

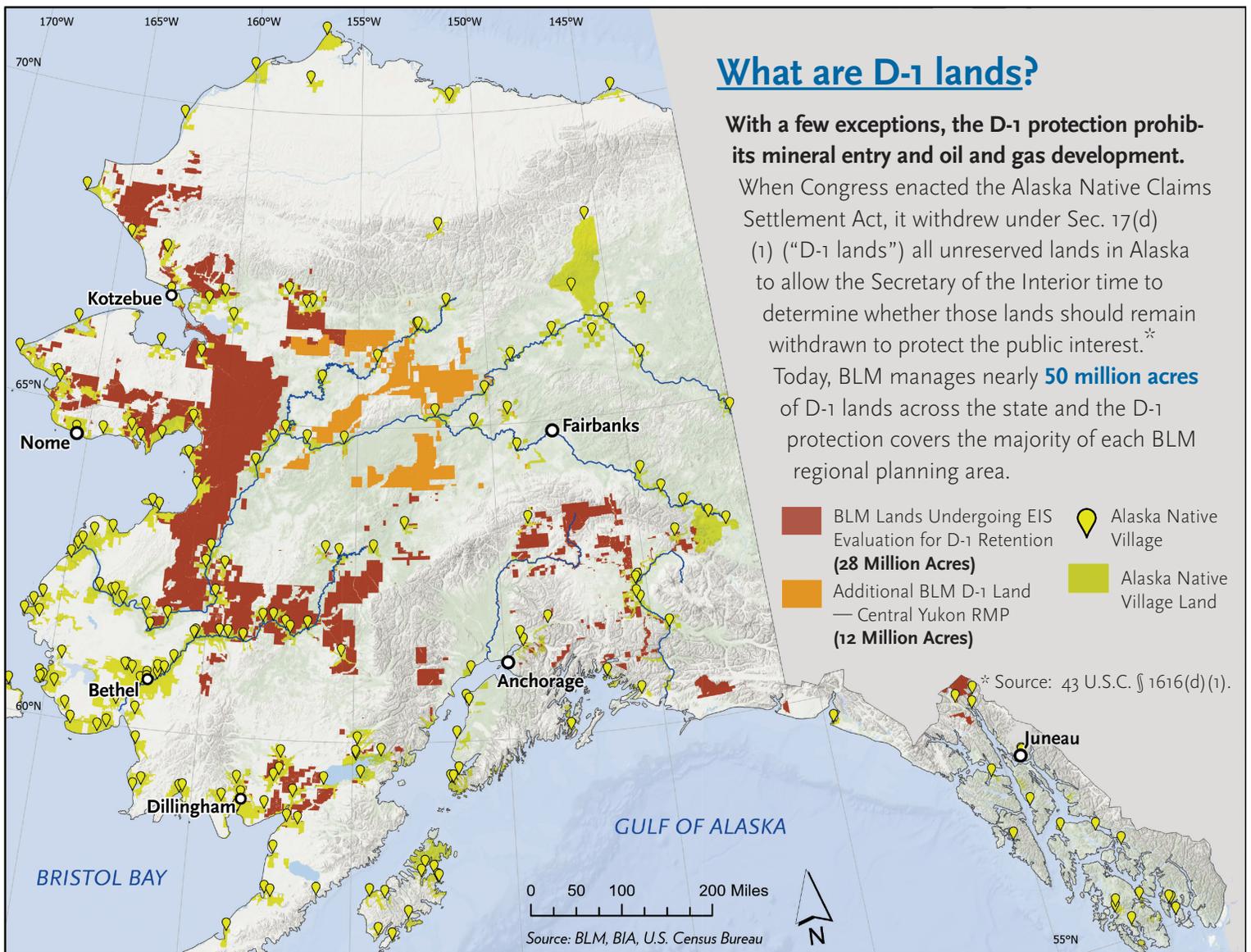
ALASKA BLM LANDS: Protecting critical fish and wildlife habitat and subsistence resources



Overview

On August 16, 2022, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) initiated a process to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider the effects of **opening 28 million acres of protected D-1 lands to extractive industrial development.** The Trump Administration previously prepared, but never finalized, five Public Land Orders to lift the D-1 protections for specific lands within Bristol Bay, Bering Sea Western Interior, East Alaska, Kobuk Seward and the Ring of Fire regions. The Biden Administration is now undertaking an environmental review to better understand how lifting the D-1 protections could affect fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence opportunities, communities, and subsistence resources.





What are D-1 lands?

With a few exceptions, the D-1 protection prohibits mineral entry and oil and gas development.

When Congress enacted the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, it withdrew under Sec. 17(d) (1) (“D-1 lands”) all unreserved lands in Alaska to allow the Secretary of the Interior time to determine whether those lands should remain withdrawn to protect the public interest.*

Today, BLM manages nearly **50 million acres** of D-1 lands across the state and the D-1 protection covers the majority of each BLM regional planning area.

- BLM Lands Undergoing EIS Evaluation for D-1 Retention (**28 Million Acres**)
- Additional BLM D-1 Land — Central Yukon RMP (**12 Million Acres**)
- Alaska Native Village
- Alaska Native Village Land

* Source: 43 U.S.C. § 1616(d)(1).

What is the opportunity?

BLM’s consideration of protections for D-1 lands presents an historic opportunity. This is the *first time* that BLM is considering how its decisions could affect large tracts of land, critical fish and wildlife habitat, and cultural and subsistence resources beyond the boundaries of the usual resource management plans. BLM’s environmental review is not constrained by the rules of the resource management planning process or the limited tools available to protect critical areas. The D-1 protections are already in place. This is an opportunity to maximize the extent and durability of those protections by creating the justification to keep the protections in place.

Tell BLM to maintain the durability of D-1 land protections in Alaska.

What’s next?

In mid-November, BLM is expected to release a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for review and open a **60-day comment period**. *This is an opportunity for Tribes, affected communities, and the public to urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections.*

Helpful themes to address during the comment period include:

1. How subsistence resources utilize and depend on large, intact landscapes (i.e., caribou range, moose habitat, bird migratory corridors, salmon spawning and rearing habitat, etc.)
2. How fragmenting landscapes and watersheds by lifting protections will harm fish and wildlife habitat and harm or displace subsistence resources.
3. How BLM D-1 lands support communities, protect cultural resources, and support hunting, fishing and subsistence opportunities.