

Chapter 2

Areawide Land Management Policies

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CHAPTER 2

Areawide Land Management Policies

Introduction

This chapter presents land management policies for each of the major resources affected by the plan: fish and wildlife, forestry, materials, mineral resources, recreation and tourism, and water. It also presents management policies for several specific land management concerns: cultural resources; protection of fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas; grazing; instream flows; public and private access; timber harvest; settlement; and shoreline and stream corridor management. These policies apply to state land throughout the planning area regardless of the land use designation.

This chapter consists of goals and management guidelines. Goals are the general condition the department is trying to achieve, and guidelines are specific directives that will be applied to land and water management decisions as resource use and development occurs.

Definitions

For definitions of terms commonly used in this chapter, see Appendix A, Glossary.

Goals

The following goals are for state lands in the planning area. Goals are general conditions that DNR attempts to achieve through management actions. The goals are listed alphabetically. No single goal has a priority over the others.

Economic Development. Provide opportunities for jobs and income by managing state land and resources to support a vital, self-sustaining local economy.

Fiscal Costs. Minimize the need for, and the fiscal cost of, providing government services and facilities such as schools and roads.

Public Health and Safety. Maintain or enhance public health and safety for users of state land and resources.

Public Use. Provide and enhance diverse opportunities for public use of state lands, including uses such as hunting, fishing, boating and other types of recreation.

Quality of Life. Maintain or enhance the quality of the natural environment including air, land and water, and fish and wildlife habitat and harvest opportunities; and protect heritage resources and the character and lifestyle of the community.

Settlement. Provide opportunities for private ownership and leasing of land currently owned by the state.

Sustained Yield. Maintain the long-term productivity and quality of renewable resources including fish and wildlife, and timber.

Management Intent

Management intent for state land is expressed through statements of management emphasis identified on a unit specific basis. These statements are based on resource and use inventories, the review of existing and potential economic trends, state authorizations, existing plans and similar resource management documents, agency review and comment, and public participation.

General Framework of the Plan

A. State land within the planning area will be managed to allow for multiple use unless legislatively designated or a parcel of state land is less than 640 acres and managed under a management agreement by another state agency.

B. State land will also be managed to protect access and public resources. Types of resources to be protected include, but are not limited to habitat, recreation, water quality, anchorages, watersheds, scenery and trails.

C. State land will remain open to mineral entry unless specifically closed. This plan does not recommend any areas to be closed to mineral entry nor to be managed under a leasehold location order. Consequently, all land within the planning area is open to entry, except for those scattered areas closed in previous mineral closing orders by DNR.

D. In management units where a primary use has been designated, activities and authorizations pertaining to that primary designated use may take precedence over other uses. Although there may be a priority for use in certain parcels, other uses may also be allowed if they do not preclude the primary use assigned to a management unit. This plan emphasizes minimizing land use conflicts through plan guidelines and intent rather than through prohibitions. All other uses are initially presumed compatible with the primary use. However, if DNR determines that a use conflict exists and that the proposed use is incompatible with the primary use, the proposed use shall not be authorized or it shall be modified so that the incompatibility no longer exists (11 AAC 55.040 (c)).

E. This plan designates state lands in categories that are generally consistent with current use patterns and reflect the significant resources in the planning area.

Management Guidelines by Activity or Resource Value

The remainder of this chapter specifies guidelines that are specific directives to apply to management decisions. DNR will use these guidelines when considering issuing authorizations and conveyances or making management decisions on state lands. These guidelines will also apply to lands that are currently state-selected and ANILCA-filed when they are tentatively approved or patented into state ownership.

Chapter 2 guidelines apply to all state land covered by the NWAP unless the plan explicitly exempts some parcels or designations from a guideline or the resource or use for which a guideline is intended does not exist in the parcel in question. There are few such exemptions.

General Guidelines

A. All authorizations for use of state land within the planning area will be consistent with the principles of multiple use¹ and sustained yield and with the management intent in this plan.

B. In considering authorizations for use of state land, DNR will adjudicate applications to:

1. minimize damages to streambeds, fish and wildlife habitat, vegetation, trails, anchorages, and other resources;
2. minimize conflicts between resources and uses; and
3. protect the long-term value of the resource, public safety, and the environment.

C. If authorizations from other agencies are required, DNR will consider issuing a permit or lease contingent upon issuance of these other authorizations.

D. Authorizations issued by the Department are to be consistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield and, if fish and wildlife resources are involved, with the public trust doctrine.

¹ The concept of multiple use means that authorizations must take into account short-term and long-term public needs for both renewable and nonrenewable resources. Although the general thrust of the Alaska Constitution (Article VIII) is to utilize state land for the benefit of the people of Alaska, this does not mean that every use can be authorized in an area. The general guidelines also include the concept that minimizing conflicts between resources and uses includes the ability to deny a particular use on a particular site.

Other State Land

Parcels that are donated or acquired after the plan is adopted will be designated for the uses for which they were acquired or donated without an amendment to the plan. Lands that come into state ownership through other means will be designated and classified consistent with the designation identified in the applicable management unit or, if not so identified, according to the standards of the section, 'Applicability of Plan Designations and Classifications', in Chapter 4 without an amendment to the plan.