

Chapter 3

Land Management Policies for Each Management Unit

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28

1 Chapter 3

2 Land Management Policies for Each Management Unit

3 Introduction

4

5 This chapter presents specific land management policy for state uplands and shorelands
6 within the planning area. Information on state lands is organized by region, of which there
7 are six: Northern (N), Northwest (O), Central (C), Glenn/Richardson (H), Wrangell/
8 McCarthy (W), and Chugach Mountains (M)

9

10 Within the planning area, there is more than 15.2 million acres of land, of which state lands
11 comprise approximately 5 million acres. This plan's recommendations apply to the areas of
12 state-owned land and state-selected land within the planning area across 6 main regions, and
13 126 management units. Most of this state land has been either tentatively approved or
14 patented to the state, and the state exercises its management authorities over this land.
15 However, nearly 800,000 acres of state selections exist within the planning area, for which
16 the state has not yet received tentative approval or patent. It is unclear how much of this
17 selected land the state will receive, and this will not be known until the adjudication of the
18 remaining selections of both the state and Native corporations are finalized by the BLM,
19 which is not expected for some time. The state exercises ANILCA 906(k) authority over the
20 area of federal land affected by state selections, which requires that ADNR concur on certain
21 actions by the Secretary of the Interior that occur on federal land selected by the state
22 including the granting of leases, licenses, permits, rights of way or easements, or developing
23 contracts affecting such conveyances.

24

25 The management requirements of this area plan do not apply to non-state lands, which
26 includes, in the context of this plan, University of Alaska lands, Mental Health Trust
27 Authority lands, federal lands not selected, or top filed by the state, and other state-owned
28 lands directly administered by the ADOT/PF or ADF&G¹.

29

30

31 Organization of Chapter

32

33 The chapter is organized into the following sections:

¹ Some lands are administered by ADF&G under Limited State Holdings (LSH). Limited State Holdings are land in which the state has a limited (less than fee) property rights interest. Examples are easements, airspace easements, clear zone easements, rights of ways, leases, fish weir permits, conservation easements, equitable servitude, etc., acquired from other source authorities, such as direct purchase, donation, escheat, condemnation, and special congressional legislation.

- 1 • Land Use Designations, which describe the general management direction for specific
2 parcels (units) of state land.
- 3 • Management Intent, which consists of an explanation of how specific units of state
4 land are to be managed. Management intent language gives additional specificity to
5 the general management direction provided by the land use designations.
- 6 • Plan Duration and Flexibility, which indicates the planning period and requirements
7 for plan amendment.
- 8 • Regional Setting.
- 9 • Regional and parcel specific management direction for state land.

12 Land Use Designations

13
14 A land use designation recognizes uses or resources that are of major importance in a
15 particular management unit. Unit designations are based on current and projected future use
16 patterns and the most significant resources identified in each unit. ADNR will manage
17 activities in the unit to encourage, develop, or protect the uses or resources for which the unit
18 is designated. Plan designations are more specific than the land use classifications required
19 under 11 AAC 55.040, and such designations are converted to land use classifications, as
20 required by 11 AAC 55.020. ADNR will manage state land according to these designations
21 and according to the equivalent land use classification.

22
23 Under AS 38.05.300, all designations are intended for multiple use. Uses other than those
24 receiving primary designations for a given unit may still be authorized if they are not
25 incompatible with the primary uses or resources for which a unit is designated. If ADNR
26 determines that a proposed use is incompatible with a primary designation, the proposed use
27 will not be authorized, or will be authorized in a manner that minimizes the incompatibility.
28 Activities exempt from this guideline include *Generally Allowed Uses* listed under 11 AAC
29 96.020. Primary designated uses cannot take precedence over disposals of interest that have
30 already occurred. Such disposals include property rights such as mining leases, land leases,
31 and rights-of-way, that once issued, are protected by the Constitution. A primary
32 designation, however, may take precedence over uses authorized by permits that were issued
33 on a revocable at will basis.

34
35 When the plan assigns a designation to a unit, the designation is accompanied by region-wide
36 management guidelines and by management intent specific to that unit. These three pieces of
37 information – designations, management guidelines, and statement of intent – must be taken
38 into consideration in determining how a parcel of state land is to be managed and in making
39 disposal and authorization decisions.

40
41 **Primary designated use.** Most management units are assigned a primary designated use,
42 which indicates, in a general way, how state land is to be used and managed (versus units
43 designated Resource Management, which do not have a designated primary use). Primary

1 designated uses shall take precedence over other uses. Generally, however, ADNR allows
2 multiple uses. ADNR initially presumes that all other uses are compatible with the primary
3 use. However, if ADNR determines that a use conflict exists and that the proposed use is
4 incompatible with the primary use, the proposed use should not be authorized, or it should be
5 modified so that the incompatibility no longer exists or the impacts from the proposed use
6 have been effectively mitigated (from 11 AAC 55.040 (c)). The plan may assign a
7 designation to ensure a future use that will best serve the public interest, even if that use is
8 not imminent.

9
10 **Co-designated use.** Where a unit has two or more designated uses, ADNR will avoid or
11 minimize conflicts between designated uses by applying the management intent statement
12 and guidelines for the unit, the regional intent, and the Chapter 2 guidelines from this plan
13 together with existing statutes, regulations, and procedures. Only those co-designations that
14 are generally complementary to or compatible with each other are included in this plan.
15 Co-designated uses should, therefore, be viewed as compatible unless specific conditions that
16 exist at the time the Department is evaluating whether to grant an authorization indicate
17 otherwise. In this plan, co-designated uses are often Habitat and Public Recreation-
18 Dispersed but may include areas co-designated Forestry and Habitat or Minerals and Habitat.
19 Within areas so co-designated, forestry and mineral exploration/development are considered
20 appropriate uses, but such activities and projects must consider their potential impacts upon
21 sensitive wildlife, fisheries and habitats, and must either avoid or mitigate significant adverse
22 impacts.

23
24 **Designations are based on resource and use inventories.** The best available information
25 has been analyzed and mapped for the following resources and uses:

- 26
- 27 • fish and wildlife habitat and harvest;
- 28 • recreation areas and facilities;
- 29 • mineral potential and material sites;
- 30 • access and transportation;
- 31 • heritage resources;
- 32 • timber resources;
- 33 • waterfront development and shoreline use.
- 34

35 In some cases, the plan assigns a designation to ensure a future use that will best serve the
36 public interest, even if that use is not imminent.

37 38 39 **Designations Used in This Plan**

40
41 **Ag – Agriculture.** Land that is agricultural or that, by reason of its climate, physical
42 features, and location, is suitable for present or future agricultural cultivation or development

1 and that is intended for present or future agricultural use. Land designated Agriculture may
2 be conveyed out of state ownership to individuals or other entities. When agricultural land is
3 disposed of, the land will be subject to agricultural covenants under AS 38.05.321 that limit
4 the use of the land for agricultural purposes.

5
6 This designation converts to a land classification of Agricultural Land as defined by 11 AAC
7 55.050.

8
9 **F – Forestry.** Land that is or has been forested and is suited for long-term forest
10 management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions. This land will
11 remain in state ownership. Approving authorizations in these areas will be conducted in
12 compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95), the
13 specific management guidelines in the Forestry section of Chapter 2, and any specific
14 requirements that might apply at the management unit level identified for a particular
15 management unit. Forest Land is to be retained by the state, although timber sales, a type of
16 disposal, are recognized as appropriate.

17
18 Certain sites within the plan area contain both habitat and forestry values and, as such, are
19 co-designated Forestry and Habitat. In these instances, while forest management projects are
20 recognized as appropriate uses, any proposed activity must take into consideration the
21 impacts upon wildlife, fisheries, and their associated habitats.

22
23 This designation converts to a land use classification of Forest Land as defined by 11 AAC
24 55.070.

25
26 **Ha – Habitat.** This designation applies to areas of varied size for fish and wildlife species
27 during a sensitive life-history stage where alteration of the habitat or human disturbance
28 could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species or that contain
29 a unique or rare assemblage of a single or multiple species of regional or statewide
30 significance.

31
32 Lands classified Habitat will remain in state ownership except for areas where a tidelands
33 conveyance to a municipality is allowed under AS 38.05.820 and AS 38.05.825. These lands
34 are not available for selection or conveyance to a municipal entity unless specifically
35 addressed in the management intent for a unit.

36
37 This designation converts to a land use classification of Wildlife Habitat Land as defined by
38 11 AAC 55.230.

39
40 **Hv – Harvest.** This designation applies to areas that are localized, traditional harvest areas
41 of limited size where alteration of habitat could permanently limit sustained yield to
42 traditional users; or areas of intense harvest where the level of harvest has or is projected to
43 reach the harvestable surplus for the resource.

1 This designation converts to a land use classification of Wildlife Habitat Land as defined by
2 11 AAC 55.230.

3
4 **Hr – Heritage Resources.** This designation applies to land where there is active
5 preservation of, or research for, significant historical, prehistoric, paleontological, or other
6 cultural values, or where there is a reason to believe that these values exist. Land designated
7 Heritage Resources will remain in state ownership.

8
9 This designation converts to a land use classification of Heritage Resources Land as defined
10 by 11 AAC 55.095.

11
12 **Ma – Materials.** Sites suitable for extraction of materials, which include common varieties
13 of sand, silt, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, pumicite, cinders, clay, and sod. This land will
14 remain in state ownership until the material on the site is no longer required for state
15 purposes (such as road construction and maintenance, materials storage, and public or state
16 facilities) after which these lands may be conveyed to municipalities. These lands cannot be
17 sold without redesignation and reclassification although some sites may be suitable for
18 settlement after material resources are exhausted. This designation applies to uplands only.

19
20 This designation converts to a land use classification of Material Land as defined by 11 AAC
21 55.120.

22
23 **Mi – Minerals.** Areas considered to have mineral potential and for which mining is
24 considered an appropriate use, are designated Minerals. See the “Explanation of Mineral
25 Designations” at the end of this list of designations. Land designated Minerals is to be
26 retained in state ownership, except as may be provided for under AS 38.05.195-.275.

27
28 This designation converts to a land use classification of Mineral Land as defined by 11 AAC
29 55.130.

30
31 **Pr – Public Facilities-Retain.** These sites are reserved for specific infrastructure to serve
32 state interests. This may include green infrastructure values open space or to function as
33 riparian buffers. Land with this designation is to remain in state ownership except that it is
34 selectable by municipalities under the special provisions of AS 38.05.810 and addressed in
35 the management intent for that unit. This designation applies to uplands only.

36
37 This designation converts to a land use classification of Reserved Use Land as defined by
38 11 AAC 55.170.

39
40 **Pt – Public Facilities-Transfer.** This designation applies to specific infrastructure to serve
41 the public at large. These sites are to be developed and managed consistent with the
42 purposes outlined in the plan for some type of public purpose. Lands designated Public
43 Facilities-Transfer are conveyable to individuals or public and charitable entities.

44

1 This designation converts to a land use classification of Settlement Land as defined by
2 11 AAC 55.202.

3
4 **Rd – Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed.** This designation applies to those areas
5 that offer or have a high potential for dispersed recreation or tourism and where desirable
6 recreation conditions are scattered or widespread rather than localized. Some level of
7 development or activities that facilitate dispersed recreation is anticipated and may include
8 remote airstrips, trapping cabins, trails, and primitive campsites among other uses and
9 activities. Permits, easements, material sales, leases, and other types of less-than-fee
10 disposals of state lands may be authorized if impacts to the identified resources can be
11 avoided or minimized through stipulations contained in an authorization. Linear
12 transportation facilities, pipelines, communication infrastructure, and other types of
13 infrastructure or developments that serve a public purpose or are in the interest of the state
14 may be authorized and must consider the values identified for the unit.

15
16 This designation can also apply to tidelands. If used as a tideland designation, it applies to
17 areas that are widely used for recreation by either commercial recreation operators or the
18 public and are usually associated with the use of fisheries or the viewing of a unique or
19 scenic area. Areas designated Public Recreation-Dispersed are to be retained in state
20 ownership except that such areas may be conveyed to municipalities under AS 29.65 or as
21 may be provided for in the management intent for specific units.

22
23 This designation converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land as defined by
24 11 AAC 55.160.

25
26 **Rp – Public Recreation and Tourism-Public Use Site.** This designation applies to areas
27 used by concentrations of recreationists or tourists compared to the rest of the planning area;
28 or areas with high potential to attract concentrations of recreationists and tourists. These
29 areas offer localized attractions, or ease of access, or developed facilities. Examples include
30 cabins, lodges, anchorages, scenic overlooks, road-accessible shore locations that are used
31 for picnicking, sports and fishing. The recreation and tourism uses for which these units are
32 designated may be either public or commercial. The primary management intent for these
33 sites is to protect the opportunity of the public to use these sites, and their public values for
34 recreation. Many of these sites require additional management attention because of the
35 public use they are now receiving. This land will remain in state ownership unless otherwise
36 noted in the management intent for the unit.

37
38 This designation converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land as defined by
39 11 AAC 55.160.

1 **Rm – Resource Management.**² Land that contains one or more resource values, none of
2 which is of sufficiently high value to merit designation as a primary use, or, because of the
3 size of the parcel, a variety of uses can be accommodated with appropriate siting and design
4 controls. This designation may also apply where there is a lack of resource, economic, or
5 other information with which to assign a specific land use designation, and/or the lack of
6 current demand implies that development is unlikely within the planning period. Areas
7 designated Resource Management may be conveyed to municipalities but must be
8 reclassified to Settlement prior to disposal to individuals. In certain instances, areas
9 designated Resource Management may be retained in state ownership; when this occurs, it is
10 noted. Most management units that are so designated are often situated in remote,
11 inaccessible areas where known natural resources are not present and for which no economic
12 demand is likely during the planning period. The management intent for such units is to
13 indicate that development is not intended although certain types of projects that provide
14 public benefits (roads, transmission lines, and the like) may be authorized. Other projects
15 may be authorized, if determined to be in the best interest of the state.

16
17 This designation converts to a land use classification of Resource Management Land as
18 defined by 11 AAC 55.200.

19
20 **Rp – Public Recreation and Tourism-Public Use Sites.** These are areas used by
21 concentrations of recreationists or tourists compared to the rest of the planning area, or areas
22 with high potential to attract concentrations of recreationists and tourists. These areas offer
23 localized attractions, or ease of access, or developed facilities. Examples include camping
24 sites, marinas, cabins, lodges, anchorages, scenic overlooks, and road-accessible shore
25 locations that are used for picnicking, sports and fishing. The recreation and tourism uses for
26 which these units are designated may be either public or commercial. The primary
27 management intent is to protect the opportunity of the public to use these sites, and their
28 resource values for recreation. This land will remain in state ownership unless otherwise
29 noted in the management intent for the management unit.

30
31 This designation converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land as defined by
32 11 AAC 55.160.

33
34 **Rs – Reserved Use.** These sites are reserved to serve state or other public interests.

35
36 This designation converts to a land use classification of Reserved Use Land as defined by
37 11 AAC 55.170.

38
39 **Sc – Settlement-Commercial.** This designation applies to uplands suitable for the sale,
40 leasing, or permitting of state lands to allow private commercial, industrial, recreational, or
41 community use. Residential use may also be appropriate in portions of an area designated

² This plan uses the term Resource Management as a designation instead of General Use. This change was made to avoid the confusion that often existed between the designation of General Use and the classification of Resource Management, which are equivalent.

1 Settlement-Commercial. This designation will generally be used for areas appropriate for
2 land offerings for industrial or commercial uses. Unsettled or unsold land will be managed
3 for uses compatible with eventual commercial or industrial activities. Land designated
4 Settlement-Commercial shall be closed to mineral entry prior to sale. This land may be
5 conveyed to municipalities and individuals.

6
7 This designation converts to a land use classification of Settlement Land as defined by
8 11 AAC 55.202.

9
10 **Se – Settlement.** This designation applies to state uplands suitable for sale, leasing, or
11 permitting to allow private recreational or residential use. This designation will generally be
12 used for areas appropriate for land offerings for residential uses. Unsettled or unsold land in
13 the unit will be managed for uses compatible with settlement. This may include uses such as
14 selling additional lots, laying out new subdivisions, identifying greenbelts through
15 subdivisions, reserving materials sites for subdivision roads and building lots, placing
16 easements on access routes, or reserving lots for community facilities and open space. Areas
17 designated Settlement shall be closed to mineral entry prior to sale. This land may be
18 conveyed to municipalities and individuals.

19
20 This designation converts to a land use classification of Settlement Land as defined by
21 11 AAC 55.202.

22
23 **Tc – Transportation Corridor.** This designation applies to land identified for the location
24 of easements and rights-of-way under AS 38.04.065(f), including transportation, pipeline, or
25 utility corridors or is under consideration for a right-of-way lease. This designation reflects
26 the need for efficient inter-regional infrastructure, the need for intra-regional access to
27 resources on state and non-state land, and consideration of the impacts of increased access on
28 resource uses. The intent is to provide a reserve of state land for the eventual development of
29 easements and rights-of-way, including transportation, pipeline, or utility corridors or other
30 linear transportation projects. As used in this plan, it refers to portions of the Glenn,
31 Richardson, and Edgerton Highways and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System but also includes
32 remnant pieces of state land adjoining these facilities. This land will remain in state
33 ownership unless otherwise noted in the management intent for the management unit.

34
35 This designation converts to a land use classification of Transportation Corridor Land as
36 defined by 11 AAC 55.205.

37
38 **Wr – Water Resources.** This designation applies to important watersheds, or portions
39 thereof, that are suitable for water sources, watershed protection, or hydropower sites. In this
40 plan, it also includes important wetland areas that may be immediately adjacent to a
41 waterbody. It is intended that this type of land will be retained in state ownership in an
42 undisturbed, natural state. Permits, easements, material sales, leases, and other types of less-
43 than-fee disposals of state lands may be authorized. The identified values for which these
44 lands are designated shall be maintained to the greatest extent practicable. If impacts to these
45 values cannot be avoided, they should be minimized through stipulations contained in an

1 authorization. Linear transportation facilities, pipelines, communication infrastructure, and
2 other types of infrastructure or developments that serve a public purpose or are in the interest
3 of the state may be authorized and must consider the values identified for the unit. Dispersed
4 recreation is recognized as a compatible use.

5
6 This designation converts to a land use classification of Water Resources Land as defined by
7 11 AAC 55.222.

10 **Explanation of Mineral Designations**

11
12 Except where state land is closed to mineral entry, ADNR will treat mining as if it is
13 compatible with the principal surface use. This is important to note because ADNR area
14 plans usually do not apply mineral resource designations to large areas. This plan does,
15 however, apply a surface designation for minerals to some uplands where resource
16 information indicates access for mineral exploration or development is likely to occur.
17 Chapter 2, Subsurface Resources, also includes additional guidelines and a summary of
18 statutes regulating mining and reclamation activities.

21 **Management Intent**

22
23 The plan provides management intent for both the resources and types of authorizations that
24 are expected to occur within the planning area for the specific management units.
25 Management intent describes how the Department intends to manage a resource or
26 management unit and may describe what is intended to occur as well as what is not intended
27 to occur. It may also identify specific management direction. Also, the plan may provide
28 management guidance for a resource without designating it. For example, the plan may
29 address the resource by providing management intent for a specific area or through areawide
30 guidelines. In addition, other state, federal, or local regulations will determine the conditions
31 for using undesignated resources.

32
33 In some cases, the management intent for a unit discourages specific uses because these uses
34 may create conflicts with designated uses. Discouraged uses may be allowed if ADNR
35 determines that the use does not conflict with the management intent, designated uses, and
36 the management guidelines. Discouraged uses include activities that should not be
37 authorized or will not be allowed if there are feasible and prudent alternatives. If ADNR
38 determines that the discouraged use conflicts with the management intent or designated uses
39 and cannot be made compatible by following the management guidelines, ADNR would
40 allow it only through a plan amendment.

41
42 In some cases, the plan may also identify prohibited uses. These are uses that have
43 significant conflicts with other uses or resources and will not be permitted without a plan
44 amendment. Prohibited uses are not often identified, because the plan seeks to minimize land
45 use conflicts through plan guidelines and intent rather than through prohibitions, but in those

1 instances where a prohibited use occurs, it is noted in the management intent in a
2 management unit. In these instances, a prohibited use cannot be authorized without a plan
3 amendment.
4

5 Management intent statements for each unit refer only to state management of state land.
6 While these statements accommodate certain proposed uses on state lands, there is no
7 guarantee that other regulatory agencies will issue permits necessary for the proposed use.
8 All proposed development uses referenced in the management intent statements are assumed
9 to employ best management practices in siting and operating the proposed use.
10

11 **Disposal or Retention in State Ownership.** Certain land use classifications, by statute,
12 allow land to be conveyed to municipalities under the municipal entitlement program. The
13 same statute identifies those land classifications that may not be conveyed to such entities.
14 Another portion of statute (AS 38.04.015) identifies the general public interests in retaining
15 areas of state land in public ownership. These principles were applied in developing the
16 recommendations for the retention of state land that are identified for specific management
17 units.
18

19 In this plan, the land use designation is the general indicator of whether land should be
20 retained in state ownership³ or made available for disposal. Units designated Habitat, Public
21 Facilities-Retain, Forestry, Minerals, and Public Recreation-Dispersed are intended to be
22 retained in state ownership. Units designated Settlement, Public Facilities-Transfer, or
23 Agriculture are considered appropriate for disposal. Units designated Materials, Resource
24 Management, or Public Recreation-Dispersed, may be appropriate for conveyance out of
25 state ownership under certain conditions. In addition, units already under management
26 agreements with other state agencies are usually not available for conveyance. Shorelands
27 must also be retained in state ownership unless law requires conveyance or the conveyance is
28 to a political subdivision of the state, and such conveyances are subject to the Public Trust
29 Doctrine, described at the end of this chapter. Finally, the Mineral Estate must always be
30 retained by the state; the only exception being conveyances to other state agencies or entities.
31

32 There are some units with management intent that precludes disposal, although the
33 designation and classification might otherwise allow it. When this occurs, this restriction is
34 noted in the management intent statement specific to the management unit in the Resource
35 Allocation Table. Such units are intended to be retained in state ownership and a plan
36 amendment is required to vary from this guideline. This includes units already under

³ Note to adjudicators: The recommendations on retaining state land are related to the conveyance of land out of state ownership. This usually involves the Land Estate and sometimes the Fee Estate. [ADNR is required to retain the Mineral Estate except for conveyances to other state agencies (AS 38.05.125)]. Many of the authorizations issued by ADNR are in the form of permits and similar authorizations that are temporary in nature. The plan does not view these as permanent disposals of interest and therefore such actions do not contradict the requirement for state land to be retained, that is stated in the definition of plan designations or the management intent of specific management units. Examples of such authorizations would include guide camps, man camps, boat storage facilities, equipment staging, and the like. Within the context of this plan, the issuance of easements also will not contradict the requirement to retain land in state ownership.

1 management by another state agency or that contain certain unique or sensitive uses or
2 resources that merit retention by the state.

3
4 **Shorelands.** ADNR will provide reasonable access across state shorelands to upland
5 owners. Upland access across state shorelands, including developed access facilities, may be
6 allowed within all land use designations where ADNR determines the proposed facilities are
7 consistent with the management intent and applicable guidelines of the plan. However, state
8 shoreland designations do not give the public access rights to adjacent private uplands.
9 ADF&G Habitat Division requires a Fish Habitat Permit if the shorelands are within an
10 anadromous or potentially anadromous stream.

11 12 13 **Management Guidelines**

14
15 Most state lands will be managed for multiple uses. Exceptions are lands that will be offered
16 for private lease or ownership, recreation sites that are less than 640 acres, and certain other
17 areas that have unique habitat or public recreation values. When used, management
18 guidelines specify requirements for the use of or development within a management unit.
19 Apart from this, the plan establishes management guidelines in order to allow various uses to
20 occur without serious conflicts. Management guidelines can direct the timing, amount, or
21 specific location of different activities to make the permitted uses compatible. For example,
22 the plan provides guidelines that require that land disposals must be designed to protect
23 public access and recreational opportunities, while still permitting the land to be conveyed
24 out of state ownership.

25 26 27 **Duration and Flexibility of Plan**

28
29 This plan guides land uses for the **next 20 years or until revised**, subject to periodic reviews,
30 for areas with designations involving settlement, industrial or commercial uses, or other
31 forms of economic uses including material extraction or uses related to community or
32 recreational development. Designations related to habitat, public recreation (dispersed),
33 forestry, and minerals do not have a specific planning horizon since these uses are to be
34 retained by the state. The area plan is intended to guide the management of land within the
35 latter areas until the plan is formally revised. In some instances, areas designated Resource
36 Management may not be appropriate for development within the planning period and, if so,
37 this is indicated in the management intent language.

38
39 The land use designations shown on the maps in this chapter are intended to be flexible.
40 ADNR may permit uses not originally designated if ADNR determines they are consistent
41 with the management intent for the unit and consistent with applicable management
42 guidelines. However, the decision document must provide an explanation and justification
43 for this.

1 Boundaries of land use designations shown on the following maps may be modified through
2 implementation activities, such as site planning or disposal, as long as modifications adhere
3 to the intent of the plan and follow the procedures described in Chapter 4 under the section
4 Types of Plan Changes.
5
6

7 **Glossary**

8

9 Definitions of terms used frequently in the plan are found in the Glossary, Appendix A.
10
11

12 **Plan Structure**

13

14 **Plan Regions**

15

16 The planning area, consisting of more than 5.2 million acres of state land, is divided into six
17 principal regions. Regions are geographic areas characterized by large blocks of state land,
18 often contiguous to each other, and located within an area with distinctive characteristics.
19 They are often demarcated by major topographic or hydrologic features and infrastructure.
20 The six regions contain state-owned and state-selected land, which is the primary focus of
21 area plans. The regions have been modified from the 1986 Copper River Basin Area Plan.
22

23 The six principal regions are: Northern, Northwest, Central, Glenn/Richardson,
24 Wrangell/McCarthy, and Chugach Mountains. The Northern Region contains nearly
25 1.4 million acres, of which nearly 990,000 acres are state-owned, and is comprised of large
26 blocks of state land that cover nearly the entire area with smaller blocks of state-selected
27 parcels along its western boundary. The Alaska range stretches into the northern and
28 northeastern portions of the region where mining claim activity exists. Three notable rivers,
29 the Gulkana, Gakona, and Chistochina rivers flow southward into the Copper River. The
30 largest community in this region is Mentasta Lake located in the far northeast corner of the
31 region.
32

33 The Northwest region contains over 1.4 million acres, of which approximately 980,000 acres
34 are state-owned with state-selected lands concentrated primarily in the north and western
35 portions of the region. The Gulkana River traverses the region just prior to joining with the
36 Copper River. The Lake Louise East remote recreational cabin staking area as well as two
37 land sale projects in the Crosswind Lake area are in the southern part of the region.
38

39 The Central region is comprised of over 960,000 acres of which nearly 630,000 acres are
40 state-owned. Most state-owned lands are in the western, central, and southeast portions of
41 the region with state-selected land located in proximity to the communities of Glennallen and
42 Copper Center. The majority of the planning areas forestry resources are found in this
43 region. Two large lakes are in this region, Tazlina Lake and Klutina Lake, with a large
44 project area established along the banks of Klutina Lake.

1 The Glenn/Richardson region contains over 900,000 acres of which the state owns
2 approximately 330,000 acres. The region is approximately five-mile-wide corridor that
3 extends approximately 2.5 miles on either side of the centerline of the Richardson, Glenn,
4 Tok Cutoff, and Edgerton highways. In areas where the Trans-Alaska Pipeline is within this
5 corridor, the region boundary is extended approximately 2.5 miles from the center of the
6 pipeline. On the Edgerton highway past Chitina and on the Nebesna road, the corridor is
7 reduced to a width of approximately 500 feet (250' each side of the centerline). The Copper
8 River runs through this region and the communities of Glennallen, Copper Center, Gulkana,
9 Gakona, Chistochina, Kenny Lake, and Chitina are all within this region. There are multiple
10 land sale and agricultural land sale projects located here as well.

11
12 The Wrangell/McCarthy region is isolated within the boundaries of the Wrangell St. Elias
13 National Park and Preserve. This region is the largest at more than 9.2 million acres but
14 contains just over 340,000 acres of state-owned land. The region contains expansive alpine
15 and glacial peaks that makes much of the area rugged and inaccessible. The two largest
16 population centers within this region are McCarthy and Nabesna.

17
18 The Chugach Mountain region is a popular recreation destination. It contains more than
19 1.2 million acres of which nearly 980,000 acres are state-owned land. Several scattered and
20 smaller rivers and lakes occupy the region, including Klutina River and Tonsina Lake. The
21 Thompson Pass Special Use Area is within this region.

22
23 This plan provides plan designations, management intent, and, sometimes, management
24 guidelines for each of the management units in the six regions. Additionally, area plans
25 provide management guidance for federal land that is selected by the state for potential
26 conveyance in fulfillment of the state's land entitlement from the federal government.

27
28 Note: The small state recreation sites that are situated within the plan boundary contain land
29 administratively withdrawn from the public domain and are not Legislatively Designated
30 Areas. These sites, which are small and scattered within the six regions, are included as
31 management units in each of the regions. In general, these units are to be managed for public
32 recreation purposes consistent with DPOR requirements for State Recreation Sites.

33 34 35 **Management Units**

36
37 In this plan, portions of state uplands and shorelands have been separated into smaller
38 geographic units called management units. State resource management is specific to this
39 level. Management units may be large or small⁴ but usually have generally similar attributes.
40 They may be specific legal management units, like a tract within a residential subdivision, or
41 they might be a discrete area of state land affected by a management agreement that is to be
42 administered for a public purpose, such as a communication site, a school, or airport.

⁴ Some areas can be over 800,000 acres and some, less than one acre in size.

1 All units have a discrete identifying number (unit number). These are depicted on the plan
2 maps and are included in the Resource Allocation Table specific to each region. This
3 number provides a cross-reference between the plan maps and the tables containing
4 information about the management unit. The Tables contains information on management
5 unit designation, management intent, management guidelines, and management unit
6 resources and uses.

7
8 Management unit numbers consist of a two-part identifier where the first part is an alpha
9 character that indicates the Region in which the unit is located, and the second part is the unit
10 number. Generally, management units are numbered from north to south and from west to
11 east within the regions. For this plan, the following convention is applied: N represents the
12 Northern region; O, the Northwest; C, the Central; H, the Glenn/Richardson; W, the
13 Wrangell/McCarthy, and M, the Chugach Mountains. For example, a parcel in the Northern
14 region has the identifying number N-1. Shorelands, which in this plan are the major rivers,
15 are addressed under the Navigable Rivers and Lakes section later in this chapter.

16 17 18 **Region Descriptions**

19
20 The regions are described in this section of the plan. These descriptions are necessarily
21 generalized and indicate only the general features or characteristics of an area and only give
22 an overview of how the region is to be managed by the Department.

23
24 Included in these descriptions for the major regions are the following:

25
26 General: This component provides a description of the planning boundaries, overall acreage,
27 number of communities in a region, and related geographic information.

28
29 Amount and Distribution of State Land: The distribution of state-owned and state-selected
30 lands within the region is explained.

31
32 Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land: Access, resources and uses of state-owned and
33 state-selected land are described in this component. Access is described in terms of major
34 road access but also the type of access that exists more generally within a region, including
35 the types of access methods (i.e., snowmachines, all-terrain vehicles, etc.). Resources and
36 uses include descriptions of recreation uses, settlement, habitats, water resources, minerals,
37 agriculture, and timber resources, if present.

38
39 Management Planning Constraints: Local, state, and federal land and resource plans
40 affecting the management unit are identified, if considered applicable to state land
41 management.

42
43 Management Summary: This section describes the general way that state land is to be
44 managed within the region. This generalized description provides an indication of how the
45 major resources and land uses are to be managed within the region and also provides an

1 indication of where this is to occur. Detailed land management is provided at the
2 management unit level, described in the Resource Allocation Tables of this Chapter.

3 4 5 **Plan Maps**

6
7 There are 16 plan maps that cover the Copper River Basin Area Plan. These maps indicate
8 the plan boundary (external boundary of the area plan), the boundaries of the six regions, and
9 the boundaries of the individual management units.

10
11 The plan maps show land ownership, unit numbers, and plan designations. It should be
12 reemphasized that while the land use designations provide the general management intent for
13 each unit, management intent and guidelines (both the management unit and areawide) must
14 be considered for a complete explanation of the management policy and requirements
15 affecting particular units. This is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the
16 management intent contained in the area plan as it pertains to a specific unit. The
17 management intent and guidelines contained in Chapter 2 are particularly critical and must be
18 consulted when adjudicating decisions affecting individual parcels of state land.

19 20 21 **Land Status Depicted in Plan Maps**

22
23 The maps in this chapter are not intended to be detailed land ownership maps. Instead, they
24 are a representation of state and federal land records current to the date of plan preparation.
25 Caution should be used when using these maps since there may be inaccuracies in the source
26 data or constraints imposed through the Geographic Information System. Land status for
27 upland parcels, including private, Native corporation, municipal, and federal land are derived
28 from the Department's GIS land status coverage. This information is generalized and for this
29 reason the land status for a particular land area can be misleading. For complete information,
30 consult the land records of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Department of
31 the Interior Bureau of Land Management, and Ahtna, Inc. the Alaska Regional Native
32 Corporation for the region.⁵ Because of the presence of Mental Health Trust land and
33 University land, it is also necessary to consult these entities at times.

34
35 The plan maps show general patterns of land ownership by color. This includes the various
36 types of state land (general state land, Mental Health Trust land, University of Alaska, and
37 lands under management agreement to another state agency) as well as private lands.
38 However, because of the way GIS maps are created, which entails a decision hierarchy on
39 what land status to represent in priority sequence, the colors that represent an ownership

⁵ Ahtna, Incorporated is one of 13 Alaska Native Regional Corporations established by Congress under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. The Ahtna region covers the entire Copper River Basin Area Plan planning area; encompassing the entire Copper River Basin bordered by the Alaska Range to the north, the Canadian border to the east, Denali National Park to the west, and the Chugach Mountains to the south.

1 pattern may not accurately describe all of the land uses that may occur in a given area and
2 may not coincide with the actual pattern of such ownership. The Department has tried to
3 make general land status on the plan maps as accurate as possible, but the ownership patterns
4 of other entities may be incorrect.

5
6 The location of state-owned or state-selected parcels is derived from information in the
7 Department's land status records and the federal Master Title Plat. Both the status and
8 spatial boundaries of these parcels are accurately represented at the time of plan preparation
9 (2021). However, because state land status changes with time, the same caution exists for
10 these areas as for areas of non-state land. Both color and a distinct external boundary line
11 indicate areas of state and state-selected land. If there is a conflict between the land status
12 depicted by color and that indicated by a boundary line, the boundary line is correct. This
13 line supersedes the color representations of land ownership.

14 15 16 **Resource Allocation Table**

17
18 Resource Allocation Tables provide information on specific parcels and are related to the
19 plan maps through the unit number. The table includes the land use designation and the land
20 management intent for each specific upland or tideland units. Essentially, the Tables detail
21 the generalized description of state management intent included under the regional
22 Management Summary for specific management units.

23
24 The tables are organized by region and for each unit it gives the unit identification number,
25 size expressed in acreage, and associated map. Also included is a description of the
26 resources and uses of a parcel, the designation(s), management intent, and management
27 guidelines.

28
29 More specifically, the policies and resource information contained in the tables include:

30
31 Unit number: Each parcel of state land has a unit number. Units are preceded with a letter
32 indicating the region that they are situated within; see previous description of Management
33 Units.

34
35 Plan Designation: Land use designations indicate the primary designation or co-designation
36 uses and resources for each unit. Although most units are only affected by a single
37 designation (primary), two compatible plan designations (termed co-designations) are
38 sometimes specified. Where co-designations have been used, the uses reflected in the
39 designations are recognized to be compatible and complementary to each other.

40
41 Acreage: The approximate acreage in each unit is indicated.

42
43 Map(s): The map number of the associated map(s) is indicated.

44

1 Management Intent: This column indicates the management direction for a specific parcel.
2 It is consistent with the recommended designation but includes more information on how
3 state land is to be managed. In some small-sized parcels, the management intent is likely to
4 be brief since the designation itself is often sufficient to indicate the management intent.
5 This is not usually the case with sensitive parcels or large parcels, and, in these instances, the
6 management intent statement is critical to an understanding of how the various resources
7 within the parcel are to be managed. This section may also indicate if the parcel is to be
8 retained in state ownership or if it is appropriate for transfer to a city, borough, non-profit
9 entity, or the public (see the discussion in chapter 2 regarding plan designations and
10 determinations to retain or dispose of state land for more detail). It often also describes those
11 parcel resources that must be taken into consideration in land disposals, coal or mineral
12 development, forest management activities, or other forms of development or use. In some
13 instances, the development of a parcel is not appropriate during the planning period and,
14 when this occurs, this is also stated. This is usually associated with units affected by the
15 Resource Management designation since these units are often located in remote, inaccessible
16 locations and their development is not considered likely or appropriate during the planning
17 period.

18
19 Resources and Uses: This column summarizes the resources and uses for which the unit is
20 designated, and which are considered important in the unit. It also provides a generalized
21 physical description of the unit and may indicate the presence (or absence) of certain other
22 resources that are important to land management decisions. Typical among this type of
23 information is whether the parcel contains a heritage or cultural site, a significant
24 concentration of wildlife or habitat, vegetation and terrain features, the current use of the
25 parcel, the presence of RS 2477 routes, adjacent land ownership, and whether a state or local
26 land use plan affects the unit.

27

28

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2

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5

Map 3-1: Planning Area Boundary and Region Boundaries

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2