



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

BLM Central Yukon Field Office

Western Interior Regional Advisory Council

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CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ARCHAEOLOGY

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- In 2026, CYFO cultural resource staff conducted fieldwork to inventory and monitor cultural and historic sites on BLM lands in several areas, including federal mining claims near Coldfoot, in the West Fork Atigun River Valley, and in the Ruby Mining District. Monitoring known sites is required by BLM policy and includes checking to make sure that cultural sites and resources are in good condition are not being impacted by human or environmental factors (such as recreational users, erosion, wildfire, etc.). The results of the fieldwork showed that most sites are in good condition and are not being impacted by humans. Some sites, especially along rivers and creeks, experience small amounts of natural erosion.
- CYFO cultural resource staff also assisted with interdisciplinary work to ensure cultural resources are in good condition and not being affected by permitted activities, including inspections at mine sites, along right-of-ways (ROWs), at special recreation permit (SRP) use areas, or other areas that have planned work (hazmat removal, fuels reduction projects, etc.).

ECOLOGY

Contact: Anna O'Malley 474-2363

- BLM Contracted Alien Species Control to conduct herbicide treatments to clear brush at the Five-Mile Campground Dump Station, Seven-Mile Administrative Site, and Arctic Circle Campground access road. Similar treatments are tentatively planned for the 2026 treatment sites, as well as the Coldfoot Contact Station/Winter Visitor Center, and the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center in spring 2027. Herbicide treatment of non-native invasive species was discontinued in 2026 because the majority of infested lands were conveyed to the State of Alaska.
- A hand-crew contracted by CYFO completed the sixth year of manual and mechanical treatment of invasive plants in August 2026. Treatment sites included high-traffic areas such as parking areas, campgrounds and BLM administrative sites. Invasive species treatment has been significantly reduced since the majority of infested areas were conveyed to the State of Alaska. BLM continues to prioritize treatment on BLM managed lands to prevent the spreading plants to uninfested areas.

FISHERIES

Contact: David Esse 474-2365 or Benjamin Kelly 474-2211

- CYFO's Aquatic AIM (Assessment Inventory and Monitoring) program completed stream surveys at 4 sites across the western portion of the field office. The purpose of this project is to describe the range of stream habitat conditions on BLM-managed land within the field office.
- CYFO funded an agreement with the Wildlife Conservation Society to evaluate pre-spawn mortality of chum salmon-

on from 2025-2027 in tributaries to the Koyukuk and Nenana rivers. Fieldwork commenced in summer 2026, and relatively few chum salmon were found. New sites and a higher return in 2026 have increased sampling effectiveness.

- Aquatics staff monitored water temperature at 18 locations along Dalton Highway streams and rivers in 2026.

HAZMAT AND ABANDONED MINE LANDS

Contact: Jessica Tighe 474-2360

- Solid and hazardous waste inventories at both active and inactive mining operations, areas of closed, excluded, and unconveyed lands, and at trespass sites under BLM management within CYFO continued in May, June, July, and August of 2026 and may continue into September 2026. Two new sites were identified as abandoned as of July 31, 2026.
- The inventory of open mine shafts associated with early drift mining in the Dalton Highway Corridor continues. These shafts pose a potential danger to human health and safety. Temporary closure of these shafts began in August of 2025. Several shafts are no longer under BLM management.
- Inventory of abandoned mining operations and trespass locations conducted in July 2026. Solid waste anticipated to be cleaned up in 2027.
- Spills from abandoned mining operations in the Nolan Valley are being assessed and will be cleaned up according to ADEC requirements. Delineation is taking place in August 2026 and soil treatment is anticipated to begin in 2027.

HYDROLOGY

Contact: Noel Turner 474-2361

- Measurements at long-term NRCS snow survey sites on the Dalton Highway occurred throughout the winter with slightly above average snow depths. Lake Todatonten was sampled in April.
- The stream gauge with water quality components on South Fork Koyukuk River by USGS was funded by BLM again this year.
- Three soil temperature monitoring stations were installed along the Dalton Highway in 2024. These stations continue to provide soil temperature and snow depth data to BLM. 2026 is the last year these stations will be in service due to the transfer of lands.

PLACER MINING

Contact: John Barefoot 474-2250

- There were 19 active federal placer gold mining operations in the CYFO in 2026.
- New exploration activities were acknowledged in the Nolan Valley and along upper Slate Creek. Plan modifications were authorized for operations along Slate Creek, Gold Creek, Chapman Creek, and Myrtle Creek. Two plan modifications are being processed for operations along Minnie Creek and the Hammond River.

PLANNING

Contact: Tiffany Kwakwa 474-2364

- The Department of Interior (DOI) rescinded a majority of the NEPA implementation regulations (43 CFR 46) and has provided final guidance in a DOI Handbook of NEPA Procedures available online: <https://www.doi.gov/oeepc/national-environmental-policy-act-nepa>. The 2008 BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790 was rescinded in March 2026.

- The Conservation and Landscape Health Rule (Public Lands Rule) was rescinded May 12, 2026, effective June 11, 2026: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/12/2026-09386/rescission-of-conservation-and-landscape-health-rule>
- BLM notices can be found on the BLM National NEPA register (<https://eplanning.blm.gov/>) or on the Federal Register (<https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/land-management-bureau>)

REALTY

Contact: Matthew Whitman 474-2249 or Melissa Head 474-2247

- The majority of the Dalton Highway Corridor lands north of the Yukon River were conveyed from the BLM to the State of Alaska after Public Land Order 5150 was revoked in mid-2026. BLM has retained ownership and management of the 4 campgrounds along the Dalton, the Arctic Circle Wayside, the Yukon River Contact Station and the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center and its associated administrative facilities. All other recreation sites and waysides along the Dalton Highway have been transferred to the State of Alaska.
- Planning is underway for two areas of BLM land north of the Yukon River (around Toolik Lake and the Ray River) to be conveyed to the University of Alaska under the land grant initiative program.
- Two new fiber optic lines are in-process or proposed: the Koyukuk ReConnect project will connect the communities of Evansville, Allakaket, Alatna, and Hughes to the existing fiber along the Dalton Highway; and the Atautchikun fiber optic project will connect Hughes and Huslia to existing fiber networks in the Northwest. Additionally, the Doyon Alaska FiberOptic project is planning to reroute a portion of the fiber optic line to follow the Eliot Highway to Manley Hot Springs and along the Tofty Road to reach the Yukon River.

RECREATION

Contact: Steve Taylor 474-2242, Brian Perry 474-2237, or Kerri Hamos 474-2204

- Staff participated in planning and execution of the 2026 North for Science! Expedition, a partnership with the Alaska Songbird Institute, BLM, USFWS and NPS. Ten middle schoolers spent one week exploring and learning about science, natural resource management and subsistence living in the central Brooks Range.
- Staff have been navigating the shift in land ownership along the Dalton Highway Corridor and adjusting recreation program operations accordingly.
- The CYFO currently authorizes 48 Special Recreation Permits operating in the Western Interior region.
 - 9 commercial hunting guides
 - 32 commercial sightseeing/photography tour companies
 - 7 backcountry tour guides operating in the Brooks Range on BLM lands adjacent to the Dalton Highway
- Many of the road tour permits and some backcountry permits will likely be closed out at the end of the year due to the transfer of lands in the Dalton corridor to the State of Alaska.

SAND AND GRAVEL

Contact: John Barefoot 474-2250

- All federal mineral material sites along the Dalton Highway north of the Yukon River were conveyed to the State of Alaska.

WILDFIRE AND FUELS MANAGEMENT

Contact: Andrew Smith 474-2270

- The BLM is developing fuels projects along the Dalton Highway to help assist in fire suppression efforts and to make communities more resilient to wildland fires. Wiseman is the priority community to assess and implement possible fuels treatments. The entire highway corridor will be assessed for possible work to help the highway and structures along the way from being impacted by fire.
- The BLM began a fuels treatment project at Melozitna Hot Springs. The area will be assessed for potential fuel break and all structures will be assessed for firewise treatments. There are numerous woody debris piles constructed during recent fire activity. These piles need to be disposed of likely through burning.
- Fuels personnel flew historic a historic trail from Nulato to Koyukuk for a planned project in conjunction with the villages and the Alaska Fire Service to reopen and maintain the trail.

WILDLIFE

Contact: Erin Julianus 474-2358

- The CYFO conducted snowshoe hare monitoring which includes track counts, browse surveys and pellet counts in March and June 2026. This project is a 30-year ongoing effort to monitor hares in the central Brooks Range which began in 1997. In 2025, management of the project transitioned from NPS to BLM and will continue indefinitely to monitor hare populations and habitat throughout changing cycles.
- The CYFO completed Breeding Bird Surveys along the Dalton Highway in June 2026.