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National
Park
Monument



Wildlife
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National
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Wild and
Scenic
Rivers

What is a National Monument?

On Dec. 1, 1978, President Carter used the Antiquities Act to create 17 Alaskan monuments totaling 56 million acres. National Monuments may be created by a president to reserve land to protect historical landmarks, structures and other objects of historic or scientific interest situated on federal land. Presidents have used the Antiquities Act of 1906 in the past, for instance in the preservation of the Grand Canyon and the Grand Tetons.

These Alaskan monuments—13 park monuments, two wildlife refuge monuments and two forest monuments—roughly include the prime core lands that had been under consideration in the D2 Alaska lands legislation last year. That legislation died in the 95th Congress last October. Had the president not used the Antiquities Act, the lands which were in D2 withdrawals would have been managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) under the BLM organic act.

On Nov. 16, 1978, Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus withdrew 110 million acres of potential park and refuge lands, stating that this new land freeze was necessary to prevent land selections by the State of Alaska and to prevent new mining claims in potential park and refuge areas. The Carter Administration said such inholdings might interfere with the eventual creation of new national parks, refuges, forest additions and wild and scenic rivers.

Alaska's monuments do not fall under the Wilderness Act of 1964—only Congress can create wilderness and Alaska's monuments were created by presidential order. These monuments will remain unless Congress, through Alaska lands legislation, changes them to some other land classification, or the president's action is found to be illegal, which is what the lawsuits filed by the State of Alaska claims.

Shortly after the creation of the monuments, the Interior Secretary issued interim rules for park and refuge monuments and the Secretary of Agriculture developed internal guidelines for forest monuments. Final regulations have not yet been issued for the monuments but interim regulations are in effect for the park and refuge monuments. The forest monuments are presently being managed according to internal agency guidelines; official regulations are being developed.

Generally speaking, park and refuge monuments will be managed much as national parks and national wildlife refuges; forest monuments will be managed essentially as national forests except that timber sales and new mineral development are presently prohibited.

There will be no further State and Native land selections and no further mining entry on any of the national monument lands.

National Park Monuments

Park monuments will be managed essentially as parks except that subsistence hunting may continue. Interim rules for Alaskan park monuments prohibit sport hunting and trapping, although trapping may continue through the 1979 season only. Carrying firearms is prohibited. Native and non-Native subsistence activities (hunting, fishing, trapping, berrying and woodgathering) will be permitted on traditional grounds and use of snowmachines is permitted for subsistence purposes only. Customary access is allowed to private property within park (and all) monuments. The basic rule is that access to inholdings will be allowed subject to reasonable regulation. At this time no areas of any of the monuments have been closed to customary landing of aircraft or customary overland crossing of monument lands.

National Wildlife Refuge Monuments

Interim regulations provide that hunting, fishing, trapping and recreational use may continue on refuge monuments as they have in the past. No oil and gas leasing is allowed although the Secretary of Interior may relax this prohibition. No new mining entry is allowed.

National Forest Monuments

The Forest Service's internal guidelines for forest monument management allow oil and gas leasing. Hunting, fishing, trapping and recreational use may continue as they have on national forests in the past. But no new timber sales or new mining are allowed.

While the Alaskan monuments cover only 56 million acres (as compared to much higher acreages in the Alaska lands legislation) President Carter has asked Secretary Andrus to consider permanent creation of wildlife refuges on 40 million additional acres of the November 16, 1978, withdrawals. Other actions by the executive branch of the federal government are also possible.

Brought to you by:

State of Alaska, D2 Information Office, 1016 W. 6th Ave., Suite 435, Anchorage, Alaska 99501



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