

Biogeographic Regions (Boreal Partners in Flight Working Group 1999) was developed through the Partners in Flight national initiative in recognition of the need for a coordinated, cooperative conservation initiative focusing on nongame landbirds. It provides conservation priorities and objectives for landbirds in each region of Alaska. Arctic Refuge contributes to this plan through a variety of inventory and monitoring studies of landbirds within the Refuge.

A.3.4.3 Alaska Shorebird Conservation Plan

Over 70 species of shorebirds have been recorded in Alaska, representing one-third of the world's shorebird species (Alaska Shorebird Group 2008). Shorebirds worldwide have suffered dramatic population declines in the past decade. The Alaska Shorebird Conservation Plan (Alaska Plan) is one of 11 regional plans associated with the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan. The Alaska Plan identifies shorebird species of concern in Alaska and provides goals, objectives, and conservation priorities for shorebird conservation throughout the State. The Alaska Plan also provides a new framework for building a conservation strategy in a landscape context. The four major components to the conservation strategy are research, population monitoring, habitat management, and education and outreach. The overall goal of the plan is to keep shorebirds and their habitats well distributed — not only across the Alaska landscape, but also throughout regions used by these populations during other phases of their annual cycle. Additionally, the “Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring” Boreal Committee is presently investigating techniques for monitoring shorebirds in the boreal forest. Arctic Refuge supports several species that are showing declines throughout the North American continent, including American golden plover, buff-breasted sandpiper, solitary sandpiper, dunlin, and upland sandpiper. The Boreal Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring program is presently in its development phase and has yet to be implemented in Alaska.

A.3.4.4 Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan

The Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan is a long-range comprehensive plan that directs management of the approximately 6.1 million acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands through which the Dalton Highway and Trans-Alaska Pipeline pass. The utility corridor, which was established by Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 on December 30, 1971, is an essential component of the national oil and gas transportation system (BLM 1989). The plan identifies special management areas and development nodes in the utility corridor, and describes provisions for appropriate uses and protections for valuable resources. Included in the plan is the Galbraith Lake Area of Critical Environmental Concern that is directly adjacent to the western boundary of Arctic Refuge. The 1989 plan, which provided management guidance for 20 years, is scheduled to be revised by BLM; however, a timeline for the revision has not yet been set.

A.3.4.5 Dalton Highway Recreation Management Plan

The Dalton Highway Recreation Management Area includes those public lands adjacent to the Dalton Highway from the Yukon River, north to a point near the confluence of the Sagavanirktok and Ivishak rivers, approximately 60 miles south of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. The 1989 Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan (see Section A.3.4.4) established the

boundaries of the plan area, which includes lands adjacent to the western boundary of Arctic Refuge.

BLM completed the Dalton Highway Recreation Area Management Plan (1991) because of increasing public interest and use of the Dalton Highway after the highway was opened to the public in 1981. The plan divides the recreation management area into zones according to the recreation opportunity spectrum, and it establishes recreation management objectives for the zones within the utility corridor. Issues addressed in the plan include information and interpretive services, facility development, resource manipulation and rehabilitation, and Dalton Highway Recreation Management Area administration.

A.3.4.6 Dalton Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan

The Dalton Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan (ADNR 2010) provides a comprehensive evaluation of the intrinsic qualities of the byway and intends to guide management, protection, and enhancement of those qualities over time. The plan is directed toward discussing the primary concerns and challenges associated with living and operating in the corridor. The plan also acknowledges issues and concerns associated with managing the byway; provides a descriptive overview of the route; summarizes road and transportation characteristics, such as traffic volumes, accident statistics, and signage; assesses current and future visitation; and provides a framework that will help local byway organizations succeed in reaching their stated vision, goals, and objectives. Arctic Refuge staff participated on the advisory committee for the Byway Corridor Partnership Plan.

A.3.4.7 Strategy for Conserving Alaska's Diverse Wildlife and Fish Resources

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) published a strategic plan for Alaska fish and wildlife in 2006 (ADFG 2006). It serves as the State's comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy and focuses on nongame species. The goal of the strategy is to conserve the diversity of Alaska's wildlife and fish resources, focusing on species with the largest need for conservation interventions. The strategy was designed with the intent to integrate new conservation actions and strategies with existing State wildlife management and research programs to build upon earlier successes. The strategy outlines the conservation needs of hundreds of species and many species assemblages, highlighting a growing need in the State for initial inventorying studies for lesser known species. The strategy also provides detailed natural history information and specific and measurable objectives for species conservation in Alaska.

A.3.4.8 Alaska Natural Heritage Program

This program was established in 1989 by The Nature Conservancy; in 1993, it became part of the University of Alaska Anchorage, residing in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Alaska Natural Heritage Program is Alaska's clearinghouse for information on plant and animal species of conservation concern, natural communities of conservation concern, and invasive non-native plant species. The information is collected, validated, and distributed, and assistance is provided to natural resource managers and others in applying it effectively. The program has developed a biological conservation database that is linked to similar programs in all 50 states, most Canadian provinces, and many Latin American countries.