

BLM, ADFG Sign

To Cooperate

The Bureau of Land Management and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that they have signed an agreement to cooperate in programs for the management of the land, fish and game resources of Alaska.

The joint announcement was made by Augie F. Reetz, Commissioner of Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Burton W. Silcock, State Director of the Bureau of Land Management in Alaska.

The agreement calls for supplemental agreements for the development of fish and game habitat management plans for each of the areas BLM classifies for retention under the Classification and Multiple Use Act.

These supplemental agreements are to be developed within one year after all final classification actions. They are to recognize each of the agencies responsibility in regard to our fish and wildlife resources. The management of the wildlife habitat on public lands is the responsibility of the BLM.

The animals are the responsibility of the State of Alaska. Additionally, the two agencies will enter into joint land and wildlife management plans for classification areas and cooperate in programs for management of fish and game habitat upon public lands not so classified.

In a joint statement, Commissioner Reetz and State Director Silcock indicated that the need for such an agreement has been apparent to both agencies and both have recognized their dual responsibility in the management of the land and resources of Alaska.

This is the first big step in coordinating their activities

to the purpose. The task of meeting the demands of Alaska's resources will not be achieved without orderly development and close coordination between concerned agencies and the public.

Although similar agreements have been developed in California and Nevada for small areas, this agreement in Alaska is unique as the country is larger and therefore the land and resources need different approaches to the problem of resource and habitat management.

With the BLM's classification program well under way and areas such as Iliamna already under management and areas such as Bornite and Copper River in the initial process of study for development of management plans this agreement is timely.

Through the joint efforts of the State and Federal government, the citizens in the state can now be assured that critical fish and wildlife areas will be recognized in all land management plans that are developed.

The public will benefit and will no longer have to take for granted that all resources are considered and that land management programs are properly integrated in the development of the state.

The information developed in the joint management plans will assist the BLM and ADF&G in assessing the future development of the State's fish and wildlife resource needs.