The 4 SOC's for PHY are related to conducting an analysis of the current and projected impacts to the region from climate change and how these impacts could be confounded by the development of a road; cumulative impacts of the land exchange and proposed road in the context of proposed oil and gas development in and around the lands and waters of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and Izembek Lagoon; regional extent and international extent of impacts to the physical resources of the region; and impacts of including road construction, sediment run-off, watershed impacts and pollution.</p>

Table 4 - Summary of Statements of Concern by Issue Category

Group	Issue Category	Summary of Statements of Concern
	Physical Resources - Climate & Air Quality	The 2 SOCS developed for PHY AQ are related to climate change; provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions (baseline or existing conditions), National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), and criteria pollutant non-attainment areas in the road corridor and surrounding areas; and disclosure of greenhouse gases emitted by the project be included in the EIS.
	Physical Resources - Environmental Contaminants & Ecological Risk Assessment	The 3 SOCs identified for PHY CON express concern for how pollutants from the proposed road could impact the surrounding ecosystem. One SOC details how the EIS should address potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of hazardous materials from construction of the project, analyze risks involving possible accidental releases of hazardous materials, and describe mitigation and emergency response measures.
	Physical Resources - Hydrology	The 4 SOCs developed for PHY HYD are related to how the EIS should describe all waterbodies and stream crossings and potential impacts (including specific pollutants) to surface, subsurface, and ground water in the project area.
	Socioeconomic Resources	The 5 SOCs identified as related to SER suggest a cost benefit analysis be conducted; discuss issues with road maintenance; benefits to the local communities from a road; potential impacts of the land transfer; and concerns expressed regarding road siting, location, safety and maintenance.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Archeological/Cultural Resources	This 1 SOC for SER ARC notes that impacts to historic properties and cultural resources should be considered in an orderly and systematic manner, in full consultation with all concerned parties.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Environmental Justice	This 1 SOC for SER EJ describes how the EIS should disclose what efforts were taken to ensure effective public participation and to meet environmental justice requirements consistent with Executive Order 12898.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Health and Safety	The 4 SOCs identified for SER H&S describes the challenges faced by the community for traveling in and out of King Cove during inclement weather. One SOC is in support of the road for health and safety reasons while another SOC expressed concern that a road would not create a safer or more efficient transport and impacts associated with the road could lead to littering, abandoned vehicles, violation of traffic laws; including speeding, and drunk driving.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Health Impact Assessment	The 1 SOC for SER HIA expressed a concern that a road between the two communities may encourage the use of illegal drugs.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Land Use, Public Use, Recreation, Visual Resources	The 9 SOCs for SER LAND are varied. SOCs are related to impacts on recreational activities; increase in legal and non-legal access; compatibility of alternatives with land management objectives; impacts to scenic, wildlife, visual opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation; and existing trail usage.

Table 4 - Summary of Statements of Concern by Issue Category

Group	Issue Category	Summary of Statements of Concern
	Socioeconomic Resources - Public Revenue and Fiscal Considerations	The 4 SOC's for SER REV are varied. One SOC expressed concern that the current EIS process is a waste of taxpayer money and that millions of dollars have already been provided to alleviate the problem of safe transportation. One SOC expressed concern as to who would provide funds for year-round maintenance and operation costs of the road. Another SOC describes how the proposed road would be good for the economy and quality of life through jobs (e.g., snow removal) and commerce (e.g., access to gravel, shipping fresh products between the communities). Concern was expressed that the EIS needs to address financial connections between the oil industry seeking leases in Bristol Bay and proponents of the road across the peninsula.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Road Design, Bridges, Transportation, Planning and Transportation Systems (air, water and road)	The 2 SOC's related to SER ROAD are related to the width of the road corridor and how the existing road that runs north of Cold Bay through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge would be affected by the exchange and how it would be connected.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Subsistence	The 3 SOC's related to SER SUB describe how the EIS should evaluate effects of the land exchange and construction of the proposed road on subsistence in relation to impacts from subsistence use, access, and management. The benefits of the road to the communities of Cold Bay and King Cove need to be evaluated against the impacts to natural resources and the subsistence culture of Alaska and the rest of the west coast. The EIS should gather and analyze traditional knowledge on subsistence use patterns and disclose historical information compiled on subsistence ORV use within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.
	Socioeconomic Resources - Wilderness	The 6 SOC's for SER WILD are related to impacts that the proposed land exchange and proposed road could have on the wildlife and wilderness values of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and impacts to tourism from loss of wilderness. Concern was expressed that declassification of wilderness will have an effect on wilderness across the nation. A comparative evaluation of wilderness and lands selected for proposed for exchange was recommended.
General	Data and Available Information	The 1 SOC for Data highlights studies, reports and sources of information recommended for review by the Service.
	Comment Acknowledged	The 2 SOC's developed for Comment Acknowledged are for submissions without substantive comments and duplicated comments.

4.0 Next Steps in the Planning Process

This section is intended to be a very broad overview of the next steps in the NEPA process.

4.1 Develop Alternatives

A reasonable range of alternatives that meet the purpose and need of the project will be identified and examined in the EIS. Pertinent input from the scoping process will be incorporated into the range of potential alternatives. This ensures that the full spectrum of positions expressed by participants in the scoping process has been considered, in accord with NEPA. In addition to the land exchange proposal, at least one road construction alternative will be evaluated, in accord with the Act that is guiding this EIS process. Alternatives that were eliminated from further consideration and not brought forward for formal analysis in the EIS will be identified, along with justifications for elimination.

Each viable alternative will be developed with conceptual plans by using available information or by identifying additional information to be obtained in order to evaluate all of the alternatives on an equal basis. This step begins after the scoping comments are analyzed and the scoping report finalized; this step is scheduled to begin in August 2010.

4.2 Describe the Affected Environment

Available environmental information associated with the identified issue categories will be reviewed and summarized. The summary will include available scientific research and pertinent studies and surveys required for areas that would be potentially impacted by the viable alternatives. This information will be presented in the *Affected Environment* chapter of the EIS. This step is scheduled to begin in August 2010.

4.3 Assess Environmental Consequences of Alternatives

The potential environmental consequences of alternatives carried forward for analysis will be evaluated, including direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. NEPA compliance associated with Federal, state, and local agency permits will be identified and incorporated into the analysis of potential effects. This step will be conducted after the range of alternatives is identified.

4.4 Issue the Draft EIS

A Draft EIS will be prepared and made available for review by the public, Tribal governments, local, state, and federal agencies. The Draft EIS will be available for a 90-day review after the Notice of Availability has been published in the *Federal Register*. The public hearings will offer another opportunity for public comment on the Draft EIS. Currently, the public comment period is estimated to begin in early 2011. Public Hearings for the Draft EIS are estimated to occur in summer of 2011. To the best of our abilities, hearing dates will be arranged with consideration of local seasonal schedules.

If the analysis of alternatives finds that the proposed action would “significantly restrict subsistence uses,” an Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 810 hearing would be held in the affected area, in conjunction with but separate from the Draft EIS hearing.

4.5 Issue the Final EIS and Record of Decision

After analyzing public comments received on the Draft EIS, the document will be revised to prepare a Final EIS. The Final EIS will include the comments submitted on the Draft EIS, including

changes made to the EIS in response to comments. This step will include public notice of document availability, the distribution of the document, and a 30-day comment/waiting period on the final document. This step is projected to occur in the spring of 2012.

The Service will strive to meet the NEPA requirements of the federal cooperating agencies in this EIS process. The federal cooperating agencies may each issue a separate Record of Decision. The issuance of the Record of Decision(s) will conclude the EIS process in the summer of 2012. The selected alternative will be identified in each Record of Decision, as well as the agency's rationale for their conclusions regarding the environmental effects and appropriate mitigation measures for the proposed project.

5.0 Contacts

Lead Agency

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator
P.O. Box 277, MS 545
King Salmon, AK 99613

Tel: 907-246-1203 or (907) 786-3965
Fax: 907-246-6696

Project Website: <http://izembek.fws.gov/eis.htm>

Project Email: izembek_eis@fws.gov

Cooperating Agencies

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources – coordinating for the State of Alaska agencies
- Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove
- Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council
- Aleutians East Borough
- City of King Cove
- King Cove Corporation

Appendix A – Scoping Outreach Materials

- A-1. Notice of Intent August 6, 2009
- A-2. Revised Notice February 24, 2010
- A-3. Project Mailing List
- A-4. Newsletter #1
- A-5. Newspaper Advertisement
- A-6. Press Release
- A-7. Electronic/Online Announcements
- A-8. Flyer for Community Posting

A-1. Notice of Intent August 6, 2009

requesting a 3-year term of approval for this information collection activity.

DATES: Public comments on this Information Collection Request (ICR) will be accepted on or before October 5, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to: Ms. Jo A. Pendry, Chief, Commercial Services Program, National Park Service, 1201 Eye Street, NW., 11th Floor, Washington, DC 20005, or via e-mail at jo_pendry@nps.gov, or via fax at 202/371-2090.

To Request a Draft of Proposed Collection of Information Contact: Ms. Jo A. Pendry, Chief, Commercial Services Program, National Park Service, 1201 Eye Street, NW., 11th Floor, Washington, DC 20005 or via fax at 202/371-2090. You are entitled to a copy of the entire ICR package free-of-charge.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

OMB Control Number: 1024-0125.

Title: Submission of Offers in

Response to Concession Opportunities.

Current Expiration Date: 01/31/2010.

Form(s): None.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection of information.

Abstract: The regulations at 36 CFR part 51 primarily implement Title IV of the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 (Pub. L. 105-391 or the Act), which provides legislative authority, policies and requirements for the solicitation, award and administration of National Park Service (NPS) concession contracts. The regulations require the submission of offers by parties interested in applying for a NPS concession contract.

Affected public: Businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Obligation to respond: Required to obtain or retain a benefit.

Frequency of response: On occasion.

Estimated total annual responses: 240.

Estimated average completion time per response: 320 hours.

Estimated annual reporting burden: 76,800 hours.

Estimated annual nonhour cost burden: \$1,120,000.

Comments are invited on: (1) The practical utility of the information being gathered; (2) the accuracy of the burden hour estimate; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4)

ways to minimize the burden to respondents, including use of automated information collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that NPS will be able to do so. All responses to the notice will be summarized and included in the request for the Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: August 3, 2009.

Cartina Miller,

NPS Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. E9-18857 Filed 8-5-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R7-R-2009-N135; 70133-1265-0000-U4]

Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, AK

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a proposed land exchange of certain lands owned by the State of Alaska and certain lands owned by the King Cove Corporation and evaluation of a road corridor through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and the Izembek Wilderness Area. We furnish this notice to advise the public and other agencies of our intentions and to seek information and suggestions on the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS. Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media releases will announce additional opportunities to provide written and oral input.

DATES: While we are initiating the EIS, progress will be dependent on specific appropriations to fund this effort. Public scoping meetings will be held in Washington, DC, as well as in Anchorage, King Cove, Cold Bay, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon in Alaska. At least 30 days prior to each meeting, we will announce dates, times, and locations.

ADDRESSES: Additional information concerning the proposed land exchange is at <http://izembek.fws.gov/EIS.htm>. Send your comments or requests for information by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* izembek_eis@fws.gov;
- *Fax:* Attn: Helen Clough, (907) 786-3965; or
- *U.S. Mail:* Helen Clough, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Helen Clough, 907-786-3357 (phone), or at the addresses above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge (417,533 acres) and the North Creek (8,452 acres) and Pavlof (1,447,264 acres) units of the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge are located at the westernmost tip of the Alaska Peninsula. The 1,008,697-acre Unimak Island (the easternmost Aleutian Island of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge) lies across the Isanotski Strait. To the north of the Izembek Refuge is the Bering Sea; to the south is the Pacific Ocean. The Alaska Peninsula is dominated by the rugged Aleutian Range, part of the Aleutian arc chain of volcanoes. Landforms include mountains, active volcanoes, U-shaped valleys, glacial moraines, low tundra wetlands, lakes, sand dunes, and lagoons. Elevations range from sea level to the 9,372-foot Shishaldin Volcano. Shishaldin Volcano is a designated National Natural Landmark. Several major lagoons are within the Izembek Refuge boundary. These lagoons contain some of the world's largest eelgrass beds. The lagoons are under the jurisdiction of the State of Alaska. Izembek Lagoon is designated the Izembek State Game Refuge. Birds from all over the Arctic funnel through Izembek Refuge each fall on their way to wintering grounds throughout the world. More than 98 percent of the world's Pacific black brant use Izembek Lagoon as a staging area for their fall migration to Mexico. Other birds that use the refuge include golden plovers, ruddy turnstones, western sandpipers, tundra swans, Steller's eiders, and emperor geese. The refuge also is home to large concentrations of brown bears and other large mammals such as caribou and wolves. The red, pink, chum, and silver salmon that use the waters within the refuge enrich the entire ecosystem with the nutrients they bring from the sea. The refuge also has a rich human history, from ancient settlements of Alaska Natives, through the 18th and 19th century Russian fur

traders, to a World War II outpost. The Izembek Wilderness covers much of the refuge and includes pristine streams, extensive wetlands, steep mountains, tundra, and sand dunes, and provides high scenic, wildlife, and scientific values, as well as outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

The King Cove Corporation is an Alaska Native Village Corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA; 43 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*) Under the authority of ANCSA, Congress granted to King Cove Corporation land entitlements within and adjacent to Izembek Refuge. The State of Alaska also owns lands, submerged lands, shorelands, and tidelands within and adjacent to Izembek and Alaska Peninsula Refuges, including the Izembek State Game Refuge.

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge stretches from the Arctic Ocean to the southeast panhandle of Alaska and protects breeding habitat for seabirds, marine mammals, and other wildlife on more than 2,500 islands, spires, rocks, and coastal headlands. Sitkinak Island, which lies within the boundaries of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, is primarily owned by the State of Alaska, with two parcels owned by the Service.

In the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (H.R. 146, Subtitle E; the Act), Congress directs us to prepare an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508) to evaluate the impacts of a proposed land exchange with the State of Alaska and the King Cove Corporation for the purpose of constructing a single-lane gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. The land exchange would involve the removal of approximately 206 acres within the Izembek Wilderness portion of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge for the road corridor and approximately 1,600 acres of Federal land within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on Sitkinak Island. In exchange, we would receive approximately 43,093 acres of land owned by the State of Alaska and approximately 13,300 acres of land owned by the King Cove Corporation. These lands are located around Cold Bay and adjacent to the North Creek Unit of Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge.

The preparation of this EIS is to begin not later than 60 days after the Secretary receives notification by the State and the King Cove Corporation of their

intention to exchange lands in accordance with the Act. The Secretary received notification by the King Cove Corporation on May 19, 2009, and by the State of Alaska on June 19, 2009. This notice initiates the process and opens the period for public scoping. Formal public involvement activities will begin when we receive funds appropriated to support this effort. At that time we will announce additional public involvement activities.

In accordance with Section 6402(b)(2)(B) of the Act, the EIS will analyze the proposed land exchange and the potential construction and operation of a road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska, and will evaluate a specific road corridor through the Izembek Refuge that will be identified in consultation with the State of Alaska, the City of King Cove, and the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove. The alternatives anticipated at this time include the existing situation (no land exchange or road construction) and the proposed land exchange and road construction and operation as outlined in the Act. In preparing the EIS, the Service will solicit comments from public locally, regionally, and nationally. As required in the Act, subsequent to the preparation of the EIS and in conjunction with the Record of Decision, the Secretary of the Interior will determine whether the land exchange (including the construction of the proposed road) is in the public interest.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold it from public review, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do so.

Dated: July 31, 2009.

Gary Edwards,

Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska.

[FR Doc. E9–18809 Filed 8–5–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Notice of Availability for the Record of Decision on the Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, South Dakota

AGENCY: Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(C)), the National Park Service (NPS) announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Final General Management Plan (GMP)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, South Dakota. On July 2, the acting regional director for the NPS Midwest Region approved the ROD for the Final GMP/EIS. As soon as practicable, the NPS will begin to implement the selected alternative.

The selected alternative, with the concept of presenting the national historic site as a symbol of the Cold War, will restore Delta One to its ready-alert status and rehabilitate Delta Nine to its stand-down appearance. These facilities will be presented as symbols commemorating the history and significance of the Cold War, the arms race, and the intercontinental ballistic missile in the second half of the 20th century.

The selected alternative includes locating a 7,700-square-foot visitor/administrative facility northwest of exit 131 on Interstate 90, built in two stages. Under the selected alternative, visitors will drive their personal cars to the Delta One facility and, with reservations, go on a ranger-led tour. Visitors will also drive their personal cars to Delta Nine for a self-guided tour. A shuttle system to Delta One will be developed for operation when the level of visitation warrants. The chain link security gate at Delta One will remain locked during business hours except during shuttle tours. The gate at Delta Nine will remain open during business hours.

Visitors benefit from this plan because of a rich range of options to see and learn about the missile sites as symbols that commemorate the Cold War, including guided tours, onsite interpretive media, and interpretive programs at the visitor/administrative facility.

The ROD includes a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, a description of the environmentally preferable alternative, a finding on impairment of park resources and values, a listing of measures to minimize environmental harm, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Superintendent Mark Herberger, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, 21280 South Dakota Highway 240,

A-2. Revised Notice February 24, 2010

Scoping Process

To avoid duplication with State and local procedures, we plan to use the scoping process initiated by Western under CEQA. No additional public scoping meetings are planned at this time. The CEQA Notice of Preparation, comments received, and a map showing the proposed project and pipeline alignment alternatives are available at <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/socal/envdocs.html>. No known Indian trust assets or environmental justice issues are associated with the Proposed Action, although the proposed pipeline alignment may include areas of low income and minority populations.

Written comments are requested to help identify any additional alternatives and issues that should be analyzed in the EIS/EIR. Federal, State and local agencies, tribes, and the general public are invited to participate in the environmental review process.

Public Disclosure

Before including your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: February 18, 2010.

Jayne Harkins,

Deputy Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region.

[FR Doc. 2010-3644 Filed 2-23-10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MN-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R7-R-2009-N288; 70133-1265-0000-U4]

Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, Alaska

AGENCY: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Revised Notice

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), intend to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposed land exchange of certain lands owned by the State of Alaska and certain lands owned by the King Cove Corporation and evaluation of a proposed road corridor through the Izembek National Wildlife

Refuge and the Izembek Wilderness Area. We published a notice in the **Federal Register** on August 6, 2009, inviting suggestions on the scope of issues to address in the EIS. We now provide a comment-period end date and announce the dates, times, and locations of upcoming public meetings. Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media releases will announce additional opportunities to provide written and oral input.

DATES: Meetings: Public scoping meetings will be held in Anchorage, Alaska on March 4, 2010, 5–8 p.m. and on March 11, 2010, 1–4 p.m. in Washington, DC. In addition, we will hold public scoping meetings in King Cove, Cold Bay, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon in Alaska. We will announce these meeting dates, times, and locations locally, at least 10 days prior to each meeting.

Comments: Please provide any written comments, information, or suggestions on the scope of issues to address in the EIS by April 30, 2010.

ADDRESSES: Additional information concerning the proposed land exchange is at <http://izembek.fws.gov/EIS.htm>. Send your comments or requests for information by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* izembek_eis@fws.gov;
- *Fax:* Attn: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786–3965; or

- *U.S. Mail:* Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS–231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephanie Brady, 907–246–1203 (phone), or at the addresses above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge (417,533 acres) and the North Creek (8,452 acres) and Pavlof (1,447,264 acres) units of the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge are located at the westernmost tip of the Alaska Peninsula. The 1,008,697-acre Unimak Island (the easternmost Aleutian Island of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge) lies across the Isanotski Strait. To the north of the Izembek Refuge is the Bering Sea; to the south is the Pacific Ocean. The Alaska Peninsula is dominated by the rugged Aleutian Range, part of the Aleutian arc chain of volcanoes. Landforms include mountains, active volcanoes, U-shaped valleys, glacial moraines, low tundra wetlands, lakes, sand dunes, and lagoons. Elevations range from sea level to the 9,372-foot Shishaldin Volcano. Shishaldin Volcano is a designated National Natural Landmark.

Several major lagoons are within the Izembek Refuge boundary. These lagoons contain some of the world's largest eelgrass beds. The lagoons are under the jurisdiction of the State of Alaska. Izembek Lagoon is designated as Izembek State Game Refuge. Birds from all over the Arctic funnel through Izembek Refuge in fall on their way to wintering grounds throughout the world. More than 98 percent of the world's Pacific black brant use Izembek Lagoon as a staging area for their fall migration to Mexico. Other birds that use the refuge include golden plovers, ruddy turnstones, western sandpipers, tundra swans, Steller's eiders, and emperor geese. The refuge also is home to large concentrations of brown bears and other large mammals, such as caribou and wolves. The red, pink, chum, and silver salmon that use the waters within the refuge enrich the entire ecosystem with the nutrients they bring from the sea. The refuge also has a rich human history, from ancient settlements of Alaska Natives, through the 18th and 19th century Russian fur traders, to a World War II outpost. The Izembek Wilderness covers much of the refuge and includes pristine streams, extensive wetlands, steep mountains, tundra, and sand dunes, and provides high scenic, wildlife, and scientific values, as well as outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge stretches from the Arctic Ocean to the southeast panhandle of Alaska and protects breeding habitat for seabirds, marine mammals, and other wildlife on more than 2,500 islands, spires, rocks, and coastal headlands. Sitkinak Island, which lies within the boundaries of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, is primarily owned by the State of Alaska, with two parcels owned by the Service.

The King Cove Corporation is an Alaska Native Village Corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA; 43 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*). Under the authority of ANCSA, Congress granted King Cove Corporation land entitlements within and adjacent to Izembek Refuge. The State of Alaska also owns lands, submerged lands, shorelands, and tidelands within and adjacent to Izembek and Alaska Peninsula Refuges, including the Izembek State Game Refuge.

In the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (H.R. 146, Subtitle E; the Act), Congress directed us to prepare an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), and

its implementing regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508) to evaluate the impacts of a proposed land exchange with the State of Alaska and the King Cove Corporation for the purpose of constructing a single-lane gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. The land exchange would involve the removal of approximately 206 acres within the Izembek Wilderness portion of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge for the road corridor and approximately 1,600 acres of Federal land within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on Sitkinak Island. In exchange, we would receive approximately 43,093 acres of land owned by the State of Alaska and approximately 13,300 acres of land owned by the King Cove Corporation. These lands are located around Cold Bay and adjacent to the North Creek Unit of Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge.

The Act directed us to begin our preparation of this EIS not later than 60 days after the Secretary received notification by the State and the King Cove Corporation of their intention to exchange lands. The Secretary received notification from the King Cove Corporation on May 19, 2009, and from the State of Alaska on June 19, 2009. Our notice of August 6, 2009 (74 FR 39336), initiated the process and opened the period for public scoping. This revised notice informs the public of the dates for the public scoping meetings in Washington, DC, and Anchorage, Alaska, and also notifies the public of the comment-period end date (see **DATES**). We will also hold public scoping meetings at King Cove, Cold Bay, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon, Alaska; we will announce the dates, times, and locations locally, at least 10 days prior to each meeting.

In accordance with Section 6402(b)(2)(B) of the Act, the EIS will analyze the proposed land exchange and the potential construction and operation of a road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska, and will evaluate a specific road corridor through the Izembek Refuge that will be identified in consultation with the State of Alaska, the City of King Cove, and the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove. The alternatives anticipated at this time include the existing situation (no land exchange or road construction) and the proposed land exchange and road construction and operation as outlined in the Act. In preparing the EIS, we will request comments from the public locally, regionally, and nationally. As required in the Act, subsequent to the

preparation of the EIS and in conjunction with the Record of Decision, the Secretary of the Interior will determine whether the land exchange (including the construction of the proposed road) is in the public interest. We anticipate release of the Draft EIS in the spring of 2011, followed by a 90-day public review period.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold it from public review, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do so.

Dated: February 16, 2010.

Geoffrey L. Haskett,

Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska.

[FR Doc. 2010–3642 Filed 2–23–10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLUT91000–L11400000–PH0000–24–1A]

Notice of Utah's Resource Advisory Council (RAC)/Recreation RAC Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Utah's Resource Advisory Council (RAC)/Recreation RAC Meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Utah Resource Advisory Council (RAC)/Recreation RAC will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The Utah Resource Advisory Council (RAC)/Recreation RAC will meet March 24, 2010, (8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.) and March 25, 2010, (8 a.m.—5 p.m.) in St. George, Utah.

ADDRESSES: The Council will meet at the Hilton Garden Inn (Indigo meeting room), 1731 South Convention Center Drive, St. George, Utah.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact Sherry Foot, Special Programs Coordinator, Utah State Office, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 45155,

Salt Lake City, Utah, 84145–0155; phone (801) 539–4195.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member Council advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in Utah. In conformance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (Title 16 of the United States Code, Part 6801 *et seq.*), the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM will present the following recreation fee proposals on March 24: The BLM Moab Field Office proposal to begin charging Expanded Amenity fees at the Moab Skyway Group Site and the Entrada Bluffs, Bartlett, and Courthouse Rock camping areas; the BLM Fillmore Field Office proposal to increase Special Recreation Permit fees at the Little Sahara Recreation Area; the Dixie National Forest proposal to begin charging Expanded Amenity fees at the Pine Valley Guard Station; and the Fishlake National Forest proposals to increase Expanded Amenity fees at the Adelaide, Gooseberry, Lebaron, Maple Grove, and Oak Creek campgrounds. Planned agenda topics for the March 24 session also include a welcome and introduction of new Council members. A half-hour public comment period, where the public may address the Council, is scheduled to begin from 2:15 p.m.—2:45 p.m. Written comments may be sent to the Bureau of Land Management address listed above.

On March 25, topics will include an implementation overview of Subtitle O of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, and the Washington County Commissioners' and School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration's perspectives on the Act. Randy Johnson, consultant, will address the Council on the status of ongoing land use bills from other counties. A field tour of the Red Cliffs National Conservation Area is planned from 1:15 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public; however, transportation, lodging, and meals are the responsibility of the participating public.

Dated: February 16, 2010.

Approved:

Selma Sierra,

State Director.

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BILLING CODE 4310–DQ–P

A-3. Project Mailing List

(Refuge = 'All' or Refuge = 'Izembek')

40379 0.650694444

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					Regional Planning			National Park Service	240 W. 5th Avenue Room 114		Anchorage	AK	99501
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Mr	Charles		Bunch	Field Representative	Indian Affairs - Alaska Region	3601 C Street, #1100	Anchorage	AK 99503-5947
	Niles		Cesar	Regional Director	Indian Affairs - Alaska Region	P.O. Box 25520	Juneau	AK 99802-5520
	Bo		Sloan	Refuge Manager	Innoko NWR	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service P.O. Box 69 MS-549	McGrath	AK 99627
	Paul T.		Schnell	Director	Institute for Environmental Learning	12398 Platten Road	Lyndonville	NY 14094
	Brian		Barnes	Director	Institute of Arctic Biology	University of Alaska	Fairbanks	AK 99775-7000
	Tom		Paragi	ADF&G	Interior Region	P.O. Box 757000 1300 College Rd	Fairbanks	AK 99701-1599
	Lynn		Levengood	Chairman, Fairbanks Advisory Comm	Interior Regl F&G Council	931 Vide Way	Fairbanks	AK 99712
	Jonathan		Solomon		Internation Porcupine Caribou Project	P.O. Box 98	Fort Yukon	AK 99740
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					Juneau Empire	3100 Channel Drive	AK	99801
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				General Manager	KBRW	P.O. Box 109	Barrow	AK 99723
				Refuge Manager	Kanai NWR	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Box 2139	Soldotna	AK 99669-2139
					KIMO 13 News	2700 E Tudor Road	Anchorage	AK 99507
	Janet		Kennedy	Alaska Manager	Kinnetic Laboratories Inc	1102 W 7th Avenue	Anchorage	AK 99501-3302

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Vincent M.	Tutiakoff		Kodiak/Aleutian Island Fed Sub Council	4000 Old Seward Hwy. #300	Anchorage	AK	99550
Dan Frank Raymond Phillip	Bross Chingliak Peterson Guy	Refuge Manager News Director	Koyukuk/Nowitna NWR KSKA Public Radio KUAC Radio Kuitsarak Inc Kuskokwim Corporation Kwethluk Incorporated	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service P.O. Box 287 3877 University Drive PO Box 755620 P.O. Box 10 P.O. Box 127 P.O. Box 109	Galena Anchorage Fairbanks Goodnews Bay Aniak Kwethluk	AK AK AK AK AK AK	99741 99508 99775-5620 99589 99557 99621
			Kwethluk School Community Library	General Delivery	Kwethluk	AK	99621
		Community Development Coordinator	Lake & Peninsula Borough	P.O. Box 495	King Salmon	AK	99613
			Lake and Peninsula School District	P.O. Box 498	King Salmon	AK	99613
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Royce	Purinton	Chair	Koyukuk Moose H	Middle Yukon Advisory Committee	Nulato	AK	99765
		Mayor	Municipality of Anchorage	Office of the Mayor	Anchorage	AK	99519-6650
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Dave	Lemarie	RCCP Coordinator	National Conservation Trainit	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 698 Conservation Way	Shepherdstown	WV	25443
Anne	Post Roy		National Conservation Trainit	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 698 Conservation Way	Shepherdstown	WV	25443
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Don	Ford	Director	National Outdoor Leadership School	P.O. Box 981	Palmer	AK	99645
		Director, Conservation, Wildlife & Natural Resources	National Rifle Association	11250 Waples Mill Road	Fairfax	VA	22030
Susan	Reece Lamson		National Rifle Association	11250 Waples Mill Road	Fairfax	VA	22030
Mr Billy	R Templeton	Wildlife Management Specialist	National Rifle Association	11250 Waples Mill Road	Fairfax	VA	22030
			National Wildlife Federation	750 W 2nd Ave, Ste 200	Anchorage	AK	99501
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Knowland	Silas		Nenana-Minto Advisory Committee	General Delivery	Minto	AK	99758
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Phillip	Titus		Nenana-Minto Advisory Committee	General Delivery	Minto	AK	99758
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			North Pacific Fishery Management Council	605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306	Anchorage	AK	99501-2252
			North Slope Borough GIS Dept.	P.O. Box 69	Barrow	AK	99723
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		President	Rampart Traditional Council	General Delivery	Rampart	AK	99767
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			Commanding Officer	Support Center U.S. Coast Guard	P.O. Box 14	Kodiak	AK	99615
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			Director, Wildlife And Parks	Tanana Chiefs Conference Inc	122 1st Avenue	Fairbanks	AK	99701
	Buddy	Brown	Community Resource Coordinator	Tanana Chiefs Conference Inc	122 1st Avenue	Fairbanks	AK	99701-4897
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	Henry	Wiehl		Tanana-Rampart-Manley Advisory Committee TDX Power, Inc.	General Delivery 4300 B Street, Suite 402	Rampart Anchorage	AK AK	99767 99503
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				The Aleut Corporation	4000 Old Seward Hwy, Suite 300	Anchorage	AK	99503
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	David Randy	Hoskins Hagenstein	Ex. Dir. State Director	The Izaak Walton League Of America The Nautre Conservancy	707 Conservation Lane 715 L Street, Suite 100	Gaithersburg Anchorage	MD AK	20878 99501
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	Mark	Pelz	Chief of Planning	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Region 8	2800 Cottage Way, Rm W-1832	Sacramento	CA	95825-1846
	Robin	West	Refuge Supervisor	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	911 NE 11th Ave	Portland	OR	97232-4181
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		Consortium Library	University of Alaska-Anchorage	3211 Providence Drive	Anchorage	AK	99508	
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Julie A.K.	Maier	Institute of Arctic Biology Library	University of Alaska-Fairbanks	P.O. Box 757000	Fairbanks	AK	99775-7000	
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Paul	Herbert		Yukon Flats Advisory Committee	P.O. Box 104	Fort Yukon	AK	99740	
Eddie	James		Yukon Flats Advisory Committee	General Delivery	Birch Creek	AK	99740	
Clifford	Luke		Yukon Flats Advisory Committee	P.O. Box 52	Fort Yukon	AK	99740	
Timothy	Sam		Yukon Flats Advisory Committee	General Delivery	Arctic Village	AK	99722	
Ron	Smoke		Yukon Flats Advisory Committee	General Delivery	Stevens Village	AK	99774	
Ben	Stevens	Chairman	Yukon Flats Advisory Committee	General Delivery	Stevens Village	AK	99774	
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A-4. Newsletter #1



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

IZEMBEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 1 – JANUARY 2010

Introduction

In the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (the Act), Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to conduct an analysis of a proposed land exchange with the State of Alaska and the King Cove Corporation and the potential construction and operation of a road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. The Act also requires the EIS contain an evaluation of a specific road corridor through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge that is identified in consultation with the State of Alaska, the City of King Cove, Alaska, and the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove, Alaska. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is the lead agency for preparing the EIS.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and the North Creek and Pavlof units of the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge are located at the westernmost tip of the Alaska Peninsula, and cover an area just under two million acres (Map 1). To the north of the Izembek Refuge is the Bering Sea; to the south is the Pacific Ocean. The 300,000 acre Izembek Wilderness covers much of the refuge and includes pristine streams, extensive wetlands, steep mountains, tundra, and sand dunes, and provides high scenic, wildlife, and scientific values, as well as outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

The King Cove Corporation is an Alaska Native Village Corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act which granted the corporation land entitlements within and adjacent to Izembek Refuge. The State of Alaska also owns lands, submerged lands, shorelands, and tidelands within and adjacent to Izembek and Alaska

Peninsula Refuges, including the Izembek State Game Refuge.

WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?

The Act states that, if approved, the land exchange would involve the removal of approximately 206 acres within the Izembek Wilderness portion of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge for the road corridor and approximately 1,600 acres of Federal land within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on Sitkinak Island (Map 2 and 3). In exchange, the Service would receive approximately 43,093 acres of land owned by the State of Alaska and approximately 13,300 acres of land owned by the King Cove Corporation. These lands are located around Cold Bay and adjacent to the North Creek Unit of Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge. The Act specifies that this land exchange is not subject to any Federal requirements for land exchanges relating to valuation, appraisal, or equalization of land. In addition, an analysis will be conducted of a specific road corridor through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

NEPA ANALYSIS

The Service is preparing an EIS to address the potential environmental, cultural, and socio-economic impacts that could result from the proposed land exchange and road corridor. The EIS process will help the Secretary of Interior decide whether or not to proceed with the exchange and road corridor. As part of the process, the Service is inviting the public to provide input throughout the process of the EIS. The initial opportunity for public input is during the scoping process, which will close on May 1, 2010.

What is Scoping?

Scoping is the process of actively acquiring input from the public and other interested Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies. Information gained during scoping assists the lead agency in identifying potential environmental issues, alternatives, and mitigation measures associated with development of the proposed project. The process provides a mechanism for "narrowing" the scope of issues so that the EIS can focus the analysis on areas of high interest and concern. Your participation in the scoping process is a vital component to preparing a sound EIS. The scoping process provides the public and agencies opportunities for meaningful involvement in the decision-making process. As the lead agency, the Service is responsible for the development of the EIS, which includes:

- A process for public participation
- Identifying project issues and concerns
- Identifying the purpose and need for the proposed action
- Describing the affected environment
- Developing alternatives
- Evaluating the effects of the alternatives for the proposed project

HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

This newsletter is the first in a series of newsletters that will be issued periodically to keep the public informed about the EIS preparation and project development. This first issue offers information about the scoping process to encourage public participation and input. We will accept written comments until May 1, 2010. You can learn more by attending one of our public scoping meetings.

Scoping Meeting Dates and Locations:

Anchorage, AK Public Scoping Meeting
Thursday, March 4, 2010 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Wilda Marston Theater, Loussac Public Library
3600 Denali Street, Anchorage, AK 99503

Washington DC Public Scoping Meeting
Thursday, March 11, 2010 – 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Main Auditorium, U.S. Department of the Interior,
1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240

King Cove, Cold Bay, False Pass, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon, AK Public Scoping Meetings
Meetings are tentatively scheduled for the last week of April, 2010. Details of these meetings will be announced locally 30 days prior; however, last minute schedule changes may occur due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

Public Scoping Ends May 1, 2010

The Service is requesting input from Federal, State and Tribal agencies, local governments, private organizations, refuge users, and the public to help identify the issues associated with the proposed project. Your input is important to the process. Public scoping comments can be submitted to the Service using the following methods:

- Email: izembek_eis@fws.gov;
- Fax: Attn: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-3965; or
- U.S. Mail: Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. When the EIS has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments.

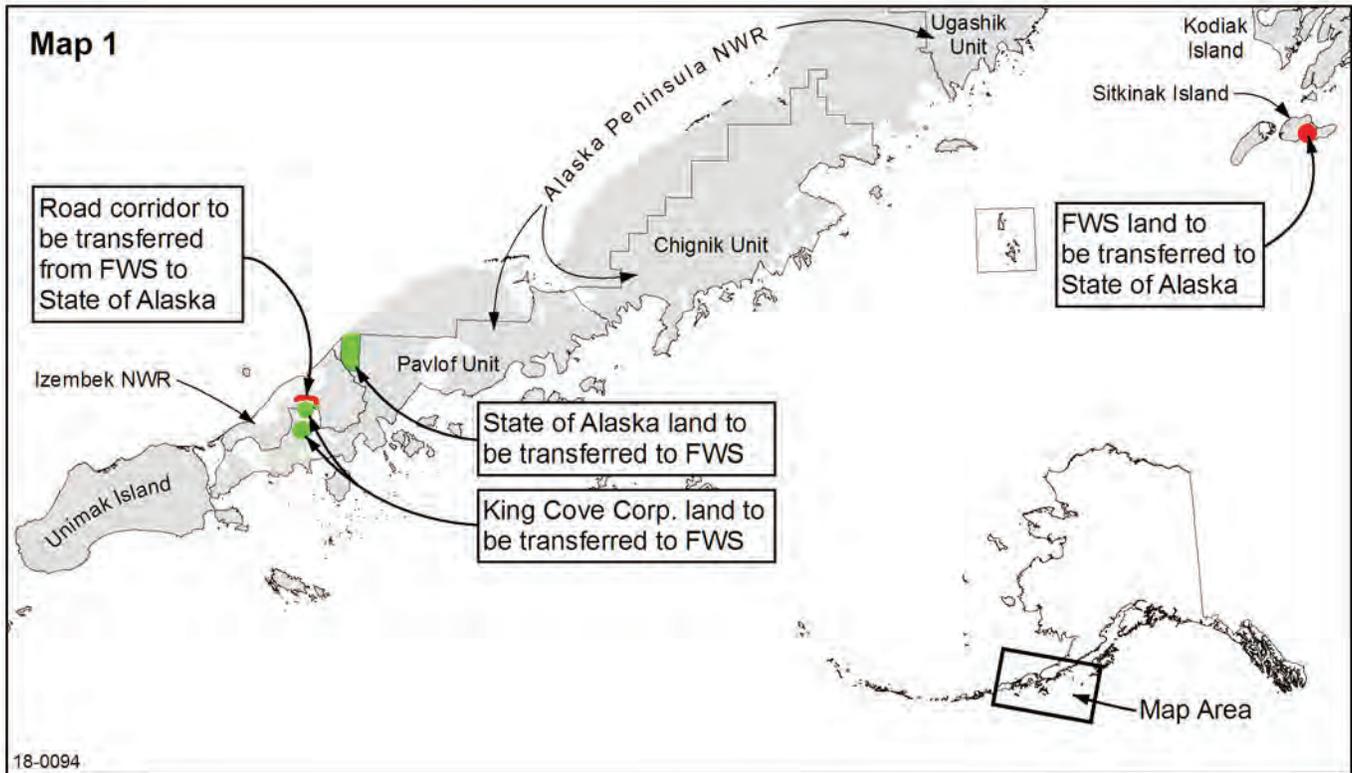
PROJECT TIMELINE¹ AND COOPERATORS

EIS Step	Completion Date
Scoping	May 1, 2010
Draft EIS public review starts	March 31, 2011
Final EIS released	February 28, 2012
Record of Decision	April 30, 2012
Public Interest Finding	April 30, 2012

¹ Timeline is contingent upon funding.

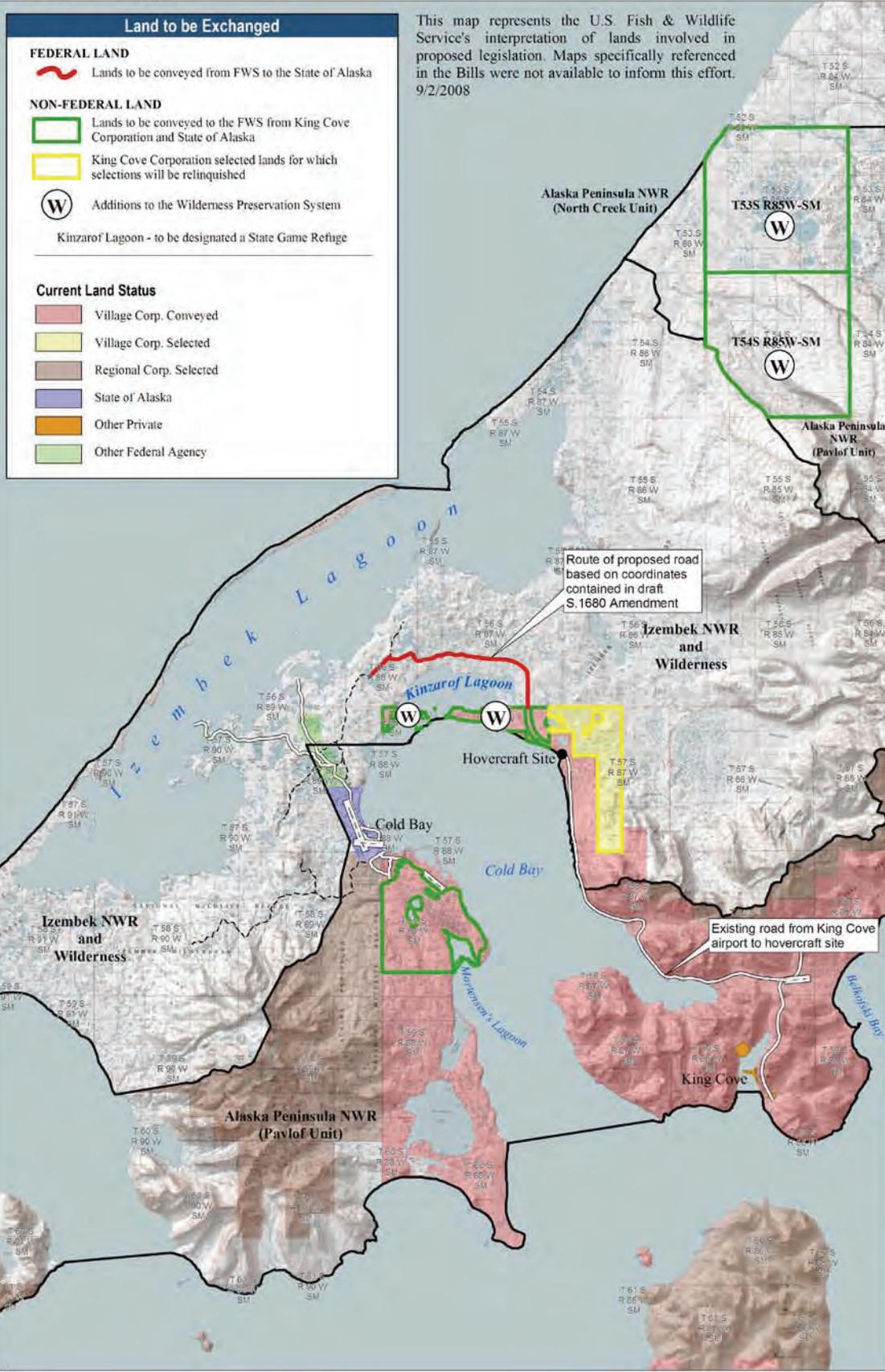
Project cooperators may include U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Lands Highways Program), State of Alaska, Aleutians East Borough, City of King Cove, King Cove Corporation, Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove, and the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management

Council. The Service is the lead agency with final responsibility for the EIS. After the EIS is completed, the Secretary of the Interior must determine that the land exchange is in the public interest.



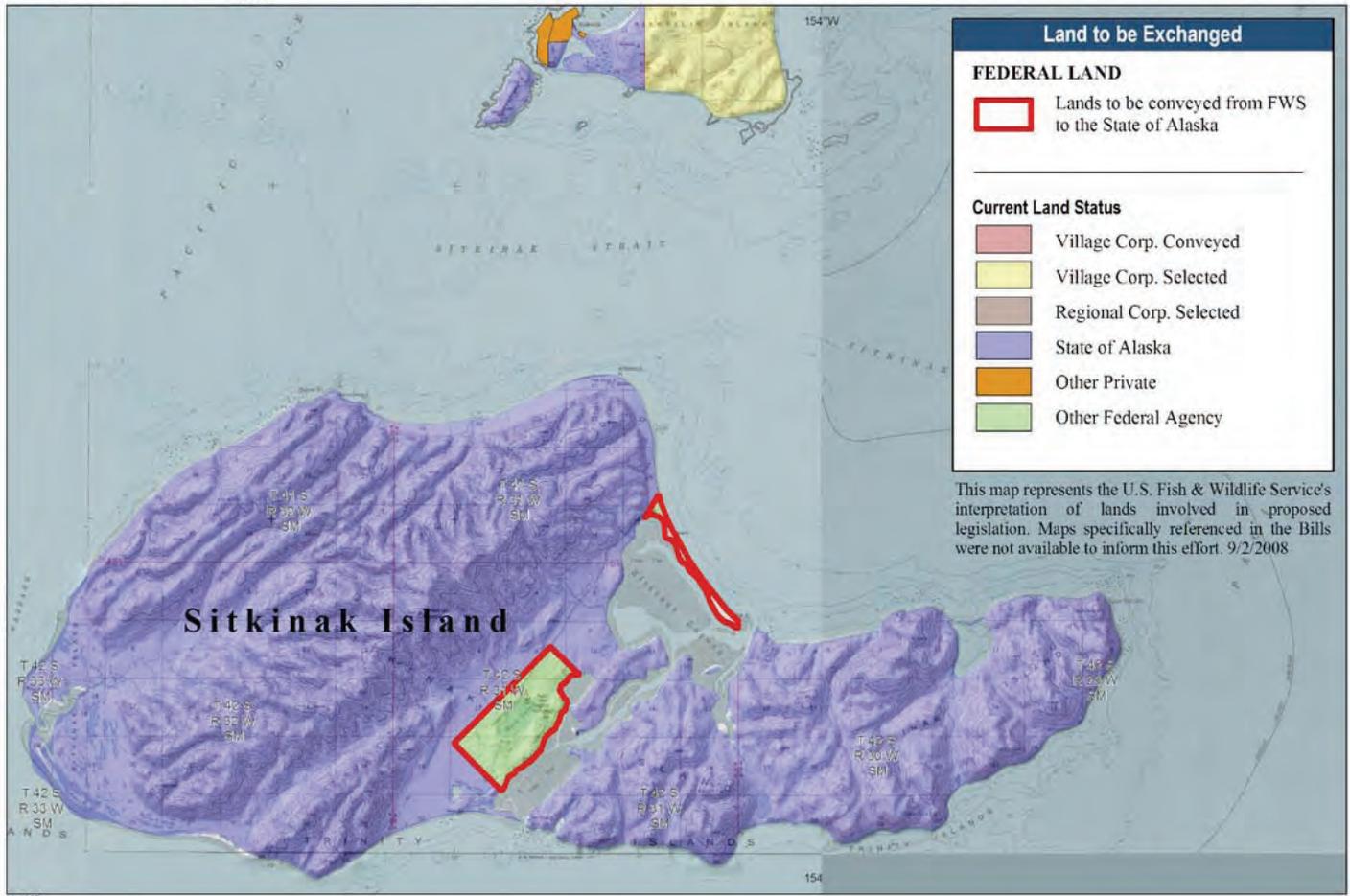


Map 2 - Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges
Alaska





Map 3 - Sitkinak Island - Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge
Alaska



18-0087

A-5. Newspaper Advertisement

Ad Verification Only

Anchorage Daily News

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 1011 E TUDOR RD Expira
 City ANCHORAGE
 State/Zip AK 99503-6103 Country Code

PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Public-Scoping Meeting in Anchorage for the Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Land Exchange and Road Corridor for Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Change and Road Corridor for Izembek National Wildlife Refuge

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The EIS process will begin with public scoping meetings to discuss issues that relate to the land exchange and road corridor. The first public scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, March 4, 2010 in the Wilka Marston Theatre at the Loussac Library in Anchorage, Alaska, 5:00 to 8:00 pm. The Loussac Library is located at 3000 Bethel Street, Anchorage, Alaska. All members of the public are welcome to attend. For additional information, please refer to the Izembek NWR website <http://izembek.fws.gov> or contact the Program Coordinator, Stephanie Brady at Email: izembek_ess@fws.gov; Fax: Attention: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-3965; or U.S. Mail: Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

Published: February 27 - March 4, 2010

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Published: February 27 - March 4, 2010

A-6. Press Release

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



News Release

March 1, 2010

USFWS Will Begin Public Scoping for an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Land Exchange and Road Corridor for Izembek National Wildlife Refuge

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Contacts

Bruce Woods (907) 786-3695

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Alaska Region announced today that the Service is beginning public scoping for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposed land exchange and the related establishment of a road corridor on Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. The development of an EIS is required by Subtitle E of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-11, Act). The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop an EIS to evaluate a three-party land exchange that would add 56,393 acres to the Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges (NWR), designate 43,000 acres as wilderness, transfer 1,600 acres of refuge lands on Sitkinak Island to the State of Alaska, and transfer a 206-acre, 9-mile corridor through Izembek NWR and designated Wilderness to the State, to allow a road to be constructed between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay.

The EIS process will begin with public scoping meetings to discuss issues that relate to the land exchange and road corridor. The Service will conduct public scoping meetings this spring on the following dates and locations:

- March 4 at the Loussac Library in Anchorage, Alaska from 5 to 8 pm
- March 11 at the Department of Interior building, Washington DC from 1 to 4 pm
- During the last week of April in five communities in Alaska: Cold Bay,

King Cove, Sand Point, Nelson Lagoon and False Pass (specific dates, times, and locations to be announced).

These scoping meetings will help the Service identify issues that pertain to the development of the draft EIS. After evaluating public comments, the Service will release a draft EIS for public review and comment in the spring of 2011. Based upon a thorough review of comments, the Service will issue a final EIS, record of decision, and a public interest finding in the spring of 2012.

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. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

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A-7. Electronic/Online Advertisements

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Website Scoping Updates
 - March 17, 2010
 - April 1, 2010
 - May 5, 2010
- Service submission to cooperating agencies for web postings
- Independent public website scoping posting, managed by Ernest Weiss
- Special edition of *In the Loop* newsletter, published by Aleutians East Borough, Aleutians East Borough School District, and Eastern Aleutian Tribes
- What's Up Listserv Excerpt



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EIS Land Exchange - Road Corridor

 Photo of Lefthand Valley Wilderness Area, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. Photo Credit: John Sarvis/USFWS

Lefthand Valley Wilderness Area,
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Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-6888, or U.S. Mail: Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

[Federal Register](#) (pdf)

[Public Scoping Presentation](#) (pdf - 1.85mb)

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 - [What's happening now?](#)
 - [How can I get involved?](#)
 - [How can I stay informed?](#)
 - [How can I submit comments?](#)

Introduction

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What's happening now?

The Service published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in August 2009 to announce the preparation of an EIS for the Izembek NWR Land Exchange ([Federal Register Notice](#) (pdf) and [press release](#).) In February 2010, the Service published another [NOI](#) (pdf) to announce the public scoping meetings in Anchorage, Washington, DC and surrounding communities.

Tentative Schedule for Izembek EIS

Notice of Intent	August 2009/February 2010
Public Scoping	March/April 2010 – We are here
Draft EIS Completed	Spring 2011
Public Comment Period	Summer 2011
Public Comment Analysis	Fall 2011
Final EIS	Winter 2012
Record of Decision/Public Interest Findings	Spring 2012

How can I get involved?

Watch this web site for continual updates as we move through the EIS process.

The first opportunity for public involvement occurs with "scoping," which is an early and open process to determine the scope of environmental issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. It is a process established to involve the public in identifying issues, alternatives, and potential impacts of the proposed land exchange/road corridor.

[Public scoping](#) (550kb - pdf) will occur from February to May, 2010. This will be your first opportunity to submit your ideas and comments. We are looking for meaningful comments that will help determine issues, alternatives and potential impacts of the proposed project.

Public Scoping Meetings Date and Locations

Anchorage, AK Public Scoping Meeting

Thursday, March 4, 2010 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., Wilda Marston Theater, Loussac Public Library, 3600 Denali Street, Anchorage, AK 99503

Washington DC Public Scoping Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2010 – 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Main Auditorium, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240

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Meetings are tentatively scheduled for the last week of April, 2010. Details of these meetings will be announced locally 30 days prior; however, last minute schedule changes may occur due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

Public Scoping Ends May 1, 2010

You are encouraged to attend public meetings that occur in your community.

How can I stay informed?

1) **Bookmark this page and visit it often.** To make the Izembek EIS process available to the widest audience, and to save printing and mailing costs, **this web site will be the primary source for all Izembek EIS-related information.** Simply by visiting this web site you will have access to everything that is produced about the Izembek EIS and you will have complete opportunities to submit your written comments.

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The Service is requesting input from Federal, State and Tribal agencies, local governments, private organizations, refuge users, and the public to help identify the issues associated with the proposed project. Your input is important to the process. Public scoping comments can be submitted to the Service using the following methods:

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Fax: Attn: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-3965; or

U.S. Mail: Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. When the EIS has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments.

If you have further questions about the Izembek EIS, email them to us at: izembek_eis@fws.gov

Last updated: March 17, 2010

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EIS Land Exchange - Road Corridor

 Photo of Lefthand Valley Wilderness Area, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. Photo Credit: John Sarvis/USFWS

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold public scoping meeting in the five communities surrounding Izembek NWR at the following dates, times, and locations:

Monday, April 26 – **Sand Point**, City Chamber Room at 4 to 5:30 pm;

Tuesday, April 27 – **Cold Bay**, Community Center at 7pm;

Wednesday, April 28 – **Nelson Lagoon**, Community Center, 1 – 2:30 pm

Thursday, April 29 – **False Pass**, Community Center, 12:30 to 1:30 pm;

Friday, April 30 – **King Cove**, Multi-purpose building at 2 – 3:00 pm.

Last minute schedule changes may occur due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances. Please check back to this website and with the Aleutians East Borough for up-to-date information on dates and times. All members of the public are welcome to attend.

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[Federal Register](#) (pdf)
[Public Scoping Presentation](#) (pdf - 1.85mb)

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Last updated: April 1, 2010

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[Federal Register](#) (pdf)
[Public Scoping Presentation](#) (pdf - 2.2 mb)

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What's happening now?

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Tentative Schedule for Izembek EIS

Notice of Intent	August 2009/February 2010
Public Scoping	March/April 2010 – We are here
Draft EIS Completed	Spring 2011
Public Comment Period	Summer 2011
Public Comment Analysis	Fall 2011
Final EIS	Winter 2012
Record of Decision/Public Interest Finding	Spring 2012

How can I get involved?

Watch this web site for continual updates as we move through the EIS process.

The first opportunity for public involvement occurs with "scoping," which is an early and open process to determine the scope of environmental issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. It is a process

issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. It is a process established to involve the public in identifying issues, alternatives, and potential impacts of the proposed land exchange/road corridor.

[Public scoping](#) (550kb - pdf) will occur from February to May, 2010. This will be your first opportunity to submit your ideas and comments. We are looking for meaningful comments that will help determine issues, alternatives and potential impacts of the proposed project.

Public Scoping Meetings Date and Locations

Anchorage, AK Public Scoping Meeting

Thursday, March 4, 2010 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., Wilda Marston Theater, Loussac Public Library, 3600 Denali Street, Anchorage, AK 99503

Washington DC Public Scoping Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2010 – 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Main Auditorium, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240

King Cove, Cold Bay, False Pass, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon, AK Public Scoping Meetings

Meetings are tentatively scheduled for the last week of April, 2010. Details of these meetings will be announced locally 30 days prior; however, last minute schedule changes may occur due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

Public Scoping Ends May 1, 2010

You are encouraged to attend public meetings that occur in your community.

How can I stay informed?

1) **Bookmark this page and visit it often.** To make the Izembek EIS process available to the widest audience, and to save printing and mailing costs, **this web site will be the primary source for all Izembek EIS-related information.** Simply by visiting this web site you will have access to everything that is produced about the Izembek EIS and you will have complete opportunities to submit your written comments.

2) You may wish to be placed on the Izembek's email or mailing list. Note that the names, addresses, and email addresses that appear on these lists could be released upon request, under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

I'd like to receive email updates notifying me when new information appears on the web.

- **Individual**
- **Organization**

I'd like to receive print copies of Izembek EIS materials. Please put me on the mailing list.

- **Individual**
- **Organization**

How can I submit comments?

The Service is requesting input from Federal, State and Tribal agencies, local governments, private organizations, refuge users, and the public to help identify the issues associated with the proposed project. Your input

is important to the process. Public scoping comments can be submitted to the Service using the following methods:

Email: izembek_eis@fws.gov;

Fax: Attn: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-3965; or

U.S. Mail: Stephanie Brady, Project Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231, Anchorage, AK 99503.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. When the EIS has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments.

If you have further questions about the Izembek EIS, email them to us at: izembek_eis@fws.gov

Last updated: May 5, 2010

[Izembek National Wildlife Refuge](#)
[Alaska National Wildlife Refuge Home](#)
[Alaska Region Home](#)

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Home Page](#) | [Department of the Interior](#) | [USA.gov](#) | [About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)
[Accessibility](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Notices](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Contact Us](#)



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement to address the potential environmental, cultural, and socio-economic impacts that could result from a proposed land exchange and road corridor through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, from King Cove to Cold Bay.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold five public scoping meetings at the following locations:

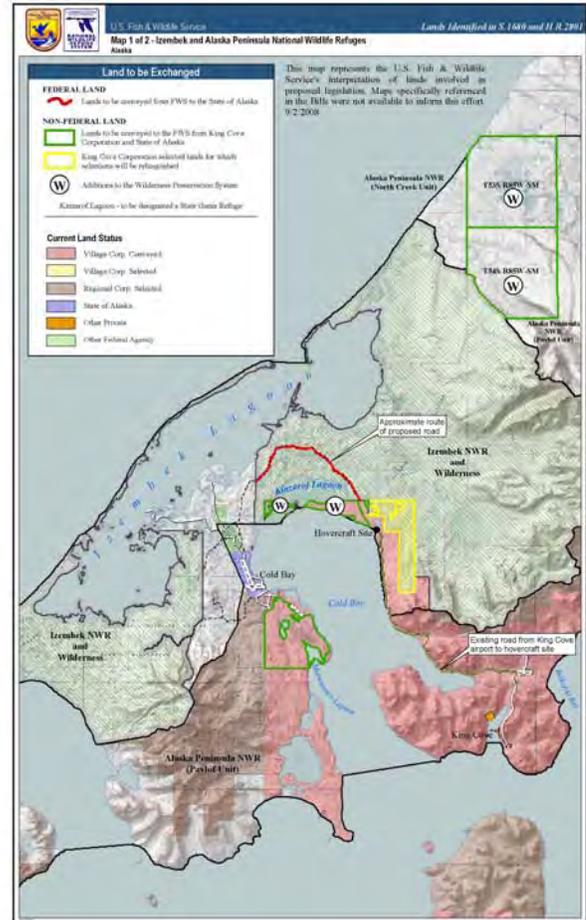
Monday, April 26 – **Sand Point**, City Chamber Room at 3pm;

Tuesday, April 27 – **Nelson Lagoon**, Community Center, mid-afternoon;

Wednesday, April 28 – **Cold Bay**, Community Center at 7pm;

Thursday, April 29 – **False Pass**, Community Center, mid-afternoon;

Friday, April 30 – **King Cove**, Multi-purpose building at 2pm.



Please note that the dates and times are weather dependent. Please check with the Aleutians East Borough for updates.

Public comments and participation are important. Please plan on attending a meeting in your community.



IzembekEIS.info

Information pertaining to the
EIS of the Izembek National
Wildlife Refuge Land
Exchange in compliance with
NEPA

Additional information at:
<http://izembek.fws.gov/eis.htm>

[Transcripts and submitted oral comments from 5 community scoping meetings: April 26th - April 30, 2010. King Cove, Sand Point, Cold Bay, Nelson Lagoon & False Pass. Released by USFWS June 18, 2010.](#)

AUTHORIZING LAW

H.R. 146 "OMNIBUS PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT ACT of 2009"
Title VI Department of the Interior Authorizations
Subtitle E [Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange](#)

[Department of Interior Notice of Intent](#)

[Federal Register](#) February 24, 2010
[Federal Register](#) August 6, 2009

[United States Fish and Wildlife Service Notice of Intent](#)
[USFWS News Release](#) March 1, 2010

[PUBLIC SCOPING NEWSLETTER](#) (5-page pdf) Issue #1 January 2010 USFWS
[USFWS Public Scoping presentation document](#) (47 page pdf) March, 2010
Public Scoping Transcripts
[Anchorage Public Scoping Transcript 3/4/10](#)
[Washington DC Public Scoping Transcript 3/11/10](#)

Links

[Department of Interior](#)
[Izembek Wildlife Refuge](#)
[Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council](#)
[Alaska Peninsula Wildlife Refuge](#)
[The Community of Cold Bay](#)
[The Community of King Cove](#)
[The City of King Cove](#)
[The Aleutians East Borough](#)
[State of Alaska](#)

Other links

[Izembek Enhancement.org](#)
[King Cove View.com](#)

Additional information at:

<http://izembek.fws.gov/eis.htm>

www.izembekeis.info is sanctioned by the Izembek Enhancement Partnership and maintained by [NW Tech Service](#).
Please send your comments to the webmaster kingcoveview@gmail.com.

page last updated 07/05/10

PROJECT TIMELINE

EIS Step	Completion Date
Scoping	May 1, 2010 CLOSED
Draft EIS public review starts	March 31, 2011
Final EIS released	February 28, 2012
Record of Decision	April 30, 2012
Public Interest Finding	April 30, 2012



Izembek Photo 1961. USFWS, David L. Spencer. Public Domain.

Public Scoping Meetings were held:

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[Transcript](#)

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[Transcript](#)

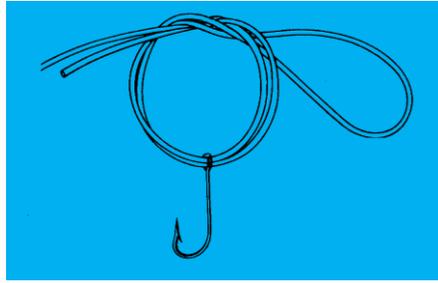
Sand Point, Alaska Monday, April 26 2010 4p.m. City Chamber
[Transcript](#)

Cold Bay, Alaska Tuesday, April 27, 2010 7p.m. Community Center
[Transcript](#)

Nelson Lagoon, Alaska Wednesday, April 28, 2010 1p.m. Community Center
[Transcript](#)

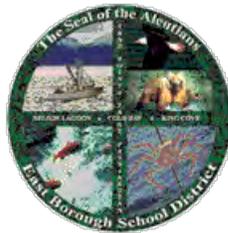
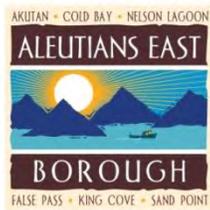
False Pass, Alaska Wednesday, April 28 2010 3 p.m. Community Center
[Transcript](#)

King Cove, Alaska Thursday, April 29, 2010 3p.m. Multi-purpose building
[Transcript](#)



Special Edition

In the Loop



EASTERN ALEUTIAN TRIBES
Working Together to Promote Healthy Communities

Bringing the Aleutians East Borough, the AEB School District and Eastern Aleutian Tribes together by sharing common goals.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service To Hold Scoping Meetings on Proposed Land Exchange and Road Corridor through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement to address the potential environmental, cultural, and socio-economic impacts that could result from a proposed land exchange and road corridor through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge from King Cove to Cold Bay.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold five public scoping meetings, at the following times and locations:

Monday, April 26 – **Sand Point**, City Chamber Room at 3pm.

Tuesday, April 27 – **Nelson Lagoon**, Community Center, mid-afternoon.

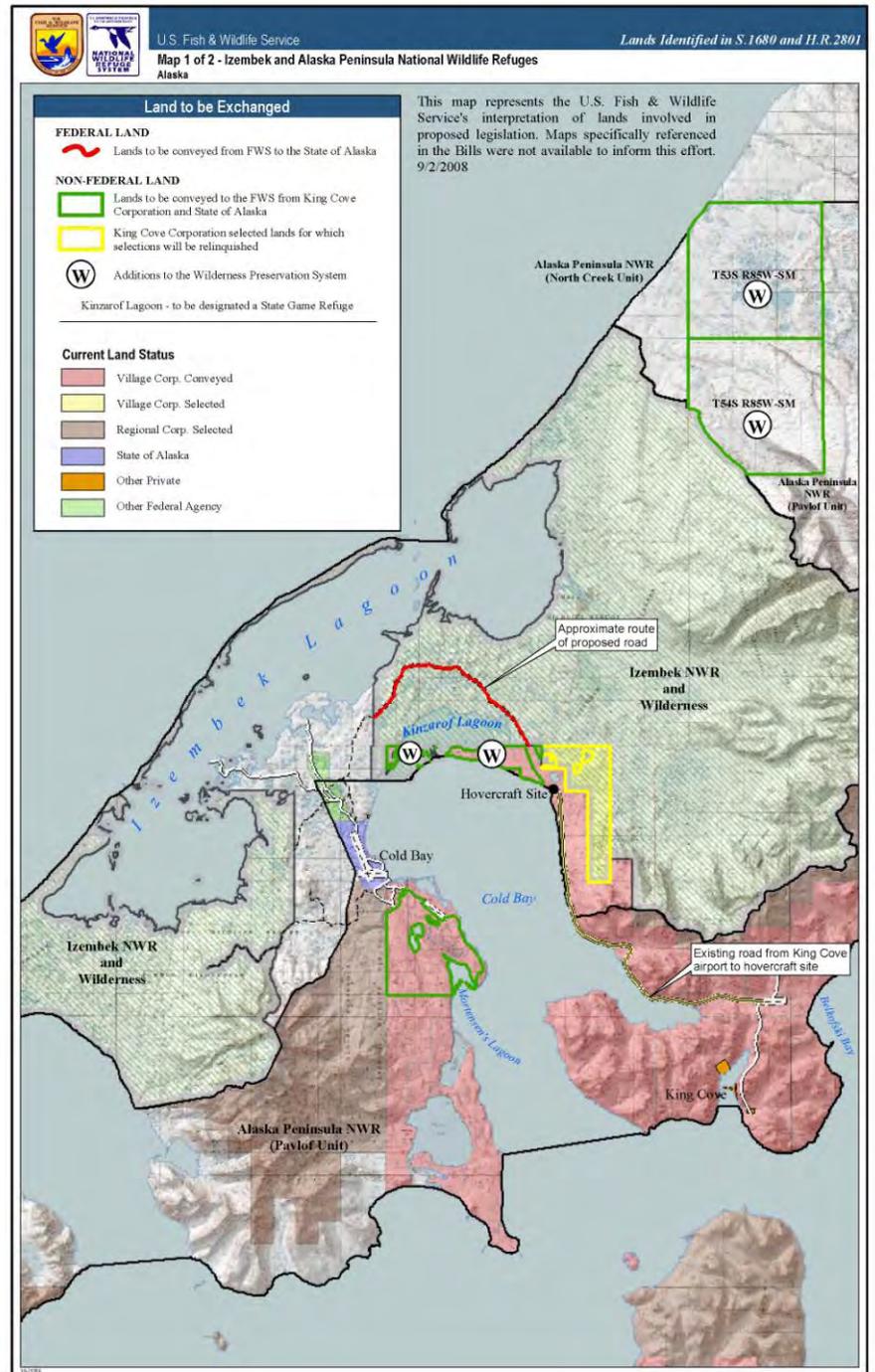
Wednesday, April 28 – **Cold Bay**, Community Center at 7pm.

Thursday, April 29 – **False Pass**, Community Center, mid-afternoon.

Friday, April 30 – **King Cove**, Multi-purpose Building at 2pm.

Please note that the dates and times are weather-dependent. Check with the Aleutians East Borough for updates.

Public comments and participation are important. Please plan to attend a meeting in your community.



***Note*:** The "Hovercraft Site" location shown on this map should be labeled as the "original, EIS approved hovercraft site". Construction at that site is planned for the future. The current hovercraft site is located in Lenard Harbor near King Cove, and is not shown on this map.

Got News?

If you have news you'd like to share, please email ltanis@aeboro.org or call AEB Communications Manager Laura Tanis at (907) 274-7579.



Thank you for reading In the Loop. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, please send an email to ltanis@aeboro.org.



What's Up Listserv Excerpt

**Mark those items that are new in this What's Up.

February 19, 2010 Compiled Weekly by Peg Tileston

On behalf of the Alaska Women's Environmental Network (AWEN), Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE), and Alaska Conservation Alliance (ACA)

**March 4

Scoping meeting will be held from 5 to 8pm at the Wilda Marston Theater, Loussac Library on the PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE that would involve the removal of approximately 206 acres within the Izembek Wilderness portion of IZEMBEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE for the road corridor and approximately 1,600 acres of Federal land within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on Sitkinak Island. In exchange, the Service would receive approximately 43,093 acres of land owned by the State of Alaska and approximately 13,300 acres of land owned by the King Cove Corporation. These lands are located around Cold Bay and adjacent to the North Creek Unit of Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge. The Act specifies that this land exchange is not subject to any Federal requirements for land exchanges relating to valuation, appraisal, or equalization of land. In addition, an analysis will be conducted of a specific road corridor through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. For more information, contact Stephanie Brady at 907-246-1203, Fax 907-246-6696 or email izembek_eis@fws.gov.

A-8. Flyer for Community Posting



PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS IN SAND POINT, NELSON LAGOON, COLD BAY, FALSE PASS, AND KING COVE ON THE IZEMBEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LAND EXCHANGE/ROAD CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Monday, April 26 – **Sand Point**, City Chamber Room at 3pm;

Tuesday, April 27 – **Nelson Lagoon**, Community Center, mid-afternoon;

Wednesday, April 28 – **Cold Bay**, Community Center at 7pm;

Thursday, April 29 – **False Pass**, Community Center, mid-afternoon;

Friday, April 30 – **King Cove**, Multi-purpose building at 2pm.

Please note that the dates and times are weather dependent. Please check with the Aleutians East Borough for updates.

YOUR COMMENTS AND PARTICIPATION ARE IMPORTANT. PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING THE MEETING.

Appendix B – Scoping Materials

- B-1. Scoping PowerPoint Presentation
- B-2. Maps
- B-3. Sign-in Sheets
 - Anchorage, AK
 - Washington, DC
 - City of Sand Point
 - City of Cold Bay
 - City of King Cove
 - City of False Pass
 - Nelson Lagoon
- B-4. Sample Comment Form

B-1. Scoping PowerPoint Presentation

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Izembek National Wildlife Refuge

Land Exchange/Road Corridor

Public Scoping





- The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 directed the Secretary of the Interior to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to conduct an analysis of a proposed land exchange among the USFWS, the State of Alaska and the King Cove Native Corporation.



The EIS will contain an analysis of:

- Proposed land exchange;
- Potential construction and operation of a road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay;
- Potential road corridors through Izembek NWR that will be identified by the State of Alaska, the City of King Cove, the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove, and the public.



Cooperating Agencies –

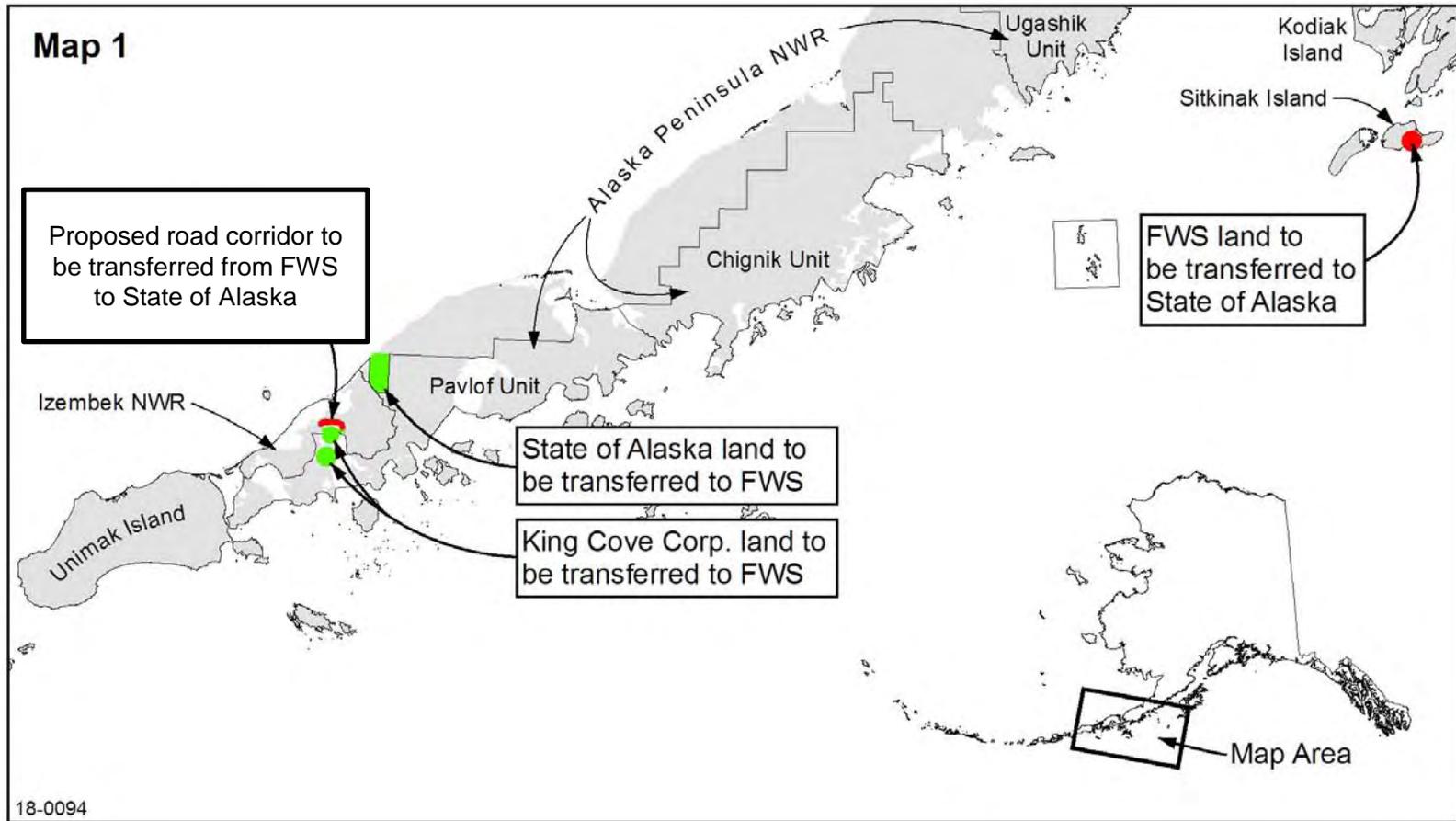
- Any Federal agency that has permitting jurisdiction over the road;
- The State;
- The Aleutians East Borough;
- The City of King Cove;
- The Tribe; and
- The Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council



Public Interest Determination –

The Secretary will determine if the land exchange (including the construction of a road between the City of King Cove and the Cold Bay airport) is in the public interest.

Map of Proposed Land Exchange/Road Corridor



What is Proposed?

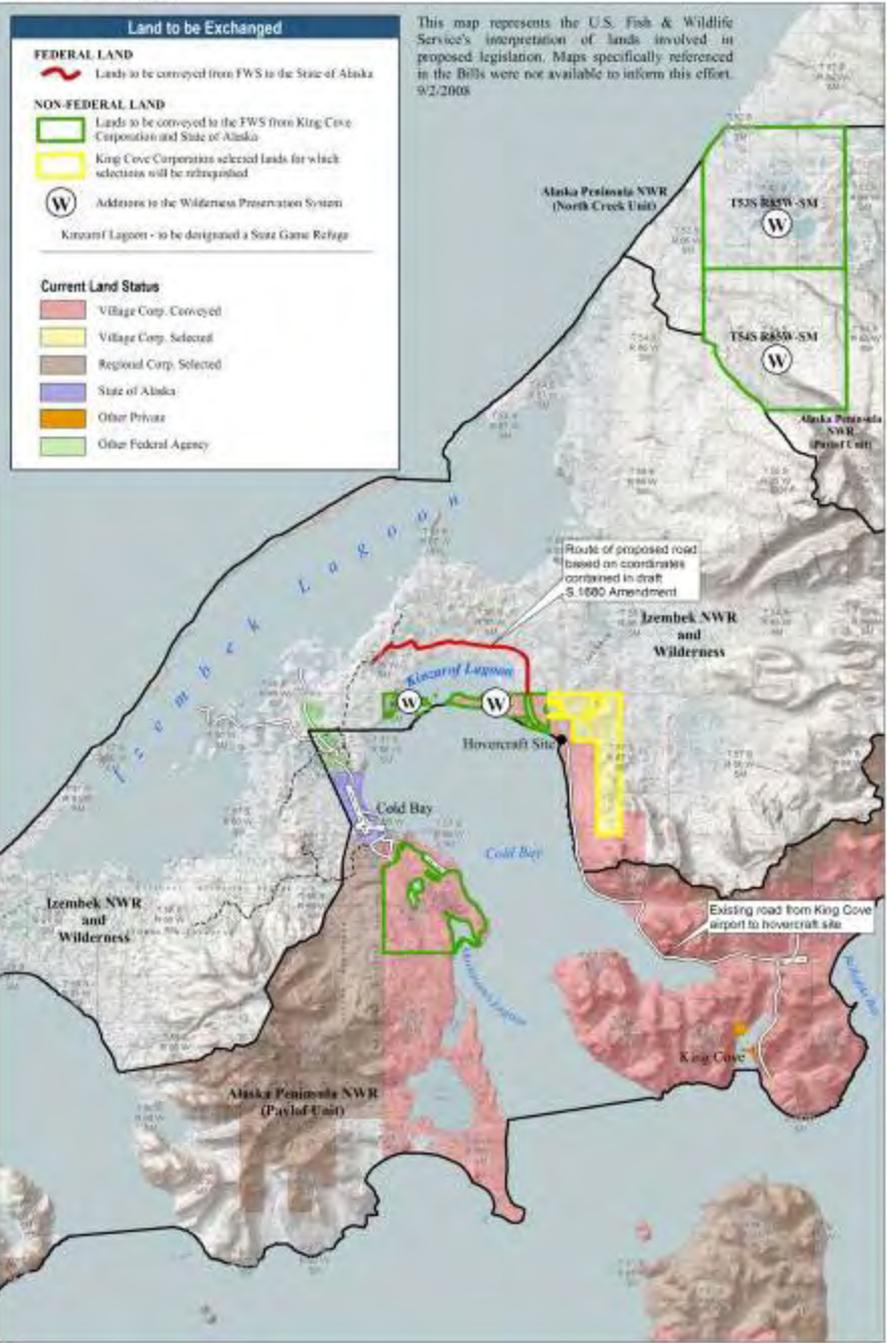


Land exchange -

- Removal of 206 acres from Izembek Wilderness and transfer to the State.
- Transfer 1,600 acres of Federal land from Alaska Maritime NWR on Sitkinak Island to State of Alaska.
- USFWS would receive 43,093 acres from State of Alaska and 13,300 acres from King Cove Native Corporation.
- 43,093 acres will be designated Wilderness.



Map 2 - Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges
Alaska



View of Izembek Wilderness



View Mortensen's Lagoon



Kinzarof Lagoon Bookends



North Creek Unit

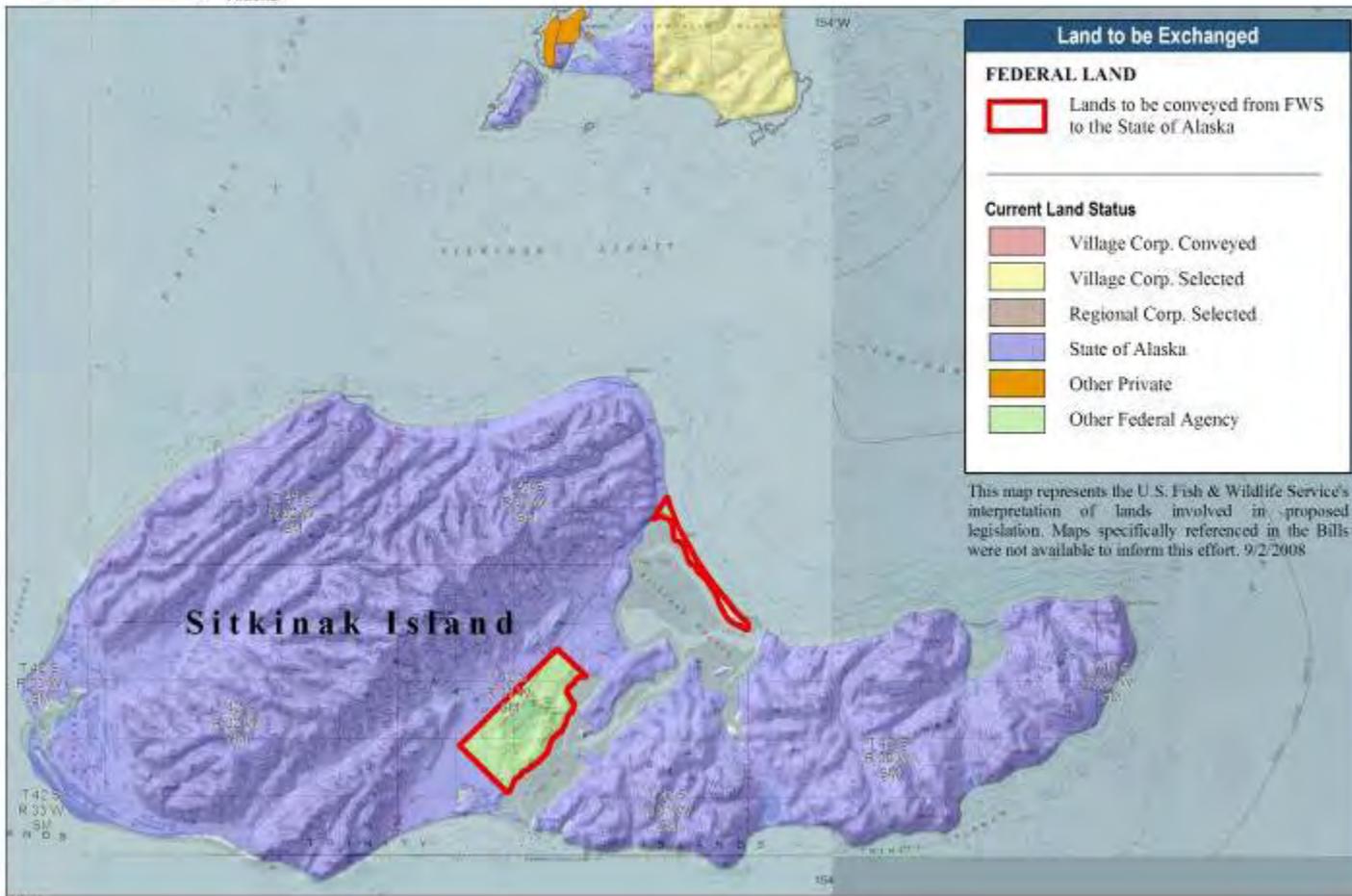




U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Lands Identified in S.1680 and H.R.2801

**Map 3 - Sitkinak Island - Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge
Alaska**



Current Legislation



Kinzarof Lagoon

- proposed land exchange cannot be carried out before the State lands within Kinzarof Lagoon are designated State refuge.



Designation of a Road Corridor –

- 1) Minimize the adverse impact of the road corridor on the Refuge;
- 2) Transfer the minimum acreage of Federal land that is required for the construction of the road corridor; and
- 3) To the maximum extent practicable, incorporate existing roads into the road corridor.



Limitations on Use of Road Corridor—

- 1) Any portion of the road constructed on federal land transferred to the State will be used primarily for health and safety and only for noncommercial purposes.
- 2) The use of taxis, commercial vans for public transportation, and shared rides will be allowed.



Requirement of a Barrier Cable on Proposed Road

- the road will be constructed to include a barrier cable on each side of the road – unless a different type barrier is required as a mitigation measure in the ROD for the Final EIS.



Required Dimensions and Design Features of Proposed Road –

- 1) A width not greater than a single lane;
- 2) Constructed with gravel;
- 3) Constructed with any mitigation measures relative to the passage and migration of wildlife, the exchange of tidal flows;
- 4) Constructed to include appropriate safety pullouts.

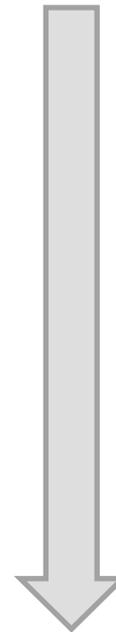


The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is our national charter for the protection of the environment. The purposes of NEPA are: 1) to allow the federal government to make better informed decisions, and 2) to involve citizens in the process.

EIS Process



- Notice of Intent (NOI)
- **Scoping**
- Draft EIS Completed
- Public Comment Period
- Public Comment Analysis
- Final EIS
- Record of Decision



AUG 2009/FEB2010

Ends May 1, 2010

Spring 2011

Summer 2011

Fall 2011

Winter 2012

Spring 2012



What is Scoping?

A process to involve the public in identifying issues, alternatives, and potential impacts of a proposed project. In this case; the proposed land exchange and road corridor.



Public Scoping meetings:

March 4 – Anchorage

March 11 – Washington DC

Week of April 26 – Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon and Sand Point

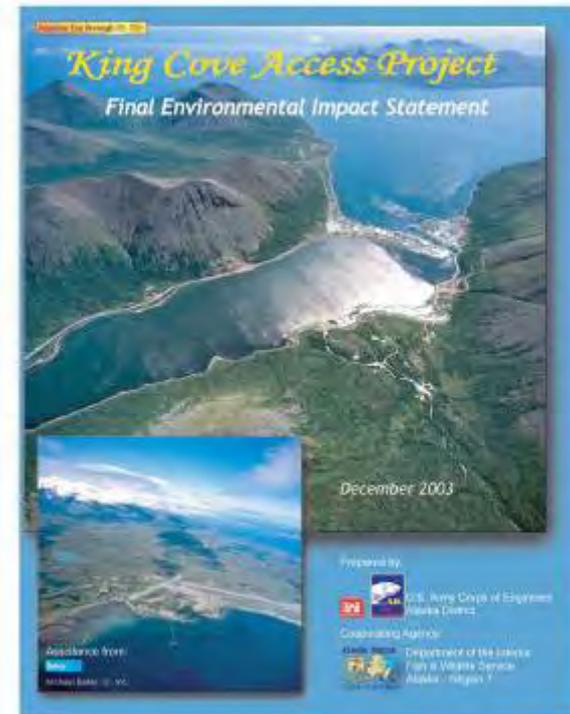
Scoping ends May 1, 2010 – however, public involvement will continue throughout the project.

Past NEPA Actions



To understand where we are now, we need to know where we have been.

- In 1998, Congress passed the King Cove Health and Safety Act for improvements to the King Cove medical clinic, airport and a road/marine transportation (hovercraft) system link between the two cities.
- An EIS was written for this project.
- A proposed road corridor was discussed in this EIS but an in-depth analysis was not completed.



Izembek NWR



Izembek NWR



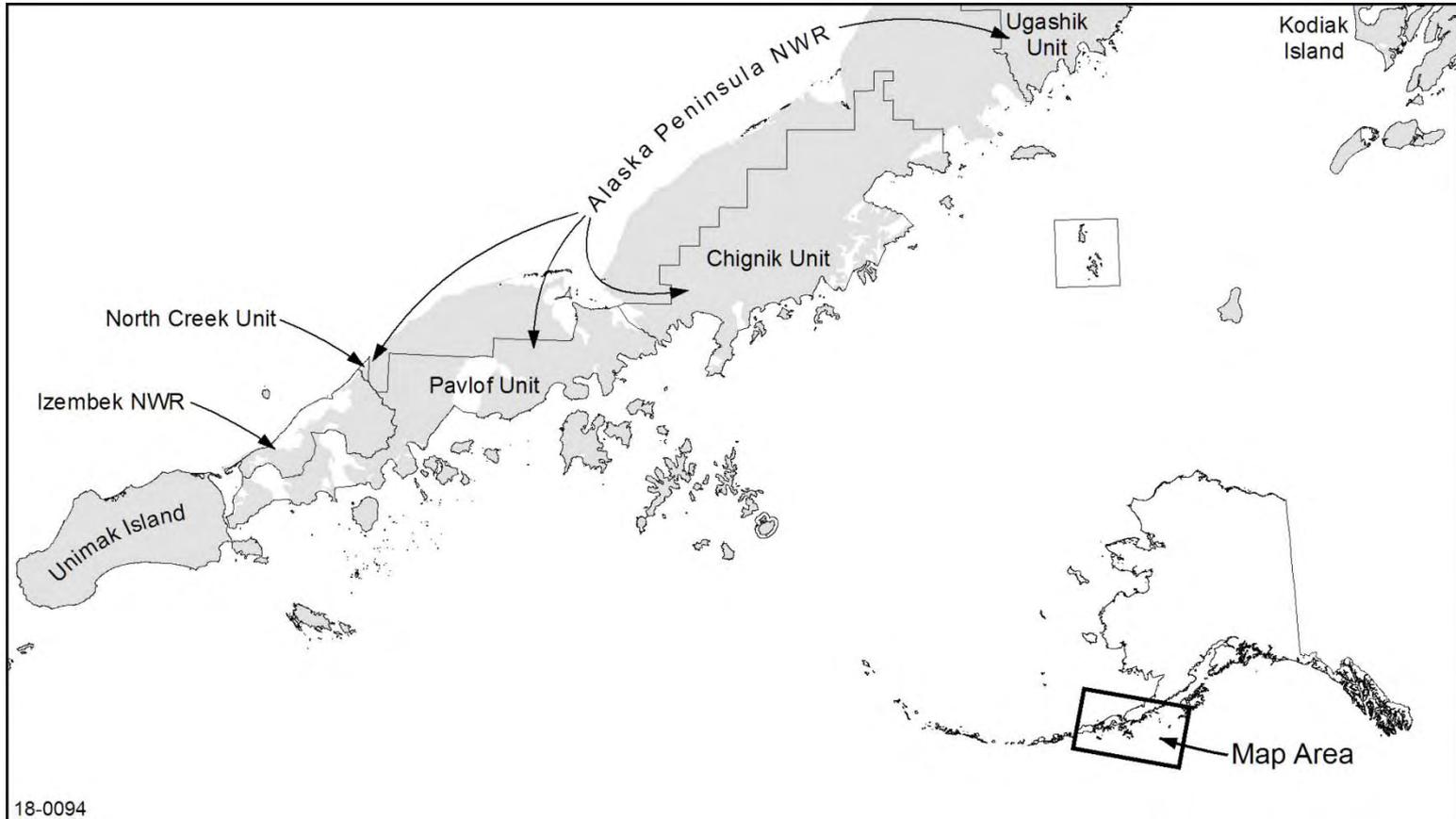
Established in 1960 as Izembek National Wildlife Range

1980, re-designated as Izembek NWR by Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA)

1980, Wilderness was established on Izembek NWR



Izembek NWR



History of Area



- The Izembek Refuge region is rich in cultural history. The Aleut people began inhabiting the region around 3000 B.C. and continue to reside in local communities.
- In 18th and 19th centuries, Russians explored this area and established fur trading posts, often resettling Aleuts in the process.

History of Area



- During WWII, Fort Randall was built at what is now Cold Bay – supported 22,000 troops.
- Depressions from military barracks dot the landscape and old military trails are still visible.



Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act – December 1980

- Passed by Congress to preserve for the benefit, use, education, and inspiration of present and future generations certain lands and waters in the State of Alaska that contain nationally significant, natural, scenic, historic, archeological, geological, scientific, wilderness, cultural, recreational, and wildlife values.
- Subsection 101 sec (c) ...“to provide the opportunity for rural residents engaged in a subsistence way of life to continue to do so”
- Established 56.3 million acres of new refuge system lands, bringing the total to 76.1 million acres of refuge system lands in Alaska.

Izembek NWR ANILCA Purposes



- To conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats;
- To fulfill international treaty obligations;
- To provide opportunities for subsistence;
- To ensure water quality and quantity





Wilderness Act – 1964

- Establish a National Wilderness Preservation System;
- Designated “wilderness areas”;
- “...and these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness...”



Izembek Wilderness



- ANILCA Title XI use of snow machines, motorboats, and airplanes for traditional activities as well as consideration of transportation and utility corridors in Wilderness.



Refuge Resources



Waterfowl, shorebirds and water birds from all over the arctic funnel through Izembek NWR each fall on their way to winter destinations.

More than 98% of the world's Pacific black brant converge on Izembek Lagoon each fall.



Refuge Resources



A large concentration of brown bear can be found on the refuge – in the Joshua Green River Valley more than 150 bear were seen during fall surveys.

Caribou migrate to Izembek each fall and early winter from calving grounds in the north.

Wolves follow the caribou – but are elusive.



Refuge Resources



Seals, sea lions and sea otters inhabit nearby coastal waters.

Beginning in mid-summer, red, pink, silver, and chum salmon return to spawning grounds found within the refuge.



Izembek NWR - Special Recognition



- Aleutian Islands Biosphere Reserve (1976)
 - Conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity is combined with sustainable use of natural resources
 - Key area for global bird conservation
- Wetland of International Importance (1986)
 - Izembek Lagoon meets 7 of 9 qualifying criteria for identifying wetlands
 - First of only 19 sites in the United States
- Globally Important Bird Area (2001)



Refuge Uses - Subsistence



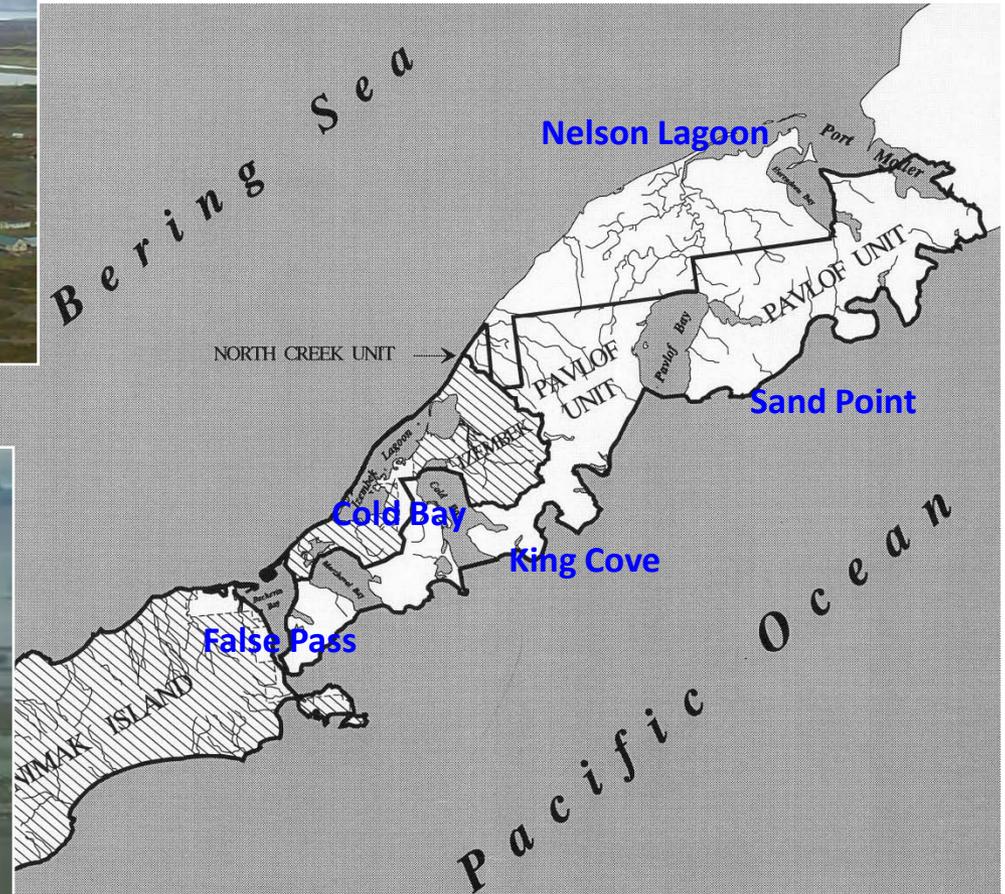
Public Uses



- Hunting
- Fishing
- Wildlife Viewing
- Birdwatching
- Wildlife Photography
- Beachcombing
- Berry Picking
- Trapping
- Hiking



Communities around Izembek NWR



Cold Bay



Population of 90 – as certified by the State of Alaska 2008. Population consists of 17% Alaska Native or part Native.

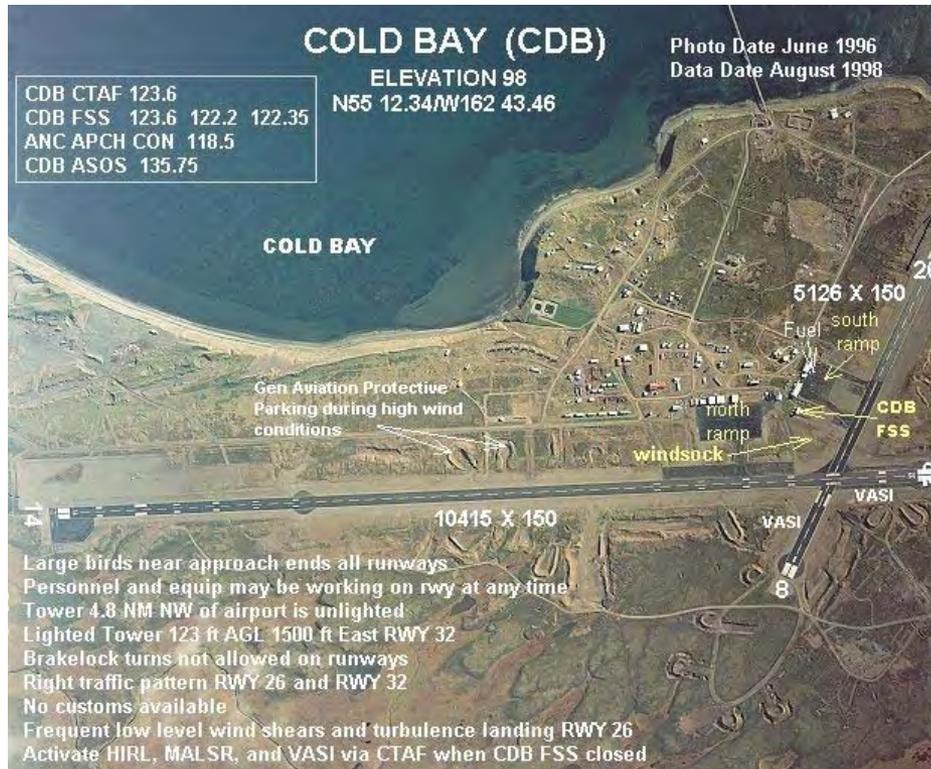
Archaeological sites dating to last ice age indicate the area was once inhabited by a large Native population.

Incorporated in 1982.

State and federal government and airline support services provide the majority of local employment.

Income is supplemented by subsistence activities.

Cold Bay

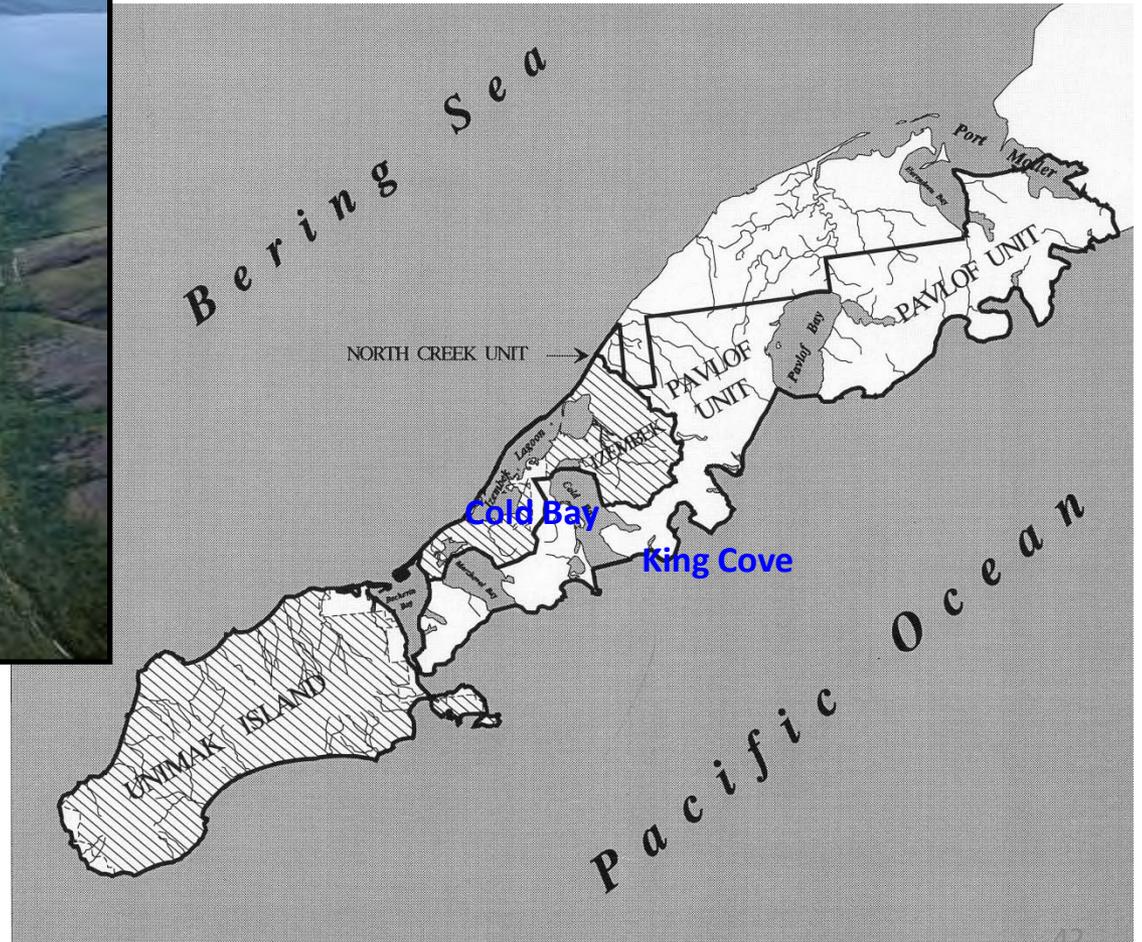


Site of a strategic air base during World War II. At that time, the airport was the largest in the state.

Due to the central location and modern airport, Cold Bay serves as a regional transportation center.

The runway is 10,415 ft long and the crosswind runway is 5,126 ft.

King Cove



King Cove



Population – 750 as certified by State of Alaska 2008. Population consists of 47.9% Alaska Native or part Native. Two Federally – recognized Tribes – Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove & Native Village of Belkfoski .

Founded in 1911 through the development of a salmon cannery. The city was incorporated in 1949. However, the area has been occupied for thousands of years by native peoples.

Economy is dependent upon year-round commercial fishery and seafood processing – Peter Pan Seafood facility is one of the largest cannery operations in Alaska.

Income is supplemented by subsistence activities.



King Cove



King Cove, like many rural communities in Alaska, is only accessible by air and sea.

King Cove does not have an all-weather airstrip like Cold Bay.

Three fatal aircraft crashes including one medical evacuation flight from 1979 – present.

The people of King Cove believe that a road to Cold Bay is primarily for improved quality of life and access to the outside world for the residents of King Cove.





Submit Public Comments:

Today – Oral testimony
- Written comments

Future - E-mail: *izembek_eis@fws.gov*;
Fax: Attn: Stephanie Brady, (907) 786-3965; or
U.S. Mail: Stephanie Brady, Project
Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS-231,
Anchorage, AK 99503

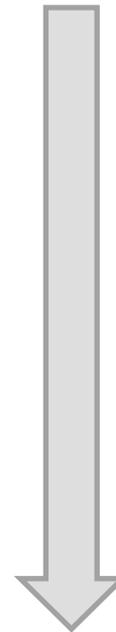
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AUG 2009/FEB 2010

Ends May 1, 2010

Spring 2011

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Spring 2012

Thank you for attending. We look forward to your comments.



B-2. Maps



Map 1 of 2 - Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges
Alaska

Land to be Exchanged

FEDERAL LAND

Lands to be conveyed from FWS to the State of Alaska

NON-FEDERAL LAND

Lands to be conveyed to the FWS from King Cove Corporation and State of Alaska

King Cove Corporation selected lands for which selections will be relinquished

Additions to the Wilderness Preservation System

Kinzarof Lagoon - to be designated a State Game Refuge

Current Land Status

Village Corp. Conveyed

Village Corp. Selected

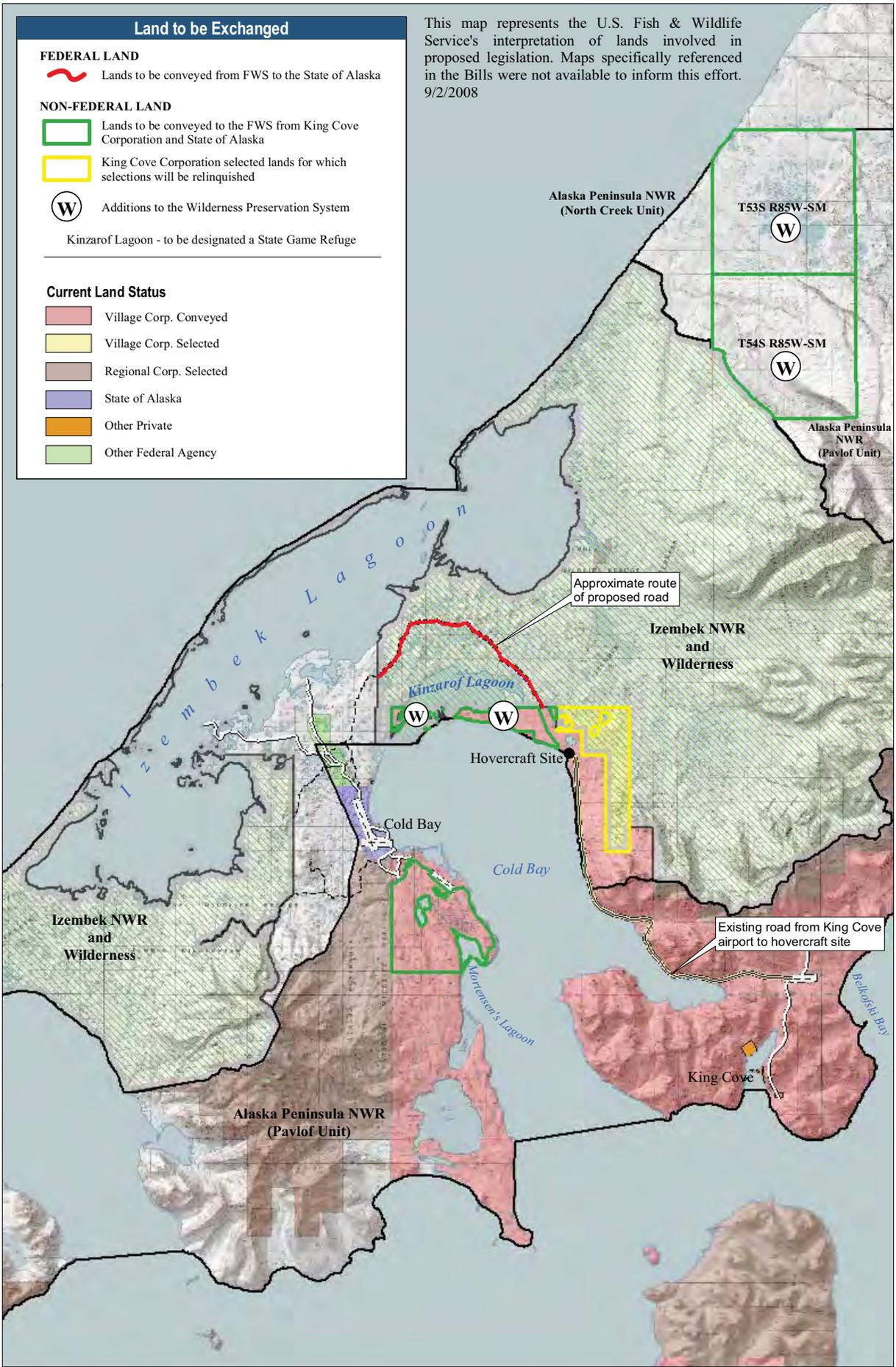
Regional Corp. Selected

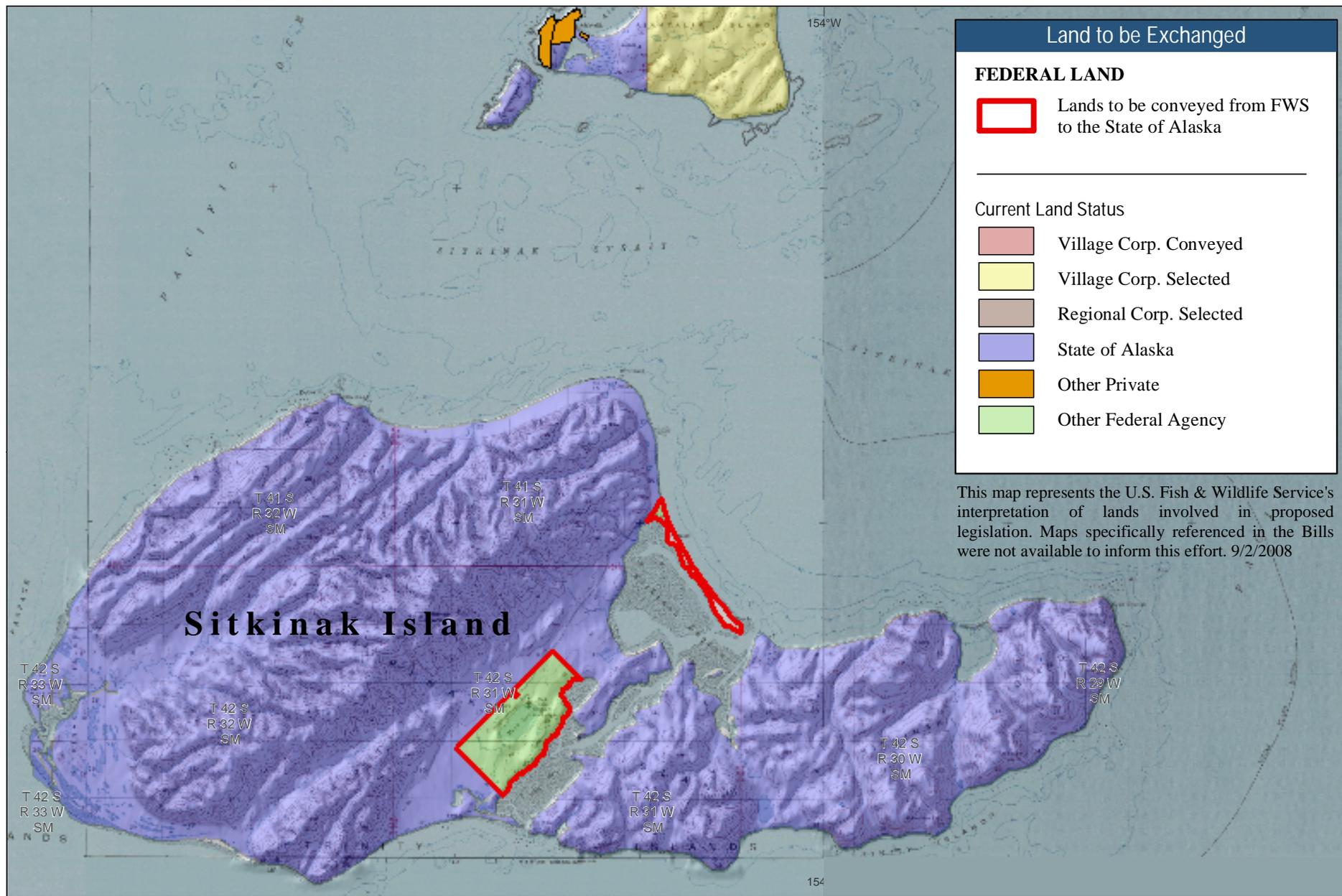
State of Alaska

Other Private

Other Federal Agency

This map represents the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's interpretation of lands involved in proposed legislation. Maps specifically referenced in the Bills were not available to inform this effort. 9/2/2008





Land to be Exchanged

FEDERAL LAND

 Lands to be conveyed from FWS to the State of Alaska

Current Land Status

-  Village Corp. Conveyed
-  Village Corp. Selected
-  Regional Corp. Selected
-  State of Alaska
-  Other Private
-  Other Federal Agency

This map represents the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's interpretation of lands involved in proposed legislation. Maps specifically referenced in the Bills were not available to inform this effort. 9/2/2008

B.3 Sign-in Sheet
Anchorage, AK

ANC Mack
2010

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
John Schoen	Audubon Alaska
Theresa Spang	Defenders of Wildlife
Della Trumble	King Cove Corp / Asdassen Trumble King Cove
Michael Christensen	Eastern Aleutian Trips
Ken Selby	Former King Cove Planning Director
Thomas Mack	President - Aleut Corporation

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

11

Name	Affiliation
Wendy Loya	The Wilderness Society
Tara Ferguson	Eastern Aleutian Tribes
SCOTT THORSON	SELF
Gary Ferguson	G & K, Inc.
Sharon Lowe	self
Carl Portman	RDC

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Gerald L. Clawson	Friends of Alaska Refugees
Bill Samuelson	<u>me</u>
Marvin Hoff	resident of King Cove
Tom Rothe	

18
5

Sign-in Sheet
Attendees Washington, DC

Please Sign In

Attendees to Public Scoping

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Lauren Hierl	Alaska wilderness League
DAVID RASKIN	FRIENDS OF AKNWR
Jade Walker	National Audubon Society
Steve Sly	HSLB
Jella Jyumbu	KC Corp + Agdaaguy Tribe of King Cove
Shirley Rast	Alutians East Borough
JAPY HONG	City of King COV
Eric Klam	Cong. Don Young
Meredith Kenny	Cong. Don Young's office
MATT HUGGLEN	USEWS
A.P. Loui	None -
BRAD GILMAN	ALUTIANS EAST Borough
Adam Kron	Defenders of Wildlife
Julie Kates	Defenders of Wildlife
RICK WARREN	BLUE RIVER GROUP Sierra Club
Emilie Svrsvco	Alaska Wilderness League
Annoreen Ali	Co-Roll Call
Nicole Whittington-Evans	The Wilderness Society
Pamela A Miller	self
Destree Sorenson-Groves	NWRA
PATRICK WOOLFORD	NWRA
McKie CAMPBELL	SENATE Energy + Natural Resources

Sign-in Sheet
Speakers Washington, DC

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
 Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
1 ✓ Phyllis Mains	Citizen of IA
2 ✓ Lauren Hierl (Hurl) pron.	Alaska Wilderness League
3 ✓ Taddi Walter	National Audubon Society
4 ✓ Stanley Mack (mack)	Aleutians East Borough
5 ✓ Gary Henry (Hennigh)	City of King Cove
6 ✓ Penny Corin (Corin)	Citizen

6 ✓ Don Young

Congressman, Alaska
 ~25 people in staff

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

	Name	Affiliation
7		
8		
9	✓ DAVID RASKIN	FRIENDS OF ALASKA NWRs
18	✓ Della Trumble (Trumble)	King Cove Corporation
19	✓ Julie Kotes	Defenders of Wildlife
10	✓ Nicole Whittington-Evans	The Wilderness Society

Whittington-Evans

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
✓ 13 Pamela A Miller	PO Box 82803 Fairbanks AK 99708 self
✓ 12 Desiree Sorenson - Groves	National Wildlife Refuge Association.
15	
14	
16	
18	

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
 Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
19 14 McKie Campbell (Campbell)	Senate Energy + Natural Resources Committee rep. Senator Turkowski
20 NICOLE WHITTINGTON-EVANS DAVID RASKIN	
21	
22	
23	
24	

Sign-in Sheet
City of Sand Point

Sand Point
April 24, 2020

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Dick Jacobsen	Rep. Fishermen, OTT Board, Alet Board
Bob Barnett	Resident
Stanley Mack	AEBK Board
Paul R Gronholdt	Self
Guntardner	Self
Sharon Boyette	Advisors to Board

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Melvin R Larsen	
Marilyn Larsen	Sand Point
George P Gundersen	Pauloff Harbor Trail
Arlene A Gundersen	Sand Point, AK 99661
Peter Deine Jr	Box 5 Sand Point AK 99661

Sign-in Sheet
City of Cold Bay

Cold Bay April 27¹
2012

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Paul Schaack	Resident Cold Bay
Connie Newton proxy to Gary Hennigh	Connie - resident of King Cove & Cold Bay
Gary Hennigh	City of King Cove City Administrator
Ty DeVault	Cold Bay resident

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
 Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
John Maxwell	
CHUCK NEERING P.O. BOX 1 COLD BAY, AK 99571	
Alan Ellis Box 61	
Monty Martin PO 26 99571	Resident
Bill Martin PO 125 99571	Resident
Jorge Lopez	Mayor city of Cold Bay

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Gordon Lyons	

Sign-in Sheet
City of King Cove

King Cove
April 29, 2010

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
✓ Henry Mack	Mayor King Cove City
✓ Leonard Brandell Sr	Res
✓ Shirley Brandell	Res King Cove AK
✓ Della Trumble	Resident - KC
✓ Trisha Trumble	" "
HARLOW NEWMAN	Res

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
 Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
✓ Bonita Babcock	King Cove EMS
✓ Chris Babcock	King Cove EMS
✓ Etta Kuzakm	President ATC written
✓ Larry Babcock	King Cove
✓ Brenda Wilson	King Cove EMS AEBSID King Cove Eastern Aleutian Tribes
✓ Ralph Lindquist	Principal King Cove School

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
✓ Daniel S. Rauff Sr.	
✓ Robert Mack	
✓ Tom Dobson	King Cove
✓ Warren Wilson	King Cove
✓ Steve Weisman	King Cove
✓ Priscilla Millh	King Cove

with Her

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Lonnie Brandell	
✓ Marvin Moser	King Cove - AK AEB -
Donna Walker	LI 47

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting
 Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
✓ Delores Kochut	
✓ Amberly Weiss	Box 253 King Cove, AK 99612
Robert Christiansen	
Christian Christiansen	
Sue R Kugak	
Dustin Newman	

Dea Jones

written

written

written

Sign-in Sheet
City of False Pass

False Pan April 29, 2010

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Melanie Hoblet	
KARMEN Newman	
Senta Lockett	

Sign-in Sheet
Nelson Lagoon

Nelson Lagoon April 28, 2010

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you.

Name	Affiliation
Justine Cundam	Nelson Lagoon
Arlene Nelson	Nelson Lagoon
Lura V. Nelson	Nelson Lagoon
Lestie Johnson	Nelson Lagoon
Mark McNeely	Nelson Lagoon
Ken Bumbell	Nelson Lagoon GK

Sign In Sheet to Speak at Izembek EIS Land Exchange/Road Corridor Public Scoping Meeting

Please sign in and provide your name if you wish to speak at the public scoping meeting on Izembek NWR EIS. Thank you

Name	Affiliation
Paul Gronwaldt	Self

B-4. Sample Comment Form



Comment Form

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Izembek NWR Land Exchange/Road Corridor Environmental Impact Statement

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to determine the effects on a land exchange and placement of a road corridor through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. The development of the EIS is required by Subtitle E of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-11, Act). The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop an EIS to evaluate a three-party land exchange that would add 56,393 acres to the Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges (NWR), designate 43,000 acres as wilderness, transfer 1,600 acres of refuge lands on Sitkinak Island to the State of Alaska, and transfer a 206-acre, 9-mile corridor through Izembek NWR and designated Wilderness to the State, to allow a road to be constructed between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay. This project is being evaluated under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) through the preparation of an EIS.

Please share your views and suggestions regarding this proposed project. Please leave this form in the comment box or mail it to the address that is preprinted on the back of this form. You may attach additional sheets if necessary.

(Optional)

Name:

Representation:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Email:

Comments:

Thank you for your participation!

To mail, fold along the dashed line on the back of this sheet and tape so that the address shows.

Stephanie Brady
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1011 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, AK 99503

-----Fold Here-----

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

APPENDIX C

Comment Analysis Report

Comment Analysis Report

During the scoping period for Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) received a total of 31,568 submissions of which 114 were unique submissions and 31,454 were form letters. Submissions included email, fax, letters, and testimony given at public scoping meetings. Comment submissions generated 640 comments which were then grouped into 149 Statements of Concern (SOCs). SOCs are summary statements intended to capture the different themes identified in the substantive comments.

The body of this appendix contains the Statements of Concern (SOCs) developed to help summarize scoping comments. The SOCs are ordered according to the grouping of issue categories, as outlined below.

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Process

PUB Public Involvement and Scoping - Comments related to public involvement activities of the project and public scoping.

PUB 1

City of Cold Bay infrastructure, medical, and other service providers are stakeholders that should have been included as "project cooperators" in the process leading up to the EIS.

PUB 2

The Service should provide resources to the local stakeholder governments to participate in the process; they could truly engage in the alternative development.

PUB 3

The community needs to be able to participate in the entire process, not just during scoping. This includes having access to all interim reports and plans and the opportunity to provide comments to them.

REG Regulatory – Comments on compliance with other statutes, laws or regulations that should be considered; coordinating with Federal, state, local agencies or organizations.

REG 1

The Omnibus Public Lands Bill of 2009 authorized the analysis of a proposed road through sensitive and ecologically unique habitat in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

REG 2

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 requires a Compatibility Determination and a public interest review to be conducted as part of the EIS analysis. The determination must conclude that the exchange is in the best interest of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and in the best interest of the public.

REG 3

This proposal would remove the area from the refuge system ("de-designation of the wilderness area") which would subject it to the impacts of road construction, use of the road and associated activity, disturbance, and pollution; all which conflict with the purposes of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge establishment which include:

- Conserve fish and wildlife (caribou, waterfowl, brown bears, migratory birds, shorebirds, salmon) populations and their habitats;
- Fulfill U.S. international treaty obligations for migratory birds and wetlands (four treaties, added to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in 1986, Important Bird Area of global significance, sister refuge to Russia's Kronotsky State Biosphere Reserve, Migratory Birds Convention);
- Provide for continued subsistence uses by local residents; and

- Ensure water quality and quantity within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

REG 4

This is the first bisection of a congressionally-designated wilderness refuge. Removal of the wilderness designation would open the door/set a dangerous precedent ("pave the way") for similar actions at other refuges, National Parks, Forests and other Federal lands. In Alaska, many other villages will want roads.

REG 5

Alternative 6 from the King Cove Access Project Final EIS violates Federal Law because it requires construction of a road through federally designated wilderness and it was based on little field verification because mechanized equipment is prohibited in a wilderness area.

REG 6

King Cove and Cold Bay residents and Aleut people of the region feel they did not participate and/or were not heard in 1960 [national wildlife refuge designation by Congress] and Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANICLA) 1980 land status hearing [added to the wilderness system], therefore the designation of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness was not in their best interest. If the land was not designated, the road access to the airport would have been completed many years ago. The Secretary of the Interior has a trust responsibility for the Aleut people with a special directive to pay attention to native people and should exercise its power to make decisions that are in their best interest, rather than comply with an unjust "public interest determination".

REG 7

The land exchange fails to offer comparable protection or habitat for that which will be lost (no net conservation benefit to the landscape or refuge system). The upland areas offered by the State of Alaska and King Cove Corporation are inferior in quality and wildlife diversity, they do not make up for the habitat lost to construction, and they do not provide habitat for the same species. The conveyed lands of Izembek and Kinzarof Lagoon are an ecological center for the larger region as well as being relatively intact, unfragmented, and under no threat of development. The EIS needs to compare the habitat value of the two parcels that would be traded.

REG 8

The EIS needs to recommend management measures the State should consider in the establishment of a Kinzarof State Game Refuge. What will be the hunting management regime? It will turn into state lands with state subsistence management regulations, with state sport hunting authority, and could perhaps allow mining, oil, and gas development in that corridor.

REG 9

The EIS needs to evaluate how Title XI ANILCA right-of-way law would affect road construction permits (if the land exchange were to occur).

REG 10

The costly medical facility construction, hovercraft road and links were completed in 2007 and have not been around long enough to demonstrate their effectiveness.

REG 11

The proposed action would violate the statutory principle of the Wilderness Act of 1964 which established a Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people. The National Wildlife Refuge System is also for the benefit of the American people. The land exchange would represent the establishment of Wilderness for the sake of a new and narrow development interest.

REG 12

Given that the land exchange and road are connected and cumulative actions, they should be dually and comprehensively addressed in this EIS.

REG 13

The proposed action is clearly contrary to and incompatible with the purposes of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge as stated in the legislation that established it which is ANILCA. One commenter also noted that the expenditure \$20 million of taxpayer funds cannot be justified in light of the recognized importance and legislation that establishes and governs its management.

REG 14

The EIS should include analysis of the following legal issues and regulations:

- Pursuant to 40 CFR 230, any permitted discharge into waters of the U.S. must be the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) that achieves the project purpose. The EIS should include an evaluation of alternatives in this context in order to demonstrate the project's compliance with the Section 404(b) (1) Guidelines (Guidelines). Otherwise, additional supplemental information may be required during the subsequent permit evaluation.
- For tidal waters (if any are present), the high tide line shall be determined as described at 33 CFR 328.3(d); For non-tidal waters, the ordinary high water mark shall be determined as described at 33 CFR 328.3(e).
- Issues that will need to be considered in the EIS if the road project is federally funded using Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Title 23 funds:
 - Historical/Cultural Resources
 - Section 4(f) Determination
 - Threatened and Endangered Species

- Environmental Justice Issues (for example, there may be some impacts resulting from the limits on commercial use of the road)
- Wildlife Segmentation
- Hazardous Waste/Materials (e.g., any military waste sites)
- The road would need to comply with Federal and State highway standards. The State will need to discuss the project with FHWA to ensure they are included in the initial planning for this project and the EIS adequately addresses any other concerns FHWA may have while working on identifying state funding for the proposed road.
- If the Secretary determines that certain areas with known or suspected historical off road vehicle (ORV) use for subsistence purpose needs to be restricted to protect refuge resources, any closure would need to be implemented by regulation, consistent with our understanding of Congressional intent and the commitment from Regional Director Rowan Gould in a letter dated March 28, 2006.
- The Alaska Coastal Zone Management Act of 1977, as amended, established policy guidance and standards for the review of federal activities within or potentially affecting Alaska's coastal zone. In addition, specific policies on activities and uses of coastal lands and water resources within coastal resource districts have been developed by the Aleutians East Borough Coastal District. Certain federal actions may require a Federal Consistency Determination in accordance with 15 CFR 930 Subpart C. The Service should contact the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Division of Coastal and Ocean Management, Anchorage office, to assist in determining applicability of a federal consistency determination for the land exchange.
- If the Secretary determines the land exchange (including construction of the road) is in the public's interest, the road corridor will become part of the Izembek State Game Refuge. ADNR would need to enter into an Interagency Land Management Agreement with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT &PF) to build and manage the roadway. Alternatively, title for the road corridor could be directly transferred to ADOT &PF. If federal funding is involved, certain standards may apply that could dictate the dimensions and design for the proposed road.

REG 15

The land exchange is unequal; the federal government is getting too much land. It is taking advantage of us with exchanging 43,000 acres for 206 acres.

REG 16

The timetable for this project is so long. It should be expedited.

REG 17

The proposed land exchange is not in the best interest of the American people and it is not compatible with the purposes of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, which should be managed strictly according to its original mandate when it was designated.

REG 18

The EIS process must consider the Ramsar Convention's obligations and principles when deciding whether to proceed with the proposed land exchange. The Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, which by itself is non-regulatory, commit to three main pillars of implementation: The designation and conservation of sites as "Wetlands of International Importance" (Articles 2 and 3);

1. The "wise use," as far as possible, of all wetlands within their respective territories (Article 3.1); and
2. International cooperation with respect to wetlands (Article 5).

REG 19

The Service should serve as the lead agency responsible for the development of this EIS.

Purpose and Need

P&N Purpose and Need – Comments related to purpose and need for the project.

P&N 1

The balance of life safety should outweigh the concern of the limited environmental impact of the immediate adjacent ecosystem along the single lane gravel road proposed compared to the greater access and impact other national parks and conservation geographic areas allow in other more populated states.

P&N 2

Safe reliable access between King Cove and Cold Bay is the purpose and need for this project. The proposed road is in support the public interest. A basic road network within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge will ensure accessible ground transport, with year round access in all weather conditions with cost affective operating and up-keep less than any other existing or proposed transportation alternatives. The hovercraft is not reliable and requires a substantial subsidy for operation and maintenance that cannot be sustained. Poor weather can prevent the operation of the hovercraft which limits safe and timely access to the Cold Bay airport. Air travel is hazardous and is a safety concern that negatively impacts the lives of the residents of King Cove.

P&N 3

Concerns were expressed that the proposed road is not needed. These comments included:

- The people of King Cove already have a fast, reliable hovercraft for medical evacuations bringing people from King Cove to Cold Bay in twenty minutes and that travel by a road would take more than two hours in good conditions.
- Evacuation from King Cove by road during winter could be as or more hazardous than transport by aircraft.
- The need for the road has already been solved by the hovercraft.
- Other reliable transportation alternatives exist at less environmental cost and should be encouraged instead of the proposed land exchange which has high environmental costs and no net environmental benefits.

P&N 4

The proposed project must be based on a clear purpose and need. Concern was expressed that there is not a true public need for this project and if not for the Omnibus Public Lands Bill (2009), it would be questionable whether the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process should continue.

P&N 5

In order to determine if the proposed project is needed and is in the best public interest and the EIS should include a formal benefit-cost analysis which takes into account the \$37.5 million already spent to fulfill the transportation need the proposed road is alleged

to address. Using a with and without framework, project benefits should be expressed in incremental terms, and limited to a discussion of benefits over and above the existing hovercraft transportation system.

P&N 6

In order to demonstrate a purpose and need for the project the Service should show that:

- Public access to medical facilities by way of the Cold Bay airport would be enhanced relative to the existing hovercraft service between King Cove and Cold Bay.
- Public safety would increase relative to the existing hovercraft service; and
- These benefits are of a magnitude that may justify loss and fragmentation of wilderness and intact ecosystems.

P&N 7

The Service will need to demonstrate through a clear purpose and need statement that the road is for safety reasons and not for access of recreation areas and/or providing a commercial transportation corridor between King Cove and Cold Bay.

P&N 8

Concern was expressed to the effect of why the community of King Cove deserves access to improve their quality of life and be connected while other remote communities in Alaska are not given the same opportunity.

P&N 9

The community of King Cove is willing to offer a large sum of Native Corporation lands for the land exchange for the purpose of safe road access to an airport for its community. This is a situation that is not always afforded by other communities.

P&N 10

Transportation accessibility is a quality of life factor for the people of King Cove that should not be taken for granted. The purpose of the road would enhance the quality of life for the community of King Cove by:

- Providing access to the Cold Bay airport whether there is an emergency or not.
- Improving access for public health to medical appointments in Anchorage and Seattle.
- Allow King Cove students, school board and borough assembly members and public health providers opportunities to travel outside their immediate community.
- Provide peace of mind to King Cove residents knowing that medical help is within reach if the weather is bad.

P&N 11

Concern was expressed questioning the need for the proposed road instead of continued use of the hovercraft when its use has been interpreted as successful for carrying out medical evacuations. It was noted that other communities in the Aleutians East Borough have decided to use a hovercraft system for access over potentially more difficult crossing areas between the Village of Akutan on Akutan Island and a proposed new airport on Akun Island.

P&N 12

Concerns were raised that the hovercraft has not been in use long enough to be weighed against the need for construction the proposed road.

P&N 13

Commenters expressed concern that if the proposed land exchange is in the public interest, the EIS should describe how it would enhance the value of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge as a staging area for migratory waterfowl and how potential negative impacts of the new road would be balanced with the need for the road.

P&N14

A clear and concise statement of the purpose and need of the project is essential (40 CFR 1502.13). The project purpose statement must be articulated in such a manner as to ensure a reasonable range of alternatives can be formulated that accomplish the underlying purpose and need.

Proposed Action and Alternatives and Mitigation Measures

PAA Proposed Action and Alternatives - Comments related to the practicability/feasibility/cost of alternatives; environmentally preferred alternative; LEDPA; additional alternatives that should be considered; issues associated with hovercraft operations; issues associated with road construction, operations, traffic volumes, and long term costs; usage fees associated with roads; helicopter operations and maintenance; and funding sources for alternatives.

PAA 1

Commentators expressed concerns in support of a no action alternative that would continue to protect the designated wilderness and habitat of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge by not building a road.

PAA 2

Support for a no action alternative was expressed through comments that the proposed land exchange and construction of the road was considered unnecessary as it could result in irreparable impacts to designated wilderness and wetland habitats that are considered internationally significant ecosystems. The road may have effects on Kinzarof Lagoon. Lands on Sitkinak Island should not be exchanged. The hovercraft operation has already proven to be effective for transporting medical emergencies to Cold Bay.

PAA 3

The land exchange and proposed road are not in the best interest of the public. The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge is there to sustain the resources and public uses and the Service should remain objective in terms of serving the public.

PAA 4

The previous EIS (2003) found that a road would be devastating to the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. That EIS evaluated the road as a "no action alternative" when determining which transportation tool would be best to enable medical evacuations from King Cove to Cold Bay.

PAA 5

The proposed project has provided alternatives to minimize the physical impact on the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge with the gravel material, single lane and alignment around or avoiding sensitive vegetation, geographic features, and wildlife habitat. These measures mitigate environmental impact far more than in other like projects in national interest lands.

PAA 6

An alternative to consider instead of building a road is the development of a wave barrier and/or a small protected harbor at Cold Bay that would provide safe access to the shore. This alternative should be evaluated differently than making improvements to the existing dock that is considered unsafe in poor weather. A safer faster marine transport

vessel such a tri hull high speed ferry operating from Lenard Bay near King Cove or from the City of King Cove could be used for this alternative. A marine route alternative would be no cost and require no maintenance. Commercial vessels are able to access Cold Bay. A small boat harbor would also then benefit the economy of Cold Bay, fishing industry, and recreational boaters. A small boat harbor could have less environmental impact by lessening road traffic in the areas of Russell Creek.

PAA 7

Consider an alternative that uses a railroad system instead of the proposed road. A narrow gauge railway could cross from the King Cove Airport to Cold Bay, crossing the barrier islands at the entrance to Kinzarof Lagoon. This option would not only meet all the criteria expressed by the people of King Cove but in addition remove the restricted access requirement and could potentially allow for commerce between the two communities. Commerce between the two communities would provide a revenue stream for the operating and maintenance costs of this type of system. Construction costs and maintenance costs may be lower than for a road. Another type of railroad alternative that could be evaluated is a light rail system that is hydro powered from King Cove. A cost analysis and feasibility analysis for a rail alternative should be constructed.

PAA 8

The proposed road through this wilderness area should be a last resort and not selected as an alternative until all other alternatives have been examined.

PAA 9

Evaluate the continued use of the hovercraft as an alternative with consideration given to:

- The existing access route for medical emergencies through use of the hovercraft should be evaluated as an alternative including subsidizing future sustainable operation and maintenance versus construction and maintenance of the proposed road.
- Subsidies could be used for design improvements to the hovercraft for improving its safety during windy weather and low winter temperatures.
- The hovercraft is viewed by some commentators as having solved the issue of safe public access for medical emergencies from King Cove to Cold Bay.
- Use of the hovercraft for medical evacuations brings people from King Cove to Cold Bay in 20 minutes; the proposed road could take more than 2 hours in good conditions and could be unusable in poor conditions.
- The hovercraft can operate in a much broader set of weather conditions than the proposed road.
- The quality of transport on hovercraft should also be evaluated as part of this alternative. This alternative could consider construction of a road to a landing facility or marine terminal at Lenard Bay to support hovercraft operations.

PAA 10

Consider as an alternative making improvements to the dock at Cold Bay. This dock is not considered to be safe when unloading passengers. A lift system could be installed on the existing dock or a floating dock could be built adjacent to the Cold Bay dock. This could be a more cost efficient means of transporting people to Cold Bay than construction of the proposed road.

PAA 11

The proposed road is the best alternative to connect King Cove and Cold Bay. Concerns that were expressed in support of this alternative included:

- The hovercraft is too expensive to operate, is undependable, and its use is limited due to weather.
- Improvements to the existing runway at King Cove would not take away the risk of bad weather and airport improvements will always be limited by the topography of the area.
- While boats are used to transport patients to Cold Bay the dock at Cold Bay is unsafe.
- The Coast Guard is only used when other alternatives have been exhausted.
- There may be a benefit to the environment through the land exchange by placing such a large acreage into refuge status that would negate any negative impacts.

PAA 12

Consider alternatives for access from King Cove to Cold Bay including:

- Use funds to upgrade the medical facilities to accommodate and treat emergencies in King Cove which could also be considered an investment in the health of the community.
- Consider the use of helicopters or form a partnership with the Coast Guard for use of rescue helicopter as this could be less expensive than building and maintaining the proposed road that would be used for medical evacuations to Cold Bay.
- Use the hovercraft and hire professionals to maintain and operate the hovercraft.
- Take no further action with the land exchange or proposed road in consideration that King Cove is located in a remote area with harsh geographic and climate conditions. Consider that a precedent may be established by the proposed action and that many other remote villages may demand a road to an all weather airport.

PAA 13

The proposed road alternatives developed for this EIS should state which government entity will be responsible for construction, operation, enforcement, and maintenance of the proposed road and how this will be funded. Maintenance could be a significant cost for the road and alternatives in the EIS should outline costs associated with maintenance, which may include grading equipment, snow removal equipment, labor, and annual gravel costs. An engineering feasibility analysis should be performed. A long-term

projected traffic analysis should be performed. Consideration of sensitive land conditions, cost and socioeconomic factors, proper design, engineering and construction could address certain adverse environmental impacts while providing safe, accessible and reliable ground transportation.

PAA 14

An alternative to consider could be the use of fishing vessels for medical transport. A financial subsidy program could be established for local fishing boats to provide medical transport to Cold Bay from King Cove or to provide another access option for King Cove residents to reach the Cold Bay airport throughout the year.

PAA 15

It would be valuable for the public to understand the costs associated with each alternative, understand the level of natural and physical environmental impacts to be involved in the screening criteria development for these alternatives.

PAA 16

The proposed alternative needs to clarify:

- The actual acreage to be exchanged. In the Statement of Work for selecting an EIS consultant reference is made to 43,093 acres of land to be added to the Congressionally-designated wilderness in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. The 5,430 acres of valid King Cove Corporation selection in the Izembek wilderness which is being relinquished needs to be included. Also, approximately 2,400 acres from the "bookends" adjacent Kinzarof Lagoon needs to be included. Consequently, about 51,000 acres of new wilderness designations will result from the proposed land exchange.
- The EIS needs to address whether the corridor will be retained by the Corporation or whether a right-of-way will be reserved for the Corporation as part of the conveyance. Since lands transferred to the Service will become designated wilderness, Congressional approval would be needed for any right-of-way granted after completion of the land exchange.
- The EIS should address remediation of contaminated sites on Sitkinak Island prior to transfer to the State, including either razing or decontaminating and retaining the existing structures.

PAA 17

Alternatives considered in the 2003 EIS should be reassessed including:

- The use of the hovercraft;
- Determine the extent to which the use of a barrier cable could impact caribou migration;
- Determine that the land exchange is in the best public interest; and

- Evaluate if proposed vehicular traffic restrictions on the new road that would parallel caribou migrations and if any traffic on existing Cold Bay road network would intersect caribou migrations.

In addition development of alternatives should also consider if the 1994 ADOT study that ranked air and water travel routes safer and less expensive than a road is valid.

PAA 18

Development of alternatives should consider by comparison the environmental impact of the hovercraft versus the land exchange and proposed road.

PAA 19

Development of alternatives for the EIS requires the following:

- Specify the criteria used to develop the range of reasonable alternatives that meet the purpose and need. Only reasonable alternatives need be considered in detail (see 40 CFR 1502.14). Reasonable alternatives must include all those that are feasible and such feasibility must focus on the accomplishment of the underlying purpose and need (see 33 CFR 325 Appendix B 9.b. (5) (a)).
- The alternatives analysis should be thorough enough for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to satisfy both NEPA and the Section 404(b) (1) Guidelines (40 CFR Part 230.10 (a) (4)).
- Section 404(b) (1) Guidelines allow elimination (i.e. not carried forward in detail in the EIS) of project alternatives if, after taking into account cost, logistics, and existing technology, they are found not practicable.
- The EIS should provide the information necessary to determine which of the alternatives being considered is the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).
- Use the best available science and technical data during the NEPA process.

PAA 20

The EIS alternatives analysis should consider:

- Analysis of alternative road alignments within the corridor including geotechnical considerations, and proximity to wildlife concentrations and wetlands.
- An evaluation of detailed wetland maps, location and quantities of gravel sources, and location and operation of road maintenance facilities with regard to construction and operation of the road.

PAA 21

Development of alternatives should take into consideration that the area of the proposed road is not pristine and have been used by the military and state for many years.

MIT Mitigation Measures - Comments related to suggestions for or implementation of mitigation measures.

MIT 1

Federal and state mitigation measures included in permits and resource protection plans that the Aleutians East Borough agreed to for the King Cove Access Project for construction of the road, hovercraft terminals and the operation of the hovercraft could be applied as mitigation measures for the current proposed project. Mitigation measures would be expected to protect the resources that are considered valuable.

MIT 2

Appropriate regulations, enforcement of safe, controlled vehicle access with regulatory grades, signage, barriers and construction can offset adverse environmental disturbance. Snow blowers could be used for areas of drifting snow. Consider limiting access.

MIT 3

Mitigation measures that should be considered include:

- The evaluation of mitigation options and feasible and enforceable measures that will avoid or minimize any adverse impacts to the passage and migration of wildlife and migratory birds and the exchange of tidal flows as appropriate.
- Analyze and disclose the extent to which the various alternatives bisect and fragment wildlife habitat and movement routes, as appropriate. It will be important to include means to make roadways permeable to wildlife movements, such as by providing wildlife crossing structures of appropriate number, size, and locations to adequately accommodate wildlife movement. These mitigation measures could prevent vehicular-wildlife collisions, which are important for both human and wildlife safety.

MIT 4

Consider that while a barrier cable could be used as mitigation measure to keep people off the sides of the road it may hinder wildlife movement.

MIT 5

Concern was expressed that even if mitigation measures are employed there may still be adverse impacts to wildlife and waterfowl from construction of the road.

MIT 6

The EIS should discuss mitigation measures that could be implemented to reduce the likelihood of introduction and spread of invasive species with the proposed management activities. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency encourages the Service to promote integrated weed management, with prioritization of management techniques that focus on nonchemical treatments first, and mitigation to avoid herbicide transport to surface or ground waters. Early recognition and control of new infestations is critical to stop the spread of the infestation and avoid wider future use of herbicides, which could correspondingly have more adverse impacts on biodiversity, water quality and fisheries.

MIT 7

Where a discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. is necessary, the EIS should discuss how potential impacts would be avoided, minimized and finally mitigated. This discussion should include:

- Acreage and type of waters that would be created or restored;
- Water sources to maintain the mitigation area;
- Re-vegetation plans;
- Maintenance and monitoring plans;
- Size and location of mitigation zones;
- Responsible parties; and
- Contingency plans.

MIT 8

Wetlands mitigation must include areas that provide important functions for the watershed, contribute significantly to the ecological sustainability of the watershed, and be permanently protected through an appropriate legal instrument.

MIT 9

The Secretary is required to develop an enforceable mitigation plan in consultation with the State and authorized entities. The EIS should provide a schedule for when this process would begin and conclude.

MIT 10

The EIS should also discuss the Project's compliance with the "Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule" (commonly referred to as the Final Mitigation Rule). The regulations establish performance standards and criteria for the use of permittee-responsible compensatory mitigation, mitigation banks, and in-lieu fee programs to improve the quality and success of compensatory mitigation projects.

Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

BIO Biological Resources – General comments related to potential impacts to the biological environment. Comments related to a more specific area of biological concern are described in further detail within this category (e.g. fish, wildlife).

BIO 1

This EIS needs to describe and analyze the following potential impacts to biological resources including:

- Road avoidance by wildlife;
- Habitat fragmentation and degradation;
- Potential for introduction of invasive species;
- Potential impacts to threatened and endangered species;
- Short-term and long-term cumulative impacts of proposed road construction, maintenance, sediment run-off and watershed impacts, water quality, hydrology, and pollution; and
- Impacts to soil compression, fresh and salt water movement within the area and vegetation as related to fish, wildlife and vegetation and aquatic communities (such as eel grass communities).

BIO 2

Concern was expressed that potential negative environmental impacts to biological resources within the proposed road corridor could include:

- Noise impacts to wildlife leading to degradation of habitat;
- Impacts to water quality;
- Introduction of environmental invasive species;
- Disturbance of nesting habitat and dividing waterfowl loafing areas;
- Disruption of migratory waterfowl populations during molting, spring and fall; staging, and species that over winter in the area;
- Decreased productivity of caribou, tundra swans and furbearers;
- Irreversible harm to wildlife, wetlands and ponds, and wilderness values;
- Disturbance of normal animal behavior and migratory patterns due to vehicular intrusion;
- Fragmentation of the natural environment;
- Dust, noise and air pollution, road kill, and run-off from the road that disturbs vegetation; and

- Disturbance of the eel grass beds and aquatic communities that are a food source for migratory waterfowl, particularly Pacific brant.

BIO 3

A quantitative cumulative effects analysis of biological resources should examine and employ the following methodologies:

- Determine the time and geographic area over which impacts could occur.
- Focus on the resources of concern (i.e. resources that are at risk and/or are significantly impacted by the proposed project before mitigation).
- Resource Selection Model that incorporates wildlife movement monitoring data with land cover classification.
- Population Viability Analysis that incorporates subsistence harvest and predator demands with wildlife population census data.
- Establish Disturbance Coefficients that incorporate wildlife responses to road construction, maintenance and use as well as subsistence and commercial activities in the area.
- Climate Change Scenarios that capture changes in temperature and precipitation in order to develop an understanding of the stability and trajectories for change of physical and biological resources in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.
- Model Habitat Availability with consideration of impacts to the entire range of habitat which species use within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and across their entire migration routes. The importance of the isthmus wilderness may be a function of loss of or impacts to habitat outside of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

BIO 4

The EIS needs to evaluate how much fill will be required to build the proposed road and what could be the impact of construction itself on the ecological values of the Izembek Wilderness Area. A determination of the ecological values of the lands to be conveyed to the Service and the adverse effects the road could have on the existing ecological values of this refuge, including wilderness values should be conducted. It should be noted that the June 2003 Draft EIS prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers examined these issues in detail and could be used as a reference.

BIO 5

The proposed road should not disturb biological resources or the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

BIO 6

For each biological resource analyzed, it is suggested that the EIS should:

- Identify the current condition of the resource as a measure of past impacts.
- Identify the trend in the condition of the resource as a measure of present impacts.

- Identify the future condition of the resource based on an analysis of the cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable projects or actions added to existing conditions and current trends.
- Assess the cumulative impacts contribution of the proposed alternatives to the long-term health of the resource and provide a specific measure for the projected impact from the proposed alternatives.
- Identify opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts, including working with other entities.

BIO 7

Assess the long-term cumulative impacts to wildlife populations and their habitats from a road bisecting the significant wetland habitat and ecological corridor in the context of how such impacts may be compounded by climate change.

BIO Fish

BIO FISH 1

The EIS should consider and evaluate the presence of salmonid habitat and Essential Fish Habitat and how the proposed project would impact these habitats.

BIO FISH 2

The Service should consider the impact on salmon spawning and passage from building bridges and culverts in the lagoons.

BIO Threatened and Endangered Species

BIO TES 1

The Service should address the potential impact to threatened and endangered terrestrial and marine species and their habitat according to the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act, including appropriate consultations. The EIS should consider impacts to Steller's eiders, black brant, emperor geese and dunlin.

BIO TES 2

Special consideration should be given to Steller's eiders due to its vulnerability when a large portion of the population stages and winters at the same time in Izembek and Nelson lagoons.

BIO Vegetation

BIO VEG 1

The EIS should evaluate how road dust will impact adjacent vegetation and habitats (such as the eel grass beds) as well as the existing gravel road network from Cold Bay to the shores of Izembek Lagoon.

BIO Wetland and Aquatic Communities

BIO WET 1

The EIS should describe aquatic habitats in the affected environment (e.g., habitat type, plant and animal species, functional values, and integrity) and include maps that clearly identify all waters within the project area.

BIO WET 2

The EIS should evaluate effects on wetlands and aquatic communities from the proposed road as well as the existing gravel roads near Cold Bay. The evaluation needs to be in sufficient detail that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be able to make its required findings under a Section 404 application and should include:

- Potential impacts to eel grass beds in Izembek and Kinzarof Lagoons (including sedimentation and climate related factors such as light reduction, temperature, and sea level variation);
- Potential impacts on Ramsar Wetlands;
- Fragmentation of wetlands (especially intertidal that would be gained or lost by the Service with particular attention to the Ramsar Wetland designation of Izembek Lagoon);
- Potential impacts to tundra (including potential secondary impacts associated with increase silt load and decreased fresh water flows to the Izembek Lagoons Complex);
- Potential impacts from increased human activity along with the creation of trails and campsites;
- Habitat removal; and
- Introduction of exotic species.

BIO WET 3

Impacts to aquatic resources should be evaluated in terms of the aerial (acreage) or linear extent, habitat types, values, and functions to be impacted.

BIO WET 4

The EIS should include a detailed description of the project impacts on aquatic resources, including the type of impact (e.g., habitat removal, fragmentation, and introduction of exotic species) and its magnitude. These effects must be evaluated in the appropriate local or regional context.

BIO WET 5

The EIS should include a delineation of all aquatic resources (wetlands and all other waters of the U.S.) which could be affected by the proposed project. The delineation of wetlands must follow the procedures set forth in the 1987 Wetlands Delineation Manual and the Alaska Regional Supplement and include all data support forms.

BIO Wildlife

BIO WILD 1

A road corridor would contribute to a significant loss of wilderness value and could compromise the long-term viability of wildlife populations.

BIO WILD 2

Special consideration should be given to impacts on:

- Black brant given that 98% of the population uses the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge as feeding grounds before migration and some may be overwintering in the lagoons.
- Caribou given that the population size is approximately 10% of the historic population size. A road corridor may separate the herd.

BIO WILD 3

The Service should consider impacts on a variety of migratory and resident birds including emperor geese, tundra swans, dunlin, and black brant as well as impacts to caribou, wolves, bears and marine mammals. Potential impacts include:

-
- Animals avoiding the road.
- Increased human disturbance (including on-road and offroad vehicles and boats), which may cause animals to flee an area.
- Habitat fragmentation (resulting in potentially splitting caribou herds to different sides of the road).
- Decreases in prey availability (ie. Disturbance to eel grass beds).
- Increased mortality through collisions with vehicles.
- Increased pollution from road construction and increased human use of the area after the road is built.
- Increased noise pollution.
- Changes in water quality and hydrology.

BIO WILD 4

The potential land exchange would impact less than 1% of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge which indicates the likelihood of significant impact to wildlife that currently use the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge is extremely unlikely. Even with the most conservative estimates, population impacts would be below the levels that can be measured with current scientific wildlife survey techniques.

BIO WILD 5

Studies have shown that avian populations adapt quickly to disturbance therefore impact to bird populations could be negligible.

BIO WILD 6

The land that is being gained by the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge through the land transfer is not suitable habitat for many species that currently inhabit the lagoons.

BIO WILD 7

Given that many migratory birds use the lagoon complex during part of their life-cycle, the Service should consider the impacts to bird populations on a National and/or continental scale.

BIO WILD 8

The Service should consider the impacts that climate change will have on wildlife species in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. Impacts may include drying of lakes and wetlands, increased pests that may stress sensitive species or decreased prey availability, especially eel grass beds.

BIO WILD 9

The existing 11 miles of road in the King Cove area has not caused any negative impacts to wildlife populations, so it is not reasonable to believe that a new road will cause any significant impacts.

BIO WILD 10

The Service should determine if non-native and/or invasive species will be introduced through this project and what impact this will have on the wildlife populations that currently inhabit the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

BIO WILD 11

The Service should examine which species were instrumental in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge's Ramsar designation and how the proposed land exchange would affect these species.

PHY Physical Resources – General comments related to potential impacts to the physical environment. Comments related to a more specific area of physical resources concern are described in further detail within this category (e.g. hydrology, climate and air quality).

PHY 1

The Service needs to analyze impacts of the proposed road to physical resources including: road construction, sediment run-off, watershed impacts and pollution.

PHY 2

The Service needs to analyze the current and projected impacts to the region from climate change and how these impacts will be confounded by the development of a road.

PHY 3

The Service needs to analyze cumulative impacts of the land exchange and proposed road in the context of proposed oil and gas development in and around the lands and waters of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and Izembek Lagoon.

PHY 4

Disturbance, sedimentation, pollution, and other adverse effects would extend far beyond the actual road corridor in the 206 acres of key Izembek Wilderness that is internationally recognized waterfowl habitat.

PHY Climate and Air Quality

PHY AQ 1

The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions (baseline or existing conditions), National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and criteria pollutant non-attainment areas in the road corridor and surrounding areas.

PHY AQ 2

It is recommended by EPA that greenhouse gases that are anticipated to be emitted by the project are disclosed in the EIS. EPA also recommends that the EIS consider how climate change could potentially affect the project in terms of water quality and quantity, local climate, soils and other resources.

PHY Environmental Contaminants & Ecological Risk Assessment

PHY CON 1

Pollutants from the road could impact the surrounding ecosystem through input of heavy metals into the aquatic environment, and nitrogen oxide emissions and other pollutants from vehicles damaging roadside vegetation.

PHY CON 2

The EIS should disclose whether toxic vehicular air emissions would result from project construction, discuss health effects associated with air toxins and diesel particulate matter, and identify sensitive receptor groups that are likely to be exposed to these emissions.

PHY CON 3

The EIS should address potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of hazardous materials from construction of the project, analyze risks involving possible accidental releases of hazardous materials, and describe mitigation and emergency response measures.

PHY Hydrology

PHY HYD 1

Watershed impacts of the road may have severe ecological repercussions for the wetland ecosystem of the lagoon complexes by increasing erosion and runoff of sediments into

wetlands, reducing aquifer recharge rates, altering channel morphology, increasing stream discharge rates, impeding normal water flows, and blocking key drainages.

PHY HYD 2

The EIS should describe all waterbodies and stream crossings and potential impacts (including specific pollutants) to surface, subsurface, and ground water in the wetland area between Izembek and Kinzarof Lagoons and in the Joshua Green River Valley.

PHY HYD 3

The EPA recommends collection and evaluation of data for crossings over waterbodies and incorporation of findings into the EIS for compliance with Basic Stream Project Data Needs (Site Characterization) and Data Specific to Waterbody Crossings.

PHY HYD 4

Impacts of increased sedimentation and dust from road construction and maintenance on anadromous streams, and other nearby waterbodies, needs to be addressed.

SER Social Resources – General comments related to potential impacts to the social environment. Comments related to a more specific area of socioeconomic concern are described in further detail within this category (e.g. subsistence, wildness).

SER 1

The cost-benefit analysis should consider the following factors in order to make a best interest finding that guarantees net public benefit:

- Compare the current transportation system (hovercraft) to the proposed gravel road and other transportation systems (rail, small boat harbor in Cost Bay, improvements to Cold Bay dock)
- Millions of taxpayer dollars already spent (per capita) under the King Cove Health and Safety Act for: upgrades to the King Cove clinic, purchase of the hovercraft, upgrades to the King Cove airstrip, and completion of the road from Leonard Harbor to the hovercraft pad.
- Include all market effects and costs such as road construction, maintenance (crew of at least 2 people year-round, 24 hours a day; grading equipment; snow removal equipment; annual gravel costs; year round law enforcement on private and state land), and transportation cost savings.
- Include all non-market effects using state-of-the-art valuation techniques that capture externalities of road construction and loss of passive use values for Alaska wilderness and wildlife refuges. Non-market effects are every bit as important economically, however, they do not manifest themselves in direct market transactions. Rather, they manifest themselves indirectly, through changes in home prices, recreational use patterns, subsistence hunting and fishing patterns, and expenditures on pollution control for example that are caused by changes in environmental quality associated with a policy, program, or project. Of particular

concern is "passive use values" representing an individual's willingness to pay for a resource even if they may never use it in anyway

- "Social benefit-cost analysis" because the proposed road is a public infrastructure investment that needs to make sense from an economic perspective
- Ecosystem services
- (Increased) use of the road to transport seafood products to Cold Bay airport during fishing season
- Economic benefits to both communities when they are connected
- The addition of 17 new road miles to the 40+ miles that already criss-cross the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge; and

SER 2

A road that just a few people use will not be maintained because there are roads that thousands of Alaskans use that are not maintained. The action alternative is not in the public interest. Commenters inquired who would provide the following functions related to the road:

- Road maintenance year-round including plowing (along all road segments).
- Driver rescue from weather-induced crashes into snow drifts or stalled vehicles.

SER 3

King Cove school children would benefit from the road because they can lose 50 days of instruction when teachers miss flights. Children also do not get to participate in the same opportunities for learning that access affords to Cold Bay and the airport.

SER 4

Transferring ownership of the Izembek land to the State could lead to further development including on- and off-shore oil and gas exploration, the installation of utility corridors or pipelines, or even increased commercial harvest of resident and migratory species. The EIS must analyze all reasonably foreseeable future actions that may contribute to cumulative impacts to the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

SER 5

The following are concerns about the road alternative siting, location, construction, safety, and maintenance:

- White-out conditions can occur from October to May in this area
- Extreme weather events (high winds and snow) will further increase maintenance and make the road extremely dangerous for travelers; wind will destroy a one-lane gravel road very rapidly
- It is unclear how the road will be adequately maintained
- More lives will be lost due to driving accidents, weather, and drunken driving than the under a no action alternative

- Conditions too poor for flying are also bad for driving
- The proposed road corridor cuts through sensitive terrain that would make road-building costly, difficult, and potentially dangerous
- Unstable wetlands would increase engineering costs and long-term maintenance; and
- Roads built on the east side of Cold Bay have experienced serious erosion and culvert wash-outs.

SER Archeological/Cultural Resources

SER ARC 1

All impacts to historic properties and cultural resources should be considered in an orderly and systematic manner, in full consultation with all concerned parties.

SER Cultural Values

SER CUL 1

A lifestyle change for the residents of Cold Bay due to an increase of vehicle traffic into the small community needs to be considered.

SER CUL 2

The EIS should document the tribal consultation and coordination process by providing a chronology with the dates and locations of meetings with tribal governments, results of the meetings, and a discussion of how tribal input was used to develop the EIS. This consultation should continue throughout the EIS development phase, which will provide an opportunity to gather traditional ecological knowledge about subsistence use and harvest, cultural resources, and other resources and lands that may be exchanged.

SER Environmental Justice

SER EJ 1

The EIS should disclose what efforts were taken to ensure effective public participation and to meet environmental justice requirements consistent with Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-income Populations).

SER Health and Safety

SER H&S 1

Many comments received describe the hardships experienced while traveling in and out of King Cove during inclement weather accidents. Some accidents have involved casualties. Some of the Health and Safety challenges faced by the community include:

- Mountainous terrain surrounding the village with hazardous and unpredictable weather conditions;

- Necessity to travel during inclement weather for medical emergencies due limited access to health services;
- Unsafe loading/unloading facilities at the boat dock;
- Illnesses requiring continual attention and medication with unreliable transport;
- Infrequent transport of medicines and other necessities via mail and freight; and
- Emotional stresses from worrying about loved-ones traveling or getting loved-ones emergency medical treatment.

SER H&S 2

Many comments received were in support of the road for Health and Safety reasons, including:

- The road to King Cove will save lives;
- The road is of utmost importance due to the recent crash at King Cove Airport;
- The road is very important for the safety of King Cove residents and others who travel between the communities; and
- The road is necessary for the survival of the whole community.

SER H&S 3

Some comments received expressed frustration over the time it has taken to resolve this access issue and the lives that have been lost and stressed the importance of human kind. One commenter stated that there is no community in the lower 48 states that would ever put up with the situation of being cut off totally when a major airport was just a short distance away.

SER H&S 4

Some commenters believe that the road would not create a safer or more efficient transport and brought up other issues the road could create such as laws regarding abandoned vehicles, traffic laws, speeding, and drunk driving.

SER Health Impact Assessment

SER HIA 1

The road will enable the spread of drugs from the King Cove School to the Cold Bay School, which doesn't currently have a drug or alcohol problem. This will affect the community.

SER Land Use, Public Use, Recreation, Visual Resources

SER Land 1

A potential legal issue to be evaluated in the EIS is the ownerships and acreages of surface and subsurface land and waters within the Izembek, Alaska Peninsula, and

Maritime refuges that are involved in the land exchange together with the acreage that would be included in the Kinzarof Lagoon State Game Refuge.

SER Land 2

A potential legal issue to be evaluated in the EIS is how the existing relocated Section 17(b) Alaska Natives Claims Settlement Act public access easement (EIN 9 C4) from the shoreline of Cold Bay to the existing Wilderness area will be maintained.

SER Land 3

The issue of the land exchange is irrelevant because outside hunters have had a larger effect on the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge wildlife than the small road will.

SER Land 4

The road will increase legal and non-legal access (including ORVs, poachers) as seen already in the east and northeast portion of Kinzarof Lagoon and the Prudhoe Bay haul road. Use restrictions will not be adequate to prevent this increased access to the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. It also makes enforcement of hunting regulations within 5 miles of the road difficult.

SER Land 5

The 17 new miles of road will enhance the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge by providing access to nature enthusiasts and Cold Bay residents. The Service already invites visitors to enjoy the roads that cross the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and Izembek Wilderness.

SER Land 6

A potential legal issue to evaluate is how additions to the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness would restrict existing public water and overland access to Mortensens Lagoon via an existing trail (also a 17(b) easement).

SER Land 7

The EIS should analyze the impacts from recreation, subsistence activities, and access, particularly those impacts associated with vehicle usage. The EIS should disclose all impacts associated with such activities and describe what actions will be taken to manage recreational, subsistence and access opportunities in the project area. The Environmental Protection Agency specifically encourages the Service to control and direct ORV and snowmachine use to protect resources (i.e. wildlife habitat and security) and prevent erosion, including adequate policing and enforcement.

SER Land 8

Analyze the impacts the road would have on the visual resources of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

SER Land 9

The road will be used to conduct business and for joy rides. It will increase access to other lands in King Cove as well as the airport. There will be considerable pressure to open the road to heavy vehicles hauling mail and freight.

SER Public Revenue and Fiscal Considerations

SER REV 1

This current process is a waste of taxpayer money. Millions of dollars have already been provided to alleviate the problem of safe transportation (e.g., road and hovercraft) between Cold Bay and King Cove.

SER REV 2

Year-round maintenance and operation costs of this road could be the highest in the state. The EIS should state who is responsible for this and if sufficient revenue would be available to cover the costs.

SER REV 3

The road will be good for the economy and quality of life through jobs (e.g., snow removal) and commerce (e.g., access to gravel, shipping products between the communities).

SER REV 4

The authors of the EIS need to address financial connections between the oil industry seeking leases in Bristol Bay and proponents of the road across the peninsula.

SER Road Design, Bridges, Transportation, Planning and Transportation Systems

SER Road1

Although the proposed road corridor of 100 feet may reduce impacts to a designated wilderness area, a 250-foot corridor may be needed to comply with ADOT&PF standards.

SER Road 2

The EIS should address whether the existing road that runs north of Cold Bay through The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge will be affected by the land exchange and how it will [be] connected. Road design needs to consider how the proposed cable barriers could affect access to the Cold Bay road.

SER Subsistence

SER SUB 1

The EIS should evaluate effects of the land exchange and construction of the proposed road on subsistence. The evaluation should include:

- Potential impacts to subsistence use, access, and species;

- Access to subsistence resources between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, including the existing road providing public access to the shore of Izembek Lagoon;
- Potential increased conservation risk to species with high commercial and subsistence values (e.g., salmon migratory waterfowl, caribou, and harbor seals);
- Changes to federal subsistence management when the road corridor goes into state ownership; and
- Effect on shared subsistence harvest by residents of Cold Bay and King Cove by increasing access for King Cove residents.

SER SUB 2

The benefits of the road to the communities of Cold Bay and King Cove need to be evaluated against the impacts to natural resources and the subsistence culture of Alaska and the rest of the west coast.

SER SUB 3

To fully evaluate subsistence impacts, the EIS should gather and analyze traditional knowledge on subsistence use patterns and disclose historical information compiled on subsistence ORV use within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

SER Wilderness

SER WILD 1

Consider the harmful impacts that the proposed road and land exchange would have on the wildlife and wilderness values of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

SER WILD 2

The road will harm tourism prospects because wilderness and refuge "mystique" are gone. One commenter described his desire to view, experience, and photograph wildlife in solitude in its natural habitat without the affects of vehicular traffic nearby.

SER WILD 3

The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge designation recognizes the tremendous value of wilderness; therefore the removal of the designation would contribute to a significant loss of wilderness value.

SER WILD 4

Declassification of wilderness will have an effect on wilderness across the nation.

SER WILD 5

The EIS needs to include a comparative evaluation of habitat and wildness values associated with lands coming to the Service in sufficient detail to clearly show the gain and loss of high value fish and wildlife habitats and wilderness values with a road between King Cove and Cold Bay and the no action alternative (no Land Exchange/no road connection).

SER WILD 6

The EIS should include an evaluation of the fragmentation of the existing Izembek Wilderness by the 206 acre road corridor in comparison to the 43,093 acres that would be designated wilderness. This evaluation should also include the relinquishment of 5,430 acres of Native corporation land selections adjacent to the Izembek Wilderness.

General

ACK Comment Acknowledged – Entire Submission determined not to be substantive and warranted only a “comment acknowledged” response and/or duplicate comments.

ACK 1

Entire comment was determined to not to be substantive or was a request to be added to the project mailing list.

ACK 2

Comments which are duplicates of other oral testimony and/or written submissions.

DATA Data and Available Information – Comments referencing scientific studies and data that should be considered.

Data 1

Additional data received during scoping that should be considered in the development of the EIS includes:

- A list of King Cove Access Project permits and a list of mitigation measures submitted by the Aleutians East Borough;
- An Izembek Climate Summary Regarding Future Water Availability (Summary) submitted by The Wilderness Society; and
- Instructions for mitigation measures to reduce emissions during construction submitted by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

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

<http://www.fws.gov>
<http://izembek.fws.gov/eis.htm>

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