



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

**Revised Comprehensive
Conservation Plan**

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Wilderness Review

Wild and Scenic River Review

Volume 1



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mission

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



National Wildlife Refuge System Mission

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

This Comprehensive Conservation Plan describes programs that may exceed future budget allocations and therefore does not constitute specific commitments for future staff increases, project details, or funding.



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**Volume 1
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**Prepared by Arctic Refuge and the Alaska Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration**

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Acronyms

ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADFG	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
AIWFMP	Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan
ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
ASRC	Arctic Slope Regional Corporation
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BLM-AFS	Bureau of Land Management Alaska Fire Service
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CRMP	Comprehensive River Management Plan
DOI	Department of the Interior
EA	environmental assessment
EIN	easement identification number
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FMP	Fire Management Plan
FNSB	Fairbanks North Star Borough
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMU	Game Management Unit

Acronyms

GPS	Global Positioning System
I&M	Inventory and Monitoring
ICRMP	Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan
IWSRCC	Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council
KIC	Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation
LCC	Landscape Conservation Cooperative
LPP	Land Protection Plan
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MRA	Minimum Requirement Analysis
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPR-A	National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska
NPS	National Park Service
NWPS	National Wilderness Preservation System
NWSRS	National Wild and Scenic Rivers System
ORV	outstandingly remarkable value
PLO	Public Land Order
PUNA	Public Use Natural Area
RIT	Refuge Information Technician
RNA	Research Natural Area
ROC	region of comparison
ROD	record of decision
SNAP	Scenarios Network for Alaska Planning
TUS	transportation or utility systems

USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VUMP	Visitor Use Management Plan
WSA	Wilderness Study Area
WSP	Wilderness Stewardship Plan

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A Note about Wilderness Terminology

Throughout this Plan, the term “wilderness” has different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. To clarify the intent of these different meanings, the following conventions are used:

“w”ilderness versus “W”ilderness

Arctic Refuge is currently comprised entirely of wildlands that host natural, undeveloped conditions, a range of special values, and provide opportunities for isolated and primitive recreation. Refuge staff works to protect these qualities and special values throughout the Refuge. The word “wilderness” (“w” not capitalized) and the phrase “wilderness characteristics” are used when describing these qualities and special values across Arctic Refuge as a whole. The word “wilderness” (not capitalized) is also used as an adjective when describing the wilderness qualities referenced in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 101(b) (“wilderness resource values”) and Section 304(g) (“wilderness value”).

The word “Wilderness” (“W” capitalized) is used when it refers specifically to Refuge lands designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. “Wilderness character” is a phrase from the Wilderness Act used to summarize the qualities the agency is mandated to preserve within designated Wilderness. These include the maintenance of “untrammeled,” “natural,” and “undeveloped” conditions and the provision for “solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.” Note that these qualities are essentially the same as the wilderness characteristics found across all the wildlands of Arctic Refuge, including the approximately 60 percent of the Refuge currently under Minimal Management (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). However, by statute, the Wilderness Act requires the Refuge provide a very high level of protection to these qualities of Wilderness character within designated Wilderness.

For More Information

“Wilderness” and related terms, such as “wilderness characteristics,” “Wilderness character,” and “wilderness values” are defined in Appendix M. For an explanation of the differences between Minimal Management and the management of designated Wilderness, see Chapter 2 (Sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4) and Chapter 3 (Table 3-3).

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A Note about Acreages

Various acreages are reported throughout this Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Plan, Revised Plan for Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge, Refuge). These acreages come from many sources, including:

- Official land surveys
- Warranty deeds, patents, and other legal documents
- Public Laws, Public Land Orders (PLOs), Executive orders, etc.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data

All acreages reported in this document are estimates of the true area represented on the ground. Some of these estimates are inherently more accurate, or closer to ground conditions, than are others. For example, surveys performed by a licensed land surveyor provide the most accurate acreage estimates. Acreages obtained from GIS data are typically less accurate. Acreages obtained from Public Laws, PLOs, and other legislation may or may not be derived from land surveys, making it difficult to ascertain the accuracy of these estimates. Because of the range of sources from which acreages are obtained, the following guidelines have been used to report acreages in this Plan.

- When reporting acreages that are based on surveys, patents, deeds, and interim conveyances, the reported acreage is that which is specified by the survey or legal document. These acreages will be reported to two decimal places.
- We handle acreages from laws, regulations, and other legal documents in two ways. If we are citing what the document said, we report the acreage as it is specified in the legal document, whether or not the acreage values are derived from actual surveys. We also use GIS to map acreages from laws, regulations, etc., and GIS-derived acreages may not agree with those in the legal document.
- When reporting acreages derived solely from GIS data, the acreages are rounded to take into account the approximation of digitally-constructed parcel boundaries. The magnitude of rounding is determined by the following:

ROUNDING FACTORS		EXAMPLES	
Acreage Range	Round Up to Nearest	GIS-derived Acreage	Rounded Up To
0 - 99	1	27.1857	28
100 - 999	10	133.5374	140
1,000 - 9,999	100	4,729.3048	4,800
10,000 - 99,999	1,000	87,637.1057	88,000
100,000 – and higher	10,000	684,304.5108	690,000

A Note about Acreages

- Very large acreages (in the millions) will be displayed in the text as a number with two decimal places (e.g., “19.64 million acres”). These acreages are still rounded per the tables here and should not be assumed to be highly accurate acreages such as from surveys or legal documents.

Based on these noted accuracy issues and guidelines, there may be cases in this Plan where the summation of individual acreages may not coincide with anticipated total acreages. This is to be expected given the inherent accuracy limits of the various acreage estimates.

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