



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Clare Ralston (NPS) (202) 343-7394  
David Klinger (FWS) (202) 343-5634

For Release June 17, 1981

### INTERIOR MODIFIES MANAGEMENT RULES FOR ALASKA PARKS AND REFUGES

Final rules were announced today by the Interior Department's National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to relieve regulatory restrictions inappropriate to the unique Alaska setting and alleviate public concern over management procedures for 120 million acres of Federal lands in Alaska.

The rules apply to 51 million acres of land in national parks, monuments, and preserves, and 76 million acres of national wildlife refuges, most of which were created or enlarged by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).

These rules are in keeping with Secretary of the Interior James Watt's March 12, 1981, policy statement that a "permit lifestyle" with unreasonable paperwork requirements will not be imposed on the people of Alaska.

Today's action has the practical effect of easing existing general restrictions on public use, recreation, and access that were deemed inappropriate and unnecessary for these Federal lands in Alaska because of the unique lifestyle of rural Alaskans and the terrain, climate, and vastness of the State. These regulations also reflect many of the special management provisions contained in the Alaska Lands Act.

"Alaska is a special case, where many of the ground rules we use for parks and refuges in the 'Lower 48' have to be modified to take into account the vastness of the area and the special traditions that Alaskans have with the land," said G. Ray Arnett, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. "What these rules permit is coordinated management of Federal lands in Alaska that is responsive to local needs."

The rules, published in today's Federal Register, govern the current administration of Interior Department lands and may be supplemented by additional rules in the future if either agency determines that further rulemaking is required.

Interim rules were proposed on January 19, 1981, and were the subject of over 500 comments from the State of Alaska and its Congressional delegation, other Federal and local government agencies, private organizations and businesses, and private citizens from Alaska and other States.

(more)

The regulations apply to the following units of the National Park System: Alagnak National Wild River, Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Denali National Park and Preserve, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Katmai National Park and Preserve, Kenai Fjords National Park, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Kobuk Valley National Park, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Noatak National Preserve, Sitka National Historical Park, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, and Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. Twelve National Wild Rivers within the boundaries of park units are also covered by the regulations.

They also apply to the following National Wildlife Refuges: Alaska Maritime, Alaska Peninsula, Arctic, Becharof, Innoko, Izembek, Kanuti, Kenai, Kodiak, Koyukuk, Nowitna, Selawik, Tetlin, Togiak, Yukon Delta, and Yukon Flats. Six National Wild and Scenic Rivers and four river study areas within these refuges are also covered by the rules.

A summary of the rules for lands under the administration of the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service follows. While rules are similar for units of both the park and wildlife refuge systems, there are some differences that reflect the distinct management responsibilities of each agency.

#### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Transportation: Snowmachine use is authorized for travel to and from villages and homesites and for traditional activities when there is adequate snow cover to protect the underlying vegetation and soil. Motorboats, non-motorized surface transportation (dogs, horses, saddle animals), and fixed-wing aircraft are generally allowed. Helicopters are allowed at designated landing sites or under permit. Off-road vehicles are allowed on routes and in specific areas designated by the Superintendent, on established roads and in parking areas, or pursuant to a permit.

Hunting and fishing: Sport fishing is allowed in park areas; sport hunting and trapping are permitted in national preserves in compliance with State and Federal law.

Firearms: Firearms may be carried in park areas in Alaska except Klondike Gold Rush and Sitka National Historic Sites, Denali (Mt. McKinley) National Park, and Glacier Bay and Katmai National Parks. The carrying of traps and bows is allowed within national preserves where the taking of fish and wildlife is authorized.

Collecting: Except in the above park areas, the collection of these renewable resources is allowed: fruits, berries, and mushrooms that are not endangered, driftwood and uninhabited seashells, and dead or downed wood. Recreational gold panning is also allowed.

Camping and picnicking: These activities are generally allowed in park areas.

Access: Adequate and feasible access across parks is guaranteed for any person who has a valid property or occupancy interest in land that is in, or surrounded by, a park area. Administrative procedures are set forth for those landowners who require temporary access across park areas.

Cabins: Procedures and guidance are provided for people occupying and using existing cabins and those wishing to construct new cabins within park areas.

Unattended Property: Property may be left unattended on most park lands for up to 12 months.

Subsistence: (The National Park Service is required by ANILCA to distinguish subsistence users who are permitted to hunt and engage in certain other activities within parks from others who are not. The Fish and Wildlife Service is not under the same requirement.)

-- In national parks and monuments, local rural residents allowed to engage in subsistence uses are those permanently residing in designated resident zones or holding subsistence permits. Resident zones for preserves were deemed unnecessary for this interim rulemaking.

-- Most national parks and monuments are open to fishing, hunting and trapping for subsistence uses by local rural residents. National preserves are open to both sport and subsistence fishing, hunting, and trapping.

-- Local rural residents may fish with a net, seine, trap, or spear in park areas where subsistence uses are authorized.

-- Aircraft use for subsistence hunting, fishing, or trapping in parks or monuments is prohibited, with limited exceptions.

-- Snowmobiles, motorboats, dog teams, and other means of surface transportation are allowed by local rural residents engaged in subsistence uses.

-- In park areas where subsistence uses are allowed, the non-commercial cutting of live-standing timber by local rural residents for subsistence uses is allowed. Timber less than 3 inches in diameter may be taken without a permit.

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Transportation: Snowmachine use is authorized for travel to and from villages and homesites and for traditional activities when there is adequate snow cover to protect the underlying vegetation and soil. Off-road vehicles are allowed on routes and in areas designated by the refuge manager, on established roads and in parking areas, or pursuant to a permit. Motorboats, fixed-wing aircraft, and non-motorized transportation (dogs, horses, saddle animals) are allowed. Helicopters are allowed at designated landing sites or under permit. Traditional means of surface transportation by local rural residents engaged in subsistence is permitted on refuges.

Hunting and fishing: Both hunting and fishing are allowed on refuges, subject to State and Federal laws. Subsistence hunting, fishing, and trapping for local rural residents are allowed. Commercial fishing operations are also permitted.

Firearms: The possession, use, and transportation of firearms for hunting and personal protection are authorized.

Timber cutting: The non-commercial cutting of live-standing timber by local rural residents for subsistence uses is allowed. Timber less than 3 inches in diameter may be taken without a permit.

Recreational activities: Sightseeing, nature observation and photography, sport hunting and fishing, boating, camping, hiking, picnicking, and related activities are allowed as long as they are compatible with the purposes of the refuge. Recreational gold panning is also allowed.

Access: Adequate and feasible access across refuges is guaranteed for anyone with a valid property or occupancy interest in land that is in, or surrounded by, a refuge. Administrative procedures are set forth for those landowners who require temporary access across refuge lands. Access is also authorized for travel to and from villages and homesites and for traditional subsistence activities.

Cabins: Procedures and guidance are provided for people occupying and using existing cabins and those wishing to construct new cabins within refuge areas.

Unattended property: Snowmachines, boats, off-road vehicles, or other personal property may be left unattended on most refuge lands for up to 12 months.

x x x