

Approved Revisions

Susitna Matanuska Area Plan – Public Review Draft

Chapter 1

Subject (page)	Revision
Pg 1-6 Ln 10	Change to read: "...that public access to state land is <i>assured</i> ."
General: planning map	Add overview map in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2

Subject (page)	Revision
Pg 2-2 Ln 17	The goal will be changed to read: " Sustained Yield. "Maintain...timber, <i>and above-ground renewable resources.</i> "
Pg 2-30 Ln 24	Change to read: "management of recreation to <i>avoid or</i> minimize user conflict, ..."
Pg 2-32 Lns 8-12	Change management guideline to read: " <i>To the extent provided by law (AS 38.04.200 and 11 AAC 96), DNR will manage recreation use and activities to accommodate a variety of uses, including motorized and non-motorized, while ensuring ...</i> "
Pg 2-36 Lns 22-23	Revise last sentence to read: " <i>ADF&G and other agencies or authorities shall be consulted to ensure there are no habitat associated impacts from parking areas, trails, or trailheads.</i> "
Agriculture: General	Replace current Agriculture section with that contained in Appendix A.
Agriculture: Protection of Agricultural Lands	Add the following under Management Guideline C: " <i>Remote state land with good agricultural potential and designated Agriculture, but not scheduled for sale within the next 15 year period shall remain in public ownership, continue in an Agriculture designation, and shall not be used for other purposes except through a plan amendment that re-designates such areas into another land use designation.</i> "
Agriculture: Disposal within Floodways	Pg 2-6, Lns 33-34. Modify management guideline relating to floodways and floodplains to: " <i>Generally, agricultural land disposals should not occur within mapped floodways or within the 10-year floodplain. Where neither of these features have been mapped, the best available information will be used to identify areas where flooding is likely to be a severe limitation on agriculture. Agricultural disposals in such areas should be avoided.</i> "

Subject (page)	Revision
Agriculture: Timber Salvage	Delete that portion of Management Guideline C related to timber salvage.
Forestry: Multiple Uses within ‘Working Forests’	Refine definition to clarify what uses are not appropriate in a working forest, such as agriculture, grazing and settlement.
Forestry: Restriction of Timber Harvests to Areas Designated Forestry	Add as a footnote to the sentence, “Systematic timber harvest programs are to be conducted in areas designated Forestry.”, the following: <i>“Harvest activities related to habitat manipulation or to the management of overall forest health are exempt from this requirement.”</i>
Instream Flow Reservations	Replace current Instream Flow section with that contained in Appendix B.
Instream Flow: In application streams	Include reference to the link to the water estate in Alaska Mapper: http://mapper.landrecords.info/Mapper/mainframe.jsp
Material Sites: Impact Avoidance	The goal on p. 2-28 will be modified to read: “Avoidance or Minimization of Impacts. Material extraction sites are to be sited so that they avoid impacts, including but not limited to noise and dust, to adjacent residential or institutional areas (i.e., schools); <i>environmental resources and sensitive habitats; and to fish and wildlife populations.”</i>
Material Sites: Coordination with land owners	Add as a goal: “Coordination. <i>When possible to do so, the state should coordinate with other landowners, including private land owners, to develop material supply sources. This goal particularly applies to material sites that are adjacent to each other but under different land ownership.”</i>
Recreation: Recreational use of certain rivers.	Add the following management guideline to Chapter 2, Areawide Policies, in the section ‘Recreation and Scenic Resources’ <i>I. Recreational Importance of Major Rivers.</i> <i>State land adjacent to rivers that are important for recreation use, in addition to their habitat functions, are to be retained in state ownership within plan designations of Forestry, General Use, Habitat, Mineral, and Public Recreation. Where riverine areas are specifically identified by management unit (Skwentna, Hayes, Happy, and Kichatna Rivers in R-02) the area of this management unit is to be retained. In instances where a specific management unit does not exist, a minimum of width 300’ is to be retained in those areas affected by Forestry, General Use, Habitat, Mineral, or Public Recreation designations adjacent to the Kahiltna, Chulitna, Susitna, and Yenta Rivers, and Peters Creek (as well as portions of the Skwentna, Hayes, Happy, and Kichatna rivers not within R-02). In areas where land may be conveyed out of state ownership (areas affected by the plan designations of Settlement and Agriculture), land within 200-300’ of Ordinary High Water of the aforementioned rivers is either to be retained in state ownership or protected through a management buffer. (The amount of this buffer either to be a minimum of 200’ or as specified in a management guideline.) Consult the requirements of the section ‘Buffer, Easement, and Building Setback Widths’ pp. 2-43 to 2-46 of ‘Shorelands and Stream Corridors’ for guidance and more detail.</i>

Subject (page)	Revision
	<p><i>Certain river segments that have important recreation functions may be appropriate for inclusion as a State Recreation River (SRR), which is a Legislatively Designated Area. This plan does not make specific recommendations of this type, but, in general, areas of state land within the aforementioned rivers may be appropriate for consideration as a SRR, either as part of the revision of the Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan or as a separate legislative action.</i></p>
Settlement: Misstatement of land designated Settlement.	<p>The statement will be made in Management Guidelines under “Pacing” that “Less than 20% of the acreage allocated to settlement in the 2010 SMAP will be utilized within the planning period.”.</p>
Shorelands and Stream Corridors: Management Guideline D	<p>Modify Management Guideline D, ‘Protection of Land Adjacent to High Value Waterbodies’. p. 4-41, to include the following at line 24:</p> <p><i>Certain of the streams within the upper and western Susitna Valley are important for both their habitat and recreation functions. Specific requirements pertain to the larger streams within this area in terms of the area to be retained by the state and/or to be protected through either an easement or setback. Consult Management Guideline I, Recreational Importance of Major Rivers in the Recreation and Scenic Resources section for specific requirements for these major rivers.</i></p>
Shorelands and Stream Corridors: ADEC	<p>Revise the Shorelands and Stream Corridor section to include: Water quality should be considered as a public value in Management Guideline B, impervious surfaces within riparian areas should be minimized (Guidelines C and F), and impacts to water quality and habitat should be minimized by any construction within setbacks (Guideline H). Identify ADEC permitting authorities.</p>
Public Access: Need to preserve public access	<p>Include a new management guideline under General Public Access: “<i>L. Preservation of Access Opportunities. The department shall preserve potential access routes to developing areas. Unless there is an overriding state need, section line easements are to be preserved. It is likely that any road corridor that is developed in the western Susitna Valley will utilize section line easements as important components of this corridor. ADOT/PF is to be consulted prior to any action involving requests for the vacation of section line easements. Vacation requests should not be granted unless it clearly can be shown that there will not be a need for the section line for the foreseeable future (25 years) or if an alternative route is available of equal or better access.</i>”</p>
Public Access: Access into the western part of the Susitna Valley	<p>Add to the Public Access goal statement on p. 2-50 the following statement: “<i>This plan views as appropriate the provision of access to and within the area west of the Susitna River and south of the Petersville Road. The development of this area will eventually require the installation of a bridge at a location south of the current crossing at mile 104 of the Parks Highway and the provision of a primary road accessing resource development in this area. Both are viewed as appropriate, the actual location of these facilities to be determined at a later time through specific bridge crossing and road corridor siting studies.</i>”</p>

Subject (page)	Revision
Public Access: Planning for public access in western Susitna Valley	<p>Revise Management Guideline K in the forestry section of Chapter 2 to the following:</p> <p>“K. Development of Forest Resources Management Plan. A substantial portion of the planning area, totaling approximately 690,000 acres, in the Susitna Valley is classified Forestry in this plan. This area mostly occupies the more central parts of the Susitna Valley. These lands, under Title 38, are required to be managed in a sustained manner while providing for multiple uses and protection of the environment. Multiple uses include public recreation, <i>the maintenance of public access</i>, water resources, and wildlife/fisheries resources and their associated habitat. While this plan assigns a Forestry designation to this area and provides some management for timber harvest, it is largely silent on other aspects of the management of this large area. Given the importance of this area’s varied resources, DOF and DMLW, in consultation with ADF&G, will jointly prepare a forest resources management plan for this area in order for its resources to be more comprehensively and effectively managed, consistent with the concept of a ‘working forest’. <i>A component of this plan is to be related to the maintenance of public access throughout the planning area, with the idea of identifying access facilities related to changing demand for public access caused by changes in the type and level of public use, and to avoid the need for closures to public access or means of existing access.</i> ... the Susitna Forest Guidelines.”</p>
Public Access: Trails	<p>Add the following to the list of trails under Management Guideline C: <i>“If the trail is of regional or statewide significance or connects to a public open space system, it should be retained by the state.”</i></p> <p>Add the following to Management Guideline D: <i>“Trails of regional or statewide significance on state owned land shall be protected by a publicly owned corridor that has a minimum width of 100’ (50’ either side of centerline). This buffer should be designed to protect the quality of the experience of the user and to minimize negative effects such as noise or dust. Buffer widths may be increased to minimize land use and ownership conflicts, protect the privacy of adjacent landowners, separate motorized from non-motorized uses, allow future siting of public facilities, or to adapt the trail to particular needs. Note: specific requirements pertain to the Iditarod Trail System.”</i></p>
Public Access: Goals	<p>Add the following to the Goals listed on p. 2-50:</p> <p><i>“Local and Regional Trails. Participate in the development of local and regional trail systems that provide access to existing settlement areas, areas of historic mining activity, and that interconnect areas at a regional level.”</i></p> <p><i>“Trail Corridors. Protect or establish trail corridors to meet projected future use requirements as well as protecting future use.”</i></p>

Chapter 3

Subject (page)	Revision
3-27 Lns 1-2	Change sentence to read: <i>“Also consulted were the two local comprehensive plans that affect this management unit.”</i>
Legislatively Designated Areas (LDA)	A 300 foot riparian buffer to protect the recreation and habitat values will apply to the recreation rivers (Alexander Creek, Talachulitna River, Lake Creek, Talkeetna River, and Deshka River (Kroto and Moose creeks)) where that buffer falls outside the boundary of the LDA.
Navigable Waters	Include a reference to the state’s map of navigable waters. This is available at: http://www.navmaps.alaska.gov/navwatersmap/
Navigable Waters: Buffer Widths of particular streams	The Chulitna River, including the East and West Forks, Peters Creek, Kahiltna River, Yenta River, and Skwentna River should be affected by a 300’ protection area to protect the recreation and habitat values.
Navigable Rivers and Lakes	Clarify table to specify that Moose Creek refers to the creek west of the Susitna River and Fish Lake refers to the lake near Talkeetna.
All regions	
Public Access: Foot travel	In the section ‘Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land’ that is included in the introductory part of each region, mention foot travel where it is known to occur.
Management Summary related to Forest land	Add the following statement to the Management Summaries in Chapter 3 for all regions with land designated for Forestry: <i>“The management of areas designated Forestry will be guided by the Forest Resources and Practices Act; Susitna Forestry Guidelines, or its successor; and this area plan.”</i>
Petersville Road	
Access	Add to this section the statement: <i>“There are also many trails, oriented in all directions, that go directly on the wetlands and are often braided.”</i>
Management constraints	List the Denali State Park Management Plan, South Denali Implementation Plan and Petersville Road Corridor Management Plan should be mentioned under Management Constraints.
Riparian buffer	Buffers should be increased to 300 feet on Peters and Trapper creeks and the Kahiltna River.
P-01	Unit P-03, which is designated Public Recreation-Dispersed, will be expanded north to encompass the area south and east of Swan Lake. The co-designation of Habitat will also be added to P-03. Expansion area is bounded on the west by the northward extension of the section lines that form the west boundary of Unit P-03; on the north by the borough land around Swan Lake and Denali State Park; and on the east by Trapper Creek. In the management intent for Unit P-01 Trapper Creek will be given a riparian buffer of 300 feet.
P-04	Amend the Resource Allocation Table to state that areas will be reserved to accommodate facilities identified in the South Denali Implementation Plan.

Subject (page)	Revision
P-04	Along Peters Creek the buffer will be increased to 300 feet.
P-04 and P-05	Establish a 300 foot riparian buffer on Kroto Creek.
P-13	Increase buffer on Kahiltna River and Peters Creek to 300 feet.
Blair Lake State Recreation Area	The BLSRA will be Unit P-20 with a land use designation of Public Recreation-Public Use Site. Management Intent will state to manage this 400 acre parcel for recreation pursuant to ILMA ADL 225371 with Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Retain land in state ownership.
Susitna Lowlands	
U-18	Northern sections of U-18 will be added to U-16; and U-18 will expand eastward into sections of U-01, U-04 and U-16. Add the following text to the Management Intent for U-18: <i>“A minimum of 300 foot riparian buffer will be retained in state ownership along Whitsol Lake and Kroto Slough. Prior to any land sale in the eastern two sections of this unit, a minimum 100 foot right-of-way will be retained by the state providing access between northern unit U-04 and the Susitna River. The Division of Forestry should be permitted to harvest the timber from parcels prior to their conversion to agricultural use.”</i>
Mount Susitna	
M-15	Change Map 3-8 to depict this unit as General Use.
M-17	Include factual information in the ‘Description’ part of the RAT in the final plan as discussed in the Issue Response Summary.
M-24	Add language that indicates that riparian buffers are to be applied to protect anadromous streams. Note: this change is to also apply to similar text in the plan.
Alaska Range	
R-02	This unit should be codesignated Habitat/Public Recreation and management intent revised to: “Manage unit to protect its habitat, hydrologic, <i>and recreational values</i> .”
Glenn Highway	
Access, Resources and Uses	The following statement will be added to this section: <i>“The Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority (ANGDA) has a conditional right of way lease for a gas pipeline connecting Palmer to Glenallen. This is a large project whose effects would be studied through an environmental impact statement.”</i>
Management Constraints	List the Matanuska Valley Moose Range Management Plan (a 1986 plan in need of revision) and Matanuska River Management Plan (a plan near completion in 2010) under Management Constraints.
Designations within the Matanuska Valley	Amend Resource Allocation Table to state that there are Mineral Closing Orders affecting a small portion of this unit.

Subject (page)	Revision
Moose Range (MVMR)	
G-04	Add to the Resource Allocation Table: rehabilitation and reopening of closed campground at Moose Creek in collaboration with MSB and Chickaloon Village Tribal Council. Also note restoration of fish habitat along Moose Creek with private, state and federal agencies.
G-08	Add language to the Resource Allocation Table which includes the Matanuska River, stating the river's highly erodible nature. Add Management intent to minimize erosion impacts and that further guidance can be found in the Matanuska River Management Plan (a joint effort of the borough, state and other agencies).
G-09	Add management intent to Resource Allocation Table stating that <i>"ADF&G should be consulted to identify and protect public access through these parcels."</i>
G-20	Mention the Sheep Mountain Dall Sheep and Mountain Goat Preserve (SMDSMGP) in the Resource Allocation Table and add Management Intent stating: "Note that the sheep and goat populations are protected within the SMDSMGP. Protect the associated habitat. Any authorizations must avoid or mitigate impacts to the sheep and goats and their habitat. If degradation of the habitat results from certain uses DNR will consider management constraints on those activities."
G-21	Include management intent in the Resource Allocation Table stating: <i>"ADF&G should be consulted to identify and protect public access through these parcels."</i>
G-23	Include management intent in the Resource Allocation Table stating: <i>"ADF&G should be consulted to identify and protect public access through these parcels."</i>

Chapter 4

Subject (page)	Revision
Legislatively Designated Areas	<p>Add the following at line 15 under Legislatively Designated Areas on p. 4-10:</p> <p><i>"Several of the major rivers in the western and upper Susitna Valley have, in addition to their habitat and fisheries values, important recreation uses and recreational values. These are not now designated a State Recreation River, a legislatively designated area as defined in AS 41.23.400-510, but they may warrant such designation. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of some of these river segments as a SRR, either in the update of the Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan or as a separate legislative act."</i></p>

Glossary

Subject (page)	Revision
Anadromous Waters: Definition	Adding 'rearing', 'migration' and 'other water bodies' to definition. Acknowledge that there are other anadromous streams that may exist in the planning area and that may not be identified in the Catalog.

Other (Not Otherwise Covered)

Subject (page)	Revision
Pipelines	Add statement to the effect that pipelines may need to be constructed in one or more of the regions west of the Susitna River. This revision would also indicate that there is nothing in the plan that affects the placement of such facilities directly. The affected regions would be Mount Susitna, Alaska Range, and Susitna Lowlands.
Various	Correct all errors and omissions of a technical nature.

APPENDIX A - Agriculture

Goals

Food Security. Provide a reserve of land for agricultural use to support the local and regional production of foodstuffs necessary to support the citizens of Alaska in the future. Known as ‘food security’, this goal recognizes the uncertainty of worldwide production in the future and indicates the state’s intent to ensure a continuing agricultural land base.

Economic Development. Diversify and strengthen the state’s economy by increasing the availability of Alaska food products by:

- Encouraging expanded production and availability of farm products from agricultural lands within Alaska;
- Increasing the acreage available as demand or market opportunities warrant;
- Preserving the ability to produce agricultural products as a future option.

Agrarian Lifestyle. Provide the opportunity for Alaskans to pursue an agricultural lifestyle.

Agricultural Land Disposals. The primary purpose of future agricultural land disposals is to bring land into agricultural production and/or preserve it for agricultural use by future generations. All such disposals are to meet the objectives for agricultural sales described in 11 AAC 67.160, and are to occur in a manner that minimizes the diversion of agricultural land to other uses, the impairment of agricultural land for agricultural use and development, and enhances the economic operation of viable farm units.

Conservation of Agricultural Resources. Agricultural land disposals shall be designed to maintain or enhance the productivity of the soil.

Protection of Environment. Agricultural land disposals shall minimize adverse impacts to the off-site environment.

Management Guidelines

A. Agricultural Sales: Classification. Agricultural land disposals under AS 38.05.321 may only occur within areas designated Agriculture Land¹.

B. Agricultural Sales: Type and Size. Within the planning area, agricultural sales shall be limited to those authorized under 11 AAC 67.160. Such sales must have a minimum area of 40 acres.

C. Agricultural Land Disposals. Agricultural land disposals shall be consistent with the requirements of 11 AAC 67 and 11 AAC 177.

¹ There may be instances where areas classified Settlement may also be appropriate, within specific areas of the site, for agricultural land disposals. The determination of whether a management unit is appropriate for the collocation of these two forms of disposal shall be made in the written decision process under AS 38.05.035(e). The decision shall specify which areas of the unit are appropriate for each type of disposal.

- Land conveyed under this authority may only be used for agricultural purposes or for purposes that do not conflict with the use of the land for agriculture.
- Approved Farm Conservation Plans shall be provided as a condition of an agricultural sale and shall meet all other requirements of 11 AAC 67.185.
- In addition to the requirements of 11 AAC 67.180 or as part of an AS 38.05.035(e) decision, agricultural sales adjoining areas designated Habitat shall evaluate the need for wildlife movement corridors or other measures needed to protect adjacent habitat, and shall incorporate these features into the Preliminary/Final Finding and Decision or Farm Conservation Plan (FCP). Agricultural sales adjoining lands designated Settlement shall evaluate the need for buffering and other measures necessary to minimize adverse impacts to areas of land disposals and shall similarly incorporate such measures into the Preliminary/Final Finding and Decision or FCP. It is not intended that mitigation measures will always be required in these instances, but that the need for such measures be carefully assessed and required where necessary.
- Remote state land with good agricultural potential and designated Agriculture, but not scheduled for sale within the next 15 year period shall remain in public ownership, continue in an Agriculture designation, and shall not be used for other purposes except through a plan amendment that redesignates such areas into another land use designation.
- Generally, agricultural land disposals should not occur within mapped floodways or within the 10-year floodplain. Where neither of these features have been mapped, the best available information will be used to identify areas where flooding is likely to be a severe limitation on agriculture. Agricultural disposals in such areas should be avoided.

D. Site Specific Requirements. Agricultural land sales within the planning area are subject to the following additional requirements:

- A riparian buffer of undisturbed vegetation of 100' to 150', the width depending on FRPA standards, shall be retained in state ownership (or otherwise protected so that riparian functions are not impaired) adjacent to all anadromous waterbodies and high value resident fish streams. See the standards for riparian areas in the section 'Shorelands and Stream Corridors' in this Chapter.
- Areas of reported historic, archaeological, or paleontological sites should not be disturbed. Agricultural operations shall not be authorized within 300 feet of the boundaries of known sites unless OHA determines, in coordination with the Division of Agriculture, that agricultural activities can occur without significant impact to the cultural resource. OHA shall work with the Division of Agriculture to develop site-specific mitigation measures to protect known cultural sites while allowing agricultural operations. A buffer (or other management mechanism sufficient to protect the cultural resource)) of 50' or greater shall be established around significant cultural resources identified by OHA as part of agency review.

E. Other Guidelines Affecting Agriculture. Other guidelines may affect agriculture. See other sections of this chapter.

APPENDIX B - Reservations of Water

Goal

Reservations of Water. Maintain water quantity and quality sufficient to protect the overall ecosystem integrity and as well as the human, fish, and wildlife resources and uses of the region.

Management Guidelines

A. Stream Uses to Consider for Reservations of Water (General). Streams, lakes, and other waterbodies may be considered for reservations of water under AS 46.15.145. Such reservations are intended to maintain the rate or volume of flow in a river or a related physical attribute such as the water level in a lake for one or a combination of four purposes: 1) protection of fish and wildlife habitat, migration, and propagation; 2) recreation and park purposes; 3) sanitary and water quality purposes; and 4) navigation and transportation purposes.

B. Priorities. Reservations of water have been established on several waterbodies in the management area (see http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/mapguide/wr_intro.htm). Proposals for new developments requiring substantial water use or that have the potential to negatively impact instream flows or water levels needed to produce fish, sustain water quality, provide for navigation, and/or recreation, should include an evaluation of the need for an instream water reservation or other forms of instream flow protection.

C. Process for Determining Reservations. Applications for a reservation of water are submitted to the Department for adjudication following the procedures identified in 11 AAC 93.141-147. In general, these procedures estimate the quantity of water seasonally available and review the amount of water already appropriated in consideration of the requested instream flows or levels of water for the purposes to be protected.

D. Other Guidelines Affecting Reservations of Water. Other guidelines may affect reservations of water. See other sections of this chapter.