



# Ecological Subsections Inventory *Status: Complete*

## Background

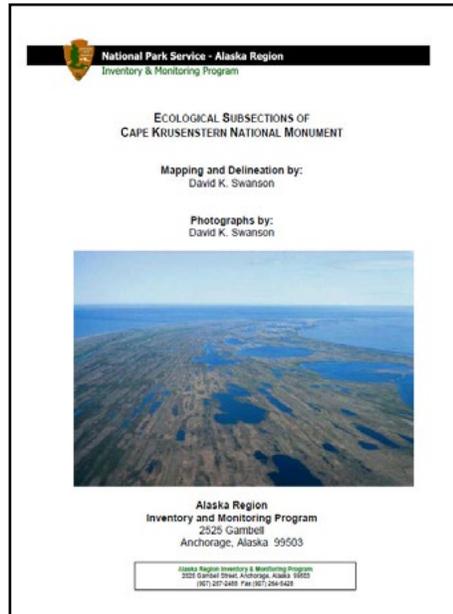
As part of the initial biological inventories completed by the Alaska Inventory and Monitoring program, ecological subsection maps were developed for all park units in the early 2000s. Their initial purpose was to serve as a stratification tool for the sample design of biological inventories. Additionally, program managers used them to help with the design of early monitoring programs.

Ecological subsections are part of a mapping hierarchy adapted from ECOMAP (1993). The hierarchy includes units that range in size from >70 million acres (domains) down to 10 -100 hundred acres (landtype phase). Ecological subsections range in size from 5,000 - 100,000 acres and are developed by integrating bedrock and surficial geology, topographic, and vegetation patterns across the landscape.

Prior to this effort, mapping in Alaska had been completed at the ecoregion level (2-40 million acres). These maps were developed with limited time and funding, which necessitated the use of a knowledgeable and diverse team of experts to create them. Previous experience, reconnaissance trips, and existing maps were used to verify mapping efforts before completion.

## Access

GIS shapefiles and PDF summary reports exist for each park unit. They can be found in the Integrated Resources Management Applications web portal, called IRMA (<http://irma.nps.gov>), by searching "ecological subsections" and filtering by park unit. All summary reports are also organized in IRMA under collection #96. To locate this collection, go to the advanced search page within IRMA, type "96" in the collection name box, and click search. GIS files are available digitally by contacting the regional Inventory & Monitoring office.

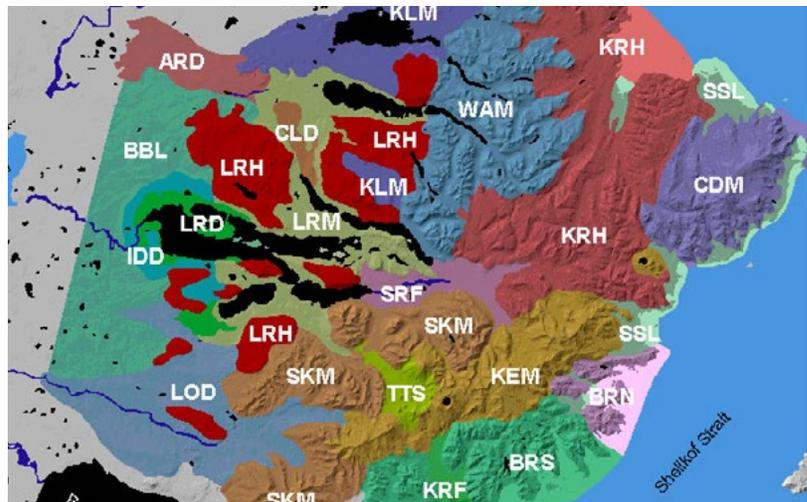


**Summary reports describe the ecological subsections defined for each park unit. GIS files accompany the reports.**

## Applications of Ecological Subsections

The ecological subsections have been used as the starting point and basis of understanding for more detailed mapping efforts, such as surficial geological maps, landcover inventories, and soil inventories. They have also been used in the initial planning stages of vegetation monitoring programs around the state.

The ecological subsections maps were used to design several bird inventories, including the initial bird inventory in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. In some instances, subsections have been altered to fit the needs of a specific project. For example, some projects require finer scale information than the subsections provide. In other cases, local expertise has been used to update subsections, such as in Katmai National Park and Preserve.



**Ecological subsections are noted by colors and three-letter codes on the map of Katmai National Park and Preserve above. "BBL" on the west side of the park, for example, denotes the Bristol Bay Lowlands. This area is defined by a Pleistocene drift with discontinuous permafrost and a mantle of loess to 2 meters deep.**

For more information or access to reports and files associated with this inventory, contact Beth Koltun at [beth\\_koltun@nps.gov](mailto:beth_koltun@nps.gov) or 907-644-3698.