

## **Region 13: Ugashik Lakes**

### **Summary of Resources and Uses in the Region**

#### **Region Boundary**

Region 13 includes the uplands on a portion of the Alaska Peninsula that includes the Ugashik Lakes and the area eastwards to the boundary of the Lake and Peninsula Borough (Map 3-13). The Region is bounded on the west and north by Region 12, on the east by the Kodiak Island Borough. The southern boundary is generally along the Dog Salmon River corridor. There are no communities in the Region. Except for navigable waterbodies and three sections, there are no other state-owned or selected uplands in Region 13.

#### **State Lands: Ownership and Acreage**

State-owned navigable waterbodies, notably Upper and Lower Ugashik Lakes, dominate the western one-quarter of the Region. Much of the remainder is in Federal ownership and within the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge. Native ownership of land is concentrated southwest of Lower Ugashik Lake between the Ugashik River and the Dog Salmon River. The plan applies to 1,541 acres of state-owned uplands. The plan also applies to state-owned shorelands (acreages of shorelands have not been calculated).

#### **Physical Geography**

Region 13 is within the Alaska Peninsula ecological province and encompasses some well dissected but rugged terrain. Drainage is predominantly westward towards Bristol Bay. The principal drainages are the Ugashik Lakes and tributaries including Ugashik, Crooked, Moore, Deer, and Black Creeks. The western portion of the Region rises to the spine of the Alaska Peninsula; thus the highest elevations are attained along the eastern boundary of the Region in the vicinity of Deer Mountain (elev. +3,000 ft.), Mount Shannon (elev. 2,055 ft.), and Mount Alai (elev. 2,850 ft.). The greatest relief occurs around Mount Peulik (elev. 4,835 ft.) where over 4,822 feet of relief is present.

#### **Climate**

The climate is characterized by cool, humid and windy weather. The average summer temperatures range from 41° to 60°; winter temperatures average 12° to 37°. Annual precipitation is 19 inches, with snowfall of 38 inches. The Ugashik Lakes are usually ice-free from June through mid-November.

## Other

Region 13 is within the Ugashik Quadrangle. It is within the boundaries of the Bristol Bay Regional Native Corporation and the Lake and Peninsula Borough.

## Access

Access to Region 13 is limited to river or air transport. An RS 2477 trail, the Chignik Lagoon-Aniakchak River trail (RST No. 394) extends from Chignik Lagoon northeast into the Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve.

## Resources and Uses

**Cultural and Historic.** The state Office of History and Archeology lists nine sites in Region 13; six of these are prehistoric, one is historic, and two are of mixed origin. Most of the historic and archeological sites occur near the Ugashik Lakes. New sites are discovered periodically and added to the Alaska Heritage Resource Database when reported.

**Economics.** Subsistence activities provide food sources, including salmon, trout, grayling, moose, caribou, and bear. Region 13 also provides fish and wildlife resources for commercial hunting and fishing recreation.

**Recreation.** Sport fishing and hunting are seasonal resources in Region 13. A few fishing lodges and hunting and fishing guide sites occur in the Region on the Ugashik Lakes. The area offers outstanding bear hunting and sport fishing for trophy-size Arctic char, grayling, and salmon. Commercial guide services are available for hunting and fishing activities. Other recreational opportunities include flightseeing, observing and photographing wildlife, hiking, boating, and camping.

**Minerals.** Only a few mineral occurrences are found in Region 13. Placer gold prospects occur on a few Creeks in the eastern portion of the area. The geology is permissive for precious and base metal deposits.

**Oil and Gas.** Region 13 has modest potential for the discovery of oil and gas. The western portion of the Region is underlain by Tertiary Milky River, Bear Lake, Stepovak, and Meshik formations. Elsewhere on the Alaska Peninsula the Milky River and Stepovak formations are known to contain oil and gas shows. Oil and gas seeps occur naturally in the Ugashik Creek-Mount Demian area where at least half a dozen are known. Four wells have previously been drilled in the Mount Demian area. Standard Oil of California drilled three wells, the McNally No. 1 in 1,925 to 510 feet, the Lathrop No. 1 in 1,923 to 500 feet, and the Lee No. 1 in 1,923 to 5,034 feet. Associated Oil Company drilled the Alaska No. 1 in 1926 to a depth of 3,033 feet.

State and Native landowners are currently pursuing a new hydrocarbon exploration licensing and leasing program. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Lake and Peninsula, Bristol Bay, and Aleutians East Boroughs have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to support oil and gas lease sales and licensing of state land in the Bristol Bay and Alaska Peninsula region (March 17, 2004). Similar MOUs are in effect between the DNR and The Aleut Regional Native Corporation and the DNR and Bristol Bay Native Corporation.

**Materials.** There are no active materials sites in the Region.

**Forestry.** There are no significant forestry resources in Region 13.

**Fish and Wildlife.** Most of Region 13 is within the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge. Important fish and wildlife resources include some of the densest concentrations of brown bears in the world. Barren-ground caribou are common, as are moose and wolves. Other mammals include wolves, wolverines, river otters, red foxes and beavers. All five species of Pacific salmon inhabit the Region, as do rainbow trout, Arctic char and, Arctic grayling.

### **Management Considerations: Local and State Plans**

A number of local, state, and federal management plans were considered in development of this plan. Local plans include the Lake and Peninsula Borough Coastal Zone Management Plan, the Lake and Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan, and the Southwest Alaska Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2003-2008. State plans include the Bristol Bay Area Plan and the Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan. Federal plans include the Alaska Peninsula and Becharof National Wildlife Refuges Draft Comprehensive Conversation Plan.

Region 13 is located within the boundaries of the Lake and Peninsula Borough. Both the Comprehensive Plan and the District Coastal Management Plan of the Lake and Peninsula Borough apply to portions of Region 13. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on economic and infrastructure development issues and does not contain specific land use standards or a land use map. The Enforceable Policies of the District Coastal Management Plan are extensive; policies affecting anadromous stream, bald eagle nests, oil and gas development, materials extraction and mining can be applicable, under certain instances, to state lands. See <http://www.alaskacoast.state.ak.us/> for more information on enforceable policies. These policies should be consulted by DNR prior to issuing an authorization.

Region 13 is also within the area covered by the Southwest Alaska Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2003-2008, which was developed for the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration by the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (July 2003). This document developed a number of goals, objectives, and strategies to facilitate and support efforts that retain and grow the region's wealth, including diversifying the economic base.

The Bristol Bay Area Plan (1984) affected all state lands in the Region until this revision. Region 13 was to be managed for fish and wildlife habitat and harvest and recreation; it also provided for the development of a transportation corridor and a port site at Wide Bay.

The Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan (ADOT/PF, November 2002) identified an Alaska Peninsula Transportation Corridor, which in general extends from South Naknek to the Chignik connecting with the communities of Egegik, Pilot Point, Ugashik, and Port Heiden. The Alaska Peninsula Corridor is an overland route linking the communities of the Alaska Peninsula from Ivanof Bay to Naknek. The key facility in this corridor is the port at Chignik, from which fuel and supplies can be disbursed to other communities via road connection. From Chignik the corridor extends west along the Gulf of Alaska coast to Perryville and Ivanof Bay. It also extends from Chignik to Chignik Lake and Chignik Lagoon, then crosses the Alaska Peninsula to Port Heiden. From Port Heiden the corridor extends north, connecting Pilot Point, Ugashik, Egegik and South Naknek, and tying into the Cook Inlet to Bristol Bay Corridor at Naknek.

### **Municipal Selections**

There are no municipal selections in Region 13.

### **Management Summary: Uplands**

The few areas of state-owned uplands in Region 13 are to be managed for a variety of multiple uses, including dispersed public recreation, mineral exploration and development, and the maintenance of sensitive wildlife habitats. Oil and gas exploration and development is also appropriate within the Region. The vast majority of lands, because they are waterbodies, are co-designated Habitat (Ha) and Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed (Rd). The few areas of state-owned or state-selected uplands are designated General Use (Gu).

### **Plan Designations and Management**

The plan designations that are used within this Region have the following management intent. The policies and management intent guidelines described in Chapter 2 affect all DNR authorizations. Refer especially to those guidelines relating to Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Harvest Areas, and Settlement. See also the descriptions of the plan designations in the first part of this Chapter; this section indicates which lands can be conveyed out of state ownership and those that must be retained.

- General Use (Gu). Within this Region, lands that contain one or more resource values, none of which is of sufficiently high value to merit designation as a primary use, and areas that are unlikely to be developed during the planning period are designated General Use. The land is to be managed for a variety of uses including protection of fish and wildlife habitat and harvest, dispersed public recreation, minerals, oil and gas

exploration and development, and protection of heritage resources. It is expected that little development will occur in these areas during the planning period, and it is not intended as a matter of policy that intensive forms of development occur in these areas other than occasionally and at specific sites. Land with this designation is to be retained in state ownership during the planning period.

- **Habitat (Ha).** Generally, this designation applies to areas of varied size that are important for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life-history stage where alteration of the habitat or human disturbance could result in the permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species. In Region 13 this designation is applied to streams and shorelands cataloged by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as anadromous (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/SARR/AWC/index.cfm?adfg=maps.interactive>). The lands are to be retained in state ownership.
- **Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed and Habitat (Co-designation).** Certain navigable waterbodies (lakes and streams) are co-designated Habitat (Ha) and Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed (Rd). Authorizations within these waterbodies should not interfere with important habitat or public recreation values. See Table 3.1 in the Navigability section of this Chapter for a listing of these streams. Note: Certain waterbodies may (only) be designated Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed, (Rd), Habitat (Ha), or General Use (Gu).

### **Specific Management Considerations**

- **Generally Allowed Uses.** The Generally Allowed Uses in 11 AAC 96.020 can occur throughout the Region.
- **Proposed Transportation Corridor.** The area identified on the Region Map as a “Potential Transportation Corridor” should be retained by the state during the planning period. Authorizations granted by DNR within or adjacent to this corridor should not preclude the future development of transportation access. Authorizations or disposals within and adjacent to this corridor should only be allowed after consultation with ADOT/PF.
- **Except for areas closed to mineral entry under existing Mineral Closing Orders, all state lands within Region 13 are open to mineral entry. No additional MCOs are recommended.**
- **Mineral Closing and Opening Orders.** This revision of the Bristol Bay Area Plan retains the mineral closing and opening orders largely implemented by DNR at the time of original plan adoption. No streams in Region 13 are affected by MCO 393.
- **Mineral Order No. 791 is an interim order (as of July 11, 2003) that precludes shallow natural gas leasing and oil and gas exploration licensing. This order has no effect on locatable minerals or leaseable minerals other than shallow natural gas leasing and oil and gas exploration licensing. The order affects all state uplands in Region 13.**

- **Retained Lands.** There are no state lands within this Region that are designated to be retained except for those that are reserved as a ‘Potential Transportation Corridor’; or designated for General Use (Gu) or Habitat (Ha).
- **Navigable Waters.** Shorelands (rivers and lakes) that are believed to be navigable are listed in Table 3.1 in the Navigability section of this Chapter. Authorizations in these waters must ensure the continued use of a waterway by the public for purposes of trade, travel, and commerce. Note: These waterbodies are assigned a plan designation of Habitat, Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed, a co-designation of Habitat and Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed, and, sometimes, General Use. Authorizations issued by DNR are to maintain the habitat and public recreation values of these waterbodies. Navigable waters in the Becharof and Alaska Peninsula NWR are co-designated (Rd, Ha).

See the Resource Allocation Table for more details on the upland management unit.

**Resource Allocation Table for Upland Management Units - Region 13**

<b>Unit # / Name</b>	<b>Acres / Designation(s)</b>	<b>MTRS</b>	<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Resources, Uses, Additional Info</b>
R13-01 Ugashik	1,712 Gu - General Use	Map 3-13 S031S049W Sec. 5, 8, 9	The unit is to be managed for a variety of resources, including oil and gas exploration and development, dispersed recreation, and the protection of fish and wildlife, including their associated habitat. Development authorizations may be appropriate subject to the protection of these resources and the requirements of Chapter 2. See especially the requirements for the protection of caribou calving areas in this Chapter. Intensive development is not expected within this unit during the planning period except occasionally and at specific locations. Most development is anticipated either within the areas designated Settlement or in areas already conveyed to private individuals or Native corporations. Unit is to be retained by the state during the planning period.	This unit consists of approximately three sections of land (the only state land in Region 13). The unit is located in the southeast corner of the Region, three to five miles south of the Ugashik River in low-lying terrain vegetated with low shrub and tundra. Moose are known to use this unit as a calving and rutting area.