

Management Unit 2

Crow Pass

BACKGROUND

The Crow Pass Management Unit includes 12,300 acres of state selected land in the Crow Creek valley, including Crow Pass. This management unit was selected as part of the state's National Forest Community Grant land entitlement and is currently part of the Chugach National Forest. Within this management unit are inholdings of private residential land and patented mining claims. The management unit is bounded on the west and north by the Chugach State Park, to the east by Chugach National Forest, and to the south by state and municipal lands.

This management unit consists of two subunits:

Subunit 2a Subunit 2a includes land at higher elevations that is adjacent to Chugach State Park.

Subunit 2b Subunit 2b includes land along Crow Creek Road and surrounding the active federal mining claims.

Most of the land within this management unit is steep alpine terrain with high avalanche danger. The higher elevations provide high value habitat for Dall sheep and mountain goats.

This management unit is heavily used for recreation. The Crow Pass Trail is one of the most heavily used trails in the state, and provides access to icefields, early and late season skiing, and mountaineering. This management unit is noted for its outstanding scenery.

There has been considerable historic mining activity in the Crow Creek valley. The valley has been the only important gold-producing stream on the north side of Turnagain Arm, producing more than 40,000 ounces of gold. Most of this gold was produced in the early 1900's at the Crow Creek placer mine in the lower valley, and at the Monarch lode mine near Crow Pass.



Forest along Crow Creek Road

Many historic sites and relics exist in this management unit. The Crow Creek Mine is a well-preserved historic landmark, and many historic remains and old mine workings can be found along Crow Creek and Crow Pass Trail.

Currently the only producing mines in the valley are the Crow Creek Mine and the Girdwood Mining Company's placer mine near the Crow Pass trailhead, which is located on patented mining claims. There may be high potential for small-scale hardrock mining operations at the sites of the old Jewel and Monarch mines. There are currently 29 existing federal claims within this management unit.

MANAGEMENT INTENT

State land in this management unit will be retained in public ownership. Subunit 2a is recommended for addition to Chugach State Park, and interim management by the Division of Land will be consistent with adjacent state park management. Subunit 2b will be managed for multiple use, with recreation and wildlife habitat as the primary uses. Management of this unit will consider the high value Dall sheep and mountain goat habitat, high scenic values, and historic resources.

Most of this management unit will be open to mineral entry. Because of the historic and existing mineral activity in the Crow Pass area, this plan recognizes that mineral development and high levels of recreational activity may have to coexist along portions of the Crow Pass Trail. Mineral development within this management unit will be conducted in such a manner that will enable the continued high recreational use of the Crow Pass area. However, recreational management will not preclude the use of the Crow Pass Trail for access to mineral resources.

A portion of this management unit, within sections 27, 33, & 34, T11N 2E SM, may be conveyed to the Municipality of Anchorage as part of their municipal entitlement. Please see *Municipal Selections* in Chapter 4.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Subunit 2a

This subunit is recommended for addition to Chugach State Park. Interim management by the Division of Land should be consistent with adjacent state park lands. The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation will be consulted before issuing any land use authorizations within this subunit.

Subunit 2b

The Divisions of Land, Mining & Water Management, and Parks and Outdoor Recreation should develop a joint management agreement for this subunit. This agreement will allow for mining activity while maintaining and enhancing recreational opportunities, and will provide a mechanism by which conflicts can be resolved. The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation will be responsible for the management of recreational activities, including the Crow Pass Trail, the Crow Pass Cabin, and the Crow Pass Trailhead. The Division of Mining & Water Management will be responsible for managing mining activities. The U.S. Forest Service may have to be involved in the joint management agreement if mining activity takes place on federal mining claims.

Commercial recreation activities and leasing will be allowed within Subunit 2b if consistent with the joint management agreement.

State lands within sections 27, 33, & 34, T11N 2E SM, will be closed to mineral entry by an existing mineral order because of conflicts with potential resort development in the Glacier/Winner Creek area. This closure is in effect until ten years from the date of conveyance of this land to the state, at which time the land may be re-opened to mineral entry if resort development is not likely to occur (see *Mineral Orders*, Chapter 4).

LAND USE SUMMARY CHART

Management Unit 2: Crow Pass

| Subunit | Surface Land Use Designation | Subsurface | Prohibited Surface Use | Comments |
|---|--|--|------------------------|--|
| 2a Adjacent to Chugach State Park 5,500 acres | Public recreation, Wildlife habitat | Open* | Land disposals*** | State selected; Recommended for addition to Chugach State Park |
| 2b Crow Creek Road 6,800 acres | Public recreation, Wildlife habitat | Open, except for Sections 27,33 & 34** | Land disposals*** | State selected; Part of this subunit may be conveyed to the Municipality of Anchorage |

*Will be closed to mineral entry when added to Chugach State Park.

**Closed to mineral entry for 10 years from date of conveyance of land to state.

***Land disposals are disposals of state land to private ownership as authorized by AS 38.05.057 (disposal of land by lottery), AS38.08 (homesites), and AS 38.09 (homesteads). For the purposes of this plan, land disposals do not include leasing, and do not preclude transfer of state land to another agency or municipality.