

Chapter 2  
**LAND USE  
DESIGNATIONS ON  
PUBLIC LANDS**

## LAND USE DESIGNATIONS ON PUBLIC LANDS

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents land use designations for public lands in the Willow Sub-basin. These designations indicate the uses for which the lands will be managed or sold. Both primary and secondary uses may be shown for any given management unit. (As explained in Chapter I the sub-basin has been divided into 25 management units for the purposes of illustrating designated land uses and developing area specific management guidelines). A secondary use is permitted within a management unit when its occurrence will not adversely affect achieving the objectives of primary uses. Proposed transportation routes necessary for implementation of land use designations are also presented in this chapter.

In several management units more than one primary use is designated. This occurs principally in units where the major values are complementary, especially where the dominant values are forestry, recreation, fish and wildlife, and watershed. A joint primary use designation simply means that neither use indicated is a dominant value with priority over the others. Potential conflicts between joint primary uses are dealt with through management guidelines for each unit presented in Chapter IV.

Designated land uses shown on Map 4 in this chapter are shown in greater detail in Chapter IV, which contains large scale maps for each management unit. Both primary and secondary land use designations shown in Chapter II are subject to the policies and management guidelines contained in Chapters III and IV. The policies and guidelines are intended to insure compatibility among the various uses occurring within each management unit.

The land use designations shown in this chapter are not inflexible. Uses not shown on Map 4 may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if the Department of Natural Resources and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough determine that they are consistent with the statement of management intent for the management unit in question (see Chapter IV) and consistent with the policies and guidelines affecting the unit.

In several management units "recommended land uses" are specified rather than land use designations. These are units which contain relatively small amounts of public land. Although the plan does not regulate private land, the recommended uses indicate development patterns the borough and the state wish to encourage. In some cases public land within these management units is given a specific land use designation (principally in the case of material and recreation sites). Management of the remaining public lands will be consistent with the recommended land uses.

## MANAGEMENT UNITS AFFECTED BY THIS PLAN

Map 3 shows the 25 management units in the Willow Sub-basin. Each unit has been given a name which appears on the map. The units fall into three general categories. The shaded units are those for which specific land use designations have been made on state and borough lands. In Chapter IV of this plan, the land use designations and guidelines for each of the shaded units on Map 3 are presented in detail. The unshaded units contain isolated parcels of state and borough land. Appropriate land uses in these areas are addressed in Chapter IV through general recommendations and, in some instances, specific land use designations. Finally, those units enclosed by a dashed line have been designated for specific uses by the state legislature. The plan does not address these areas.

Map 4 presents primary and secondary land use designations on public lands in the sub-basin. The designations are shown by management unit. (Borough lands affected are indicated by diagonal lines.) These management units are divided into subunits to illustrate land use designations in greater detail. The table accompanying Map 4 shows both primary and secondary designations within each subunit. (Refer to Map 2 for land ownership information.)

## OVERVIEW OF LAND USE DESIGNATIONS BY RESOURCE

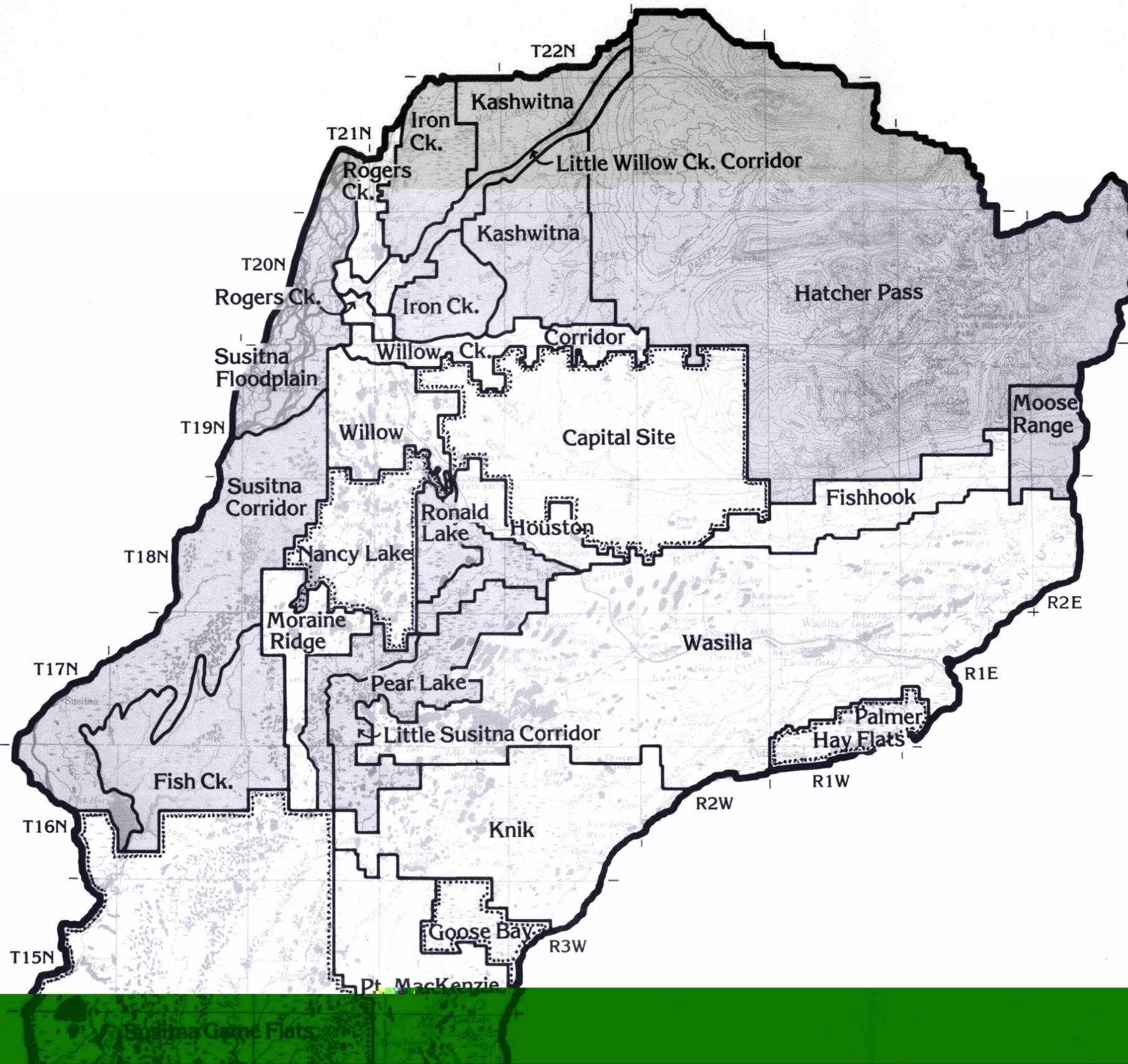
### FORESTRY

This plan designates forestry management as a primary use on approximately 60,000 acres of state land and 6,500 acres of borough land. Secondary use designations are made on approximately 20,000 acres of state land and 24,000 acres of borough land. All forestry primary designations will also be managed for other important values such as recreation and wildlife.

The important forestry areas located in the plan include the primary designations in the Kashwitna, Susitna Floodplain, and Susitna Corridor Management Units, and a secondary designation in Fish Creek for agricultural timber salvage. In addition, there are a number of other areas which are available for limited harvest. None of these other areas will make a large contribution to either commercial or personal timber supply. However, they are important for local personal use and limited commercial harvests.

Timber salvage from agricultural lands presents a unique opportunity for the local forest industry. It can provide a large but short-term supply of timber to help a developing industry. For this reason secondary designation of Fish Creek (for timber salvage purposes) is particularly important.

# Land Management Units



## MANAGEMENT UNITS

The subbasin is divided into 25 management units. Management unit boundaries encompass areas with similar resources, ownership patterns and access characteristics. Three general categories of management units are described below:

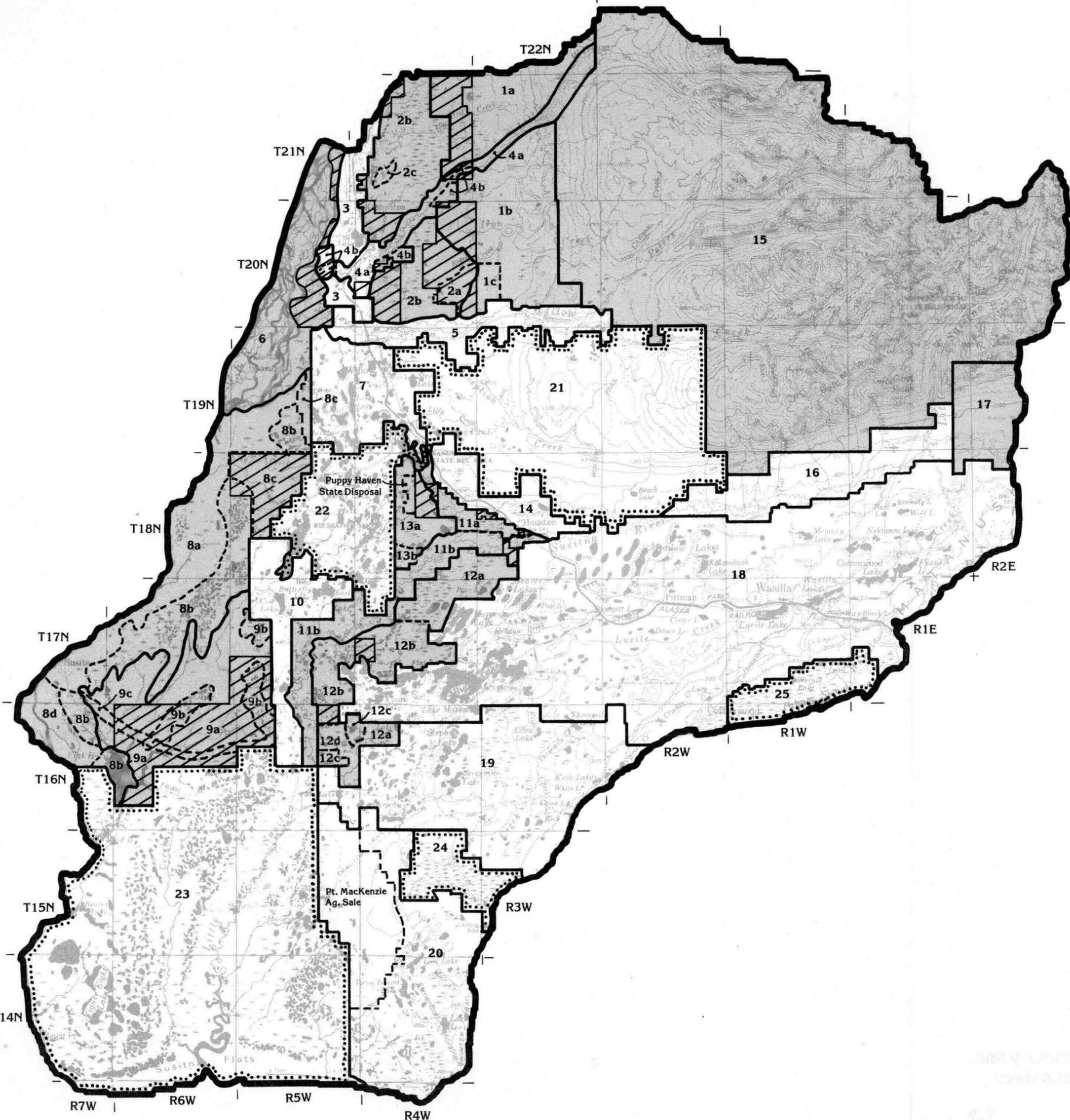
**Legislatively Designated Areas** - Land uses within these areas (the Capital Site, Nancy Lakes Recreation Area and three game refuges) have been previously determined by the State legislature. Consequently, these areas are not addressed by the plan.

**Areas with Specific Land Use Designations** - Management units shown in gray are primarily owned by the state and borough. In these areas detailed land use designations are prepared as well as management guidelines to control how these uses occur.

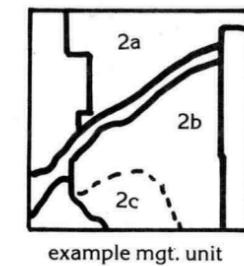
**Areas with General Land Use Objectives** - Management units shown in white (excluding legislatively designated areas) are primarily privately owned but contain some parcels of state/borough lands. The area plan addresses appropriate land uses in these areas through general land use objectives prepared for each management unit; specific land use designations are made for state land in some cases.



# Primary and Secondary Designated Land Uses



-  **Legislatively designated areas**
-  **Areas with specific land use designations**  
Management units shown in gray are primarily owned by the state and borough. In these areas detailed land use designations are prepared as well as management guidelines to control how these uses occur.
-  Diagonal lines indicate where land use designations are made on borough lands.
-  **Areas with general land use objectives**  
Management units shown in white (excluding legislatively designated areas) are primarily privately owned but contain some parcels of state/borough lands. The area plan addresses appropriate land uses in these areas through general land use objectives prepared for each management unit; specific land use designations are for state land in some cases.



The map and the accompanying chart show primary and secondary land uses. Numbers on the map identify management units and management subunits; the chart shows the designated land uses within each of these areas.



scale 1:332,000  
June 1, 1982

## WILLOW SUB-BASIN AREA PLAN: PRIMARY & SECONDARY DESIGNATED LAND USES

Management Unit & No.	Subunit	Primary Uses	Secondary Uses
1. Kashwitna	1a	Forestry/Fish & Wildlife	Recreation
	1b	Forestry/Fish & Wildlife	Grazing
	1c	Small Farms	Grazing, Fish & Wildlife, Forestry
2. Iron Creek	2a	Small Farms	Grazing, Fish & Wildlife, Forestry
	2b	Watershed/Fish & Wildlife	—
	2c	Small Farms	Fish & Wildlife
3. Rogers Creek	Recommended Land Uses	*Settlement *Fish & Wildlife (Migration & Harvest) *Parks Highway Scenic Areas *Forestry	
4. Little Willow Creek Corridor	4a	Fish & Wildlife Recreation	Forestry
	4b	Small Farms	Forestry, Fish & Wildlife, Recreation
5. Willow Creek Corridor	Recommended Land Uses	*Fish & Wildlife *Small Farms *Settlement *Recreation	
6. Susitna Floodplain	—	Forestry/Fish & Wildlife	Recreation
7. Willow	Recommended Land Uses	*Community Land Needs *Parks Highway Scenic Areas	
8. Susitna Corridor	8a	Forestry/Fish & Wildlife	Recreation
	8b	Fish & Wildlife/Watershed	—
	8c	Agriculture	Forestry, Fish & Wildlife, Watershed
	8d	Fish & Wildlife	Grazing
9. Fish Creek	9a	Agriculture	Forestry, Settlement, Small Farms, Recreation
	9b °streams	Fish & Wildlife/Recreation	Forestry
	9c °wetlands	Fish & Wildlife/Watershed Recreation (Iditarod)	Forestry Forestry
10. Moraine Ridge	—	Settlement	Forestry, Fish & Wildlife, Recreation
11. Little Susitna Corridor	11a	Watershed/Fish & Wildlife	—
	11b	Recreation/Fish & Wildlife	Forestry
12. Pear Lake	12a	Fish & Wildlife/Watershed	—
	12b	Small Farms/Settlement	Forestry
	12c	Small Farms/Settlement	Recreation
	12d	Fish & Wildlife/Forestry	—
13. Ronald Lake	13a	Settlement/Small Farms	Fish & Wildlife, Forestry
	13b	Fish & Wildlife/Watershed	—
14. Houston	Recommended Land Uses	*Community land needs *Parks Highway Scenic Areas	
15. Hatcher Pass	All sub-units	Mining, Recreation, Fish & Wildlife Grazing	— —
16. Fishhook	Recommended Land Uses	*Settlement *Watershed *Fish & Wildlife (Moose Habitat)	*Recreation *Forestry
17. Moose Range	—	Fish & Wildlife	Forestry, Grazing
18. Wasilla	Recommended Land Uses	*Settlement *Small Farm & Commercial Agriculture *Recreation (fishing - local & regional parks)	*Forestry (personal use) *Parks Highway Scenic Areas
19. Knik	Recommended Land Uses	*Small Farms *Settlement *Recreation (Iditarod & other trails)	*Fish & Wildlife (stream buffers) *Forestry (personal use)
20. Pt. MacKenzie	Pt. MacKenzie Agricultural Project. Recommended Land Uses (in remainder of area)	*Development of Port, Industrial Area, Community	
Legislatively Designated Areas:	21. Capital site 22. Nancy Lakes Recreation Area	23. Susitna Flats Refuge 24. Goose Bay Refuge	25. Palmer Hay Flats Refuge

Note: For details of subsurface resource management, see Chapter III (Subsurface resources, goals and policies)

## SUBSURFACE RESOURCES

### The Effects of the Plan on Opportunities to Explore and Develop Subsurface Resources on State-owned Subsurface Land\*

The large majority of state-owned subsurface areas in the Willow Sub-basin are currently open to exploration and development of subsurface resources and will remain open under this land use plan. However, an important effect of this plan is that it closes certain areas to specific types of subsurface resource exploration and development. The following section describes the areas closed by the plan. It is important to note that these mineral closures and other policies resulting from this plan do not alter or replace existing regulations, nor do they affect any existing mineral closures in the area. The areas closed to mining described below are closed only to new exploration or development activities; any existing leases, prospecting permits, or claims will not be affected. (Mineral closing orders will be prepared for these areas in compliance with AS 38.05.185.)

- a. Areas closed both to mineral leasing and to locatable mineral entry by this plan\*\*  
The Little Susitna River Corridor Management Unit is closed to all mineral leasing and to locatable mineral entry.
- b. Areas closed only to locatable mineral entry by this plan  
Under current department policy, areas sold by the state for residential or agricultural purposes -- including those identified by this plan -- are closed to all locatable mineral entry. (These sale areas may, on a case-by-case basis, be open to development of leasable minerals.)

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\* The state retains subsurface rights when it transfers land to local governments or private owners. Consequently all subsurface rights in the sub-basin, with two notable exceptions, are held by the State and are subject to the policies in this plan. The first exception is certain private lands that were homesteaded and passed directly from federal to private ownership. Private land of this type comprises a relatively small percentage of the sub-basin's area, less than 5 percent (mostly in the Willow and Wasilla areas). The second exception is lands granted to Native regional and village corporations. Under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Native Corporations received both surface and subsurface rights. These lands make up about 1 percent of the sub-basin's area.

\*\* "Leasable" minerals include oil and gas, coal, and geothermal resources. Development rights are acquired either at a lease sale, (the method always used for oil and gas) or non-competitively (by applying for a prospecting permit). Minerals such as gold, silver, copper, iron, asbestos, and uranium, are "locatable;" rights to these minerals are acquired by staking a mining claim.

c. Areas Closed to Coal Prospecting

Certain areas with exceptionally high surface resource values are closed to the issuance of coal prospecting permits\*; these areas are described below:

- Large blocks of class II and III soils: The Point MacKenzie project and potential agricultural areas in the Fish Creek and Susitna Corridor Management Units.
- River Corridors: Little Susitna River, Little Willow Creek, Willow Creek, and the Big Susitna River.

The Little Susitna River: all of the Little Susitna River Management Unit and a corridor 300 feet on either side of the river over the remainder of the river's course.

Little Willow Creek: the portion of Little Willow Creek Management Unit east of where the railroad crosses the river and a corridor 300 feet on either side of the river over the remainder of the river's course.

Willow Creek: Willow Creek Management Unit and a corridor 300 feet on either side of the river over the remainder of the river's course.

Big Susitna River: a corridor at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile on either side of the river (note: only the eastern bank of the river forms the boundary to the study area).

- Recreation sites identified on the recreation map of this plan (Appendix 2). (These are primarily small sites -- less than 160 acres -- used for campgrounds, waysides, boat launches and access sites on water bodies and along trails.)
- A corridor 300 feet wide on either side of the Parks Highway right-of-way to protect visual quality.
- Nancy Lake State Recreation Area.
- The proposed state capital site at Willow.
- All past and planned (through 1987) state subdivisions and the portions of state remote parcel sales areas likely to be staked.

For additional policies and guidelines affecting subsurface resource development, see Chapter III, Goals, Policies, and Management Guide lines; subsurface resources.

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\* Under State law, once a coal prospecting permit is issued, the state is required to grant the permit holder a coal lease if coal is found in commercial quantities. Any coal mining that occurs after a lease is issued would be subject to state, federal and local mining regulations.

## FISH AND WILDLIFE

This plan designates approximately 345,000 acres of state land and 26,000 acres of borough land for fish and wildlife use and habitat protection (see Map 4). In each case, fish and wildlife is one of two or more primary designated land uses. For example, forestry is an additional primary use in the Kashwitna and Susitna Floodplain Management Units; mining, recreation, and grazing are also primary uses in the Hatcher Pass Management Unit; watershed is a second primary use in the large wetland areas within the Pear Lake, Ronald Lake, and Susitna Corridor Management Units; and recreation is a use of equal importance in the Little Susitna River Corridor and other small stream and river buffers.

The practical effect of these land use designations is to set aside an amount and variety of land sufficient to provide opportunities for a continuing high level of fish and wildlife use. Shared uses of these lands will help protect or enhance habitat and assist the development of necessary access.

## AGRICULTURE

Agricultural land use designations fall into three categories: commercial agriculture, grazing, and small farms (40-80 acres). Approximately 25,000 acres of state and 19,500 acres of borough lands are designated for commercial scale agricultural use (parcels larger than 80 acres). These figures include approximately 15,000 acres in the Pt. MacKenzie agricultural project. In addition, approximately 120,000 acres of state land and 3,000 acres of borough land are designated for grazing (this includes primary and secondary designations). Lands designated for small farm use are discussed under the settlement section of this chapter.

The Fish Creek Management Unit is the major commercial agricultural project proposed by this plan. As indicated on Map 4, the borough owns about 60% of the unit and the state 40% (except for small parcels in private ownership). The unit contains approximately 16,000 acres of prime agricultural land.

Areas available for grazing include the southern two-thirds of the Kashwitna Unit, the southern and western portions of the Hatcher Pass Unit, the Moose Range Unit, and the southern portion of the Susitna Corridor Unit. Grazing is controlled by the guidelines in Chapter III, Goals, Policies, and Management Guidelines; Agriculture. These guidelines are principally intended to minimize the impacts of grazing on wildlife habitat and water quality.

Approximately 4,000 acres of borough land in the northern portion of the Susitna Corridor Management Unit, west of Nancy Lake, are designated for agricultural use. State land in the Susitna Corridor Unit which has high agricultural potential (Agricultural Capability classes II and III)

is to remain in non-intensive uses: forestry, habitat, or recreation. Management of this unit will be designed to minimize negative impacts on potential agricultural development.

#### SETTLEMENT AND SMALL FARMS

Land designations for settlement refer primarily to residential lands. It is the policy of the Borough and State to sell suitable lands for private commercial and industrial use in order to facilitate economic development. Land disposal decisions for these uses will be made on a case-by-case basis consistent with this plan. Therefore no specific designations for these land uses have been made. Although small farms (40-80 acres) are a separate category on the land designation maps, they are appropriately discussed as a settlement category.

Vacant land suitable for settlement in the sub-basin is abundant. There are over 17,000 vacant subdivided private parcels in the sub-basin - a total of 35,000 acres. (The sub-basin's existing population of approximately 8,000 people occupies 3,850 parcels.) Much of this private land is located in the Wasilla, Willow, and Roger's Creek Management Units along the Parks Highway; the large majority is road-accessed. In light of this vast supply of private land for settlement, the borough and state set a low priority on selling important agricultural, timber, mineral, and recreation lands for residential use.

However, the borough and state recognize that public land should be made available for residential use when the private supply is limited. Therefore, the borough and state will jointly assess demand for residential land yearly and establish annual disposal schedules for public lands.

Settlement is a designated primary use on public lands in portions of the following management units: Pear Lake, Ronald Lake, and Iron Creek. In these units, the state has identified approximately 3,000 acres of land for which settlement is a primary designation (this includes two remote parcel selection areas - LeRoux View and Papoose Twins). Settlement is designated as a secondary use on approximately 7,000 acres of state and 10,000 acres of borough land in the Fish Creek Management Unit. That does not mean that most of this land will be used for settlement, but that settlement may occur as compatible with the designated primary uses (principally agriculture).

For most of the management units with road access, where private landowners hold a majority of land, the plan lists settlement as a "recommended land use." This means that although there may be little public land in these units, it is both borough and state policy to encourage settlement in these accessed areas rather than on remote public lands.

Borough and state lands designated for use as small farms are in the Kashwitna, Ronald Lake, Pear Lake, Little Willow Creek Corridor, and Iron Creek Units. Agricultural land in the Fish Creek unit not suitable for large farms because of topography will be sold for small farms. Although specific tracts have not been identified, small farms are a

"recommended use" in the Knik Unit, where private landowners and the borough own considerable land suitable for that purpose. (There are several thousand acres of private land suitable for small farms in the Wasilla Management Unit.)

It is difficult to specify an acreage figure for small farms because the plan frequently designates small farms as one of several permitted uses within a management unit. Sites for small farms will be identified specifically through more detailed planning. However, the plan designates approximately 3,000 acres of state land and 2,500 acres of borough land for primary small farm use. Through this plan, the state and borough have also set small farm disposal targets of 3,000 acres and 4,000 acres respectively during the next 5 years.

### RECREATION

Public lands designated for recreation use fall into 4 categories: major public recreation areas, recreation sites larger than 160 acres, recreation sites smaller than 160 acres, and trails. The major public recreation areas include the Hatcher Pass Unit, Little Willow Creek Corridor, Little Susitna Corridor, and the Iditarod Trail. Primary land use designations include 18 sites larger than 160 acres, over 100 sites smaller than 160 acres, and approximately 400 miles of trails. The recreation sites include lake and stream access, trail waysides, campgrounds, and historic sites. It is not possible to show all of these recreation areas at the scale of Map 4. (They are mapped in the recreation section of Appendix 2.)

Map 4 shows the primary designations in the major public recreation areas listed above. The Hatcher Pass Management Unit provides a wide range of summer and winter recreation activities including hiking, mountain climbing, snowmobiling, skiing, and wildlife photography. (Mining, recreation, fish and wildlife, and grazing all receive primary use designations in the Hatcher Pass Unit.) The Little Willow Creek and Little Susitna River Corridors are anadromous streams which provide important recreation opportunities to people from all over Alaska. The Iditarod Trail, between Knik and Nome, is the state's best known dog mushing route.

Map 4 also shows recreation as a secondary use in several units where dispersed hunting, fishing, hiking, and other recreation activities are important values that will be protected as other land uses occur.

### WATERSHED (WETLANDS)

Watershed is a primary use designation on approximately 57,000 acres of state, and 7,500 acres of borough land. These designations apply to wetlands in the Iron Creek, Little Susitna Corridor, Pear Lake, Susitna Corridor, Fish Creek, and Ronald Lake Management Units. All primary watershed designations are also primary fish and wildlife designations.

The principal feature that most wetlands share is soil that is at least periodically saturated with or covered by water. Wetlands provide extremely important hydrologic functions. They serve to filter nutrients and sediment from upland runoff and therefore are one of the environment's natural safeguards for water quality. They also stabilize water supply by retaining excessive water during flooding and by recharging ground water during dry periods.

The wetlands identified for watershed management on Map 4 will be managed to protect important hydrologic functions, recreation opportunities, and habitat.

### PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

For this plan's land use designations to be feasible, there are three areas which will require major road systems: Fish Creek (Agriculture), Susitna Corridor (Forestry), and Kashwitna (Forestry). Map 5 shows a possible road system to serve these areas. The routes shown on the map are not intended to represent precise locations. Nor are they funded for construction. However, approximations of these routes would eventually be necessary to make the land use designations in this plan meaningful. Aside from routes related to the land uses proposed by the plan, Map 5 shows two other routes which have been proposed by various public and private groups: the Houston right-of way, between Houston and Point MacKenzie; and a route between the proposed Fish Creek agricultural project and the town of Willow. All of these proposed transportation routes are discussed below. A more detailed discussion, including estimated costs, appears in Appendix 2.

#### Fish Creek - The Chuitna Right-of- Way and Winnebago Way

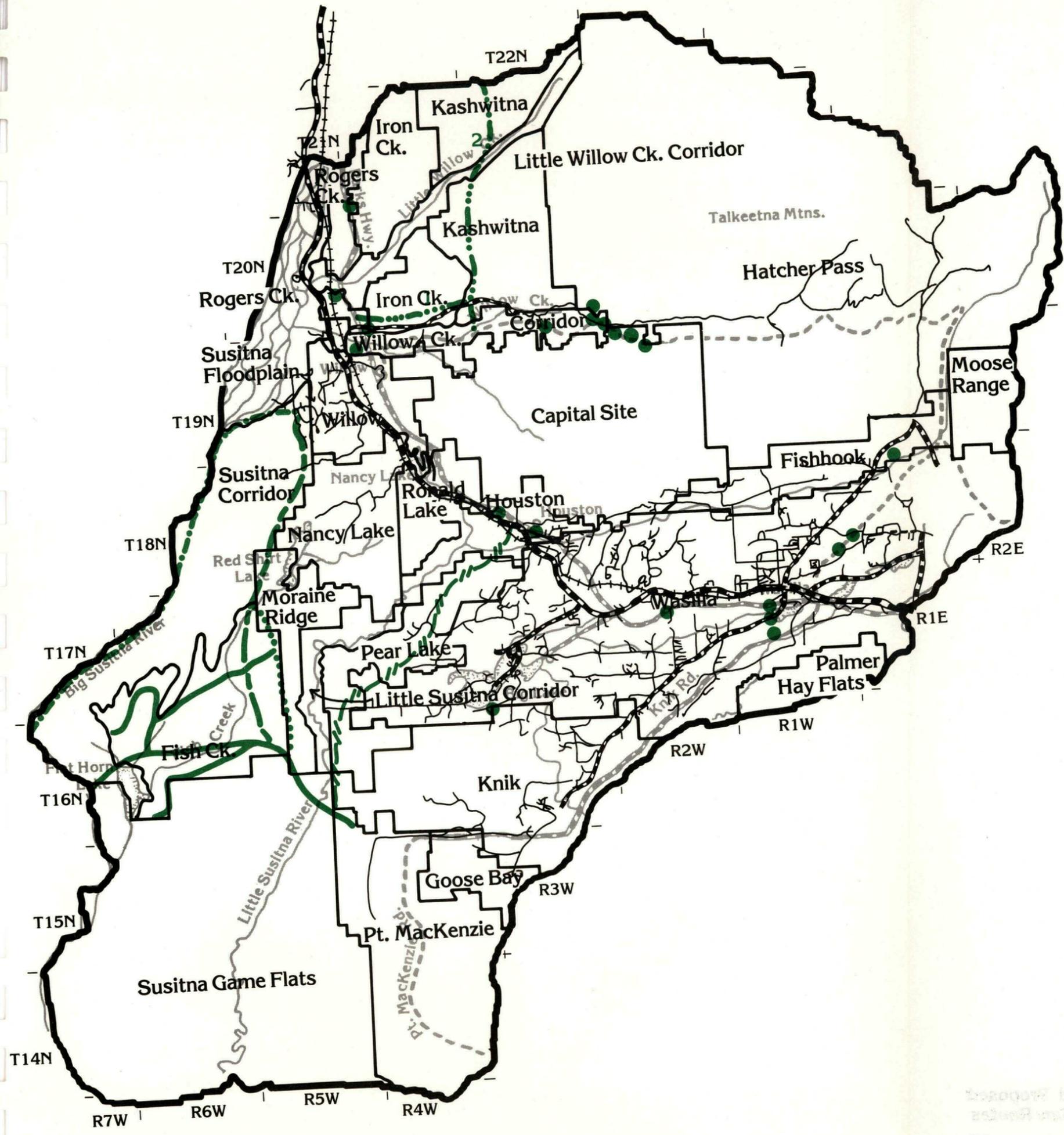
The Fish Creek Management Unit is intended to provide acreage for a major commercial agriculture project. Such a project would require a main road crossing the Little Susitna River and a system of spur routes to access individual farms. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT/PF) has located an approximate alignment for a transportation corridor (road or railroad) to the Beluga Coal Fields, including alternate alignments to the Susitna River. That alignment, known as the Chuitna Right-of-Way, appears to adequately serve as the main road through the unit. A second alignment shown on Map 5 (Winnebago Way) would link the Fish Creek area to Willow. If the Knik Arm crossing were built, this road would shorten the distance from Anchorage to Willow by approximately 30 miles.

In addition, Map 5 shows approximate alignments for spur roads to all parcels of agricultural land 40 acres or greater. These routes may be significantly revised during DOT/PF alignment studies.

#### Susitna Corridor

The Susitna Corridor is intended to provide a large area to be managed for its forestry, habitat, and agricultural resources. Forestry opera-

# Existing and Potential Transportation Routes



**Existing transportation:**

- ++++ railroads
- primary roads
- secondary roads

**Roads recommended by this plan:**

- Chuitna Right-of-Way and spurs
- ..... Moraine Ridge
- - - - Susitna Corridor
- . - . - . Kashwitna
- - - - Winnebago Way

**Other potential transportation corridors:**

- - - - Houston Right-of-Way

**Material sites**

- sand and gravel



scale 1:332,000  
June 1, 1982

## Willow Subbasin Area Plan

tions require a network of roads, but these roads do not need to be the same quality as the roads in the Fish Creek Management Unit. Wetlands can be crossed using winter roads, clearing need not extend beyond the road itself, and construction techniques need be much less intensive. In addition, only a main route is shown. The numerous forestry spurs would probably be built by the various logging companies. Map 5 shows a possible alignment reaching as far south as Susitna Station. It is likely that road development would occur in increments spread out over many years - as more areas are harvested, more roads would be needed.

#### Kashwitna

The Kashwitna Unit is intended to be a multiple use management area emphasizing fish and wildlife habitat, forestry, and allowing grazing and small farms.

The initial access would require one of three expensive options: a major bridge across Willow Creek just downstream from a canyon-like area of the creek, or a smaller bridge closer to the Parks Highway and a road along the north side of Willow Creek, or access from the Parks Highway north of the creek and a road along the north side of the creek. Access to the small farm area (just north of the creek) would have to be adequate for conventional vehicles. The remainder of the system could be forestry roads similar to those described for the Susitna Corridor Unit.

#### Houston Right-of Way

A north-south connection between Pt. MacKenzie and Houston has been proposed by various agencies. DOT/PF has a right-of-way application for this route. There are currently no construction plans. In fact, it is likely that a corridor through the area would be for railroad only and not include a conventional road.

RELATIONSHIP OF WILLOW SUB-BASIN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS TO  
THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES' STATEWIDE PLAN

The Department of Natural Resources prepared a statewide land use plan in 1980 which is updated annually. The purpose of the statewide plan is to give guidance to planning on a regional and local scale and to serve as an aid to decisions that require a statewide perspective.

The statewide plan developed general land use designations for all state land in Alaska. In areas such as the Willow Sub-basin, which had already been the scene of extensive study, the statewide plan adopted the land uses that were identified and classified prior to the development of the statewide plan. The amount of land designated for various uses by the statewide plan in the Willow Sub-basin is, therefore, exactly the same as the pre-existing land use classifications in the area.

The figures in the following table show the amount of land designated for various uses in the statewide and Willow Sub-basin plans. In both cases the land use designations define the primary values the land will be managed for. It should be noted that the designation of a primary value does not in itself prohibit other uses. In the Willow Sub-basin plan detailed resource data and analysis resulted in the designation of more than one primary land use.

Land use designations on the statewide level are not intended as firm quotas which this or any other plan had to meet. This would be inappropriate considering the more detailed resource information, analysis, and public participation methods that are used in developing area plans. Using the acreage figures in the statewide plan as a general guide, however, it can be seen that the land designations in the Willow Sub-basin plan conform to the intent of the statewide plan. In each category, however, the Willow Sub-basin plan allocates more land than does the statewide plan. This is due to the dual allocations in the Willow plan and to the fact that not all state lands were allocated to specific resources in the statewide plan.

COMPARISON OF STATEWIDE TO WILLOW SUB-BASIN PLAN  
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS (STATE-OWNED LAND)

Resource	1981 Statewide Plan Land Use Designations (In Acres)
Agriculture	19,500 <sup>1</sup>
Forestry	19,000
Recreation	195,000
Habitat	26,500
Settlement (includes small farms)	2,000

Resource	Willow Sub-basin Plan Land Use Designations (In Acres)
Agriculture - Cropland	25,000 <sup>2</sup>
Agriculture - Grazing	130,000
Forestry/Fish & Wildlife	68,300
Recreation/Fish & Wildlife	267,500 <sup>3</sup>
Fish & Wildlife/Watershed	76,300
Settlement (includes small farms)	5,500 <sup>4</sup>
Mining	220,500

- 1 Includes the Pt. MacKenzie agricultural project.
- 2 Includes the Pt. MacKenzie agricultural project.
- 3 Includes 220,500 acres designated for recreation in Hatcher Pass Management Unit. Portions of this management unit are also designated for mining, grazing, and habitat.
- 4 Net acreage sold will be less than 5,500 due to varying soil and terrain conditions. The 5,500 acres do not include areas where settlement is a secondary use - specific parcels in such areas will be identified through more detailed planning.

## MANAGEMENT PLANS

Implementation of land use designations discussed in this chapter will require a number of management plans. As explained in Chapter I, a management plan is the next level of planning by DNR for state lands. A management plan is a more detailed plan than this document, which is an "area plan." Area plans designate permitted land uses and management guidelines. Management plans are necessary for site planning: delineating and scheduling parcels for disposals, designating roads and other infrastructure, scheduling timber sales, rerouting trails to prevent use conflicts, and developing more detailed management guidelines. Implementation of the Willow Plan requires a number of management plans. They are listed in order of priority below:

### The Fish Creek Management Plan

The Fish Creek Management Unit is intended to be the site of a joint borough/state agricultural project of approximately 18,000 acres (10,000 borough; 8,000 state). This area is located between the Little Susitna and Susitna Rivers, approximately ten miles northeast of the Point MacKenzie agricultural project. As an implementation of the Willow Plan, DL&WM and the Borough Planning Department have initiated a detailed management plan for Fish Creek. This management plan will lay out individual farms, fix the precise road alignments, and design buffers for important wetlands and anadromous fish streams.

The development of Fish Creek will require a main road from the Point MacKenzie area across the Little Susitna River and a system of spur roads to access individual farms. The Willow Sub-basin Area Plan has proposed a tentative road system adopting the existing Chuitna right-of-way corridor to the Beluga area as the main road and locating approximate spur alignments to all parcels of agricultural land 40 acres or greater.

### The Hatcher Pass Management Plan

As indicated above the Willow Sub-basin Plan designates mining, grazing, recreation and habitat as primary uses in the 220,000 acres Hatcher Pass Management Unit. Potential conflicts between mining and recreation, and between grazing and habitat require site specific decisions about the location and management of these activities. Recent private requests to lease parcels for recreation development require action. Therefore DNR and the borough are currently developing a management plan for this unit.

This management plan will include a range management section which implements the grazing guidelines in Chapter III of the Willow Sub-basin Plan. These guidelines require the specification of maximum stocking densities and the protection of water quality, soil stability and habitat.

### The Susitna Corridor Management Plan

The Willow Plan designates the Susitna Corridor Unit as a commercial forestry management area of approximately 14,000 acres along the east side of the Susitna River from near Willow to the Susitna Game Flats. Approximately 4,000 acres of borough land in this unit will be developed for agricultural use; some grazing will be allowed on state lands.

This currently remote area could provide a needed boost to the fourteen lumber mills operating in the borough. These mills are currently operating at 10% of capacity due to the lack of timber sales on public lands. The management unit could also provide an important recreation area accessible by vehicle from Anchorage.

Prior to timber harvest, a management plan will be necessary to design road systems, schedule sales, and implement the guidelines in the Willow Plan which limit timber harvests in certain environmentally sensitive areas.

### The Kashwitna Management Plan

The Kashwitna Unit is a large area (60,000 acres) between Willow Creek and the Kashwitna River along the foothills of the Talkeetnas, north of the capital site. It is designated as a multiple use area for commercial forestry, grazing, small farms, and habitat management.

Access to the Kashwitna Unit would require one of three options: a major bridge across Willow Creek just downstream of Willow Creek Canyon; a smaller bridge closer to the Parks Highway with a road along the north side of the creek; access from the Parks Highway north of the creek and a road along the north side of the creek. All options would be expensive.

When it is determined that the timber, agricultural and recreation values in the Kashwitna Unit warrant the development of access, a management plan will be necessary to design roads, schedule timber and farm sales and develop detailed management guidelines to minimize conflicts among land users.