

BLM, Army develop plans for Yukon Maneuver Area

The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Army are beginning to develop resource management plans for the 248,000-acre Yukon Maneuver Area of Fort Wainwright near Fairbanks and 623,600 acres of Fort Greeley near Delta Junction.

The land is used by the Army for maneuvers, training and equipment development and testing.

When Congress renewed the temporary withdrawal for these areas last year, it directed the BLM to investigate and recommend other ways these lands can serve the public interest during the 15-year withdrawal period. BLM, in cooperation with the Army, will write a Resource Management Plan for each withdrawal area to identify potential uses compatible with the land's military mission.

Congress specifically suggested BLM consider options for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat, control of predatory and other animals, development of recreational opportunities, fire suppression and opening of lands to mineral entry.

"Right now we need the public to

help us identify issues and planning criteria for the plans," said planning team leader Jim Ducker. Issues identified by the planning team to date are related to wildlife and wildlife habitat, economic development, recreation, access and military use.

The plans must be completed by November 1989.

The BLM has prepared a free brochure to further explain the planning effort. It includes a response form for individuals who wish to suggest issues and planning criteria. Questions and comments may be directed to: Military Withdrawals Planning Team, AK-918, Bureau of Land Management, 701 C Street, Box 13, Anchorage 99513.

Telephone contacts are Jim Ducker, Anchorage, 271-5595, and Billy Butts, Fairbanks, 356-5153.

Open house meetings are scheduled at the Delta Junction Community Center, Aug. 18 from 2-4 p.m. and 6-9 p.m.; and at the Noel Wien Library, 1215 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, Aug. 19, from 2-4 p.m. and 6:30-8:30 p.m.