

- (1) Lake Thibadeau Refuge Alternative 1—Current management (no action);
 (2) Lake Thibadeau Refuge Alternative 2—Divestiture (proposed action).

Alternatives for Salinity and Blowing Salts on Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge

The principle sources of water for the Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge are precipitation, floodwater from Beaver Creek, ground-water seepage, water deliveries from the Milk River Project, and irrigation return flows. The last three sources of water add dissolved solids (salinity) to the refuge waters, particularly Lake Bowdoin, a closed basin. In addition, the refuge and adjoining lands are underlain by glacial till and shale containing high concentrations of soluble salts. The Milk River Project water rights for Bowdoin refuge are limited and insufficient to improve wetland water quality. As water evaporates from Lake Bowdoin, salts have become concentrated and water salinity has increased.

Historically, two methods have been used to improve Lake Bowdoin's water quality and reduce salinity levels: (1) Discharges of saline water into Beaver Creek; and (2) managing Dry Lake as an evaporation basin for Lake Bowdoin's water. Neither of these methods is acceptable due to impacts from windblown salts and saline water discharge. As a consequence, evaporation has continued to increase salinity levels in Lake Bowdoin to levels that will eventually negatively impact the diversity of aquatic vegetation and invertebrates. Waterfowl production will also be negatively affected, particularly if more suitable freshwater areas are not available or significantly reduced during the breeding season.

The Service hopes to address the salinity and blowing salts issue by developing a water management system on Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge Complex that would protect the environment and mitigate current and future salt-dust-blowing concerns for neighboring properties, while providing quality water and wildlife habitat for migratory birds. A benchmark for achieving this goal would be to meet the Service's salinity objective of sustaining a brackish water quality level of approximately 7,000 mg/L of total dissolved solids (salts) in Lake Bowdoin. The Service developed and analyzed five alternatives to address the salinity and blowing salts issue for Lake Bowdoin in the Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge including (1) current management (no action), (2) Evaporation ponds and removal of salt residue, (3) Flushing by Beaver Creek, (4)

Underground injection and flushing by Beaver Creek (proposed action), and (5) Pumping to the Milk River. The Service has identified salinity and blowing salts alternative 4 as the best option (proposed action) for addressing this issue based on the effectiveness of treatment, environmental and social consequences, and cost.

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.

The environmental review of this project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*); NEPA Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508); other appropriate Federal laws and regulations; Executive Order 12996; the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997; and Service policies and procedures for compliance with those laws and regulations.

Dated: August 25, 2010.

Hugh Morrison,

Acting Regional Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLAK–963000–L1410000–FQ0000;
 AA–5964, AA–3060, AA–5934]

Public Land Order No. 7770; Extension of Public Land Order No. 6884; Alaska

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Public Land Order.

SUMMARY: This order extends the duration of the withdrawal created by Public Land Order No. 6884, for an additional 20-year period. The extension is necessary to continue to protect the recreational values of the United States Forest Service's Kenai River Recreation Area, the Russian River Campground Area, and the Lower Russian Lake Recreation Area.

DATES: *Effective Date:* October 2, 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert L. Lloyd, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, 222 West Seventh Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513; 907–271–4682. Persons who use a telecommunications device

for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose for which the withdrawal was first made requires this extension in order to continue to protect the recreational values of the Kenai River Recreation Area, the Russian River Campground Area, and the Lower Russian Lake Recreation Area. The withdrawal extended by this order will expire on October 1, 2031, unless as a result of a review conducted prior to the expiration date pursuant to Section 204(f) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1714(f), the Secretary of the Interior determines that the withdrawal shall be further extended. It has been determined that this action is not expected to have any significant effect on subsistence uses and needs pursuant to Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 3120.

Order

By virtue of the authority vested in the Secretary of the Interior by Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1714, it is ordered as follows:

Public Land Order No. 6884 (56 FR 49847 (1991)), as corrected (56 FR 56275, (1991)) which withdrew approximately 1,855 acres of National Forest System land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the United States mining laws (30 U.S.C. ch 2), but not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws, to protect recreational values of the Kenai River Recreation Area, the Russian River Campground Area, and the Lower Russian Lake Recreation Area, is hereby extended for an additional 20-year period until October 1, 2031.

Authority: 43 CFR 2310.4.

Dated: June 7, 2011.

Wilma A. Lewis,

Assistant Secretary—Land and Minerals Management.

[FR Doc. 2011–15484 Filed 6–21–11; 8:45 am]

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