

CHAPTER 2

Areawide Land Management Policies

INTRODUCTION	2-1
FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT	2-3
FOREST RESOURCES	2-6
HERITAGE RESOURCES.....	2-8
RECREATION	2-10
RESORT DEVELOPMENT	2-15
SHORELANDS, TIDELANDS, AND SUBMERGED LANDS	2-29
STREAM CORRIDORS.....	2-32
SUBSURFACE RESOURCES	2-34
TRAILS	2-36
WATER	2-38

Chapter 2

AREAWIDE LAND MANAGEMENT POLICIES



Forest glade near Winner Creek

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents land management policies for each of the major resources or land management concerns affected by the plan. These policies apply to state land throughout the region, regardless of the land use designation.

The policies in this chapter consist of goals and management guidelines. Goals are the general condition the department is trying to achieve, and guidelines are specific directives that will be applied to land and water management decisions as resource use and development occur.

Some policies in the plan, such as those modified by the terms “feasible and prudent”, “feasible”, and “should” are written to allow exceptions if the condition in the policy are met. For more information, please refer to the definitions of these terms in Appendix A, and also to *Procedures for Plan Review and Changes* in Chapter 4.

CONSTITUTIONAL GOALS

The Alaska constitution sets forth the fundamental principle that guides land management for state land. It says, in part, that

“It is the policy of the State to encourage the settlement of its land and the development of its resources by making them available for maximum use consistent with the public interest.”

“The legislature shall provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the State, including land and waters, for the maximum benefit of its people.”

“The legislature may provide for the leasing of, and the issuance of permits for exploration of, any part of the public domain or interest therein, subject to reasonable concurrent uses.”

“Free access to the navigable or public waters of the State...shall not be denied..., except that the legislature may by general law regulate and limit such access for other beneficial uses or public purposes”.

Free public access to state land is an important goal that applies equally to all state land regardless of geographic location. Included in the idea of free public access is a concept called the “public trust doctrine”. The public trust doctrine means the state has a special responsibility to make sure that state-owned tidelands, shorelands and submerged lands are available to the public for navigation, commerce, recreation, and other related uses.