

## Settlement

The general pattern of settlement within the North Slope planning area is primarily characterized by activities related to oil and gas development, and is therefore commercial in nature, especially in the Deadhorse and Kuparuk areas. Commercial and industrial use of the Settlement designation is used extensively in this plan. It is unlikely, given the relative isolation of this area, that extensive residential growth can be expected for the planning period. Review of available settlement locations throughout the planning area indicated that there may be areas suitable for potential remote settlement. Any proposed land conveyance would require a subsequent public process through the DMLW Land Conveyance Section.

The North Slope Borough has developed and continually updates local comprehensive plans for specific parts of the Borough. These are intended to identify preferred land use patterns and development stipulations. ADNR reviews these plans in the course of developing management plans or area plans, and often makes use of their recommendations. However, while community comprehensive plans can make recommendations for state lands within their planning areas, they cannot establish land use designations or other planning requirements for state land.

ADNR will attempt to satisfy two settlement categories within the planning area:

**Industrial or commercial development.** ADNR will sell, lease, or protect for future use suitable land for private commercial and industrial uses. Within the NSAP planning area most land designated Settlement is intended for commercial or industrial use. Relatively few parcels are suitable for possible residential development and these are indicated in the Resource Allocation Table. If ADNR sells the land, the timing of this disposal will depend upon market demand and adequate funding.

**Seasonal remote recreation opportunities.** ADNR may offer land suitable for seasonal recreation use. This land will be provided as demand warrants, subject to the availability of funding. This category of land disposal is intended to provide land, often in remote locations, for recreational needs. No public facilities and services are intended to be provided.

## Goals

**Provide Private Land Ownership Opportunities.** Provide suitable public land for transfer to private ownership for settlement purposes.

**Balance Fiscal Impacts.** Land disposals (not including remote settlements) should be sited and planned to minimize the costs of infrastructure and other services resulting from settlement.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Plan and coordinate the transfer of state land to private ownership with other landowners to ensure the optimal use, development, and protection of area resources.

- **Guideline A-1.** It may be appropriate to provide land for private use, but such an action must be in the overall best interests of the state.
- **Guideline A-2. *Competition.*** To ensure the availability of lands suitable for transfer to private ownership for settlement purposes within the Plan boundary, the state may compete with the private sector or local governments if necessary to satisfy demand, provide market choice, or moderate unreasonably high prices.
- **Guideline A-3. *Local Plans.*** ADNR will comply with provisions of the Borough comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance (if applicable) regarding the location and density of land development except to the extent that local requirements are inconsistent with an overriding state interest.
- **Guideline A-4. *Coordination with Local Governments.*** Where state land adjoins Borough land and where both areas are designated for Settlement, consideration should be given to the coordination of land disposal programs in order to achieve economies of scale and reduce infrastructure costs.
- **Guideline A-5. *Pacing.*** Settlement offerings may be phased over 20 years, the life of this plan. The timing and extent of disposals will depend upon anticipated demand, availability of funding, the rate of community expansion, the availability of or costs to provide necessary infrastructure, and the particular land requirements of such expansion. Another factor may be whether the disposal will generate a demand for services that cannot be reasonably expected to be met by local government or community organizations.
- **Guideline A-6. *Ensure Access to Remote Settlements.*** Because remote settlement areas are almost always distant from infrastructure, it is generally not practicable to identify and develop access corridors to such areas, whether or not they are adjoined by state land or land under other ownership. However, in those limited instances where access corridors can be identified and economically developed, access should be provided. In this circumstance, it is intended that this access be accommodated even if plan designation(s) differ from that of Settlement. As part of the development of remote settlement areas, ADNR should consider the provision of staging areas, parking areas, and/or trailheads in order to accommodate landowners parking vehicles and other equipment while accessing their remote parcels. ADF&G should be consulted to ensure there will be no habitat associated impacts from parking areas or trailheads.

**Objective B.** To the maximum extent practicable, ADNR will sell, lease, or protect suitable land for private commercial and industrial uses or for seasonal residences used for recreation.

- **Guideline B-1. *Types of Settlement Land and Land Offerings.*** The nature of state land available for private ownership is influenced by both the characteristics of land designated for settlement, and the type of land sales program that makes it available. The NSAP designates certain lands for settlement and provides guidelines for land sales.
- **Guideline B-2. *Industrial or Commercial Development.*** ADNR will sell, lease, or protect for future use suitable land for private commercial and industrial uses. Within the NSAP planning area most land designated Settlement is intended for commercial or industrial use. Relatively few parcels are suitable for possible residential development and these are indicated in the Resource Allocation Table. If ADNR sells the land, the timing of this disposal will depend upon market demand and adequate funding.
- **Guideline B-3. *Seasonal Residences for Recreation.*** ADNR may offer land suitable for seasonal recreation use. This land will be provided as demand warrants, subject to the availability of funding. This category of land disposal is intended to provide land, often in remote locations, for recreational needs. No public facilities and services are intended to be provided.
- **Guideline B-4. *Areas Designated Resource Management and Minerals.*** The large areas of state land that are designated Resource Management are generally not suitable for development during the planning period. Most Resource Management areas are remote and generally unsuitable for residential development because of the presence of adverse topography, drainage, and extensive areas of wetlands that adjoin these areas. This makes the lands within the Resource Management areas difficult to develop because of the costs and difficulty of road construction in the adjacent wetlands. For these reasons, residential development during the planning period in areas designated Resource Management is considered generally inappropriate except in those areas that adjoin parcels designated Settlement, where road access has been provided to adjoining properties, or for remote land disposals that are not dependent upon access. Similar considerations exist for areas designated Minerals (or Minerals/Habitat) except that settlement/residential development to support mining exploration and/or development may be appropriate. In instances where settlement has been determined by ADNR to be appropriate within areas that are so designated, a plan amendment (to Settlement) and reclassification (to Settlement Land) will be required.
- **Guideline B-5. *Recommended Land Disposal Program.*** This plan designates five settlement areas within the Plan boundary. Areas designated Settlement are usually larger than the actual areas of the subdivision in order to provide flexibility in the design. This plan continues that custom. Consult the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3 for more information.

**Objective C.** When land is transferred out of state ownership for settlement purposes, the protection, management, and enhancement of other resources is to be considered to the maximum extent practicable.

- **Guideline C-1.** *Provide State Land for Important Environmental and Resource Development Purposes.* As a general policy, ADNR should retain appropriate public-use corridors, water supply areas, riparian and coastal buffer areas, roads and other public facilities, as well as other open space to create a desirable land use pattern in expanding areas. Generally, however, subdivision design should provide for the creation of an open space system designed to protect or maintain important uses and values. Depending on the context, ADNR may either protect these areas through retaining land in state or public ownership, through the imposition of a reservation of an interest in land for the maintenance of riparian values and access, or through the use of a stipulation (i.e., ‘subject to’).
- **Guideline C-2.** *Subdivision Design.* Subdivisions will be designed to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural setting and the recreational opportunities that make an area attractive to potential buyers. State subdivision design will take account of site limitations and opportunities such as slope, drainage, soils, erosion, riparian zone and coastal buffer, and other features to ensure that sites offered are buildable and can be developed without the need for extensive public infrastructure. Riparian buffers or building setbacks shall be imposed on all disposals where important riparian areas have been determined to exist. If there is some question as to whether a riparian protection area should be imposed, consult ADF&G. ADNR should review Borough subdivision requirements prior to the initiation of subdivision design.
- **Guideline C-3.** *Protect Life and Property.* Sensitive areas such as wetlands or potentially dangerous areas such as areas with unstable soil, riverbanks subject to active stream erosion, or within floodways or floodplains, should be avoided in subdivision design or protected by retaining these areas in state ownership or restricting their use through developmental reservations or restrictions. Easements or plat notes can be used for this purpose in lieu of retaining land in state ownership.
- **Guideline C-4.** *Priority of Public Uses in Stream Corridors.* Within stream corridors, ADNR will set a higher priority on protecting public use values than on providing opportunities for private ownership of land.
- **Guideline C-5.** Disposals near streams with important recreation value will be designed to protect riparian habitat and protect access to and along the stream for fishing, hiking, camping, and other recreational activities.
- **Guideline C-6.** Disposals near streams that have important fish and wildlife habitat or other wildlife resources will be designed to ensure the protection of fish and wildlife and their habitats.
- **Guideline C-7.** Before lands are disposed of in stream corridors, ADNR will assess existing and projected public use needs associated with the stream corridor, in consultation with other affected agencies and the public. Depending on the context, ADNR may either protect these areas through retaining land in state or public

ownership or through the imposition of a reservation of an interest in land for the maintenance of riparian values and access.

- **Guideline C-8.** *Protect and Enhance Scenic Features.* ADNR will design and develop subdivisions to protect or maintain unique geologic and scenic features such as cliffs, bluffs, or waterfalls. These areas should be avoided altogether or protected in subdivision design and development through the use of reservations or plat restrictions. Where scenic views exist, lots should be oriented to this feature.
- **Guideline C-9.** *Protect and Enhance Recreational, Educational, and Cultural Opportunities.* ADNR should determine the need for and retain appropriate areas for outdoor recreation, hunting, fishing, trails, campsites, boat launches, historic sites, and areas for scientific study. Areas for intensive and dispersed use will be preserved.

**Objective D.** *Other Guidelines affecting Settlement.* Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect settlement in the planning area. Other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.