

Chapter 4

Implementation and Recommendations

Introduction	1
State Land Classification	1
Relationship of Land Use Designations in the Plan to State Land Classifications	3
Table 4-1: Acreages Associated with Land Designations and Co-designations.....	4
Table 4-2: Land Designations – Conversion to Classifications	5
Public Trust Doctrine	5
Leasing of State Land	5
Classification Order	5
Table 4-3: Acreages Associated with Land Classifications and Co-classifications	6
Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan	
Text or Plan Maps	6
Survivor Designations and Classifications	7
Alaska Coastal Management Program.....	8
Municipal Entitlement	8
State Land Selections	8
General Land Selections	8
ANILCA Topfiled Lands	9
Mineral Orders	9
Legislatively Designated Areas	10
Generally Allowed Uses	10
Types of Plan Changes.....	11

Chapter 4

Implementation and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter includes information and recommendations necessary to implement plan goals, management intent, and guidelines. Information is included on the following:

- State Land Classification
- Relationship of Land Use Designations in the Plan to State Land Classifications
- Public Trust Doctrine
- Leasing of State Land
- Classification Order
- Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps
- Survivor Designations and Classifications
- Alaska Coastal Management Program
- Municipal Entitlement
- State Land Selections
- Mineral Orders
- Legislatively Designated Areas
- Generally Allowed Uses
- Types of Plan Changes

State Land Classification

To implement the plan on state lands, DNR must “classify” state lands to reflect the intent of “land use designations” made by this plan. State law requires that land classification precede most conveyance or leasing of state uplands or tidelands. According to state statute classification means, “. . . the designation of lands according to their apparent best use.” It “. . . identifies the primary use for which the land will be managed . . .” but “. . . all other

uses are initially presumed as compatible with the primary use.” For this reason, all plan classifications are intended for multiple uses. In this plan most management units are assigned a single, principle designation.

In some instances more than one designation is identified; these are termed “co-designations” and indicate that two (or more) uses are considered to be compatible within a specific management unit of state land. The General Use (Gu) designation is used occasionally in this plan, typically applying to the large management units where two or more uses are judged to be compatible within specific portions of the management unit. Compatibility of uses should be able to be achieved through distance separation, or siting and design techniques that should reduce or preclude the undesirable effects of a particular use.

Following is a list of land classifications, and their associated definitions in Alaska regulations (the Alaska Administrative Code – AAC), which will apply to state lands in the planning area as a result of plan adoption. DNR will manage state lands and resources consistent with these classifications and with the management directions given in Chapter 3 for specific management units of state land.

11 AAC 55.050. Agricultural Land. Land classified agricultural is land that, by reason of its climate, physical features, and location, is suitable for present or future agricultural cultivation or development and that is intended for present or future agricultural use.

11 AAC 55.055. Coal Land. Land classified coal is land where coal resources exist and where development is occurring or is reasonably likely to occur, or where the coal potential has been determined to be high or moderate under 11 AAC 85.010.

11 AAC 55.070. Forest Land. Land classified forest is land that is or has been forested and is suited for forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions.

11 AAC 55.120. Material Land. Land classified material is land that is suitable for the extraction of common varieties of sand, gravel, stone, peat, clay, and other similar materials.

11 AAC 55.130 Mineral Land. Land classified mineral is land where known mineral resources exist and where development is occurring or is reasonably likely to occur, or where there is reason to believe that commercial quantities of minerals exist.

11 AAC 55.160. Public Recreation Land. Land classified public recreation is land that is suitable for recreation uses, waysides, parks, campsites, scenic overlooks, hunting, fishing or boating access sites, trail corridors, or greenbelts along bodies of water or roadways.

11 AAC 55.170. Reserved Use Land. (a) Land classified reserved use is land that:

- 1) is reserved for transfer to another governmental or non-governmental agency that is performing a public service;
- 2) is reserved for transfer through land exchanges; or

- 3) has been designated for a public facility.

(b) Nothing in this section requires classification of land identified for a future land exchange under AS 38.50.

11 AAC 55.200. Resource Management Land. Land classified resource management is either:

- 1) land that might have a number of important resources, but for which a specific resource allocation decision is not possible because of a lack of adequate resource, economic, or other relevant information; or for which a decision is not necessary because the land is presently inaccessible and remote and development is not likely to occur within the next 10 years; or
- 2) land that contains one or more resource values, none of which is of sufficiently high value to merit designation as a primary use.

11 AAC 55.202. Settlement Land. An upland area classified settlement is land that is, by reason of its physical qualities and location, suitable for year-round or seasonal residential or private recreational use or for commercial or industrial development.

11 AAC 55.222. Water Resources Land. Land classified water resources is land encompassing watersheds or portions of watersheds and is suitable for such uses as water supply, watershed protection, or hydropower sites.

11 AAC 55.230. Wildlife Habitat Land. Land classified wildlife habitat is land which is primarily valuable for:

- 1) fish and wildlife resource production, whether existing or through habitat manipulation, to supply sufficient numbers or diversity of species to support commercial, recreational, or traditional uses on an optimum sustained yield basis; or
- 2) a unique or rare assemblage of a single or multiple species of regional, state, or national significance.

Relationship of Land Use Designations in the Plan to State Land Classifications

The classifications contain no specific land management directives; those directives are expressed through the use of land use designations in the plan and described in detail for individual regions and management units included in Chapter 3. However, the designations used in the area plan must be converted into land classifications outlined in state regulation (11 AAC 55) that reflect the intent of the plan.

Since plan designations are central to the management of state land in this area plan, knowledge of the amount of area associated with particular designations is important, allowing a comparison between the designated uses. Table 4-1 identifies the acreage associated with the designations recommended in this plan. Descriptions of each of the following designations are also provided at the beginning of Chapter 3. Note: Acreages associated with plan classifications are given in Table 4-3.

Table 4-1: Acreages Associated with Land Designations and Co-designations

Symbol	Designation	Acreage
Ag	Agriculture	71,433
Co/Ha	Coal/Habitat	121,913
F	Forestry	682,999
Gu	General Use	1,318,145
Ha	Habitat	2,374,858
Ha/Wr	Habitat/Water Resources	655,092
Ha/Rd	Habitat/Public Recreation-Dispersed	1,860,551
Ma	Materials	2,593
Mi	Minerals	736,192
Mi/Ha	Minerals/Habitat	38,430
Rd or Rp	Public Recreation	80,612
Pr	Public Facilities-Retain	2,171
Se	Settlement	656,279
Wr	Water Resources	282
Wr/Rd	Water Resources/Public Recreation-Dispersed	11,811
Total		8,613,361

NOTES: 1) Shoreland acreage is (mostly) combined with that of upland units. In four instances shoreland acreage was segregated from that of the adjoining uplands. The four shoreland units, which total 79,340 acres, include the Susitna River, Matanuska River, and the Chulitna River. Each is designated Habitat and Public Recreation-Dispersed. 2) This table includes the acreage associated with the LDAs that are assigned a plan designation (and subsequently a land classification). The amount of land that is designated for particular uses in LDAs follows: Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers, 224,714 acres co-designated Habitat and Public Recreation-Dispersed; Nelchina PUA, 2,247,416 acres designated Habitat; Matanuska Valley Moose Range, 121,913 acres co-designated Habitat and Coal; and the Petersville and Caribou Creek Recreational Mining Areas, 775 acres designated Minerals.

The conversion of land use designations used by this plan into state land classifications is indicated in the table below. These are intended to identify the allowable uses of a state upland or tideland area, consistent with the definitions described previously and with any management intent given in Chapter 3.

Table 4-2: Land Designations – Conversion to Classifications

Symbol	Designation	Classification
Ag	Agricultural	Agricultural Land
Co	Coal	Coal land
F	Forest	Forest Land
Gu	General Use	Resource Management Land
Ha	Habitat	Wildlife Habitat Land
Ma	Materials	Material Land
Mi	Minerals	Mineral Land
Pr	Public Facilities - Retain	Reserved Use Land
Rd	Public Rec. - Dispersed Use	Public Recreation Land
Rp	Public Rec. - Public Use Site	Public Recreation Land
Se	Settlement	Settlement Land
Wr	Water Resources	Water Resources Land

Public Trust Doctrine

See the *Management Intent for Navigable Waterbodies* section at the end of Chapter 3.

Leasing of State Land

Under the authority of AS 38.05 and 11 AAC 58.300-.340, state land within the planning area is available for surface leasing, provided that the project is consistent with the land's classification and with the management intent set forth in this area plan.

Applications for uses of state land within the planning area will be considered by the Regional Manager for the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, Southcentral Region, Anchorage, Alaska.

Classification Order

State land is classified under the authority of AS 38.04.005, AS 38.05.300, and 11 AAC 55.010 -.280 according to the management intent set forth in this area plan.

Land Classification Order SC-09-002 classifies all state land within the plan area. See *Appendix B*. This Land Classification Order supersedes and replaces all previous classifications and classification orders affecting the planning area of the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan.

Also refer to the following section, *Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps*. This section describes how lands inadvertently omitted in the Area Plan or acquired by the state subsequent to this revision are to be treated in terms of plan designation and classification.

Table 4-3 provides estimates of the acreage by classification and co-classification for upland and shoreland units of state land.

Table 4-3: Acreages Associated with Land Classifications and Co-classifications

Classification	Upland Acreage	Shoreland Acreage¹
Agricultural land	71,433	
Coal/Wildlife Habitat land	121,913	
Forest land	682,999	
Resource Management land	1,318,145	
Wildlife Habitat land	2,374,858	
Wildlife Habitat/Water Resources land	655,092	
Wildlife Habitat/Public Recreation land	1,781,211	79,340
Material land	2,593	
Mineral land	736,192	
Mineral/Wildlife Habitat land	38,430	
Public Recreation land	80,612	
Reserved Use land	2,171	
Settlement land	656,279	
Water Resources land	282	
Water Resources/Public Recreation land	10,509	
Totals	8,534,021	79,340

Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps

This section deals with those lands that are not designated in the SMAP or classified in the Land Classification Order. Such lands include those state lands inadvertently omitted in the SMAP and those lands that may be acquired by the state in the future but not designated or classified in the Area Plan. The state has acquired and will continue to acquire isolated parcels of land through foreclosure, escheat, and other methods. The purpose of this section is to give direction to the designation of these lands by the Department when future issues of parcel classification and management arise.

¹ This estimate is for the Susitna, Matanuska, and Chulitna river management units. Shoreland acreage is combined with the adjacent upland management units for all other units.

The following guidelines of plan designation/classification and potential disposal out of state ownership are to apply:

- **Parcels in or near Existing Communities.** If the parcel is in or is immediately adjacent to an existing community or past state land offering, the designation of Settlement and classification of Settlement Land apply. Such land can be considered for disposal use unless it is appropriate as a site(s) for schools, material sites, roads, parks, or other similar public use. Unsold lots identified for disposal in existing subdivisions and lots that return to state ownership will be available for lease, sale, or conveyance. Tracts identified for community purposes in existing subdivisions will not be sold but may be conveyed to municipalities or homeowner associations if they are not needed for state purposes and community purposes will be protected.
- **Parcels near other State Land.** If the parcel adjoins or is surrounded by other state land, the designation of that area(s) applies. It is to be managed according to the management intent and guidelines applicable to the adjacent lands. Such lands can be considered appropriate for disposal if they are designated Settlement unless it is appropriate as a site(s) for schools, material sites, roads, parks, or other similar public use. They may also be conveyed to a municipality even if it is suitable for these public uses as long as the proposed uses are for comparable municipal (public) use.
- **Parcels not near Other State Land.** Parcels not near other state land or that occur within areas designated General Use are to be designated General Use and classified as Resource Management Land. These lands are to be managed according to the management intent and guidelines applicable to the adjacent lands. Disposal of these lands to the adjacent landowner may be appropriate but will require reclassification to Settlement Land.
- **Newly Acquired State Lands.** Lands that were acquired proactively through exchange, purchase, or other methods will be managed and classified consistent with the purposes for which they were acquired.
- **Other Lands.** If the designation/classification of a parcel of acquired or omitted state land cannot be adequately determined, the parcel is to be designated General Use and classified Resource Management Land.

Survivor Designations and Classifications

This revision of the SMAP replaces and supersedes all previous plan designation and land classifications (termed ‘survivor’) that affect the SMAP planning area. It does not replace or supersede Special Use Designations predating the approval of this revision.

Alaska Coastal Management Program

The Alaska Coastal Management Program will be implemented through the coastal consistency review process described in Title 46 of the Alaska Statutes and associated regulations at 11 AAC. Activities, federal activities, and activities that require a state or federal authorization within the coastal zone of the planning area must be conducted in a manner consistent with the standards of the Alaska Coastal Management Program and the enforceable policies of the coastal district plan. Consult the Alaska Coastal Management Program for the coastal zone boundaries and enforceable policies of the Borough Coastal District Plan.

Municipal Entitlement

The Municipal Entitlement Act (AS 29.65) determines a municipal general grant land entitlement and identifies what lands are available for transfer to a qualifying municipality. The term “municipality” includes both incorporated cities and organized boroughs. The size of a municipality’s entitlement is generally 10 percent of the vacant, unappropriated, unreserved (VUU) state general grant land within the municipal boundaries. State general grant lands that meet the criteria of VUU land as defined in AS 29.65.130 (i.e., classified as Agricultural, Grazing, Material, Public Recreation, Settlement, Resource Management, or unclassified land) may be appropriate for conveyance to municipalities with a remaining general grant land entitlement under AS 29.65.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough is entitled to 355,210 acres of state land under the Municipal Entitlement program. Recent entitlement decisions (2006) have approved the conveyance of state land to the Borough that will fulfill the Borough’s entitlement acreage. Accordingly, this plan does not designate areas for selection under the Municipal Entitlement program.

State Land Selections

General Land Selections

Under the Statehood Act, Alaska is entitled to approximately 103 million acres of federal land. The selections made by the state in the planning area occurred under the “General Grant” program, and nearly all have been either conveyed to the state through patent or are in TA (Tentative Approval) status, which gives management authority to the state. The areas noted as state-selected land on the plan maps depict those areas of federal land selected for eventual conveyance to the state. Areas of state selections on the plan maps include, in addition to state selections proper, ANILCA topfiled selections and areas subject to Public Land Orders.

There may be areas of state selections that this plan has not identified. In these instances, land conveyed to the state is to be considered classified under this plan and land classification order. In those instances where a plan designation has not been assigned to a state selection, classifications are to be assigned according to the standards described in the section, *Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps*.

Because the SMAP plan maps indicate the status of state land and state land selections to a specific date (2009), DNR adjudicators must review the status of state land at the time of an adjudicatory decision. It would be imprudent to rely upon the land status information contained in this plan given the changing character of state land selections. Consult Alaska Mapper or DNR ArcServer for the most recent state selection information.

ANILCA Topfiled Lands

There are certain areas that are topfiled by the state under the provisions of Sec. 906 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). These are selections made by the state that become valid when Native regional or village ANCSA (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) selections are relinquished. It is uncertain how many of these state selections will become valid during the planning period because the amount of Native selections, in terms of acreage, greatly exceeds that allowed under the corporation's selection entitlement. The Bureau of Land Management is currently adjudicating all prioritized Native village and regional corporation selections so the corporations and state can receive their land. The category of "State-Selected Land" on region plan maps includes areas of ANILCA topfiled selections in addition to areas of state-selected land.

The same caution in the use of plan maps for ANILCA topfiled lands as for state land selections exists (see above).

Mineral Orders

Alaska Statute 38.05.185 requires the Commissioner of DNR to determine that mineral entry and location is incompatible with significant surface uses in order to close state-owned lands to mineral entry. This plan retains all existing mineral closing orders. However, additional mineral closing orders or leasehold location orders are not recommended since few conflicts should exist between mining and sensitive surface uses given the location of the mineral deposits and settlement areas. Most of the settlement areas are not located within or adjacent to the areas of principal mineral deposits.

Legislatively Designated Areas

There are numerous existing Legislatively Designated Areas within and adjoining the planning area. These include state parks, public use areas, state recreational rivers, and state recreational mining areas. These special purpose areas encompass the principal recreational, mining, and habitat resources that require special management within the planning area and additional LDAs are not recommended for the management of recreational or habitat resources.

Areas designated Forestry may, however, be appropriate for legislative designation. The 1985 Susitna Area Plan proposed legislative establishment of high value forested lands as state forests and as multiple use areas with forestry as a primary use. The creation of a State Forest may be appropriate for those lands designated Forestry in the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan. DOF should further evaluate the use of this management vehicle and if found to be appropriate, advance it for legislative consideration.

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 (SRR), 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.

Generally Allowed Uses

Under 11 AAC 96.020 there are a variety of uses and activities that are allowed on state land that usually do not require a permit from DNR. These uses are listed in [11 AAC 96.020](#) and are explained further in a [DNR Factsheet](#) on Generally Allowed Uses (GAUs) that may be obtained from a DNR Public Information Center. In some instances it may become necessary to limit or preclude certain uses on state land that would otherwise be permitted as a Generally Allowed Use on state land under 11 AAC 96.020. Uses may be limited under the authority of 11 AAC 96.014 when land use or natural resource management requires it, but limits to such uses must be codified in all cases on general domain land in state administrative code. Although there are instances where uses are limited under this authority in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, they do not occur within the plan boundary of the SMAP nor are any such limits to GAUs recommended to be imposed in this plan.

Types of Plan Changes

The various kinds of changes allowed in 11 AAC 55.030 are:

“A revision to a land use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a ‘revision’ is an amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:

An ‘amendment’ permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying the basic management intent for one or more of the plan’s subunits or by changing its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. For example, an amendment might close to new mineral entry an area that the plan designated to be open, allow a land use in an area where the plan prohibited it, or allow land to be opened to homestead entry in an area that the plan designated for retention in public ownership.

A ‘special exception’ does not permanently change the provisions of a land use plan and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan’s provisions, without changing the plan’s general management intent or guidelines. For example, a special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan would be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the exception.

A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A ‘minor change’ is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections.”