

DECISION RECORD AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
CAMPBELL TRACT WITHDRAWAL RENEWAL

I. Decision:

It is my decision to recommend to the Secretary of the Interior that the withdrawal on the 730 acre Campbell Tract (CT) administrative site be renewed for 20 years.

II. Rationale for the Decision:

The decision to renew the withdrawal is in conformance with the Southcentral Planning Area Management Framework Plan (MFP), dated March 1980. There are no mitigation measures required as no change in the management of the site is anticipated and any new actions that occur will be analyzed under a separate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document.

The mission to manage public lands throughout Alaska remains as important today as it was 20 years ago. In 1976, the CT was included as part of a complex land exchange agreement between Cook Inlet Region, Inc., the State of Alaska and Department of Interior. The agreement was ratified into law as an amendment to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and allowed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to retain up to 1,000 acres. After negotiations with the State and City of Anchorage, this acreage was reduced to the minimum needed, 730 acres, and withdrawn by Public Land Order (PLO) 6127 dated February 11, 1982.

The continuation of the withdrawal will protect the large investment the BLM has made in the CT. The facilities located on the CT are relatively secure because of the remote location of the site. Aside from the actual physical space occupied by the improvements, many of the uses of the CT require additional buffers to ensure safe and successful operation. The airstrip is important, especially in the event of a major catastrophe, and requires a buffer for safety purposes. The meteor burst radio communications site is unique to the State, serves several Federal agencies and has the potential to serve more. It is sensitive to interference and was originally situated at the CT because of the lack of interference and good window for reception. The CT serves as an outdoor classroom for the Campbell Creek Science Center (CCSC), the BLM Alaska's main outreach program. Renewal of the withdrawal guarantees that a unique natural resource will be available for this purpose.

Public comments point out the value of the CT as a natural area to the citizens of Anchorage. Their comments, with the exception of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), were overwhelmingly in favor of renewing the CT withdrawal. The BLM was

applauded on its good stewardship for the last 20 years and the public trusts the BLM to continue managing the CT the way the public wants it managed. The BLM Alaska Resources Advisory Council (RAC), made up of a diverse cross section of interests, strongly supports renewal and passed a resolution in favor of renewal. In the negotiations for the original withdrawal, the State was concerned that recreation use continue in concert with the Far North Bicentennial Park (FNBP), provided it did not interfere with other administrative uses. The BLM has honored that agreement and received strong public support for that effort.

The No Action and Partial Renewal alternatives were considered and rejected. The No Action Alternative would leave the improved lands in the BLM administration, but unimproved lands would be subject to conveyance out of Federal ownership. This would potentially break the continuity of the site and create management issues. The buffers around the improvements would decrease and this would reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of the facility. Security problems would develop if more access to the site was developed. The public does not want to see any development and some development for active recreation uses would be possible. Any loss of vegetation would change the natural character and reduce wildlife habitat found on the CT.

The Partial Renewal Alternative would reduce the site by 110 acres. This area would be subject to conveyance. The area is essential as a buffer zone for the meteor burst radio communications site. It also contains important wildlife habitat and has recreation value to the public. Future development in this area could not be ruled out if the withdrawal is not renewed.

The BLM's mission to manage public lands in Alaska will continue into the foreseeable future. Protecting the CT by withdrawing it as an administrative site is critical to the BLM mission in Alaska.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

Based upon the analysis of the potential environmental impacts, I have determined that the impacts are not expected to be significant and that an environmental impact statement is not required. The impacts from renewal of the existing withdrawal were determined to be minor. Management of the CT will continue as in the past, which has fully considered the impacts of the administrative use on the human environment and modified those actions to eliminate or mitigate any impacts.

IV. ANILCA Section 810 Compliance:

The CT lands are Federal Public Land as defined in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Section 102 and fall under the authority of the Federal Subsistence Board and the Subsistence Regulations for the Harvest of Fish and Wildlife

on Federal Public Lands in Alaska. The CT lies within the Anchorage Management Unit of Game Management Unit 14C which under the current Subsistence Regulations noted above is closed to the taking of wildlife under both State (hunting and trapping) and Federal Subsistence Regulations. Further, the taking of wildlife on the CT is limited by Supplemental Rules issued on November 20, 1998 under 43 CFR 8365.1-6 that close the CT to the use of firearms, archery equipment, traps or snares. The CT has no documented consistent use by rural Alaskans of fish or game and no knowledge of such use has become available since the inception of the Federal Subsistence Program or the issuance of the above noted Supplementary Rules.

/s/ Peter Ditton, Acting
Anchorage Field Manager

October 17, 2000
Date