

## **NPR-A Rule Alaska Native Tribes and ANCSA Corporation Engagement**

- On March 13, 2023, the Administration previewed its intent to develop a draft rule to maximum protections for significant resource values on the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the western Arctic, while supporting subsistence uses and needs for Alaska Native communities.
- On August 25, 2023, in advance of the publication of the draft rule, the BLM mailed a formal offer for consultation to 45 Tribes and 30 Alaska Native Corporations to engage in consultation on the proposal. The BLM did not receive a response to these invitations from any of the Tribes or Alaska Native Corporations. On September 6, 2023, agency staff called state and local governments to ensure they were aware of the upcoming publication of the proposed rule and to offer opportunities to discuss the rule language.
- On September 6, 2023, the Department released the draft NPR-A rule and launched a 60-day comment period following publication in the *Federal Register* on September 8th. The BLM continued to offer consultation via phone, email, and in-person invitations to Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations that it determined would be most likely to have substantial direct effects from the rule, including the Native Village of Atqasuk; Atqasuk Corporation; Village of Wainwright; Olgoonik Corporation; Native Village of Nuiqsut; Kuupik Corporation; Native Village of Barrow; Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation (UIC); Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC); and Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS).
- The BLM held three in-person meetings on the proposed rule in Anchorage (October 10, 2023), Nuiqsut (November 1, 2023), and Utqiagvik (November 2, 2023) to provide an overview of the proposed rule and answer questions from the public. The BLM also held one hybrid meeting in Wainwright on December 4, 2023. A court reporter was present at the Nuiqsut and Utqiagvik meetings to transcribe all comments and questions. The hybrid meeting in Wainwright was recorded via the Zoom platform, and those comments were collected by the BLM on behalf of the commenters and submitted as comments to the rulemaking docket on regulations.gov. For each meeting in Reserve communities, the BLM coordinated with local entities.
- **Based on feedback our team heard in Alaska, the BLM extended the comment period on October 17, 2023, for 10 additional days.**
- The BLM met with the Mayor of Atqasuk on October 31, 2023; the Native Village of Nuiqsut on November 1, 2023; ICAS on November 3, 2023, and February 6, 2024; Village of Wainwright on November 21, 2023; Olgoonik Corporation on December 19, 2023; ASRC on December 21, 2023; and Kuupik on February 1, 2024.
- In addition, the agency met with the NPR-A Working Group three times during the public comment period and three times since its close. The NPR-A Working Group is comprised of representatives from North Slope local governments, Alaska Native Corporations, and Tribal entities. It is intended to provide a forum for North Slope communities to provide input to management of the Reserve. ICAS, NSB, Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, and ASRC met with representatives of the BLM and the Department on September 21, 2023, in Washington DC.
- Representatives from ICAS, NSB, Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, ASRC, Olgoonik Corporation and Anaktuvuk Pass, along with their lobbying representation, met with Acting Deputy Secretary Laura Daniel-Davis and BLM leadership in Washington DC on November 8, 2023, in Washington DC, where they were joined by Representative Peltola.
- The Acting Deputy Secretary, BLM Director and BLM Principal Deputy Director also met with non-profit, Native Alaskan-led organizations who support the rule: Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic and Grandmothers Growing Goodness.
- Following those meetings, **the BLM again extended the comment period on November 13, 2023, for an additional 20 days, to ensure that anyone who wanted to participate had the opportunity.** We also reaffirmed that nation-to-nation consultation is not restricted to a public comment period and could occur anytime Tribal leaders requested.