

Aspects of the new Yukon-Tanana Area Plan

The Yukon-Tanana Basin Area Plan (YTAP) is a plan revision for the western regions included within the 1985 Tanana Basin Area Plan (TBAP) and a large area of state land located immediately north of the TBAP boundary. The eastern regions of ETAP are being revised in a separate plan, the Eastern Tanana Basin Area Plan (ETAP). The overall YTAP planning area includes 16,619,652 acres of land, over 9 million of which is state land and over million acres within three Legislatively Designated Areas: The Tanana Valley State Forest, Minto Flats State Game Refuge, James Dalton LDA. The 1985 TBAP encompasses a much greater area, consisting of 22,716,001 acres of land within the planning area.

The 1985 Tanana Basin Area Plan needs to be revised because it is outdated and it is necessary to produce a comprehensive guiding document for land management decisions based on current land ownership, land use patterns, and more recent resource information. Currently, land use decisions are being made based on the 1985 area plan and numerous plan amendments that have been developed to accommodate for changes in land use patterns and resource development, which has been a costly and time consuming process for the state.

The overall management themes of the YTAP are not significantly different from the original TBAP. Wildlife Habitat, Mining and Forestry are still recognized as the predominant land classifications for the area. The distribution of those resources has shifted since the 1980's and those changes are reflected in the YTAP land classifications.

The land status in the TBAP area has changed significantly over the past 25 years. There is land classified in TBAP that is not classified in YTAP due to land status changes. Large areas of selected land have been conveyed to the state and native corporations or relinquished by the state. Land has been conveyed out of state ownership to municipalities, mental health trust, universities, or sold to private individuals. Current land status is reflected on YTAP plan maps.

The TBAP had rather specific management guidelines, whereas the YTAP has more flexible guidelines. In TBAP, there are acreage limits and quotas for Agriculture and Settlement areas. The YTAP identifies areas that are appropriate for Agriculture or Settlement, but does not specify design requirements or a quota for the amount of acreage that should be disposed off within a land disposal area. The TBAP included detailed information regarding Transportation and design information. The transportation information in YTAP is focused on existing road systems and public access orientation. Detailed guidelines for grazing, remote cabins, trapping cabins and wetlands are also not included in YTAP, since most are covered by administrative, statutory or more current regulatory processes.

Both plans reflect a multiple use land management approach, however the approach is different. In TBAP, multiple land uses are provided for through the utilization of multiple land classifications for each management unit, sometimes with five or more designations. There are many small management units, with similar management intent within the same geographic area. YTAP provides for multiple uses through the management intent for each management unit rather than multiple land classifications. Land classifications are specific to a predominant

resource in each unit, with other significant resources identified in the management intent. In YTAP, many of the smaller management units from TBAP have been merged into larger units to provide cohesive management intent for a given geographic area.

The prevalence of Habitat is still acknowledged in YTAP, however the land recommended for Wildlife Habitat classification has shifted to focus on areas that are significant to habitat life cycles such as areas where: calving, wintering, nesting and molting occur. Nearly 900,000 acres of land that was classified for Wildlife Habitat in TBAP, is recommended for a Water Resources classification due to the hydraulic values of wetland complexes. Although there is a wetlands management guideline in TBAP, no land is classified for Water Resources. There is land co-classified for Coal and Habitat in YTAP, although there is no land classified for Coal in TBAP, even though extensive coal resources exist in the Healy area.

There is a notable decrease of land classified for Public Recreation in YTAP in comparison to TBAP. In TBAP, Public Recreation was a common co-classification. In YTAP, public recreation is viewed as an appropriate use throughout the planning area, however, only areas of concentrated public recreation are recommended for the Public Recreation classification.

The most significant difference between TBAP in YTAP is how management units are classified. In YTAP, classifications are focused on the primary resource within each management unit. There is a maximum of two classifications in YTAP, whereby TBAP included up to five or more classifications for each management unit, often with competing resources or interests. This should improve our understanding of how the land should be managed.

The land classifications for each management unit in YTAP reflect only those uses that are considered compatible by the state. In YTAP there are no management units that are co-classified for both Settlement and Agriculture because they are competing interests. Land disposal areas are classified for Settlement or Agriculture. There are also no areas recommended for co-classifications of Wildlife Habitat in land disposal areas. There are no Forestry and Mining co-classifications in YTAP.

The shift in distribution of land classifications is reflected on the YTAP plan maps and the changes in acreages are reflected on the attached table

YTAP and TBAP ACREAGE COMPARISON
(Reflects TBAP Land Classifications located within the YTAP Plan Boundary)

<u>Classification</u>	1986		2012		<u>Upland Difference</u>	<u>Shoreland Difference</u>	<u>% Land Change</u>	<u>% Plan Change</u>
	<u>Upland Acreage</u>	<u>Shoreland Acreage</u>	<u>Upland Acreage</u>	<u>Shoreland Acreage</u>				
AGR	199,489		195,469		-4,020	0	-0.04%	-0.02%
COM	36		0		-36	0	0.00%	0.00%
FOR	365,436		358,593		-6,843	0	-0.08%	-0.04%
HST	90		124		34	0	0.00%	0.00%
MAT	13		2,425		2,412	0	0.03%	0.01%
MIN	1,069,119		1,293,612		224,493	0	2.48%	1.35%
OTE	3,317		0		-3,317	0	-0.04%	-0.02%
PUR	1,538,325		743,073	110,345	-795,252	110,345	-8.66%	-4.78%
PVR	1,040		0		-1,040	0	-0.01%	-0.01%
RMG	1,826,294		2,442,939		616,645	0	6.80%	3.71%
RSD	321		0		-321	0	0.00%	0.00%
RSU	1,498		147,086		145,588	0	1.61%	0.88%
STL	566,673		619,864		53,191	0	0.59%	0.32%
SUPER	283		0		-283	0	0.00%	0.00%
UTL	1,011		0		-1,011	0	-0.01%	-0.01%
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WHB	5,964,857		4,962,137	110,345	-1,002,720	110,345	10.92%	-6.03%
WRR	0		897,448		897,448	0	9.90%	5.39%
COL	0		74729		74729	0	0.82%	0.45%