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NEWS RELEASE

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'ALASKA'S HIDDEN GEMS' PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST KICKS OFF

Shutterbugs asked to show off their talents while showing off Alaska's wild places.

ANCHORAGE—Alaska Wilderness League and Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association (AWRTA) have teamed up to highlight the extraordinary and diverse values found on federal public lands in Alaska, managed by the Bureau of Land Management, with a national photography contest launching today.

"The unique history, cultures, and untouched beauty of these wild places have yet to be discovered by millions of Americans who actually own these lands," said Jeremiah Millen of Alaska Wilderness League. "We hope to inspire the public to show off their photography talents while showing off these amazing places in Alaska. Ultimately, our hope is that the images taken will then inspire people to visit these special places and work to protect them for future generations."

The challenge for contest participants is to highlight and capture the extraordinary values found on Alaska's Public/BLM lands with engaging photographs and stories. The contest is divided into four photographic categories: Landscapes and Natural Features, Wildlife, Historical and Cultural Features, and Humans and the Environment.

"These lands contain some of our nations greatest treasures," added Millen, "the world's largest wild salmon fishery, the largest surging glacier in North America, millions of migratory and resident bird populations, the largest caribou herd in Alaska, and Alaska's longest River; the mighty Yukon. They deserve to be shown off, and what better way than through the eyes and pictures of people who want to preserve them?"

Entries will be accepted from the launch date of April 1, 2009, to the closing date of May 15, 2009. Submissions can include new photographs or photographs already taken within the five target areas around Bristol Bay, the Wrangell's, the Yukon, the Nulato Hills and Seward Peninsula. Prizes will be awarded to the top three photographers.

Detailed contest guidelines can be found at alaskawild.org/blmcontest.

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