CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Background

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The role of state land use plans was established by state statute (AS 38.04.005). It is the policy of the State of Alaska "...to establish a balanced combination of land available for both public and private purposes. The choice of land best suited for public and private use shall be determined through the inventory, planning, and classification processes..."

The plan determines management intent, land-use designations, and management guidelines that apply to all state lands in the planning area.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

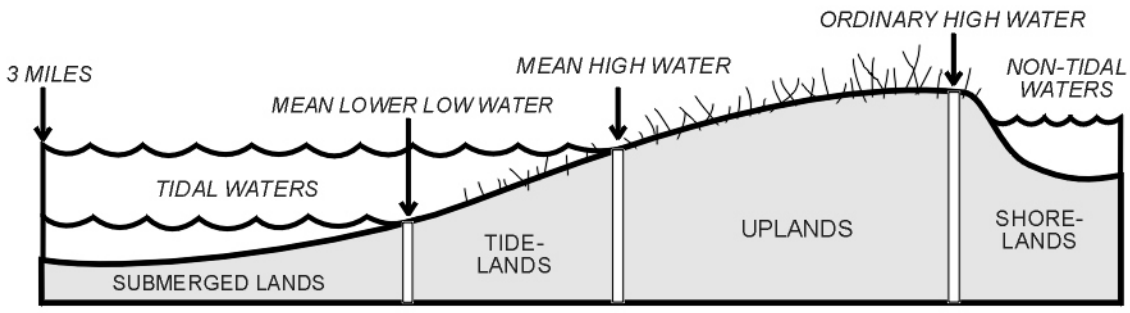
The Central/Southern Southeast Area Plan directs how the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will manage state uplands, tidelands, and submerged lands within the planning boundary. The following is a summary of the acreage to which the plan will apply:

Area	Acres
State-owned uplands	83,258
State-selected uplands	15,174
State-owned tidelands	2,704,454
Total Acreage	**2,802,886**

SUBMERGED LANDS, TIDELANDS, UPLANDS AND SHORELANDS AS DESCRIBED IN THIS PLAN

Tidelands span the area from mean high water to mean lower low water; submerged lands reach from mean lower low water to a line three miles seaward from mean lower low water. Shorelands include the lands below ordinary high water in non-tidal areas.

Figure 1.1
Submerged lands, tidelands, uplands, and shorelands as described in this plan



PLANNING AREA

The planning boundary of the Central/Southern Southeast Area Plan includes all state owned and state selected uplands, and all tidelands, submerged lands and shorelands within the area depicted on Map 1-1. This area extends from the southern boundary of the City and Borough of Juneau at Tracy Arm in the north, to Portland Inlet on the south, situated adjacent to Canada. The western boundary is formed by Clarence and Sumner Straits and includes Kuiu Island. The boundary with Canada forms its eastern extent.

HOW THE PLAN IS ORGANIZED

The plan has four chapters:
Chapter 1 includes a summary of the purpose of the plan, description of the planning area, how and why the plan was developed, what the plan covers and does not cover, and a summary of plan actions.

Chapter 2 includes goals of the plan and guidelines that apply throughout the planning area. Guidelines are listed in 11 resource and land-use categories. Guidelines are specific directives that will be applied to land and water management decisions as resource uses and development occur.

Chapter 3 includes detailed descriptions of the land-use designations in the plan's five regions. Each region will be described in a regional summary that depicts the location, land ownership pattern, acreage, physical features, access, resources and uses for each region. This section also provides a summary of management

Map 1–1.
Central/Southern Southeast Planning Area & Planning Regions

Return to front page and click on link for Map 1-1. to view Planning Area & Region boundaries.

constraints and considerations based on existing plans, legislative designations, and other issues that significantly affect the management of state lands.

Then the state land in the entire planning area is divided into units (there are over 130 upland units and 320 tideland units in the planning area). Tables describe the resources and uses in each unit, and identify the uses for which the unit was designated. This chapter also includes the management intent and management guidelines for each unit, and location maps. The last section of this chapter addresses navigable waters.

Chapter 4 discusses specific actions necessary to implement the plan. These include a description of how land-use designations convert into classifications, proposed additions to the state park system, and proposed mineral closing orders. Procedures for changing the plan are also discussed.

Appendices offer support materials for information presented in the plan including a glossary and a mineral closing order.

WHY THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The planning area is rich in natural resources. There are many different ideas about how these resources should be used or protected. Although some proposed uses may be in conflict with each other, many different uses can occur throughout the planning area while protecting vital resources, providing the uses are properly managed.

This plan describes the intended uses of state lands. The plan directs which state lands will be retained by the state and which should be sold to private citizens, used for public recreation, or used for other purposes. The plan also presents a prioritized list of state land selections from the National Forest for conveyance to the state.

With an area plan, state permits and permit review processes become more efficient for the government and the public. The area plan guides DNR decisions for leases, sales, and permits that authorize use of state lands. Preparation of land-use plans for state lands (except for State Park System lands) is required under Title 38 of Alaska Statutes. DNR's actions will be based on the area plan.

THE MANDATE

Forty years after statehood, the state is close to receiving almost all its land entitlement within the Central/Southern Southeast Plan boundary. Although some of the most valuable state lands have already been conveyed to the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, cities of Wrangell, Kupreanof, Ketchikan and Petersburg, Mental Health Trust, the University of Alaska, and to private individuals, the state is responsible for managing the lands remaining in state ownership. To ensure that these lands are

properly managed, the Department of Natural Resources has developed this plan for all state lands in the planning area.

The planning process provides a means of openly reviewing resource information and public concerns before making long-term decisions about public land management. The planning process resolves conflicting ideas on land use and informs the public about what choices were made and why. Decisions are made on a comprehensive basis, rather than case-by-case, providing consistency and consideration of the wide diversity of resources and uses within the planning area. This process provides for more efficient use and protection of the area's resources.

WHAT THE PLAN WILL DO

The plan will help ensure that state resource management takes into account the sustained yield of renewable resources, that development is balanced with environmental concerns, and that public access to state land is provided. The plan encourages cooperation with other landowners to better address conflicts caused by checkerboard land-ownership patterns. Finally, the plan documents the state's intent for land management so that both public and private interests know how the state plans to manage lands over the long term.

HOW THIS PLAN IS USED

This plan is intended to manage state lands and resources within the planning area, and is the expression of how DNR will pursue this management. Much of the use of this plan is by the DNR Division of Mining, Land and Water. Adjudicators use this plan when reviewing and making decisions on authorizations for use of state land, including permits, leases, sales, conveyances, and rights-of-way. This plan is also used by the DNR Division of Forestry and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CENTRAL/SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST AREA PLAN AND OTHER PLANS

Except for several site specific plans that cover small areas and an evaluation of mariculture on Etolin Island, DNR has not undertaken comprehensive resource analyses in the planning area. The recently revised Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (TLRMP) prepared by the U.S. Forest Service provides in-depth resource and management information on federal lands within the Tongass National Forest. In addition, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and the cities of Petersburg, Kupreanof, and Wrangell have comprehensive plans which provide an indication of desired development patterns within the corporate limits of each of these entities. There is also a coastal district plan for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and the cities of Wrangell, Petersburg and Kake.

The coastal and comprehensive plans were reviewed to ascertain the policies that these municipalities use to guide development in their respective areas, including their recommendations concerning state land. The TLRMP was consulted to determine land and resource management directions on adjacent federal land. Resource information was also incorporated from various state and federal resource management documents.

HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Central/Southern Southeast Area Plan is the product of over two years of work by state and federal agencies, other land owners, local governments, interest groups and the public. Two rounds of public meetings were held in Ketchikan, Petersburg, and Wrangell. In addition, a large number of meetings took place with local government, conservation groups, economic interests, and the U.S. Forest Service.

PROCESS OF PLAN PREPARATION

The following process was used to develop this area plan:

- Identify issues in the planning area;
- map and analyze resources and uses;
- prepare and distribute the Parcel Description Report (describes resources and uses);
- conduct public meetings to identify issues and reactions to preliminary designations;
- prepare an Agency Review Draft (ARD);
- planning team and agencies review the ARD;
- prepare the Public Review Draft (PRD) based on comments from the ARD;
- public reviews the PRD;
- prepare an Issue/Response summary of all public comments on the PRD;
- based on the results of the Issue/Response Summary, prepare an Intent to Adopt (ITA) final draft of the plan and circulate for public review;
- prepare the final plan incorporating comments on the ITA;
- the Commissioner signs the plan and adopts it as DNR's management intent for state lands in the planning area.

WHO DEVELOPED THE PLAN?

The DNR planning staff directed the planning process, including data collection, draft plan and final plan preparation, and response to public and agency comments. The interagency planning team reviewed significant policy issues and provided comments on and direction to the preparation of the draft plan. The planning team included representatives from state agencies, local government (Ketchikan Gateway Borough, cities of Wrangell, Kupreanof, Kake, and Petersburg), and the regional Native corporation (Sealaska Corporation), with additional input from the U.S. Forest Service. The Commissioner of the

Department of Natural Resources signed and adopted the Central/Southern Southeast Area Plan. The planning team agencies represented are listed after the table of contents.

USES AND RESOURCES WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA

Uses of State Land. The plan outlines management objectives for state land. This includes describing what resources and valid existing uses should be protected, and what uses are most suitable for development or protection on state land during the planning horizon.

State-selected Land and Land Susceptible to Navigation. Some lands have been selected but not yet been conveyed to the state. Other lands are underwater bodies surrounded by federal lands that, if determined navigable, are state-owned. In both cases, the plan determines how to manage these lands if they are state owned.

Land Sales. The state has offered land for sale to Alaskan citizens. The planning process reviewed the state land holdings to determine which undeveloped lands are suitable for settlement uses in the future.

Land Conveyance. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough, and to a much lesser extent the cities of Petersburg, Ketchikan, and Wrangell, have selected land from the state. Most of this land has been conveyed to these cities and, under state municipal entitlement standards, there is very little remaining land entitlement to be conveyed. However, there is discussion of borough formation in the communities of Wrangell and Petersburg, and borough expansion in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Should new boroughs be formed, they will be entitled to ten percent of the vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved (VUU) state land within the boundary of the new boroughs, which may be a significant acreage. This area plan determines what land will be classified VUU and will influence entitlements of future new boroughs. It will also determine which lands new boroughs can select. Until state lands are conveyed to the borough, the state will continue to plan for their future use in case some of these lands remain in state ownership.

Roads, Trails, and Access. The plan considers access across state lands, including existing and proposed roads, trails, easements, and rights-of-way.

Additions to State Marine Park System. Seven upland units are recommended for addition to the State Marine Park System.

Waterfront Development. There are a number of areas that have been considered in the past for development on state tidelands. There are also pending applications for development on tidelands. The planning process reviewed these areas to see whether these developments will be compatible with existing resources and uses and designated certain areas within the communities of Kake, Wrangell, Petersburg and Ketchikan as appropriate for intensive waterfront use.

Mining. The plan addresses existing proposals for mineral development support facilities on state land. The plan also considered policies concerning areas of state land to be subject to leasehold location or closed to new mineral location. Chapter 2 summarizes these decisions. The Mineral Closing Order is included in Appendix B.

Recreation. Recreation is a popular use of state land. The plan proposes designations to manage lands for recreation.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Harvest. The plan documents fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas and provides management intent and guidelines for these resources and uses.

Water Resources. The Division of Mining, Land and Water in DNR is responsible for allocating water resources on all lands within the state of Alaska. The plan designates areas to be managed for watershed values that include current and future community drinking water sources, and provides direction for resolving conflicts with other users when reviewing glacier ice harvest applications.

WHAT THE PLAN WON'T DO

The Central/Southern Southeast Area Plan is not the only way in which land management goals are implemented. The area plan is coordinated with a variety of other programs and projects implemented by the Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies. There are some important issues that are not addressed in this plan:

Non-DNR Lands. This plan does not apply to federal, municipal, private, University of Alaska, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, or Mental Health Trust lands.

Fish and Wildlife. Allocation of fish and game stocks and regulating methods and means of harvest are the responsibility of the state Boards of Fisheries and Game.

Legislatively Designated Areas. The plan does not apply to units of the state park system that are legislatively designated.

Decisions on Specific Applications. While this plan provides general management intent for state lands, the plan does not make decisions about specific land-use authorizations. These decisions are made through the application review process. Land-use authorizations must, however, be consistent with the plan, and existing laws and regulations.

Actions by agencies other than DNR. The plan does not provide management intent for prescribing actions and policies for agencies and governments other than DNR.

PLANNING PERIOD

This plan reflects land management decisions and allocations based on the best available information on demand for use of state land and resources projected over the next 20 years. It is also based on a specific set of social, environmental, economic, and technological assumptions. A planning period of 20 years applies to those uses that can be expected to occur within this period, and the term "planning period" is used to indicate the expected length of validity of certain proposals and decisions recommended in the plan. In some instances it is not likely that certain areas will be developed during the planning period or contain resources which require protection over the long term. The term "planning horizon" is used to indicate this condition.

Summary of Plan Actions

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Five regions are delineated in the planning area. These regions are divided into units, each with a unique number. The plan presents management intent that explains the Department's overall resource management objectives for each region and unit and provides resource and use information for land managers. This information is presented in Chapter 3.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Each unit shows a combination of designations representing the uses and resources for which the area will be managed. These designations are explained and mapped in Chapter 3.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

According to the Alaska Constitution, state lands are to be managed for multiple use. When potentially conflicting uses are designated in a management subunit, the plan provides guidelines to allow various uses to occur without unacceptable consequences. Management guidelines for specific management units are given in Chapter 3. Guidelines that apply to the entire planning area are located in Chapter 2.

CLASSIFICATIONS

All state lands in the planning area will be classified consistent with the land use designations in this plan. Classifications made by the plan will be noted to State land status plats. A table that shows how designations convert to classifications is located in Chapter 4.

SUMMARY OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND MODIFICATION

The plan is implemented through administrative actions such as leases, permits, land conveyances, classification orders, and mineral orders. The plan serves as the final finding for land classifications and mineral orders. Chapter 4 presents the details of plan implementation recommendations and procedures.

Economic and social conditions in Alaska and the planning area are sure to change and the plan must be flexible enough to change with them. The plan will be reviewed regularly to monitor progress in implementing the plan and to identify problems that may require amendment or modification.

Specific modifications may be made whenever conditions warrant them, though a request for these changes must follow certain procedures. The plan may be amended after approval by the Commissioner of DNR following public review and consultation with the appropriate agencies. Special exceptions and minor changes must follow certain procedures. See Chapter 4 for a more detailed description of procedures for plan modifications, amendments, special exceptions, and minor changes.