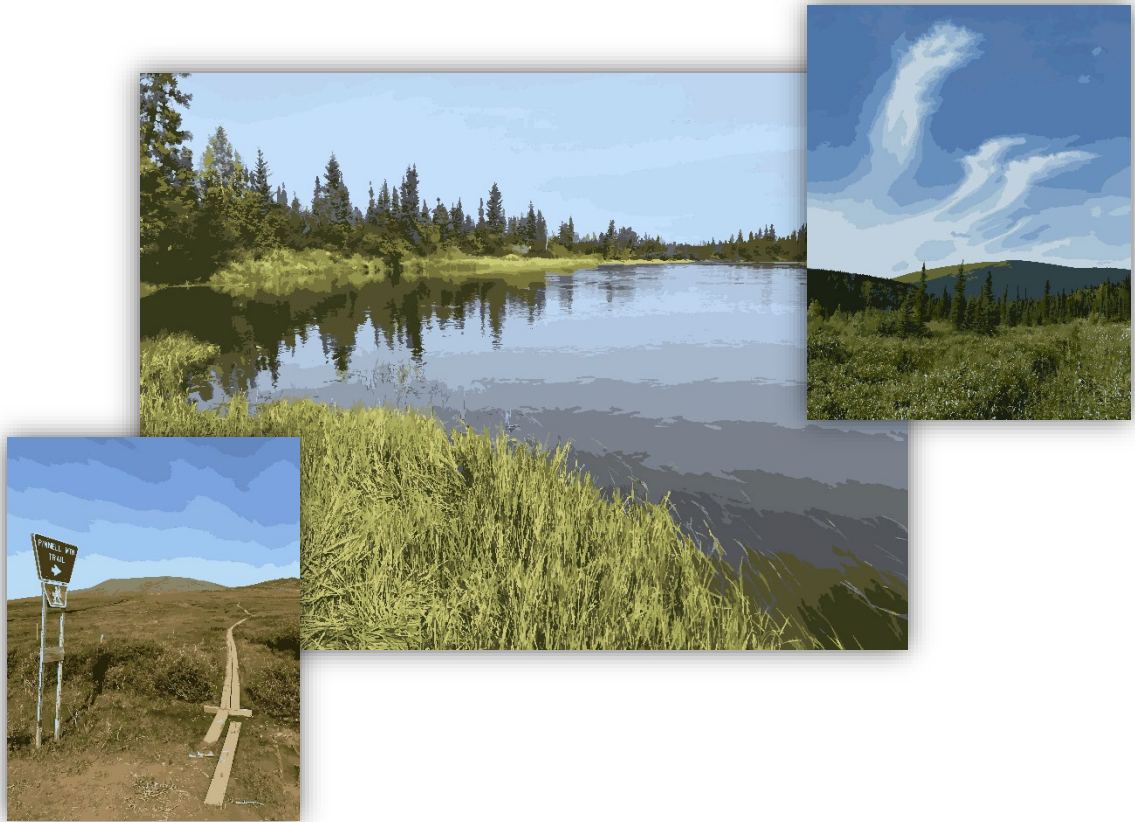


# Northeast Alaska Area Plan



**Adopted February 2026**



Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Mining, Land & Water  
Resource Assessment & Development Section



# **Northeast Alaska Area Plan**

**Adopted February 2026**



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Division of Mining, Land & Water  
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Cover Photos Courtesy of  
Rob Earl and Diana Sevier

This document has been released by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, for the purpose of informing the public about the Northeast Alaska Area Plan, at a cost of \$33.15 per copy, in Anchorage, Alaska.



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Natural Resources

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1400  
Anchorage, AK 99501-3561  
Main: 907.269-8431  
Fax: 907-269-8918

### ADOPTION OF 2026 NORTHEAST ALASKA AREA PLAN

The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources finds that the Northeast Alaska Area Plan (NEAAP) meets the requirements of AS 38.04.065 and 11 AAC 55.010-55.030 for land use plans, and hereby adopts the plan. The Department of Natural Resources will manage state land consistent with this plan.

Handwritten signature of John Crowther in blue ink.

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Crowther, Commissioner Designee  
Department of Natural Resources

2/25/2026

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Acknowledgements

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**DNR, Division of Mining, Land & Water, Resource Assessment & Development Section:** Diana Sevier, Rob Earl, Monica Alvarez, Kevin Husa, Shawana Guzenski, Ruth Booth, Gregory Larsen.

**DNR, Division of Mining, Land & Water, Land Conveyances Section:** Tim Shilling, Colin Craven.

**DNR, Division of Mining, Land & Water, Northern Regional Land Office:** Dianna Leinberger, Becky Baird, AJ Wait, Ashley Lund.

**DNR, Division of Mining, Land & Water, Mining Section:** Jesse White, Stephen Buckley, Russ Kirkham, Charles Ireys.

**DNR, Division of Mining, Land & Water, Water Section:** Jenny March, Henry Brooks.

**DNR, Division of Mining, Land & Water, Public Access Assertion & Defense:** Danny Hovancsek, Emily McDermott.

**DNR, Division of Forestry:** Trevor Dobell, Kevin Meany, Geneva Preston.

**DNR, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation:** Ian Thomas, Nikki Potter.

**DNR, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Office of History & Archaeology:** Nick Schmuck.

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**Alaska Department of Fish & Game:** Sue Goodglick, Colton Percy, Marla Carter, Brad Dunker.

**Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation:** Jessalynn Rintala, Elyssa Millard.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Introduction and Background

#### Purpose of the Plan

The role of state land use plans was established by state statute (AS 38.04.005). It is the policy of the State of Alaska “...to establish a balanced combination of land available for both public and private purposes. The choice of land best suited for public and private use shall be determined through the inventory, planning, and classification processes...”

The Northeast Alaska Area Plan (NEAAP) is the land use plan for state-owned, state-selected and top-filed lands in the Northeast part of Interior Alaska. As such, it provides the basis for management of state lands and resources and affects all authorizations issued by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The planning area is separated into four individual management regions that occupy areas with similar characteristics and management direction. For these regions the plan establishes goals, objectives, management guidelines, and land classifications with management intent that apply to all state lands.

This plan establishes a balanced combination of land available for both public and private purposes through the identification of primary uses of state lands and waters. This plan establishes policy for the Department to manage principles of multiple use and sustained yield on all public domain lands. It does not manage land uses for private, borough, Native, Mental Health Trust, University, or federal land. Because general state lands are managed for multiple use, this plan establishes guidelines that allow various uses to occur and minimize conflict.

#### Planning Area

The Northeast Alaska Area Plan includes all state-owned and state-selected uplands and shorelands within the area depicted on Map 1. The plan boundary covers approximately 37.9 million acres of land from northeast of Fairbanks north to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and stretching from the Dalton Highway east to the Canadian border. The southern border of the NEAAP plan area abuts the Yukon Tanana, Eastern Tanana, and Upper Yukon Area Plans. Major drainages within the NEAAP boundary include the Yukon, Teedriinjik (Chandalar), Porcupine, and Charley rivers.

The NEAAP directs how DNR will manage general state uplands and shorelands within the planning area. The following is a summary of the acreage to which the plan will apply:

Area	Acreage
State-owned uplands	3.1 Million
State-owned shorelands	616,546
Total State-owned Acreage	3.7 Million

**NOTE:** There are two Legislatively Designated Areas (LDA) which encompass approximately 12 million acres within the planning area. While the NEAAP establishes land classifications and management intent for state lands within the LDAs, adjudicators shall also refer to the statutes, regulations, and management plans applicable to each LDA. Refer to the LDA region description at the end of this chapter, and defined in the Glossary, for more details.

## Physiography

The Yukon Flats, a flat wetland complex centrally located in the planning area, is surrounded by the Brooks Range to the North, the White Mountains to the South, and the Ogilvie Mountains to the East. The Brooks Range spans about 700 miles with a peak elevation of 8,976 feet. The White Mountains are a 71-mile range, with a peak elevation of 3,176 feet, composed of white limestone. The Ogilvie Mountains reach into Alaska from Canada's Yukon Territory, and are characterized by their granite peaks, with a maximum elevation of 7,749 feet. Most drainage is toward the Yukon River, which generally flows northwest to Fort Yukon, before turning west and eventually emptying into the Bering Sea.

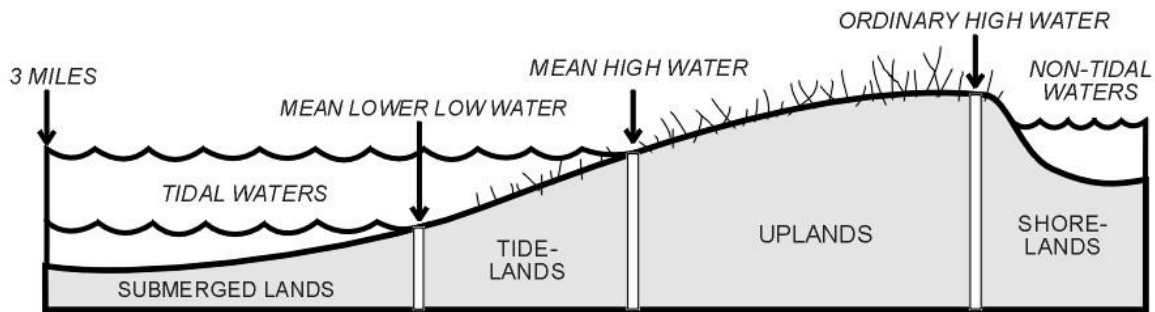
The Yukon Flats are underlain by discontinuous permafrost – some ground remains below 32 degrees Fahrenheit year-round while other areas thaw for weeks or months. Permafrost in Interior Alaska, near the planning area, has warmed by about 1 degree Fahrenheit each decade since about 1978. Thawing permafrost is more prone to erosion, excessive wetting, plasticity, and instability. The impacts of thawing permafrost may become more pronounced during the life of the planning period and may create significant landscape changes in the planning area.

## Uplands and Shorelands as Described in This Plan

Figure 1-1 depicts those areas typically owned by the state and affected by area plans. This planning area does not include tidelands or submerged lands, only that portion of the figure that depicts uplands and shorelands apply. As listed in AS 38.05.965(23), “shoreland” means land belonging to the state which is covered by nontidal water that is navigable under the laws of the United States up to ordinary high water mark as modified by accretion, erosion,

or reliction. Uplands include all other land above ordinary high water in non-tidal areas. These definitions are also found in the Glossary.

**Figure 1-1: Submerged lands, tidelands, uplands, and shorelands as described in this plan**



### Land Ownership and Land Status

The Northeast Alaska planning area consists of a mixed ownership pattern of state land, private land, Native land, and federal land; the United States is the principal landowner. There are approximately 3 million acres of state-owned uplands within this area. Since the area plan is within the unorganized borough, there are no borough lands. Table 1-1 summarizes the distribution of land ownership in the planning area.

**Table 1-1: Land Ownership Summary**

Land Owner	Acreage
State-owned uplands	3,121,017
State-owned shorelands	616,546
Federal	28,812,957
(state selected or top-filed federal lands)	(1,616,266)
Private	68,228
Native	5,288,897
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.9 M</b>

*\*Note: Plan recommendations do not apply to Native, federal, or private land.*

General Domain Land. Most state land consists of general domain land, which is governed by AS 38 statutory requirements and by associated Alaska Administrative Code (11 AAC 96). This land is to be managed for multiple use and sustained yield of the area’s renewable resources, although state land use plans can direct this management toward particular uses. While not withdrawn from the public domain, the two Legislatively

Designated Areas (LDAs) within the planning area have special management guidelines set out in statute.

*Legislatively Designated Areas.* Management requirements pertaining to the LDA:

- The James Dalton Highway LDA is managed under AS 19.40. This section of statute requires that state-owned land within five miles of the Dalton Highway right-of-way may not be disposed of, with exceptions. These exceptions include the ability to reauthorize leases that were in effect on January 1, 1994 and to allow nonresidential development within the Coldfoot development node. This statute also states that off-road vehicles are prohibited in the highway corridor, with some exceptions.
- The Arctic National Wildlife Range State Game Refuge was established under AS 16.20. This section of statute designates the area to be a game refuge. The value to the state and the nation of the unspoiled habitat and the game characteristics of the area are recognized by designating it as a state game refuge, whereas it was a Wildlife Refuge at the time that Alaska achieved statehood.

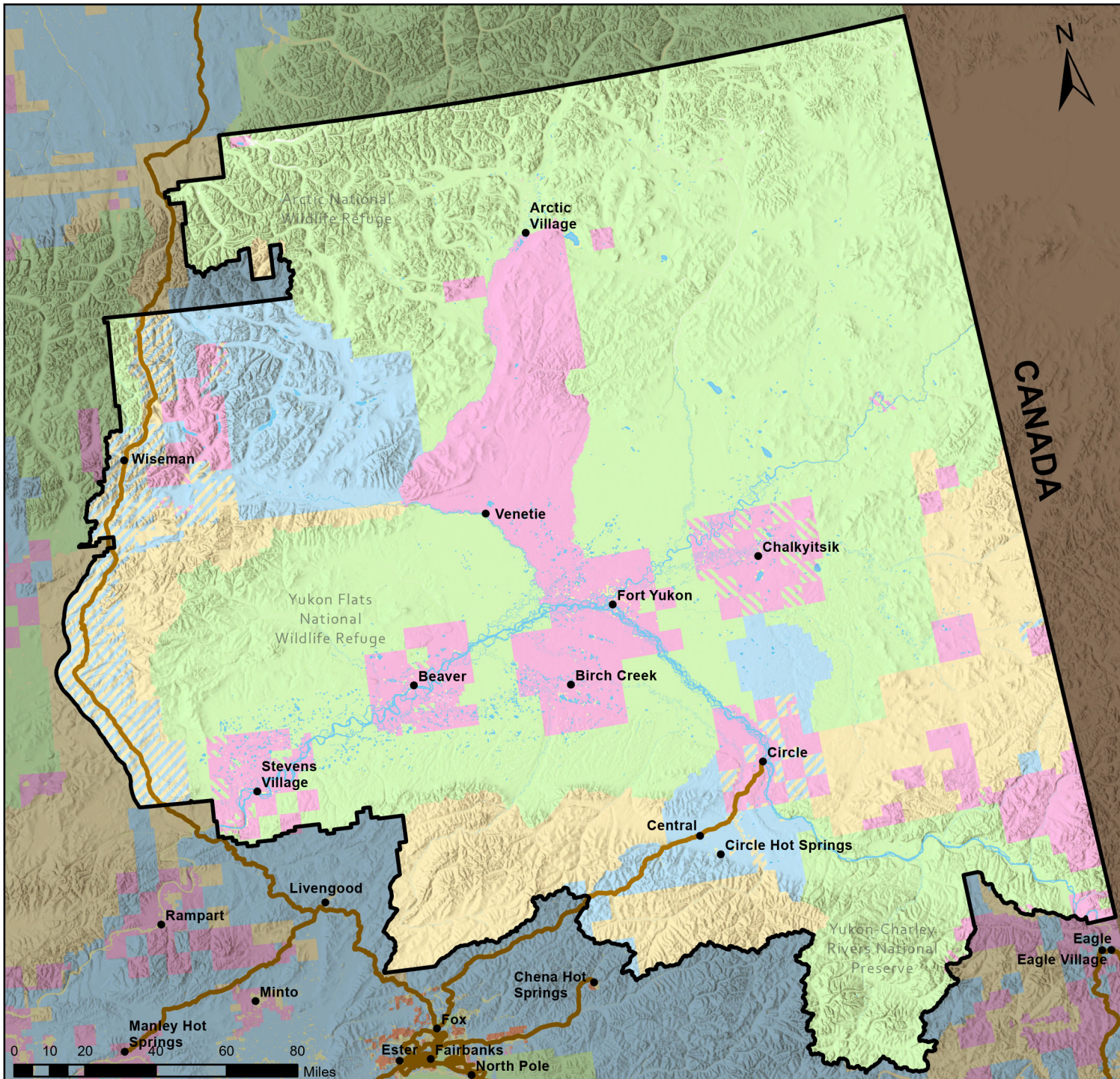
## **How the Plan is Organized**

**Chapter 1 - Introduction** includes a summary and purpose of the plan, description of the planning area, how and why the plan was developed, what the plan does and does not cover, and a summary of plan actions.










**Chapter 2 - Areawide Land Management Policies** includes goals, objectives, and management guidelines for the major resources affected by the plan. These policies are specific directives that will be applied to land and water management decisions as resource use and development occurs.

**Chapter 3 - Land Management Policies for Each Management Unit** includes an explanation of plan designations, general management intent for state land, descriptions of the four planning regions, and a detailed listing of management units and major waters. It also provides a summary of management constraints and considerations based on existing plans, legislative designations, and other management constraints that significantly affect resource management.

The bulk of this chapter consists of descriptions of background information on land status, natural resources, and the uses of state land for each of the four regions. A management summary is also included that provides an overview of the management direction within each region; this is augmented by a description of specific management considerations that apply to development authorizations. Specific management intent for planning units are contained within a Resource Allocation Table (RAT) for each region. Regions in the plan are divided into spatial areas called “units.” These units range in size from small lots or tracts to very large areas that generally have common location, access, use, or resource characteristics. The RAT



**Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Map 1  
Planning Area and  
Generalized Land Status**

-  Planning Boundary
-  Highways
-  State Land
-  State Selected Land
-  Private or Other Land
-  Native Land
-  Native Selected Land
-  BLM Land
-  NPS/USFWS



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Created: March 2026  
DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
UTM Zone 6 North



identifies land designations, background information on resources and uses, and management intent for each unit. These correspond to the management units identified on the plan maps.

**Chapter 4 - Implementation and Recommendations** discusses specific actions necessary to implement the plan. These include a description of how land use designations convert into classifications, a description of designations and classifications used in the plan, and acreages associated with each classification type. Procedures for changing the plan are also discussed.

**Appendices** include a glossary, a land classification order, two appendices related to mineral orders, the Public Trust Doctrine, and information on reservations of water.

## **The Mandate**

The Department of Natural Resources is responsible for managing the general domain lands that are owned by the State of Alaska across Northeast Alaska. There are approximately 3.7 million acres of state-owned uplands and shorelands within the planning area. The majority of these lands are general domain land managed under AS 38.04 and 38.05. Although this plan focuses on the management of the general domain state land, designations and classifications are also provided for lands within the portion of the James Dalton Highway LDA that is contained in the planning boundary.

Alaska Statute (AS 38.04.065) requires the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to “adopt, maintain, and when appropriate, revise regional land use plans that provide for the use and management of state-owned land.” To ensure that these lands are properly managed, DNR has developed this plan for all state uplands and shorelands within the planning area.

The planning process provides a means of openly reviewing resource information and public concerns before making long-term decisions about public land management. The planning process resolves conflicting ideas on land use and informs the public about what choices were made and why. Decisions are made on a comprehensive basis, rather than case-by-case, providing consistency and consideration of the wide diversity of resources and uses within the planning area. This process provides for more efficient use and protection of the area’s resources.

## **Why This Plan Was Developed**

The planning area is rich in natural resources, contains a mixture of developed and undeveloped land, and there are competing demands for the use of state land. There are many different ideas about how these resources should be used or protected. Although some proposed uses might conflict with each other, many different uses can occur throughout the planning area while protecting vital resources, providing the uses are properly managed.

This plan establishes the land use designations and classifications for state land and describes their intended uses. The plan directs which state lands will be retained by the state and which should be sold to private citizens, used for public recreation, or used for other purposes. It also identifies management guidelines for major resources and land uses within the planning area as well as guidelines for the development and use of resources for specific parcels.

With an area plan, state permits and permit review processes become more efficient for the government and the public. The area plan guides DNR decisions for leases, sales, and permits that authorize use of state lands. Preparation of land use plans for state lands (except for State Park System lands) is required under Title 38 of Alaska Statutes. DNR's actions will be based on the area plan.

## **How This Plan Will be Used**

The NEAAP is intended to provide an overall management strategy for state lands and resources within the planning area, as well as specific management strategies for individual management units and is the expression of how DNR will pursue this management. Much of the use of this plan is by the DNR Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW). Adjudicators will use this plan when reviewing and making decisions on authorizations for use of state land, including permits, leases, sales, conveyances, and rights-of-way.

## **Planning Period**

The plan reflects land management decisions and allocations based on the best available information on the demand for use of state land and resources projected over the next 20 years. Social, environmental, economic, and technological factors have been assessed through public input and agency review prior to the adoption of the plan. The plan guides state land use and resource decisions for the next 20 years, or until it is revised.

## **Process of Plan Preparation**

The following process was used to develop this area plan:

- identify issues in the planning area;
- map and analyze resources and uses;
- conduct public meetings to identify land use issues;
- prepare the Public Review Draft (PRD) based in part on comments previously received from the public and from agencies;
- public review of the PRD;

- review all public and agency comments and prepare an Issue Response Summary (IRS) that addresses issues raised in comments;
- The Commissioner adopts the plan as DNR's management intent for state lands in the planning area.

## **Who Developed the Plan?**

The DNR planning staff directed the planning process, including data collection, drafting the area plan, preparing response to public and agency comments, and final plan preparation. State agencies reviewed the preliminary draft of the Public Review Draft (PRD) and provided land use and resource recommendations to aid in refining initial plan recommendations. Following the review of the public comments on the PRD and Issue Response Summary (IRS), the DNR Commissioner formally adopted the Northeast Alaska Area Plan.

## **Public Participation in the Planning Process**

The Northeast Alaska Area Plan is the product of a planning process conducted by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land & Water. Other Divisions within DNR, state and federal agencies, Native corporations and tribal groups, local governments, public interest groups, and the public have also played a pivotal role in the planning process. A first round of public meetings occurred in August 2024 and focused on a description of the planning process, planning area, and issue identification. A second round of public meetings was held in the fall of 2025. These meetings focused on the PRD with information provided on proposed plan designations and management intent, and on plan implementation. The results of these discussions and the subsequent review of public comments submitted on the PRD formed the basis for revisions, if required, to the draft plan, which are included in an IRS. The Commissioner adopted the final plan as amended by the Recommended Revisions on February 25, 2026.

## **What the Plan Will Do**

The plan will form the basis for the management of land and waters that are state-owned or state-selected. The plan will help ensure that state resource management considers the sustained yield of renewable resources, that development is balanced with environmental concerns, and that public access to state land is provided. The plan encourages cooperation with other landowners to better address conflicts caused by irregular land ownership patterns. The plan also supersedes all existing classifications and reclassifies all state lands within the planning area. Finally, the plan also documents the State's intent for land management so that both public and private interests know and understand how the State intends to manage lands over the lifetime of the plan.

## What the Plan Will Not Do

The Northeast Alaska Area Plan is not the only way in which land management goals are implemented. While the plan provides an overall basis for state decision making, there are limits on its authority and constraints on its application. The plan is coordinated with various programs and projects implemented by DNR and other state agencies. The following are some important aspects of land and resource management that are beyond the scope of this plan:

- **Non-DNR Lands.** This plan does not apply to federal, Native, or private lands (including Native Allotments, Mental Health Trust, and University lands).
- **Fish and Wildlife.** Management, maintenance, and protection of fish and wildlife resources are the responsibility of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Allocation of fish and game stocks and regulation of harvest methods, means, and timing are the responsibility of the state boards of Fisheries and Game.
- **Generally Allowed Uses (GAUs).** The area plan does not regulate activities that do not require a written authorization on state land, such as hiking, camping, boating, hunting, and fishing. GAUs are identified in 11 AAC 96.020 and the conditions for GAUs are provided in 11 AAC 96.025.
- **Legislatively Designated Areas (LDAs).** The plan does not apply to state parks, refuges, public use areas, and other areas that are legislatively designated, with the exception of providing land classifications for LDAs that are not totally reserved from the public domain.<sup>1</sup>
- **Decisions on Specific Applications.** While this plan provides general management intent for state lands, the plan does not make decisions about specific land use authorizations. These decisions are made through the application review process and must be consistent with the plan and existing laws and regulations.
- **Actions by Other Agencies.** The plan does not provide management intent for prescribing actions and policies for agencies and governments other than DNR.

## Uses and Resources Within the Planning Area

**Uses of State Land.** The plan outlines management goals, objectives, and guidelines for state land. This includes describing what resources and valid existing uses should be protected, and what uses are most suitable for development or protection on state land during the planning period.

**State-selected and Top-filed Land.** Some federal lands within the planning boundary have been selected by the State for potential conveyance in fulfillment of the State's land entitlement provided by the Alaska Statehood Act. Future selection applications have been

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<sup>1</sup> See "Land Use Designation" in the glossary for a further description of authorities.

filed for other federal lands consistent with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 906(e). These “top-filed” lands are within the Dalton Highway corridor. The plan provides management intent for selected and top-filed lands in anticipation of the state receiving title to some or all of these lands.

**Shorelands.** This plan provides management intent for lands beneath non-tidal fresh waters. These land areas are defined in AS 38.05.965(23).

**Land Sales.** The planning process reviewed the state land holdings to determine which undeveloped lands may be suitable for settlement uses and land disposal. This plan recommends new settlement areas.

**Roads, Trails, and Access.** The plan considers access across state lands, including existing and proposed roads, trails, easements, and rights-of-way.

**Materials.** The plan reviews existing state-owned material sites and makes recommendations for further studies in areas where material site development may be appropriate. Areas with significant material resources are designated as Materials.

**Mineral and Coal Development.** The plan reviews the mineral and coal potential within the planning area and describes the statutory authorities that affect mining and coal development. Mineral and coal development can occur consistent with resource presence and statutory restrictions. This plan maintains all current mineral closures and recommends a single additional mineral order for lands identified for land disposals and designated Settlement areas. Coal and oil and gas development can occur in the planning area; however, development in the LDAs are subject to the management plans specific to those areas.

**Oil and Gas Leasing.** The plan does not provide land use designations for oil and gas leasing. AS 38.04.065 was amended in 1987 to recognize that oil and gas leasing undergo a separate planning process under AS 38.05.180.

**Forest Resources.** There are some forest resources in the southern portions of the planning area. The plan identifies these areas and designates them Forestry.

**Recreation.** Recreation is a popular use of state land. The plan proposes designations to manage lands for recreation in several locations where recreational use is extensive. Where appropriate, these uses are recognized in the management intent statement for a unit where recreation is particularly significant and widespread or where it is important to recognize this use. Those areas with a significant recreation use or potential use are designated Public Recreation-Dispersed.

**Fish and Wildlife Habitat.** The plan documents important fish and wildlife habitat areas and provides management intent and guidelines for these resources and uses. Areas with particularly significant habitat, wildlife, or fisheries values are designated Habitat.

**Subsistence and Harvest.** Fishing, hunting, trapping, and other natural resource gathering activities are vital to Alaska’s economy and culture, especially for rural families who rely on harvest for food and traditional practices. State subsistence take is open to all Alaskans under the state constitution regardless of residency. The plan provides management goals and guidelines to maintain harvest opportunities consistent with applicable laws and land ownership.

**Water Resources.** DNR is responsible for allocating water resources on all lands within the State of Alaska (AS 46.15). The plan designates areas to be managed for their water resource values and describes management guidelines for instream flow reservations. Areas with water resource values are primarily associated with the maintenance of rivers and streams, which are extensively distributed throughout the planning area.

## Summary of Plan Actions

### Management Intent

The planning area consists of four regions: Arctic Region, Dalton Corridor Region, Yukon Flats Region, and Interior Highlands Region. Each of the four regions include state-owned and state-selected uplands and shorelands that are generally adjacent to each other. Area plans, as a matter of course, include designations and management intent for federal lands selected by the state for conveyance under the various types of land entitlement programs since it is likely that some or all of the land will eventually be conveyed. When such federal land is conveyed, the classifications within this plan will automatically attach.

The plan presents management intent that explains the Department’s overall resource management goals, objectives, and management guidelines for each region and unit, and provides resource and use information for land managers. This information is presented in Chapter 3.

### Management Guidelines

According to the Alaska Constitution, state lands are to be managed for multiple uses. As defined in AS 38.04.910(5), multiple use means “the management of state lands and its various resource values so that it is used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions.” Management guidelines are intended to ensure that primary and secondary resource uses will be compatible to the maximum extent possible. When potentially conflicting uses are designated in a unit, the plan provides guidelines to allow various uses to occur with minimal

conflict. Guidelines that apply to the entire planning area are identified in Chapter 2. Management guidelines for specific management units are given in Chapter 3.

## **Land Use Designations and Land Classifications**

General state lands are classified by identifying the resources and uses present in order to designate primary and secondary uses for individual units. Each unit identifies up to three designations representing the uses and resources for which that area will be managed. Plan designations are identified and described in Chapter 3 along with the Resource Allocation Tables that contain the designations assigned to individual units. A more complete description of compatible uses is found in the management intent statement and guidelines for each specific planning unit. These designations are then implemented through land classifications as defined by 11 AAC 55.20-277. Up to three classifications are allowable on individual management units. The Land Classification Order (LCO) that is to be adopted with this plan is included as Appendix B. Table 4-2 in Chapter 4 shows how designations convert to classifications.

## **Plan Implementation and Modification**

The plan is implemented through the LCO and serves as the final finding for land classification. The plan sets forth policy for the Department in administering actions such as leases, permits, and land conveyances. Chapter 4 presents the details of plan implementation recommendations and procedures.

Economic and social conditions in Alaska and the planning area are sure to change and the plan must be flexible enough to change with them. The plan will be reviewed periodically to monitor progress in implementing the plan and to identify issues that may require amendment or modification.

Specific modifications may be made whenever conditions warrant them, though a request for these changes must follow certain procedures (11 AAC 55.240). The plan may be amended after approval by the Commissioner of DNR following public review and consultation with the appropriate agencies. Special exceptions and minor changes must follow certain procedures. See Chapter 4 for a more detailed description of procedures for plan modifications.

*Chapter 1: Summary of Plan Actions*

## Chapter 2

### Areawide Land Management Policies

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# Chapter 2

## Areawide Land Management Policies

### Introduction

This chapter presents land management policies that apply to all state-owned, state-selected, and ANILCA top-filed lands for each of the major resources affected by the plan. The resources identified in this chapter are cultural features; fish and wildlife habitat; forestry; materials sites; public access; recreation, tourism, and scenery; settlement; shorelands and stream corridors; harvest; subsurface mineral resources; transportation and infrastructure; and water. These policies apply to state land throughout the planning area regardless of the land use designation. Unit-specific management intent is provided in Chapter 3.

This chapter consists of goals, objectives, and management guidelines that apply to all state-owned and state-selected lands within the plan boundary unless the plan explicitly exempts some parcels or designations from a guideline, or the resource or use for which a guideline is intended does not exist in the parcel in question. There are few such exemptions. Goals are the general condition the Department is trying to achieve; objectives and guidelines are specific directives that will be applied to land and water management decisions as resource use and development occurs. Management goals, objectives, guidelines, and intent are focused on maintaining and enhancing opportunities for public and commercial use of the state lands and waters while considering emerging issues related to climate change and conserving the natural resources and habitats necessary to sustain fish and wildlife populations.

### Definitions

For definitions of terms commonly used in this chapter, see Appendix A, Glossary.

### Plan Goals

The following goals are for state lands in the planning area. The goals are listed alphabetically, and no single goal has priority over the others. Goals are general conditions that DNR attempts to achieve through management actions. These goals will lay the foundation for maintaining these important uses, resources, or activities, and guide use and development interests.

**Cultural Resources.** Preserve, document, and interpret Alaska's cultural resources and heritage on all lands within the State.

**Economic Development.** Provide opportunities for jobs and income by managing state land and resources to support a vital, self-sustaining, diverse local economy.

**Environment and Habitat.** Where possible, avoid or minimize the impact of uses, activities, and development on wildlife and the natural environment.

**Fiscal Costs.** Minimize the need for, and the fiscal cost of, providing government services such as schools or road maintenance activities when considering making lands available for private use (residential, commercial, or industrial).

**Pollution Remediation.** Discharges, spills, or other releases of pollutants will be reported immediately upon discovery and remediated in a timely fashion by the responsible parties, as required by state and federal agencies.

**Public Access.** Provide access to public and private lands and resources to ensure adequate opportunities for the use of public resources.

**Public Health and Safety.** Maintain or enhance public health and safety for users of state land and resources.

**Public Use.** Provide, plan, enhance, and manage diverse opportunities for public use of state lands, including uses such as hunting, fishing, boating and other types of recreation.

**Quality of Life.** Maintain or enhance the quality of the natural environment including land, water, fish and wildlife habitat, and harvest opportunities; provide opportunities to view wildlife and the natural environment; and protect heritage resources.

**Recreation.** Encourage outdoor recreation on public lands and provide for a range of recreational experiences on state land managed for multiple uses while protecting natural resources and public access.

**Settlement.** Provide opportunities for private ownership and leasing of land currently owned by the state.

**Subsistence Harvest Areas.** Retain lands and waters where subsistence harvest occurs in state ownership to support traditional uses.

**Sustained Yield.** Manage renewable resources to maintain the long-term productivity and quality of renewable resources including fish and wildlife habitat.

**Water Quality.** Provide adequate water quantity and quality to support subsistence and recreational uses; domestic, commercial and industrial uses; and fish and wildlife production.

## Plan Objectives

Objectives provided here are general and apply to all state lands and all authorized uses and activities in the planning area. The NEAAP provides for multiple uses of public land, as required by statute, and the objectives provide statements of what the state will do with a resource, use, or activity based on identified goals. In the long-term, the land within the plan boundary will be used for as many uses as possible, without eliminating or unreasonably limiting other resources. DNR will use these objectives when considering issuing authorizations and conveyances or making management decisions on state lands.

## Plan Guidelines

Management guidelines identified are intended to provide specific standards, management direction or procedures to be followed by the Department in the issuance of permits, leases, or other authorizations for the use of state land or resources within the planning area. Guidelines range in their level of specificity, from giving general guidance for decision-making to identifying specific factors that need to be considered when making on-the-ground decisions. In most cases, these guidelines can be implemented through the authorization of applications for proposed uses or through agency actions. In other cases, DNR may promulgate regulations to ensure that these guidelines can be implemented and are enforceable.

- A. All authorizations for use of state land within the planning area will be consistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield and with the management intent in this plan.
- B. In considering authorizations for use of state land, DNR will adjudicate applications to:
  - 1. avoid or minimize damage to streambeds, fish and wildlife habitat, vegetation, trails, and other resources;
  - 2. minimize conflicts between resources and uses; and
  - 3. enhance public safety and protect the long-term value of resources and the environment.
- C. If authorizations from other agencies are required, DNR will consider issuing a permit or lease contingent upon issuance of these other authorizations.

## Management Intent for the Plan

The following statements provide management intent for all state land in this plan with further unit-specific intent provided in Chapter 3. These statements define DNR's near and long-term management policies and are based on resource and use inventories, the review of

existing and potential economic trends, state authorizations, existing plans and similar resource management documents, agency review and comment, and public participation.

- A. All general domain state land within the planning area will be managed to allow for multiple use and provide for the balanced use, development, and conservation of the resources.
- B. Lands retained in state ownership will be managed to continue to provide habitats that support: maintaining fish and wildlife populations; hunting, fishing, and harvest opportunities; a diversity of recreation opportunities; and development of the State's mineral and hydrocarbon resources, among other beneficial uses.
- C. State land will remain open to mineral entry unless specifically closed or affected by a Leasehold Location Order. Consequently, most lands remain open to mineral entry.
- D. The designation applied to a unit identifies the recommended use for the unit. In some cases, a unit may have co-designated uses. Up to three designations may be assigned for one unit. Consistent with the multiple use mandate, other uses may also be allowed if they do not preclude the uses designated for a management unit. This plan emphasizes minimizing land use conflicts through guidelines and intent rather than through prohibitions. However, if DNR determines that a use conflict exists and that a proposed use is incompatible with the primary use(s), the proposed use should not be authorized, or the use should be modified so that the incompatibility no longer exists (11 AAC 55.040(c)). Except in areas closed to mineral entry, subsurface uses are considered an allowable use but must take into consideration the effects upon surface uses.
- E. This plan designates state lands in categories that are generally consistent with current use patterns and reflect the significant resources in the planning area.

## Coordination and Public Notice

Consistent with the Alaska Constitution and Alaska statutes, certain actions taken by the Department such as leases, easements, and other disposals require public notice. Other actions, such as classifying and making lands available for private use, specifically require the involvement of municipalities and local residents. Where required by statutes and regulations, the Department provides notice of actions proposed on state lands and engages with local municipal and tribal entities and community members.

### Goals

**Coordination with Non-state Landowners.** Coordinate with municipal, Alaska Native Corporation, private, and other landowners in fulfillment of the Department’s mission to, “*Responsibly develop Alaska’s resources by making them available for maximum use and benefit consistent with the public interest.*”

**Public Participation.** Provide local governments, state and federal agencies, adjacent landowners, and the general public with meaningful opportunities to participate in the process of making significant land use decisions.

### Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** DNR will provide notice as required by statutes and regulations and Department staff will provide public notice.

- **Guideline A-1.** *Notice for Decisions Requiring Public Notice (Under AS 38.05.945).* As required by statute, public notice will be given for decisions involving the sale, lease, or disposal of (or interests in) land, property, or resources. Notice will be given to parties known or likely to be affected by an action proposed by the state or an applicant to the state.
- **Guideline A-2.** *Avoiding Conflicts with Adjacent Upland Owners.* Before issuing a land use authorization on shorelands, DNR should encourage applicants to use areas that will reduce the likelihood of possible land use disagreements with upland owners. DNR will consider comments from private landowners and others before making a decision and will retain the right to issue a land use authorization over the objection of adjacent landowners.
- **Guideline A-3.** *Authority of State Plans.* This plan only applies to patented and tentatively approved state lands and lands that have been selected or top-filed for conveyance to fulfill the State’s land entitlement under the Alaska Statehood Act. It does not affect Borough lands, other federal lands, or private lands.

**Objective B.** *Other Guidelines Affecting Coordination or Public Notice.* Several other guidelines may affect coordination or public notice. See other sections of this chapter.

## Cultural Resources

Northeast Alaska contains a long and rich history of human habitation. Numerous sites across the area contain cabins, graves, caribou fences, caves, commercial buildings, mining debris, military infrastructure, hunting and fishing camps, bones, and relics that attest to the long history of Alaska Native and Euroamerican presence within the planning boundary. Cultural resources are generally considered “historical” in age around the 50-year mark and therefore require further consideration under historic preservation law.

The earliest recognized cultural tradition in the area, the Beringian tradition, was followed by the American Paleoarctic tradition. Over time, the American Paleoarctic tradition changed into the Northern Archaic tradition, which in turn gave way to the Athabaskan tradition of the past 2,000 years. The earliest archeological evidence of human occupation of Interior Alaska dates to at least 14,000 years ago. This period was characterized by use of the atlatl to hunt steppe bison, horse, canids, and waterfowl, and frequent movement to follow the seasonal availability of resources. In the northern part of the planning area, the Mesa Complex of the Brooks Range is represented by the Hilltop site, which dates to around 12,200 years ago. As glaciers retreated, the Beringian tradition of the Interior and Mesa Complex of the north gave way to the American Paleoarctic Tradition. The tool base and animal resources were largely the same, except with a heavier focus on caribou and bison hunting. The American Paleoarctic tradition gave way to the Northern Archaic tradition during a period of climate stability around 8,000 years ago. As forests expanded, bison declined, and new tool technology developed, people of the Northern Archaic tradition relied more heavily on caribou. Around 2,000 years ago the Athabaskan tradition emerged during a period of glacial expansion. This period was marked by drastic technological change including the adoption of the bow and arrow. Dene (Athabaskan) lifestyles involved seasonal movement following fish in the summer and game in the winter. Social units were defined by regional and local band ties. Gatherings between bands would occur in mid-winter, where trade relationships or marriages might be arranged. Many traditional uses of the land continue today in the Dene communities and surrounding areas. These traditions, cultural practices, and subsistence lifestyle are passed down to the younger generations.

Euroamerican settlers arrived in Upper Yukon portion of Interior Alaska around the 1850s. They brought new diseases, technology, foods, and lifestyles. Many settlers came to this region in search of furs and mineral wealth, while others came on military or missionary business. The first major settlement in the region was at Fort Yukon, where the Hudson Bay Company set up an outpost. The Alaska Commercial Company, run by Americans, would take over the post and build many more along the Yukon after Alaska’s purchase. Interior Athabaskans sold 75,000 pelts to the traders in 1880 and would also be hired to help boats navigate the Yukon. Mining, furs, and later the oil and gas industries remained important to Native and settler histories through the 1980s in this region.

Some of the lands used by Alaska Native people have been conveyed to individuals as Native Allotments. Within the planning boundary there are currently 527 allotments totaling about

58,000 acres. The number and acreage will change as more allotments are conveyed under existing federal laws. Lands with heritage and cultural significance will be managed according to the following goals, objectives, and management guidelines.

## Goal

**Cultural Resources.** The Alaska Historic Preservation Act establishes the State's basic goal: to preserve, protect, and interpret the historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources of Alaska so that the scientific, historic, and cultural heritage values embodied in these resources may pass undiminished to future generations.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Preserve, protect, and interpret the historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources within the planning area.

- **Guideline A-1.** Identify and determine the significance of cultural resources on state land through the following actions:
  1. Cultural resource surveys conducted by qualified personnel;
  2. Research about cultural resources on state land by qualified individuals and organizations; and,
  3. Cooperative efforts for planned surveys and inventories between state, federal, and local or Alaska Native groups.
- **Guideline A-2.** Protect significant cultural resources through the following actions:
  1. The Office of History and Archeology (OHA) within the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) reviews authorizations, construction projects, and land uses for potential conflict with cultural resources. The office determines if there may be an adverse effect on heritage resources and makes recommendations to mitigate these effects.
  2. Cooperating with concerned government agencies, Alaska Native corporations, statewide or local groups, and individuals to develop guidelines and recommendations on how to avoid or mitigate identified or potential conflict.
  3. Require the establishment of buffers a minimum of 50' or greater around significant cultural resources as part of the overall protection process when subdividing or otherwise using state lands.
- **Guideline A-3.** If determined by OHA during an agency review of a proposed disposal that a cultural survey may be required, further coordination between OHA and DMLW prior to the land disposal is warranted. A Cultural Resources Investigation Permit is required for cultural resource contractors surveying on State land. This permit authorization is managed by the State Archaeologist within OHA.

Cultural surveys shall be considered where OHA reported sites exist or where there is a high potential for such sites to exist. The extent and type of cultural survey within the area of the proposed land disposal shall be determined by OHA in consultation with DMLW.

- **Guideline A-4.** Recreation facilities that might subject cultural sites to vandalism because of the increased public use should not be placed adjacent to the cultural sites.
- **Guideline A-5.** The Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) is an inventory of all reported historic and prehistoric sites within the State of Alaska and is maintained by the OHA. The AHRS is used to identify known cultural resource sites and ensure they are addressed during a project should one be proposed where a cultural resource exists. By knowing of possible cultural remains prior to construction, efforts can be made to avoid project delays and prevent the destruction of cultural sites. While over 45,000 sites have been reported within Alaska, this is estimated to be only about 1% of the sites which may exist but are yet unreported. The AHRS is not complete or static, so heritage sites, when found, should be reported to the OHA.

**Objective B.** *Other Guidelines affecting Heritage and Cultural Resources.* Many of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect heritage and cultural resources in the planning area. Other guidelines will affect cultural resources. See other applicable sections of this chapter.

## Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Fish and wildlife habitats across the planning area vary by region and season, spanning a range of terrestrial and freshwater environments. Habitats are undergoing significant changes due to a changing climate. Wildfires are becoming more frequent, wetlands are drying; boreal forests are transitioning to grasslands; Interior river basins are warming; permafrost is thawing; and water availability is declining. These shifts in habitats are expected to continue to affect fish and wildlife populations and distributions over the course of the life of this plan making it important to evaluate how activities will affect species in the context of on-going climate change. Therefore, adjudicators should consult with the appropriate state or federal agency to determine the most current information on fish and wildlife resources within the planning area.

Mammals inhabiting the area include moose, caribou, black and brown bears, Dall sheep and a variety of furbearers. Moose are prevalent, with known calving, rutting, and winter habitats throughout the planning area. Caribou are an important part of the biological landscape in the northern and southern parts of the planning area, with the most prominent use occurring from three different herds, the Central Arctic Herd (CAH), the Porcupine Caribou Herd (PCH), and the Fortymile Herd. Brown bears are known to seasonally congregate in the Brooks Range and along fish-bearing streams and berry patches. Dall sheep inhabit the higher terrain sweeping along the northern portion of the planning area through the Brooks Range, with a few smaller areas in the White Mountains. Furbearers and other small mammals such as foxes, beavers, woodchucks, muskrats, lynx, American mink, American martens, marmots, wolverines, wolves, snowshoe hares, squirrels, shrews, pikas, mice, weasels, river otters, porcupines, coyotes, ermines, lemmings, and voles occupy suitable habitats across the planning area. These species are important for subsistence use and trapping by local communities, and their populations and habitats should be managed to support continued traditional and sustainable harvests.

Wood bison habitat potential in the Yukon Flats was studied in 1992 and 1994. The habitat was found to be suitable for wood bison restoration. The Alaska Wood Bison Environmental Assessment of 2013 evaluated Yukon Flats as a place for restoration. ADF&G may restore wood bison in the Yukon Flats in the future.

The planning area provides seasonally important habitat for millions of birds, including waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, and raptors. Most of these species migrate to the region every spring and fall to breed, nest, raise young, and acquire energy stores prior to southward migration in the fall. However, a few—such as ptarmigan, certain boreal songbirds, some raptors, and resident species like owls and corvids—remain in the region year-round. These birds have adapted strategies to survive cold temperatures and limited food availability. Productivity of the landscape acts as a nursery for numerous bird species that migrate elsewhere and consequently impact populations globally. Suitable habitat, which varies by species, is widely dispersed and includes wetlands, boreal forests, riverine areas, and mountain cliffs. The highest concentrations of migratory birds in the planning area are

associated with the abundant wetlands and rivers. Landbird species including raptors, songbirds, and ptarmigan are seasonally concentrated along river corridors.

Resident and anadromous fish species are found in the waters of the planning area, including salmon, burbot, Dolly Varden, whitefish, northern pike, Arctic grayling, Arctic lamprey, slimy sculpin, sheefish, and longnose sucker. A brief summary of the major rivers, streams, and lakes as well as species that have been recorded in them are given in Table 2-1 and Table 2-2 as part of the Anadromous and High Value Fish Habitat information at the end of this section. Due to the lack of liquid water in winter, fish that overwinter in freshwaters have strict requirements for flow, oxygen, etc. Often these areas are small, particularly in rivers and streams, with large concentrations of fishes overwintering together in a small area. Each species has requirements for feeding areas and suitable spawning area with particular substrate types. Subsistence use of many of these fish and wildlife resources occurs throughout the planning area. See the Harvest section in Chapter 2 for more detail.

Within the planning area, nearly all land and water contribute to wildlife habitat resources, and the most important areas are identified through this plan and supported through the following goals. These goals, objectives, and guidelines lay the foundation for maintaining the integrity of these habitat areas, and guide use and development interests. This section will consider the habitat and needs of fish and wildlife species within the planning area.

## Goals

**Minimize Habitat Loss.** When resource development projects occur, avoid or minimize reduction in the quality and quantity of fish and wildlife habitat, particularly in anadromous waterbodies. Compliance with AS 16.05.871 is required.

**Manage Lands to Maintain the Natural Environment.** Maintain the natural environment in areas known to be important as habitat for fish and wildlife.

**Maintain and Protect Publicly Owned Habitat Base.** Maintain in public ownership and protect habitat for fish and wildlife resources sufficient to conserve a diversity of species to support commercial, recreational, or traditional uses on a sustained yield basis; or protect a unique or rare assemblage of a single or multiple species of regional, state, or national significance.

**Contribute to Economic Diversity.** Protect fish and wildlife resources which contribute directly or indirectly to local, regional, and state economies through commercial, subsistence, personal use, sport, and non-consumptive uses.

**Manage for Sustained Yield.** DNR management of state land and resources is to be consistent with the requirements of sustained yield, as expressed in the State Constitution under Article VIII (Natural Resources).

**Ensure Access to Public Lands and Waters.** Ensure access to state lands and waters and promote or enhance the responsible public use and enjoyment of fish and wildlife resources.

**Avoid the Introduction of and Reduce the Spread of Invasive Plants, Exotic Animals and Diseases.** State uplands and aquatic environments are to be managed to avoid the introduction, and reduce the spread, of non-native invasive animals and plants as well as exotic diseases that can be detrimental to wildlife populations. This management shall be consistent with the applicable requirements of 11 AAC 34.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Minimize impacts to fish and wildlife habitat areas, whether or not it is classified as Wildlife Habitat Land, to maintain fish and wildlife populations, production, and related public uses.

- **Guideline A-1.** Waterbodies that contain anadromous fish shall be designated as Habitat (Ha). See the Navigable Waterbodies section of Chapter 3.
- **Guideline A-2.** Impacts to fish and wildlife habitat areas should be minimized when authorizing development and infrastructure projects.

**Objective B.** Protection of fish and wildlife habitat and riverine areas, particularly the areas described in guideline B-3, shall be considered in all authorizations by the Department.

- **Guideline B-1. *Habitat Manipulation: General Requirements.***
  1. Fish and wildlife restoration, enhancement, or manipulation activities on state lands, whether by ADF&G or other parties, may be used to improve habitat for certain fish and wildlife species where ADF&G determines that it is beneficial to the species or habitat and DNR determines that it is compatible with the management intent for those lands. Habitat manipulation through controlled burning, mechanical treatment, water control, dredging practices, removal of pollution and pollution sources, or other measures may be allowed with the intent to enhance or restore wildlife.
  2. Enhancement activities likely to attract significant public use, will be designed and located to minimize the impact of additional public use on the existing recreation resources, moorage, campsites, and other resource values.
  3. The state shall manage its lands and waters to avoid the introduction, and reduce the spread, of invasive non-native plants and animals, consistent with the requirements of 11 AAC 34. Although the *Strategic Plan for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management in Alaska* recognizes this as a statewide issue, in most instances this problem is best handled at the local level.
- **Guideline B-2. *Alteration of the Riverine Hydrological System.*** To the extent feasible, channelization, diversion, or damming that will alter the natural hydrological

conditions and have a significant adverse impact on important riverine habitat will be avoided. If projects like this are proposed they will require a review and permit from the ADF&G Habitat Section and other agencies.

- **Guideline B-3. *Protection of Riverine Areas.*** Riverine areas perform a variety of important functions related to recreation, habitat protection, and water quality/quantity maintenance, and the protection of these areas is important. Authorizations are to ensure the natural conditions of these areas are protected by avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating the impacts in any authorization that may be issued.
- **Guideline B-4. *Allowing Uses in Fish and Wildlife Habitats (Ha).*** These habitats are defined as areas that serve as concentrated use areas for a single or multiple fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life history stage where alteration of the habitat and/or human disturbance could result in permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of the species, or these habitats are highly important to the maintenance or management of a single or multiple fish and wildlife species.
  1. In the granting of authorizations within areas classified Wildlife Habitat Land, DNR adjudicators shall acquire more detailed recent information pertaining to habitat resources and values if there is some question as to the appropriateness of the use that is under consideration for authorization.
  2. There is a distinct seasonality associated with the critical life periods of certain species; seasonality, and any associated off-season carry-over effects, shall be taken into consideration during project review and approval. Seasonality and critical life cycle stages are identified by various agency sources. Thus, it may be possible, through consultation with ADF&G and other agencies, that uses and facilities may be found appropriate within areas classified Wildlife Habitat Land if the seasonality criteria are satisfied by including mitigating measures in project design.
  3. Uses that are likely to produce levels of acoustical or visual disturbance sufficient to disturb sensitive life stages may be authorized with spatial or temporal restrictions that eliminate or minimize the disturbance during the sensitive life stage period.
  4. Uses not consistent with a plan designation and classification, or not authorized in a management intent statement, and that, if permitted, would result in the degradation of the resource(s) within areas designated “Ha”, are to be considered incompatible and are not to be authorized unless determined to be necessary and in the best interest of the state. Degradation of the resource might result from actions involving one or more of the following factors: dredging, filling, significant compaction of vegetation and sediment, alteration of flow patterns, discharge of toxic substances, or disturbance during sensitive periods.
  5. If there is a question as to whether a use would be appropriate or whether it would degrade a listed resource, DNR shall consult with ADF&G in making the determination of initial incompatibility.

6. Non-designated uses that cause significant adverse impacts to the resources identified within a given “Ha” parcel may be allowed if:
    - a) DNR, in consultation with ADF&G, determines that the management unit in question does not possess those attributes characteristic of a Habitat designation as defined in the plan; or
    - b) If DNR, in consultation with ADF&G, determines that the non-designated use can be made compatible and significant adverse impacts to the “Ha” area avoided with appropriate design, siting, and operating stipulations; or
    - c) If after consideration of the above statements, the project is then found to be in the best interest of the state under AS 38.05.035(e) or similar Department authorizations, and significant adverse impacts are mitigated under Management Guideline C-4.
  7. For more information about the fish and wildlife categories used to identify Habitat (Ha) classifications and species-specific guidelines for allowing uses in Fish and Wildlife Habitats, see the *Species Specific Management Guidelines* and the *Anadromous and High Value Fish Habitat* discussion at the end of this resource section.
- **Guideline B-5. *Allowing Uses Outside of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas.***

If important fish and wildlife habitat or harvest areas exist in non-Habitat (Ha) designated units, DNR adjudicators shall consult with ADF&G and the appropriate federal management agency to acquire more detailed and recent information pertaining to fish and wildlife habitat and harvest values. See *Harvest* resource section for more detail.
  - **Guideline B-6. *Threatened and Endangered Species.***
    1. All land use activities will be conducted consistent with state and federal Endangered Species Acts to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of threatened or endangered species of animals or plants, to provide for their continued use of an area, and to avoid modification or destruction of their habitat.
    2. Specific mitigation recommendations should be identified through consultation with ADF&G’s statewide Threatened, Endangered, and Diversity Program for any land use activity that potentially affects threatened and endangered species.
    3. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Division of Ecological Services should be consulted on questions that involve endangered or threatened species of federal interest. The ADF&G Threatened, Endangered, and Diversity Program should be consulted on questions that involve endangered or threatened species of state interest.

**Objective C.** When resource development projects occur, adequate measures shall be taken to avoid or minimize impacts that may result in changes in the quality and quantity of fish and wildlife habitat.

- **Guideline C-1. *Balancing Impacts with Potential Development.***
  1. To the extent practicable, linear infrastructure shall be co-located to reduce the surface area of impacted lands except in situations where separation distances are required to reduce adverse impacts to wildlife movements.
  2. DNR, in its consideration of resources and in the management of state land, shall consider the immediate and long-term impacts of such use upon fish and wildlife populations and human uses of those populations, habitat and soil degradation, and upon other forms of use that may occupy the area that is under consideration in an authorization. Uses that are not compatible with these uses and resources are to be made compatible through the use of stipulations when possible.
  3. It is recognized that the use and development of resources will create some level and area of impact. Nonetheless, the state may determine through its authorization processes that the development of specific surface or subsurface resources is appropriate, even with some level of impact, and may approve such developments, with appropriate stipulations. It is also recognized that the development of specific subsurface resources may take precedence over surface uses.
- **Guideline C-2. *Water Intake Structures.***
  1. When issuing water rights for waters providing fish habitat, DNR will require that practical water intake structures be installed that do not result in entrainment, entrapment, or impingement of fish and will maintain instream flows needed to sustain existing fish populations. The simplest and most cost-effective technology may be used to implement this guideline when consistent with all applicable permits.
  2. Water intake structures should be screened, and intake velocities shall be limited to prevent entrapment, entrainment, or injury to fish. The structures supporting intakes should be designed and maintained to prevent fish from being led into the intake. Other effective techniques may also be used to achieve the intent of this guideline.
  3. The DMLW (Water Section) and ADF&G (Habitat Section) should be consulted to determine screen size, water velocity, and intake design if the intake structure is in fish-bearing waters. ADF&G will continue to determine and permit the appropriate intake structures for specific locations and projects.
- **Guideline C-3. *Transportation Routes and Facilities.*** Location of routes and timing of construction should be determined in consultation with ADF&G. Transportation corridors that intersect or cross fish or wildlife movement areas shall be equipped with appropriate crossing devices or structures to allow the free and efficient bidirectional passage of species using the corridor.
- **Guideline C-4. *Mitigation.***
  1. When issuing permits and leases or otherwise authorizing the use or development of state lands, DNR will recognize the requirements of the activity or

development and the effects to habitat when determining stipulations or measures needed to protect fish, wildlife, or their habitats. The costs of mitigation relative to the benefits to be gained will be considered in the implementation of the authorization.

2. DNR will consult with federal agencies to develop mitigation measures to avoid and minimize impacts to resources within the plan boundary, when appropriate.
3. All land use activities will be conducted in accordance with requirements from DNR and other pertinent agencies to avoid or minimize adverse effects on fish, wildlife, or their habitats, and on public access to those resources.
4. DNR, DEC, and ADF&G may require the mitigation of any significant damage to fish, wildlife, or their habitats that may occur as a result of a project or proposal. DNR, DEC, and ADF&G will enforce permit stipulations and measures consistent with their authorities and enforcement capabilities.
5. Mitigation will be required for any significant damage to fish, wildlife, or their habitats that may occur as a direct result of the party's failure to comply with applicable law, regulations, or the conditions of the permit or lease.
6. When determining appropriate stipulations and measures, the Department will apply, in order of priority, the following steps. Mitigation requirements listed in other guidelines in this plan will also follow these steps:
  - a) Avoid anticipated, significant adverse effects on fish, wildlife, or their habitats through siting, timing, or other management options.
  - b) When significant adverse effects cannot be avoided by design, siting, timing, or other management options, the magnitude of the adverse effect(s) of the use or development will be minimized.
  - c) If significant loss of fish or wildlife habitat occurs, the loss will be rectified by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected area to a useful state once the authorized use ceases and the Department has determined the appropriate DR&R and potential site remediation action (if any) needed for the degraded lands or waters.
  - d) DNR shall consider replacement or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat when steps a through c cannot avoid substantial and irreversible loss of habitat. The ADF&G will identify the species affected, the need for replacement or enhancement, and the suggested method for addressing the impact. In those instances when replacement or enhancement is not feasible, DNR will consider the provision of substitute resources or environments. DNR will consider only those replacement and enhancement techniques that are either scientifically supported or are likely to be effective and that will result in a benefit to the species impacted by the development. Replacement or enhancement will be required by DNR if it is determined to be in the best interest of the state either through the AS 38.05.035(e) or other authorization processes.

- **Guideline C-5. *Avoidance of Conflicts with Traditional Uses of Fish and Game.*** Surface activities authorized under permit or lease are to avoid significant conflicts with subsistence harvest activities and other traditional uses of fish and wildlife resources. The impact of surface activities upon harvest is to be evaluated in DNR authorizations. These evaluations are to determine the degree of impact and, where significant impact is likely to occur, either deny the activity or impose seasonal/temporal restrictions. Prior to issuing an authorization that may have a significant effect upon habitat or local harvests, DNR is to consult with ADF&G and local communities to ascertain their interests and concerns. See *Harvest* section for more information.

**Objective D. *Other Guidelines affecting Fish and Wildlife Habitat.*** Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect fish and wildlife habitat in the planning area. The most commonly affected resource sections include Public Access, Transportation and Infrastructure, Water Resources, Harvest, Subsurface Resources, and Recreation and Tourism; however other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Species Specific Management Guidelines

**Caribou.** Caribou are plentiful in the Interior Highlands, Dalton Corridor, and Arctic Regions, and they are generally absent from the Yukon Flats Region. The Arctic Region of the planning area functions as important winter range and general distribution area for caribou. The Central Arctic Herd (CAH), the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd (TCH), the Fortymile Herd, Hodzana Hills Herd, White Mountains Herd, and the Porcupine Caribou Herd (PCH) are present within the planning area. The CAH, PCH, and Fortymile Herd are the most prominent in the planning area, with the CAH centralized in the eastern Brooks Range, the PCH in eastern portions of the Arctic Slope, the Brooks Range, and the northeastern Interior Alaska, and the Fortymile Herd in the Interior Highlands Region. The Teshekpuk Herd periodically overlaps with the planning area during spring, fall, and winter. The Fortymile Herd exhibits high variability in calving and wintering areas, shifting its range frequently. The Fortymile Herd uses remote calving and summer ranges primarily on federally protected lands. The White Mountains Herd has largely merged with the Fortymile Herd, with former calving areas primarily on federal lands. The smaller Hodzana Hills Herd resides and calves mainly in upland hill regions along the western edge of the planning area.

The most significant habitats include calving grounds and winter range. Where these areas exist, they are identified within specific management units in the Resource Allocation Tables (RAT) of Chapter 3. The RAT and the applicable goals, objectives, and guidelines found in this Chapter are to be consulted to determine the full management intent. The temporal sensitivity of herds within each unit should also be considered. If it is likely that a caribou concentration exists within the area affected by a potential project, adjudicators shall consult with ADF&G to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures. Other

management requirements pertain to the ‘Subsurface Resources’ component of Chapter 2 and should be consulted prior to authorizing locatable, leasing, or licensing activities.

**Moose.** Moose play a key ecological and cultural role on the landscape. They are widely distributed across the planning area, with various habitats being important for calving, rutting, and overwintering. Willow stands associated with riparian areas are important winter habitat. South-facing slopes and wetlands may also be important for wintering, offering thermal cover and easier movement. Moose rutting occurs throughout the area, particularly in riparian zones. During the calving and insect season (summertime), riparian zones and tundra are important habitats. Calving typically occurs from May through June, while rutting occurs from late September to October. In the Interior Highlands Region, during the summer, moose are commonly seen in subalpine habitats and in stream-margin shrublands. Severe winter conditions may force them into higher elevations along the Yukon and its major tributaries where temperatures are more moderate. DNR authorizations should include seasonal restrictions on activities that would produce significant acoustic or visual disturbance during wintering, calving (including post-calving), or rutting periods.

Moose calving and rutting areas may change over time. Adjudicators shall consult with ADF&G to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures, if applicable.

**Dall Sheep.** Dall sheep are present throughout the mountainous terrain and open alpine ridges from 3,000 to 6,000 feet including steep, rugged terrain suitable for predator escape; alpine tundra providing summer forage; and wind-scoured ridges or south-facing slopes with minimal snow in winter within the Brooks Range and the White Mountains. Within these areas, sheep are widely distributed. Spring lambing typically occurs between late May and early June. Ewes and lambs are especially vulnerable and sensitive to disturbances (e.g., low elevation air traffic) and other environmental factors at this time. Additionally, disease transmission from domestic livestock may pose a significant threat to Dall sheep and proactive prevention efforts such as the establishment of spatial buffers between livestock and wild sheep should be considered in consultation with ADF&G. Fall rutting occurs from November to December. Rutting and wintering areas can be found throughout mountainous terrain of the planning area. There are mineral licks in the Dalton Corridor and Arctic Regions. The licks play an important role in the life history of the animals. The area around the licks should be protected for their wildlife value. Stipulations should be developed on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with ADF&G for authorizations. Adjudicators should implement stipulations that address:

1. How impacts on the mineral licks, the animal tracks leading to them, and other areas of concentrated animal use that are associated with the mineral lick will be avoided;
2. Consult with ADF&G for the method and routing of mining-related access to these areas. Adjudicators shall consult ADF&G to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

**Black and Grizzly Bears.** Grizzly Bears are seasonally concentrated along the fish-bearing streams, areas of mammalian food sources, and berry patches of the planning area. Densities are generally highest in the foothills and mountains of the Brooks Range (below 4,000 feet) and lowest in the Yukon Flats. Bears could be denning across nearly every portion of the planning area, particularly in regions where densities are highest. Adjudicators shall consult ADF&G to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures. All permanent and long-term seasonal facilities shall prepare a bear interaction plan to reduce conflicts with black and brown bears.

**Migratory Birds.** The planning area contains a variety of habitats that are integral to the breeding, nesting, and foraging of numerous migratory bird species. Alaska's wetland habitats are heavily used as summer staging and breeding grounds for migratory birds that use all four North American flyways to reach their wintering grounds. There are 41 migratory bird Species of Greatest Conservation Need that occur within the planning area, as identified in the 2015 Alaska Wildlife Action Plan. For many species, the planning area includes core breeding and staging areas important to population maintenance. Migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Protection Act). Current recommendations are that disturbance of nesting habitat should be avoided between May 1 to July 15 for most birds, and between March 1 to August 31 for eagles. Adjudicators shall consult ADF&G and USFWS to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

Abundant field data reveals climate-related stressors that result in both breeding and carry-over effects for migratory species. Given the list below, it is imperative to account for both the current context of climate change, as well as any additional habitat disturbance, which can result in cumulative impacts.

Some scientifically documented existing climate-related stressors for birds are:

1. Many low-lying areas are changing and drying, reducing habitat suitability.
2. Asynchrony of migratory and reproductive events with the phenology of physical and biological events, reducing survival.
3. Greater variability of seasonal weather and dates of snowmelt can dramatically reduce breeding success.

**Waterfowl and other waterbirds.** The extensive lakes, ponds, and sloughs of the Yukon Flats are one of the most productive waterfowl breeding areas in North America. These habitats support important breeding grounds for numerous species, including trumpeter swans, sandhill cranes, Arctic terns, Canada and white-fronted geese, and yellow-billed loons— a former candidate under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Interior boreal forests support a diverse range of waterfowl, offering both breeding and foraging opportunities. Wetlands within these forests are crucial for duck species such as scaup, northern pintail, and American wigeon. Streams with dense vegetation and crevices provide important breeding

habitat. Birds will feed on larvae of aquatic insects and fish eggs in the streams. Adjudicators shall consult ADF&G and may contact USFWS to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

**Shorebirds.** The planning area contains several areas important to about a dozen shorebird species during breeding and post-breeding staging, with at least five shorebird species identified as either Species of Greatest Conservation Need (a state designation from the Alaska Wildlife Action Plan) or Birds of Conservation Concern (a federal designation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), and at least seven priority shorebird species identified by the Alaska Shorebird Group in 2019. In important waterfowl and waterbird habitat, activities requiring a lease, permit, or development plan, and producing habitat disturbance or high levels of acoustical or visual disturbance from sources such as boat traffic, vegetation clearing, construction, blasting, dredging, and seismic operations, should be avoided during sensitive periods such as nesting, staging, or brood-rearing periods. Adjudicators shall consult ADF&G and may contact USFWS to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

**Landbirds.** Landbirds include songbirds, upland gamebirds, and raptors. The planning area supports a significant portion of the continental populations of several species. The Alaska Landbird Plan 2021 highlights multiple species, including the short-eared owl and the olive-sided flycatcher, which are on its watchlist. Other songbirds of conservation concern include gray-headed chickadees, American kestrels, gray-cheeked thrushes, varied thrushes, fox sparrows, and American tree sparrows. Songbirds breed within a variety of habitats, including boreal forests and wetlands. The gray-headed chickadee is of special concern due to its limited range and small population size. Recent surveys across its range in Alaska suggest a significant population decline and range contraction.

Five resident upland game bird species occur. Willow and rock ptarmigan nest in the tundra areas and willow stands within river valleys of the planning area and are the most common. Much of the Yukon-Tanana Uplands is an important breeding area for rock and willow ptarmigan and remains an important wintering area for males of both species. Spruce grouse are abundant in forests. Ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse are also present in the area.

**Raptors and Eagles.** Golden and bald eagles, federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, use habitats throughout the planning area and appear to be important for continental populations. Bald and golden eagles are known to nest along or near the Yukon River. Golden eagles also nest on ledges in the tundra uplands. The best-available tracking data can be provided by the Alaska USFWS. The additional federal protections under the Eagle Protection Act prohibit molesting, agitating, disturbing or taking these species, their parts, nests, or eggs without a federal permit. Disturbance includes decreasing productivity by substantially interfering with breeding, feeding, sheltering behavior, or causing nest abandonment in the current or subsequent year.

Alaska also supports 100% of the U.S. breeding population of gyrfalcon, rough-legged hawk, and snowy owl, as well as large proportions of other raptor subspecies. Given the endemic nature of breeding populations, recent declines, and presence of their habitat in the planning area, these species are worthy of consideration. Rough-legged hawks may nest in upland areas. America's largest falcon, the gyrfalcon, nests in the highlands of the Charley River. Common raptors within the planning area include peregrine falcons, gyrfalcons, rough-legged hawks, goshawks, golden eagles, red-tailed hawks, osprey, kestrels, northern harriers, and owls including boreal, great gray, great horned, short-eared, and northern hawk. Generally, raptor nesting sites are associated with bluffs and cliffs along riverine areas, particularly the Yukon, Koyukuk, and Porcupine river areas, which have some of the highest concentrations. Short-eared owls are likely widely distributed in the planning area and their habitats include grasslands, wetlands, tundra, and low shrubs; short-eared owls have been in decline and their habitat should be protected. Adjudicators shall consult with ADF&G and USFWS to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

### **Anadromous and High Value Fish Habitat**

The Yukon River provides high value fish habitat for anadromous species, including salmon. Anadromous whitefish such as sheefish, broad whitefish, and Bering cisco are also present in the NEAAP. Sheefish that overwinter in the Yukon River Delta are often found at the mouths of tributary streams early in the season as they migrate upstream during spring and summer to their known spawning locations in the Yukon River drainage where they spawn in the fall. Bering cisco are widely distributed in coastal habitats of western Alaska but only spawn in the Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Susitna Rivers. In the Yukon River, Bering cisco spawn in a single reach between Fort Yukon and Circle during the second and third weeks of October. Some Arctic lamprey populations may also be anadromous.

Arctic grayling are ubiquitous throughout the Yukon River drainage, especially during the open water season. Northern pike are found in the lower reaches of most tributary streams and in backwater sloughs of the Yukon River. Burbot are also found throughout the Yukon River and spawn throughout the mainstem during late January to early February. Dolly Varden have been noted in northern rivers and most within the Yukon River drainage are not believed to be migratory. Longnose suckers and slimy sculpin are also ubiquitous throughout the Yukon River drainage. Adjudicators should consult ADF&G and the Alaska Fish Resource Monitor, and may consult USFWS to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

**Salmon.** Chinook, chum, and coho salmon are present in the planning area. Timing of spawning runs is different for each species of salmon. Of these, Chinook salmon are typically the first to enter the Yukon River in early June, arriving at middle to upper Yukon River spawning streams from late June through late August. Yukon River chum salmon consist of genetically distinct summer and fall runs. Summer chum, approximately two-thirds of all

Yukon chum salmon, enter the river primarily before July 16. Summer chum salmon spawn from July through September. Fall chum salmon begin entering the Yukon River in mid-July. Spawning for fall chum occurs mainly in September and October, with key spawning areas within the planning area including the Teedriinjik (Chandalar) and Sheenjek Rivers. Adult coho salmon primarily enter the Yukon River between August and September. In November, they migrate up the Porcupine River and have been found as far upriver as Old Crow, Yukon Territory. Adult and juvenile coho salmon, as well as fall chum salmon, occur in the Draanjik (Black) River and its tributaries. Fall chum salmon have been documented spawning in the upper reaches of the drainage, with some individuals tracked into Canada and back into the U.S. After spawning, salmon eggs remain in the gravel until hatching in late April to early May, when juveniles begin migrating downriver during spring runoff. Protecting the diversity and interconnectedness of riverine habitats is key to sustaining these populations.

Salmon are highly valuable to subsistence fishers along the Yukon River. Chinook salmon stocks have experienced over a decade of low productivity with subsequent restrictions to subsistence fishing opportunities. For more information, see the Harvest section of Chapter 2. Adjudicators should consult ADF&G and may contact USFWS to identify important areas in addition to those identified in the management units in the plan to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

Timing data for all Yukon River monitoring projects are available through the ADF&G link: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts>. Aerial survey data can also be accessed at the ADF&G AKY Database Management System ([https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/CF\\_R3/external/sites/aykdbms\\_website/](https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/CF_R3/external/sites/aykdbms_website/)) under “Data Type” > “Survey Counts Data.”

**Table 2-1: Fish Species in NEAAP Major Rivers and Streams**

Fish species presence in the state and state-selected lands of major rivers and streams in the NEAAP as recorded by the Alaska Freshwater Fish Inventory. Data was collected at stream locations at points in time, so the lack of species data does not mean that the species are not present, just that they were not captured and recorded.

Rivers and Streams	Crosses Highway	Fish Species											
		Chinook Salmon	Chum Salmon	Coho Salmon	Arctic Grayling	Northern Pike	Slimy Sculpin	Burbot	Whitefish	Dolly Varden	Longnose Sucker	Sheefish	Arctic Lamprey
Dietrich River	Dalton Highway				X		X			X			
Bettles River	Dalton Highway		X		X		X			X			
North Fork Chandalar River	Dalton Highway	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				
Middle Fork Koyukuk River	Dalton Highway	X	X		X		X		X			X	
South Fork Koyukuk River	Dalton Highway	X	X	X	X				X		X		
Hammond River	Dalton Highway	X	X				X				X		
Minnie Creek	Dalton Highway	X			X		X		X	X			
Marion Creek	Dalton Highway	X	X				X						
Slate Creek	Dalton Highway	X	X		X					X			
Ray River	Dalton Highway	X	X		X		X						
Kandik River	No	X	X		X		X		X		X		
Draanjik River	No	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X
Grayling Fork Black River	No	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek)	Steese Highway	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	

**Table 2-2: Fish Species in NEAAP Major Lakes**

Fish species presence in the state and state-selected lands of the NEAAP as recorded in the Alaska Lake Database. Lack of species data does not mean that the species were not present, just that they had not been captured and recorded.

Lakes		Fish Species						
	Nearby Villages / Towns	Chinook Salmon	Arctic Grayling	Northern Pike	Slimy Sculpin	Burbot	Whitefish	Lake Trout
Medicine Lake	Circle			X			X	
Ackerman Lake	Chandalar					X	X	X
Vunittsieh Lakes	Chandalar			X				
Chandalar Lake	Chandalar	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boulder Lake	Chandalar		X	X	X		X	X
Bob Johnson Lake	Chandalar		X	X	X	X	X	X

## **Threatened and Endangered Species**

All land use activities will be consistent with state and federal Endangered Species Acts to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of threatened or endangered species, to provide for their continued use of an area, and to avoid modification or destruction of their habitat. Specific mitigation recommendations should be identified through interagency consultation for any land use activity that potentially affects threatened or endangered species. At the time of adoption, there are no determined threatened or endangered species under AS 16.20.190 within the planning boundary. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Ecological Services should be consulted for questions involving federally designated threatened or endangered species in the planning area.

## Forestry

The forest resources of the NEAAP planning area are a mixture of white spruce, black spruce, quaking aspen, and paper birch in the upland areas. Balsam poplar is commonly found in riparian areas. Black spruce is the dominant species in the boreal forest. White spruce has commercial value for sawlogs, biomass, fiber, and wood chips. The commercial value of the paper birch is for biomass, fiber, and wood chips; birch with little or no defects has some sawlog value. Spruce and birch support a significant personal use firewood harvest by residents of the area.

The recommendations that follow implement constitutional and statutory policies to develop the state's renewable resources, making them available for maximum use, consistent with the principle of sustained yield, and with the overall public interest. The primary purpose of the timber management program is to provide for the production, utilization, and replenishment of timber resources while allowing other beneficial uses of public lands and resources. Forestry designated lands are to be managed by DNR as a 'working forest' consistent with the constitutional mandate to encourage the use and development of state resources, including renewable resources. A 'working forest' refers to actively managed forest lands that provide wood for personal and commercial use, while protecting fish and wildlife habitat, providing the public with recreation and other multiple use of state land, and maintaining public benefits such as clean air, land, and water.

## Goals

**Personal Use Timber.** Provide timber to meet the needs of Alaskans. This program will be provided on a demand basis when the operational costs of administering this program are satisfactory.

**Economic Opportunities.** Provide for economic opportunities and stability in the forest products industry by allowing the use of state uplands in areas designated Forestry. Also, to benefit the state's economy by providing royalties to the state from stumpage receipts, and adding to the state's economy through wages, purchases, jobs, and business.

**Support Timber Industry.** For adherence to the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act, continue to perform reviews of private timber harvests. Provide the timber industry with information, technical expertise, and management guidance for utilizing forest resources.

**Wildland Fire Suppression.** DOF shall continue to provide wildland fire suppression within the planning area consistent with the requirements of the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan.

**Forest Health.** To improve forest health and vigor by harvesting and replacing mature birch stands with healthy new stands of regrowth, while protecting and maintaining other resource values.

**Wildlife Habitat Management.** DNR will seek to create, enhance, and maintain wildlife habitat consistent with forest management objectives by providing a mosaic of forest stand areas, reflecting the natural range of species and habitat diversity, for the variety of wildlife species that live in the planning area.

**Provision of Biomass for Public Purposes.** DNR shall support actions to develop sustainable sources of energy for meeting community needs from renewable woody biomass obtained from state forests or other state lands that are suitable for this purpose and consistent with state and federal permitting standards. Wherever feasible and practical, the by-products of forest management practices involving harvest or land clearing are to be utilized for biomass.

**Carbon.** In 2023, legislation was enacted allowing the State to use its lands and natural resources for carbon management projects, including through the Carbon Offset Program authorized under AS 38.95.400 – AS 38.95.499. The Carbon Offset Program enables the State to implement carbon offset projects on State land.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

A systematic program of scheduled timber harvests is appropriate within those areas of the plan designated Forestry. Timber management activities are subject to the following management guidelines. Another important component of the state forestry program within the planning area is fire management. A management guideline is included that describes the broad aspects of this program. The implementation of the state fire management program is identified and controlled in detail by the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan.

**Objective A.** Timber harvest activities must be compatible with unit-specific management intent and conducted in accordance with pertinent state guidelines and laws.

- **Guideline A-1. *Timber Harvest: General Requirements.***
  1. Systematic timber harvest programs are to be conducted in areas designated Forestry.
  2. Forest harvest operations can precede actual construction conducted on a parcel of state land intended for subdivision development or agriculture by DNR. These operations must be consistent with the subdivision plan or Farm Conservation Plan for the parcel; consultation with DMLW is required before commencing operations.
  3. Timber harvest operations will be conducted in accordance with the stipulations in the Forest Land Use Plan, the Five Year Schedule of Timber Sales, the Alaska

Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17 & 11 AAC 95), the Alaska Land Act (AS 38.05 & 11 AAC 71), and other pertinent state guidelines and laws.

4. The Forest Practices Act provides statewide policy and regulatory authority for managing forestry related activities. The specific layout and other site-specific requirements of a timber sale is addressed through a Forest Land Use Plan (FLUPs), which is prepared prior to any commercial timber harvest or sale (AS 38.05.112).
  5. FLUPs developed for timber sale or harvests in the planning area are to be consistent with the Forestry Management Guidelines of this Chapter and the Management Guidelines specified for particular parcels in Chapter 3. FLUPs shall consider, in their preparation, the sensitive resources and wildlife, or any other significant factors identified in the Management Guidelines for a parcel.
- **Guideline A-2. Sustained Yield of Forest Resources.**
    1. Forestland will be managed to guarantee perpetual supplies of renewable resources to serve the needs of all Alaskans for the many products, benefits, and services obtained from them.
    2. The annual allowable harvest will be calculated using the area control method and the units designated Forestry or co-designated Forestry are to be used for the basis of this calculation.
  - **Guideline A-3. Timber Harvest in Areas Designated Settlement, Materials, or Minerals.**
    1. Timber harvests are considered appropriate in areas designated Settlement if intended to support the costs of subdivision development, provide access to the subdivision, or provide ancillary facilities subject to the other requirements of the Forestry standards in this Chapter. The elective harvesting of timber before subdivision development is considered appropriate, after consultation with the Land Conveyance Section and if authorized by the Regional Manager, NRO.
    2. Timber harvests may be appropriate in areas designated Minerals or Materials if the use is consistent with the submitted plan of operations or as may be authorized by the Chief, Mining Section, DMLW, and after consultation with the Regional Manager, NRO.

**Objective B.** Wherever feasible and practical, the by-products of forest management practices involving harvest or land clearing are to be utilized.

- **Guideline B-1. Timber Salvage from Rights-of-Way.** Timber with commercial or personal use value should be salvaged from lands that are to be cleared for other uses such as roads, transmission lines, material sites, mining, and habitat enhancement projects (AS 41.17.083). The DMLW Regional Manager shall determine the amount and kind of material that is to be salvaged and shall coordinate with DOF on timber salvage operations having commercial value.

- **Guidelines B-2. *Salvage of Damaged Trees.*** Trees damaged due to fire, windthrow, insects, disease, or other causes may be salvaged on all land use designations. A Forest Land Use Plan, if required, will provide the rationale for conducting the salvage harvest and describe how the action will not conflict with the management intent for each management unit.

**Objective C.** Provide personal use timber to meet the needs of Alaskans when the operational costs of administering this program are satisfactory.

- **Guideline C-1. *Personal Use Wood Harvest.***
  1. When forested lands are available near communities and where personal use harvest is consistent with other purposes for which the land is being managed, DOF may provide wood products for personal use.
  2. This program will only be undertaken if it can be effectively and efficiently administered by DOF.
  3. In areas designated for settlement, personal use forestry permits may be issued by DOF after consultation with DMLW's Land Conveyance Section to assure compatibility with future land sales.

**Objective D.** The Division of Forestry shall provide wildland fire management within the planning area consistent with the requirements of the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan.

- **Guideline D-1. *Fire Management.*** The intent of fire management is to identify where wildland fire can be allowed or managed fires can be used to reduce costs of fire suppression, reduce the risk of damaging fires, and maintain the natural diversity and productivity of forest stands.
- **Guideline D-2. *Fire Suppression and the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan.***
  1. Residential areas or other forms of active land use, high value recreation use areas, and areas with infrastructure development will be the priority for fire suppression.
  2. Consistent with AS 41.15.010 and AS 41.15.020, DOF will protect forest resources from destructive agents commensurate with the values at risk identified in the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan.
  3. The Fire Management Plan indicates where suppression operations are likely to occur; generally, such operations are to be limited to decreasing the long-term risk of damaging fires and maintaining the natural diversity of forest stands, stand ages, and habitat types. Specific fire suppression levels are identified in the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan.

**Objective E.** DNR will seek to create, enhance, and maintain wildlife habitat consistent with forest management and to improve forest health and vigor.

- **Guideline E-1. *Enhance and Maintain Wildlife Habitat.***
  1. DOF will consult with ADF&G during the planning stage of timber harvest layout and in the preparation of the Forest Land Use Plan in order to receive guidance on wildlife habitat enhancement opportunities.
  2. Trees and vegetation may be manipulated by cutting, crushing, harvesting, or burning to provide or improve wildlife habitat.
  3. Where soil erosion is not a concern subsequent to wildland fire, habitat enhancement techniques may be appropriate.
- **Guideline E-2. *Improve Forest Health and Vigor.*** Harvesting and replacing mature birch stands with healthy new stands of regrowth, while protecting and maintaining other resource values may be appropriate. Scarification to expose mineral soil, a substrate essential to the natural regeneration of early successional browse species, may be appropriate for use after wildland fire.

**Objective F. *Other Guidelines Affecting Forestry.*** Other guidelines will affect management practices for timber development support facilities and forestry. See other sections of this chapter.

## Harvest

The harvesting of fish, game, and other wild resources is an important part of rural life in Alaska. Access to state lands for subsistence activities throughout the planning area provides for the ability for all Alaskan residents to maintain their current lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and gathering on these lands. Subsistence use is defined in state statute (see Appendix A, Glossary) and is open to all State of Alaska residents. Federal subsistence priority does not apply on state lands and nothing within this section or this plan should be construed to grant it.

Residents of local communities have historically harvested moose and continue to rely on moose as a primary source of wild food. Black bears are an important food source for many residents across the Yukon Flats. Residents of the planning area have a long history of harvesting fish, including anadromous species (Dolly Varden, whitefishes *spp.*, and chum and Chinook salmon *spp.*), and resident species (Arctic grayling, burbot, and northern pike). Within the planning area, the majority of lands and waters are used for harvest activities; however, the most important areas for these uses are designated Harvest (Hv) in this plan. These areas will be retained in public ownership and managed to maintain access to and wildlife habitat for subsistence and other noncommercial harvest opportunities.

Climate change is affecting wildlife habitat, which in turn affects hunters' ability to harvest, including travel, harvest preservation, decreases in wetland habitat, and shifts in moose movement. These changes are expected to continue to affect fish and wildlife populations and distributions over the course of the planning period, making it important to evaluate how activities will affect species in the context of on-going climate change. Therefore, adjudicators should consult with the appropriate state or federal agency to determine the most current information on fish and wildlife resources within the planning area.

## Goals

**Maintain Resource Areas.** Maintain in public ownership and protect resources sufficient to conserve a diversity of biological resources to support traditional harvest opportunities in areas that receive high levels of use.

**Maintain Traditional Use of Resources.** Maintain resources necessary to support traditional use for cultural activities and practices.

**Manage for Sustained Yield.** DNR management of state land and resources is to be consistent with the requirements of sustained yield, as expressed in the State Constitution.

**Contribute to Economic Diversity.** Protect fish and wildlife resources which contribute directly or indirectly to local, regional, and state economies through subsistence, personal use, and non-consumptive uses.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Use and implement adequate protection measures to ensure the sustainability of fish and wildlife habitat, populations, and the continuation of other uses of the area.

- **Guideline A-1.** The management of state land and resources are to be consistent with the requirements of maximum use and sustained yield consistent with the public interest, as described in Article VIII of the State Constitution.
- **Guideline A-2.** Consider subsistence and harvest needs of Alaska residents and the communities that extensively utilize these resources.
- **Guideline A-3.** Consult ADF&G regarding uses and activities that potentially impact the harvest of resources in areas designated for Harvest.

**Objective B.** Maintain and enhance the natural environment in areas known to be important as habitat for fish and wildlife necessary for harvest.

- **Guideline B-1.** Maintain to the maximum extent practicable the underlying integrity of the ecological systems supporting traditional ways of life within the planning area.
- **Guideline B-2.** When resource development projects occur, avoid or minimize changes in the quality and quantity of fish and wildlife habitat.
- **Guideline B-3.** DNR decisions are to carefully consider the effects of a proposed project or activity upon these uses and resources, and authorizations are to ensure that adverse impacts are avoided, minimized, or mitigated consistent with the requirements of this section of Chapter 2 and, specifically, with Management Objective A within areas designated for Harvest.

**Objective C. *Other Guidelines Affecting Harvest.*** Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect subsistence and harvest activities within the planning area. The most commonly affected resource sections include Public Access, Water Resources, Fish and Wildlife Habitat, and Recreation and Tourism; however other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Material Sites

Material sites are areas where common variety materials such as sand, gravel, rock, crushed rock, and rip-rap are extracted and processed. Material resources are required for the construction, maintenance, and expansion of infrastructure including roads, pipelines, airports, businesses, residences, utilities, and communication facilities among other types of projects. Some material sites or material sources exist that may have been previously developed and are not currently active or are newly identified sources. Ideally, source areas are located close to a project area or other area of use to reduce transportation costs; however, appropriate material sources are not located uniformly in many landscapes, so transportation distances can vary. Transportation costs increase with distance from the material source area which quickly makes their use cost prohibitive; therefore, a lack of materials sites within a reasonable distance from projects increases transportation costs and may effectively prevent some maintenance and development activities that are necessary or desirable.

Within the planning area, material source sites are more readily identified in lands adjacent to the Dalton Highway, Steese Highway, and Yukon River, where sand and gravel are common and exist in a natural thawed state. Current trends and outlooks for the planning period indicate that demand for materials is high and will continue to grow as mineral exploration is conducted and projects are authorized by local, state, and federal agencies. Material resources for this plan have been assessed with the perspective of managing a relatively scarce resource while also prioritizing sites near project areas.

## Goals

**Retain Land for State-Owned Material Sites.** Maintain in state ownership and make available to public and private users sufficient, suitably located material sites to meet long-term economic and infrastructure needs of the area.

**Minimize Material Site Impact.** Sites will be consolidated to minimize impact to other resources, to the extent economical or practicable.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** The State will designate material sites necessary for development and maintenance of infrastructure during the planning period.

- **Guideline A-1.** All state-owned material sites designated under AS 38.05.550 will be retained in state ownership unless determined by the Commissioner to be in the state's best interest to dispose of the land.

- **Guideline A-2.** Lands with potential for production of materials necessary for maintenance of existing infrastructure, or development of new infrastructure, are identified as such and shall be retained in state ownership unless a land disposal is determined by the Commissioner to be in the State’s best interest.
- **Guideline A-3.** When designating material sites, the state may include appropriate stipulations. The designation of material sites may take precedence over other surface uses.
- **Guideline A-4.** When responding to a request for a new material site designation, the highest priority should be given to using or expanding existing designated material sites when the quality, quantity, and cost of the resource is acceptable.
- **Guideline A-5.** Consideration should be given to designating material sites near present or planned infrastructure projects.
- **Guideline A-6.** Construction material resources are required for the development, maintenance, and expansion of critical infrastructure including roads, pipelines, airports, utilities, communication facilities, and similar types of projects. Because of the importance of material resources, it may be appropriate to locate material sites within areas not already identified in this plan. Unless specifically stated in the management intent, material sites should be considered appropriate in any classification.
- **Guideline A-7.** As a general policy, material sites will not be designated in known fish spawning areas or within 100 feet of known spawning areas.
- **Guideline A-8.** Material Site Designation decisions will go through the AS 38.05.945 public notice process which includes alerting the appropriate borough, municipality, village, and Native corporation entities. When authorizing a material site, coordinate with the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT/PF) and ADF&G for site-specific information.

**Objective B.** Designated material sites required for exploration and development activities will be limited to the minimum necessary and will include stipulations to minimize the environmental impact.

- **Guideline B-1.** *Protect Area Adjacent to Anadromous or High Value Resident Fish Waterbodies.* A buffer shall be provided adjacent to anadromous waterbodies. The adjudicator shall consult with ADF&G on the width of the protection area prior to designating a material site. See also ADF&G Pit Performance Guidelines.

**Objective C.** Development of upland sources should be prioritized over streambed or riverine sources to minimize impact to river systems, to the extent that it is practicable.

**Objective D.** When siting, operating, or closing material sites, maintaining other uses and resources is to be considered to the maximum extent practicable.

- **Guideline D-1.** Prior to material extraction, the adjudicator will ensure that the requirements of the authorization adequately protect other important resources and uses.
- **Guideline D-2.** The disposal of materials should be consistent with the applicable management intent statement and management guidelines of the plan.
- **Guideline D-3.** In some instances, areas occupied by a material site may be appropriate for reuse for settlement or another form of development. These instances are noted in the ‘management intent’ of the affected unit when reuse of the parcel for the intended use is appropriate. If this occurs, the reclamation plan shall take this into consideration and account for the possible reuse.
- **Guideline D-4.** *Land Sales in Areas of High Material Potential.* Generally, if a settlement area contains sand and gravel deposits, rock sources or other similar, high value material resources, a material site should be identified during subdivision design and retained in state ownership for future use.
- **Guideline D-5.** Where topography and vegetation allow, material sites should be screened from roads, residential areas, recreational areas, and other areas of significant human use. Sufficient land should be allocated to the material site to allow for such screening. Rehabilitation of the site shall follow the requirements of AS 27.19.020 and 11 AAC 97.250.
- **Guideline D-6.** *Access Roads.* Roads for access to material sites should be dedicated to their respective site and maintained for materials extraction operations.

**Objective E.** *Other Guidelines affecting Material Resources.* Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect material resources in the planning area. Other resources addressed in this chapter should also be considered.

## Public Access

Public access is sparse due to the limited number of roads throughout the planning area, therefore most areas are primarily accessed by air. The Steese Highway and Dalton Highway are the two main ground access routes. Off-road vehicles are prohibited on land within five miles of the Dalton Highway right-of-way, with a few exceptions. See AS 19.40.210 for more information.

### Goals

**Public Access.** Preserve, enhance, or provide adequate access to public lands for recreation, harvest, and resource development. Provide for future trail and access needs and protect or establish trail corridors to ensure continued public access consistent with responsible wildlife and fish habitat conservation. Ensure adequate opportunities for the public's use of public resources of local, regional, and statewide significance.

### Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** To the maximum extent practicable, adequate opportunities for the use of public resources of local, regional, and statewide significance by the public will be ensured.

- **Guideline A-1. *Preservation of Access Opportunities.*** The Department shall preserve existing access routes, and may identify additional potential access to, through, and within the planning area. Unless there is an overriding state need, section-line easements are to be preserved. DOT/PF is to be consulted prior to any action involving requests for the vacation of section-line easements. Vacation requests should not be granted unless it clearly be shown that there will not be a need for the foreseeable future (25 years) or if an alternative route is available of equal or better access.
- **Guideline A-2. *Access Across Land Use Designations.*** Due to their linear alignment, it is recognized that roads and trails may traverse several different land use designations. A particular land use designation is not intended to affect or preclude access. Access may be developed on all land use designations, including Habitat, Public Recreation, and Water Resources, although stipulations may be required to mitigate adverse impacts to the resources associated with these designations.
- **Guideline A-3. *Retain Access.*** Improve or preserve public access to areas with significant public resource values by retaining access sites and corridors in public ownership; reserving rights of access when state land is sold or leased; or identifying, managing and legally validating RS 2477 (Revised Statute Section 2477) rights-of-way. RS 2477 rights-of-way within the planning area that are identified in

- AS 19.30.400(d) or otherwise determined by DNR to qualify as RS 2477 trails are to be retained in state ownership or made a stipulation of approval ('subject to') in the transfer of state land.
- **Guideline A-4. *Reservation of Public Use Easements.*** Before selling, leasing, or otherwise disposing of the land estate, DNR will reserve public use easements pursuant to the requirements of 11 AAC 51.015. This section of administrative code establishes when public access easements are to be reserved and the widths of these easements. Specific standards for section-line easements are identified in 11 AAC 51.025 and for easements required under AS 38.05.127, to and along navigable and public waters, in 11 AAC 51.045. These sections of Administrative Code shall be used as the basis for the reservation of public access easements in authorizations granted by DNR.
  - **Guideline A-5. *Management of ANCSA 17(b) Easements.*** The state will identify 17(b) easements as required and ensure that public access is maintained to state lands. These easements are intended to provide access through private Native lands to public lands and waters. They are reserved and managed by the federal government. Generally, DNR will not accept management of 17(b) easements unless the state already actively manages a portion of the trail or easement, or state management will best protect public access to state lands.
  - **Guideline A-6. *Access to Non-State Lands.*** Reasonable access will be provided across state lands to other public and private lands. If a proposed access route is located in close proximity to a village or Alaska Native owned lands, DNR should coordinate with the appropriate regional or village corporation holding title to the surface estate. Existing legal access will not be precluded unless equivalent access is available.
  - **Guideline A-7. *Access for Exploration Activities.*** Access for exploration should be temporary and constructed of ice or snow unless DNR approves an alternative. Access will be encouraged to occur during winter months and may be approved in areas where snow and soil temperatures are sufficient to protect the ground surface. Summer off-road travel may be authorized subject to time periods and vehicle types and configurations approved by DMLW. Exceptions may be granted by DMLW.
  - **Guideline A-8. *Access for Development.*** Public access to mineralized land, oil, gas or geothermal areas, recreation, fish, wildlife, or other public resources should generally be retained when an access route is constructed for resource development over state land. If the new resource facility is likely to be of limited duration and provides superior access to the current means of access, the state should retain the new facility for public access. If the new route or facility will not or should not provide public access due to concerns for public safety or the long-term detrimental impact on natural resources, the current means of public access should be retained. Additional access routes in some areas may lead to negative impacts on valuable resources, particularly certain renewable resources. The development of new trails should not displace current methods of access without providing alternative routes.

- **Guideline A-9. *Limiting Access.*** Access to state lands may be curtailed at certain times or locations to protect public safety, provide for the remediation of public use areas, allow special uses, and prevent harm to the environment, fish and wildlife.
- **Guideline A-10. *Joint Use and Consolidation of Surface Access.*** Multiple use and consolidation of access routes and facilities should be encouraged whenever it is feasible and prudent to do so. Surface access should be sited and designed to accommodate future development and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- **Guideline A-11. *Consultation between DMLW and DOG.*** Proposed access routes to oil and gas resources shall be reviewed by DMLW and DOG prior to authorization. DMLW determines if the routes or trails are required, consistent with applicable sections of statute and administrative code.

**Objective B.** To the maximum extent practicable, adequate opportunities for access to and within developing areas will be provided.

- **Objective B-1. *DNR shall consider the need for public access before selling, leasing, or otherwise disposing of the land estate.*** If local access needs are identified through the adjudication and agency or public review process, access trails should be reserved. This will occur through the retention of state land in public ownership or through the creation of a public use easement. Under either approach, the public should have the right of access within the area of state land or the public use easement.
- **Objective B-2. *Ownership.*** The following factors shall be considered by DNR in making the decision to retain the access corridor under state ownership or to provide for public access through public easements.
  1. If the access (usually a trail within a developed or developing area) is used for subsistence purposes or is a trail route of regional significance, access should be retained in public ownership.
  2. If a route is used as access by residents, it should be dedicated to local government or established as an easement to an entity willing to accept maintenance and management responsibility. This would typically occur when the purpose is to establish access between communities or to traditional subsistence areas.
  3. If the access provides a connection to other areas and is considered of regional or statewide significance, it should be retained in public ownership.
- **Objective B-3. *Width of Access Corridors.*** The width of the access corridor shall be determined according to its function and location:
  1. Access corridors shall not be less than 25 feet in width for pedestrian movement and not less than 40 feet if motorized movement can be expected in addition to pedestrian travel. In areas where topographic conditions restrict development, widths less than 40 feet may be considered.

2. In all other areas, the width shall vary with terrain, function, and the need for separation from other uses, but shall not be less than 50 feet.
  3. Trails or other access facilities of statewide or regional significance shall not be less than 100 feet in width.
- **Objective B-4. *Trail Rerouting.*** Standards for the vacation and modification of trails are identified in 11 AAC 51.065. Rerouting of trails may be permitted to minimize land use conflicts, reduce duplication in trail routings, or minimize habitat destruction. If trails are rerouted, provision should be made for construction of new trail segments if warranted by type and intensity of use. Rerouting trails shall be done in consultation with affected private users and public agencies. Rerouted trails should allow the same uses and activities as the original trail. Reroutes should not interrupt access, and reroutes should be established, open and useable for the intended uses before the original route is closed. Closed routes should be blocked off and restored. The development of new trails should not displace current methods of access without providing alternative routes.

**Objective C.** Whenever feasible, adequate public access opportunities should be preserved, enhanced, or provided without adversely impacting other resources, uses, or the natural environment.

- **Guideline C-1.** Existing roads should be used for access to material sites whenever feasible.
- **Guideline C-2. *Siting and Constructing Permanent Roads, Bridges, and Causeways.*** Permanent roads, bridges, and causeways will, to the extent feasible and prudent, be routed to avoid sensitive wetlands, avoid streams and minimize alteration of natural drainage patterns, and avoid long-term adverse effects on fish and wildlife, water quantity or water quality, and permafrost.
- **Guideline C-3.** Access across tundra, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas will be managed in a manner that minimizes damage and must be consistent with the requirements of applicable administrative regulations, including 11 AAC 96.010 and 11 AAC 96.025.
- **Guideline C-4. *Protection of the Environment.*** In the siting of regional and industrial access facilities, consideration should be given to the effect of the proposed project or improvement on the natural environment, fish and wildlife species, and habitats that the plan identifies as significant. Precautions should be taken when developing new trails or access roads to avoid critical wildlife concentration areas. ADF&G shall be consulted prior to the issuance of an authorization or development of an access route if significant impacts to fish or wildlife resources or their associated habitats will occur.

**Objective D. *Other Guidelines affecting Public Access or Trail Management.*** Other guidelines may directly or indirectly affect access. See other sections of this chapter.

## Recreation, Tourism, and Scenery

Recreational use and commercial tourist destinations are present throughout the planning area. Most recreational use is along the Steese and Dalton Highway corridors, and in areas surrounding communities in the region. Both independent and commercial recreation are important uses within the Dalton Highway Corridor. Independent travelers, campers, hikers, photographers, educational groups, aurora seekers, and guests of lodges are significant user groups along the highway and within Wiseman. Guided hunting is one major form of commercial recreation occurring in the planning area. Commercial guide hunting generally occurs in the Brooks Range with staging areas located near Coldfoot and the Dalton Highway. Hunting trips are for grizzly bear, wolves, caribou, Dall sheep, and moose. One commercial guide reported 133 visitor days in 2023. Other commercial recreation includes staging areas for television programs, lodges, guided canoeing and backpacking, and flightseeing tours. Floating trips occur on the Charley River, Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek), Beaver Creek, and Porcupine River.

The use of off-road vehicles, including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and snowmobiles, is prohibited within the Dalton Highway Corridor LDA, with some exceptions. Allowable means of access include boat, aircraft, foot, ski, or dog team. The frontcountry is accessible year-round via automobile on the Dalton Highway and Steese Highway; these areas are the most popular for recreation. The main source of backcountry access is during the summer months via flights, Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV), and river corridors, including the Yukon, Charley, Teedriinjik (Chandalar), Porcupine, and Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek). These waterways are accessed by highway or fly-in to drop-off boats. During the winter, snowmachines are the primary method of access.

Common recreation activities along the Dalton Highway include camping, hiking, boating, gold panning, hunting, and fishing. Hunting also occurs throughout the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area and Steese National Conservation Area. Hunters traverse off the Dalton Highway to hunt beyond the LDA's 5-mile management boundary using firearms, or hunt within the corridor closer to the road with bow and arrow. The area around the Twelvemile wayside of the Steese is particularly popular for hunting and viewing caribou, as well as moose and upland bird hunting. Sport fishing occurs throughout the area. Trapping activities are dispersed and most trapping cabins located on state land are within the Interior Highlands Region. Additionally, the Steese area is well known for berry picking.

This section will consider the recreation and tourism resources within the planning boundary. The Goals, Objectives, and Management Guidelines that follow apply to areas classified Public Recreation throughout the planning area.

## Goals

**Maintain Multiple Use.** Maintain recreation opportunities on state land and water that serve multiple purposes such as hunting, tourism, and backcountry wilderness activities.

**Contribute to Economic Diversity.** Encourage commercial development of recreational facilities and services through concession contracts, land sales, leases, and permits where public recreation needs can most effectively be provided by private enterprise, while minimizing environmental impacts and conflicts with the existing users of the area.

**Protect Recreational Resources.** Protect resources including public access, visual and aesthetic resources, as well as the isolation and unique wilderness characteristics of the planning area.

**Minimize Use Impacts.** Maintain protection of ecosystems and habitat to prevent damage caused by inappropriate recreation use.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Manage state land within the planning area for multiple uses without eliminating or unreasonably limiting recreation, tourism, or scenic resources.

- **Guideline A-1.** *Management of Recreation Uses on State Lands.* To the extent provided by law, DNR will manage recreation use and activities to enable a variety of uses and vehicle types:
  1. while ensuring that adverse impacts to fish and wildlife species and habitats are avoided or minimized, and
  2. while avoiding the creation of user conflicts and minimizing the impact of any existing conflicts.
- **Guideline A-2.** *Roles of Different Public Landowners in Providing Public Recreational Opportunities.* Generally, the State's role is to retain and manage land supporting recreational opportunities of regional or statewide significance. The state and federal governments are most capable of providing recreational opportunities that require large land areas, while local government is generally best suited for providing and managing community recreation opportunities. To recognize local government's role in providing community recreation needs, the state may transfer state land designated Public Recreation-Dispersed (Rd) or state recreation sites within or near existing communities, if this action is in the overall best interest of the state (AS 38.05.810). The selection of these sites shall be agreed to by local government and the state and shall be contingent on the local government's commitment to develop and maintain the recreation uses, facilities, and values of these areas.

- **Guideline A-3. *Coordination with Other Landowners and Users.*** Recreation management, including the location and management of recreation facilities, will consider the current and projected future uses of lands owned by local governments and private landowners, and should strive for compatibility with adjacent current and anticipated uses.
- **Guideline A-4. *Public Use Sites.*** Uses that adversely impact public use sites or areas should not be authorized. Uses that are made available to the public, such as an airstrip development or a dock, may be authorized if consistent with the management intent for the public use site or area, and if there is a demonstrated public need.
- **Guideline A-5. *Scenic Areas of Exceptional Value.***
  1. To the extent feasible and prudent, areas of exceptional scenic value are to be retained by the state and protected with easements, setbacks, or other management techniques.
  2. Authorizations issued by DNR shall consider the area's scenic values during the process of adjudication, and if found to be in the state's best interest, should retain or protect these areas through appropriate stipulations or management requirements.
- **Guideline A-6.** Consult with ADF&G in the siting of recreational facilities where fish and wildlife species or important habitats are present.

**Objective B.** Consider the needs of recreational use to minimize user conflict, provide for a quality experience for a range of user groups, and protect the natural values and attributes of the planning area.

- **Guideline B-1. *Private Commercial Recreation Facilities and Operations on State Land.***
  1. Lodges or other private commercial facilities and operations designed to be run as or to support private commercial recreation facilities may be authorized if:
    - a) the facility or operation fulfills the conditions outlined in this guideline; or
    - b) conforms to the requirements of AS 38.05.070 and AS 38.05.850, AS 38.07.075, or AS 38.05.073.
  2. If authorized, the facility or operation should be sited, constructed, and operated in a manner that creates the least conflict with natural values and existing uses of the area.
  3. The commercial facility and its generated use should avoid significant adverse impacts on fish and wildlife habitat and existing uses of an area.
  4. For facilities supporting recreational fish and wildlife harvest, ADF&G shall be consulted on the possible effects of increased harvest on fish and wildlife resources, and on established commercial, recreation, and subsistence users.
- **Guideline B-2. *Commercial Recreation Leasing Processes.***

1. There are several processes for leasing state land for commercial recreational facilities under the following Alaska Statutes: AS 38.05.070, 38.05.073, 38.05.075, and 38.05.810. The first three are used for commercial recreation facilities and the last is used for nonprofit entities that provide some type of recreational use or service.
  2. In particular, AS 38.05.073 is designed for creating recreational facility leaseholds. This statute requires that the regional land use plan identify areas suitable for recreational facility leasing. Given the broad scope of this plan, the determination of specific sites is impractical, although such uses are generally appropriate within most classified lands.
  3. Authorizations under AS 38.05.073 must evaluate the adequacy of the proposed recreation facility, and a final site determination and best interest finding must support this determination. Any amendments to this plan to accommodate such a commercial lease shall be reviewed by the Director of DMLW prior to or concurrent with the adjudication process.
- **Guideline B-3. *Permits, Easements, and Leases Adjacent to Recreation Facilities.*** Permits, easements, and leases may be issued adjacent to recreation facilities if the land manager determines that the two uses can be made compatible by design, siting, or operating guidelines; or if the land manager determines there is no feasible and prudent alternative for the activity. This guideline also applies to sites reserved for future recreation facilities. The land manager's determination will be made after consultation with the facility manager.
  - **Guideline B-4.** Consult with ADF&G in the siting of recreational facilities where fish and wildlife species or important habitats are present.

**Objective C. *Other Guidelines affecting Recreation, Tourism, and Scenery.*** Many of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect recreation and tourism in the planning area. Other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Settlement

The general pattern of settlement along the highways within the planning area is catalyzed by mining activities, and is therefore commercial in nature, especially in the Wiseman/Coldfoot and Central areas. Other settlement areas include the villages throughout the area. Commercial and industrial use of the Settlement designation is used in this plan. It is unlikely, given the relative isolation of this area, that extensive residential growth can be expected for the planning period. Review of available settlement locations throughout the planning area indicates there may be areas suitable for potential remote settlement. Any proposed land conveyance would require a subsequent public process through the DMLW Land Conveyance Section.

DNR will attempt to satisfy three settlement categories within the planning area:

**Industrial or commercial development.** DNR will sell, lease, or protect for future use suitable land for private commercial and industrial uses. If DNR sells the land, the timing of this disposal will depend upon market demand and adequate funding.

**Seasonal remote recreation opportunities.** DNR may offer land suitable for seasonal recreation use. This land will be provided as demand warrants, subject to the availability of funding. This category of land disposal is intended to provide land, often in remote locations, for recreational needs. No public facilities and services are intended to be provided.

**Year-round residences for community expansion.** DNR will offer accessible land suitable to meet the needs of existing communities. This category serves people whose principal place of residence and work is, or will be, in the area of the disposal. This land will be provided as demand warrants, subject to the availability of funding.

## Goals

**Provide Private Land Ownership Opportunities.** Provide suitable public land for transfer to private ownership for settlement purposes.

**Balance Fiscal Impacts.** Land disposals (not including remote settlements) should be sited and planned to minimize the costs of infrastructure and other services resulting from settlement.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Plan and coordinate the transfer of state land to private ownership to ensure the optimal use, development, and protection of area resources.

- **Guideline A-1.** It may be appropriate to provide land for private use, but such an action must be in the overall best interest of the state.
- **Guideline A-2. *Competition.*** To ensure the availability of lands suitable for transfer to private ownership for settlement purposes within the plan boundary, the state may compete with the private sector or local governments if necessary to satisfy demand, provide market choice, or moderate unreasonably high prices.
- **Guideline A-3. *Pacing.*** Settlement offerings may be phased over 20 years – the length of the planning period. The timing and extent of disposals will depend upon anticipated demand, availability of funding, the rate of community expansion, the availability of or costs to provide necessary infrastructure, and the particular land requirements of such expansion. Another factor may be whether the disposal will generate a demand for services that cannot be reasonably expected to be met by local government or community organizations.
- **Guideline A-4. *Ensure Access to Remote Settlements.*** Because remote settlement areas are almost always distant from infrastructure, it is generally not practicable to identify and develop access corridors to such areas, whether or not they are adjoined by state land or land under other ownership. However, in those limited instances where access corridors can be identified and economically developed, access should be provided. In this circumstance, it is intended that this access be accommodated even if plan designation(s) differ from that of Settlement. As part of the development of remote settlement areas, DNR should consider the provision of staging areas, parking areas, and/or trailheads in order to accommodate landowners parking vehicles and other equipment while accessing their remote parcels. ADF&G should be consulted to ensure there will be no habitat associated impacts from parking areas or trailheads.

**Objective B.** To the maximum extent practicable, DNR will sell, lease, or protect suitable land for private, commercial, and industrial uses or for seasonal residences used for recreation.

- **Guideline B-1. *Types of Settlement Land and Land Offerings.*** The nature of state land available for private ownership is influenced by both the characteristics of land designated for settlement, and the type of land sales program that makes it available. The NEAAP designates certain lands for settlement and provides guidelines for land sales.
- **Guideline B-2. *Industrial or Commercial Development.*** DNR will sell, lease, or protect for future use suitable land for private, commercial, and industrial uses. If

DNR sells the land, the timing of this disposal will depend upon market demand and adequate funding.

- **Guideline B-3. *Seasonal Residences for Recreation.*** DNR may offer land suitable for seasonal recreation use. This land will be provided as demand warrants, subject to the availability of funding. This category of land disposal is intended to provide land, often in remote locations, for recreational needs. No public facilities and services are intended to be provided.
- **Guideline B-4. *Areas Designated Resource Management and Minerals.*** The large areas of state land that are designated Resource Management are generally not suitable for development during the planning period. Most Resource Management areas are remote and generally unsuitable for residential development because of the presence of adverse topography, poor drainage, or extensive areas of wetlands that adjoin these areas. This makes the lands within the Resource Management areas difficult to develop because of the costs and difficulty of road construction in the adjacent wetlands. For these reasons, residential development during the planning period in areas designated Resource Management is considered generally inappropriate except in those areas that adjoin parcels designated Settlement, where road access has been provided to adjoining properties, or for remote land disposals that are not dependent upon access. Similar considerations exist for areas designated Minerals (or Minerals/Habitat) except that settlement/residential development to support mining exploration and/or development may be appropriate. In instances where settlement has been determined by DNR to be appropriate within areas that are so designated, a plan amendment (to Settlement) and reclassification (to Settlement Land) will be required.
- **Guideline B-5. *Recommended Land Disposal Program.*** Units designated Settlement are usually larger than the actual areas of the subdivision in order to provide flexibility in the design. This plan continues that custom. Consult the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3 for more information.

**Objective C.** When land is transferred out of state ownership for settlement purposes, the protection, management, and enhancement of other resources is to be considered to the maximum extent practicable.

- **Guideline C-1. *Provide State Land for Important Environmental and Resource Development Purposes.*** As a general policy, DNR should retain appropriate public-use corridors, water supply areas, riparian buffer areas, roads, and other public facilities, as well as other open space, to create a desirable land use pattern. Generally, subdivision design should provide for the creation of an open space system designed to protect or maintain important uses and values. Depending on the context, DNR may either protect these areas through retaining land in state or public ownership, through the imposition of a reservation of an interest in land for the maintenance of riparian values and access, or through the use of a stipulation (i.e., ‘subject to’).

- **Guideline C-2. *Subdivision Design.*** Subdivisions will be designed to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural setting and the recreational opportunities that make an area attractive to potential buyers. State subdivision design will take account of site limitations and opportunities such as slope, drainage, soils, erosion, riparian zone buffers, and other features to ensure that sites offered are buildable and can be developed without the need for extensive public infrastructure. Vegetation clearing should be done before or after the applicable wildlife breeding seasons. Refer to the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section for breeding seasons and consult ADF&G. Check with USFWS or ADF&G for location of bald and golden eagle nests. Riparian buffers or building setbacks shall be imposed on all disposals where important riparian areas have been determined to exist. If there is some question as to whether a riparian protection area should be imposed, consult ADF&G.
- **Guideline C-3. *Protect Life and Property.*** Sensitive areas such as wetlands or potentially dangerous areas such as areas with unstable soil, riverbanks subject to active stream erosion, or within floodways or floodplains, should be:
  1. avoided in subdivision design,
  2. protected by retaining these areas in state ownership, or
  3. restricted through developmental reservations or restrictions.Easements or plat notes can be used for this purpose in lieu of retaining land in state ownership.
- **Guideline C-4. *Priority of Public Uses in Stream Corridors.*** Within stream corridors, DNR will set a higher priority on protecting public use values than on providing opportunities for private ownership of land.
- **Guideline C-5.** Disposals near streams with important recreation value will be designed to protect riparian habitat and protect access to and along the stream for fishing, hiking, camping, and other recreational activities.
- **Guideline C-6.** Disposals near streams that have important fish and wildlife habitat or other wildlife resources will be designed to ensure the protection of fish and wildlife and their habitats.
- **Guideline C-7.** Before lands are disposed of in stream corridors, DNR will assess existing and projected public use needs associated with the stream corridor, in consultation with other affected agencies and the public. Depending on the context, DNR may either protect these areas through retaining land in state or public ownership or through the imposition of a reservation of an interest in land for the maintenance of riparian values and access.
- **Guideline C-8. *Protect and Enhance Scenic Features.*** DNR will design and develop subdivisions to protect or maintain unique geologic and scenic features such as cliffs, bluffs, or waterfalls. These areas should be avoided altogether or protected in subdivision design and development through the use of reservations or plat restrictions. Where scenic views exist, lots should be oriented to this feature.

## Chapter 2: Settlement

- **Guideline C-9.** *Protect and Enhance Recreational, Educational, and Cultural Opportunities.* DNR should determine the need for and retain appropriate areas for outdoor recreation, hunting, fishing, trails, campsites, boat launches, historic sites, and areas for scientific study. Areas for intensive and dispersed use will be preserved.

**Objective D.** *Other Guidelines affecting Settlement.* Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect settlement in the planning area. Other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Shorelands and Stream Corridors

Rivers and other waterbodies are important highways for local residents and visitors to the area. They provide access to subsistence fishing and hunting areas and access to traditional harvest areas. For residents and visitors, lakes, rivers, and other waterbodies offer places to hunt, fish, camp, view wildlife, and travel through the area. For moose, the river corridors provide important habitat particularly for over-wintering. A variety of waterbird and landbird species are seasonally concentrated along stream corridors, lakes, and wetlands. The Goals, Objectives, and Management Guidelines that follow apply to all state waters throughout the planning area. Buffers, easements, and setbacks may be required on Navigable and Public waters in this plan. Typically, they will not be applied to ancillary waters as defined in this plan as they receive very little use compared to Navigable and Public waters.<sup>1</sup>

### Goals

**Water Quality.** Protect water quality to support domestic, commercial, and industrial uses; fish and wildlife production; and recreational activities.

**Water-Dependent and Water-Related Uses.** Provide for needed water-dependent and water-related uses.

**Habitat Protection.** Protect fish and wildlife habitats along lakeshores, stream corridors, and wetlands.

**Recreation.** Provide opportunities for a variety of recreational activities within publicly owned stream corridors.

### Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Protect high value waterbodies or waterbodies that supply drinking water in a way that protects and enhances water quality and fish and wildlife habitats along stream corridors, shorelines, and waterbodies to the maximum extent practicable.

- **Guideline A-1.** *Alaska Clean Water Actions (ACWA).* In accordance with the ACWA process, DNR will work with ADF&G and DEC to protect and improve water quality, water quantity, and fish habitat. Any activity or development that impacts anadromous fish-bearing waters or resident fish streams will require a permit from ADF&G.
- **Guideline A-2.** *Protection of Land Adjacent to High Value Waterbodies.* When the management intent for state land adjacent to waterbodies (including rivers, streams, or lakes) is to protect wildlife habitat, anadromous or high value resident fish streams,

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<sup>1</sup> Navigable and Public waters are defined in the Glossary found at Appendix A.

or provide for intensive recreation uses associated with fishing, picnicking, hunting, camping, or other similar uses, the state should retain ownership of the adjacent uplands. Alternatively, to minimize on-going management responsibilities or for some other public purpose, a riparian buffer should be imposed either through an easement or a setback. See Table 2-3 for requirements related to riparian buffers. In instances involving a land disposal, the area of a riparian buffer may be reserved as public open space to be maintained by a common interest association. Whichever method is chosen should be designed to minimize negative impacts on visual character, protect habitat value, preserve water quality, and ensure public access. Public use sites may also be reserved during the land disposal process along high value waterbodies to provide public access and use of the waterbody. State-owned buffers or riparian buffers may be retained along the full length of the waterbody or on segments of the waterbody determined to have high current or future use, public use, or to require habitat protection.

- **Guideline A-3.** ADF&G, DEC, and the DNR Water Resources Section should be consulted when issuing or approving permits or authorizations adjacent to high value waterbodies.
- **Guideline A-4.** *Public Trust Doctrine.* All activities and authorizations should take into consideration and comply with the Public Trust Doctrine. For information on the Public Trust Doctrine, see Appendix E.

**Objective B.** Protect and preserve public use and public access to waterbodies to the maximum extent practicable without restricting resource development and as required by statute and regulation.

- **Guideline B-1.** *Priority of Public Uses in Stream Corridors.* DNR will place a higher priority on protecting public use values in stream corridors than on providing opportunities for private ownership or development of land. Prior to the disposal of stream corridor lands, DNR, in consultation with other affected agencies and the public, will assess existing and projected public use needs associated with the stream corridor. Disposals near streams that have important fish or wildlife habitat, or wildlife value, will be designed to ensure the protection of fish and wildlife and the habitat through the imposition of measures to ensure riparian protection.
- **Guideline B-2.** In making determinations as to whether a riparian area should be protected and the manner of such protection, adjudicators shall consult ADF&G. These procedures emphasize retaining such areas where a significant public interest or value exists, which is common in riparian areas. Other methods may be used depending on the specific context, including setbacks and easements.
- **Guideline B-3.** *Public Access Adjacent to Waterbodies.* Pursuant to AS 38.05.127, legal public access will be reserved in order to protect the public's right to travel to and along the ordinary high water (OHW) of a waterbody without encouraging trespass. Permits, leases, and plans of operation for commercial and industrial uses, transportation facilities, pipelines, and other water-dependent uses may be authorized

on state uplands adjacent to waterbodies if their activities are consistent with the management intent for the area and if they maintain stream bank access, and protect important fish and wildlife habitat, public water supplies, and public recreation. Trails and forms of non-motorized public access are generally considered to be appropriate within these areas, if they meet the conditions listed in 11 AAC 96.025. Certain types of motorized uses may also be appropriate if consistent with 11 AAC 96.020 and 11 AAC 96.025.

- **Guideline B-4.** Where feasible and prudent, there should be setbacks between the activities described above in Guideline B-3 and adjacent waterbodies. The width of this setback may vary depending upon the type and size of the use but must be adequate to maintain public access to and along riparian areas. The amount of impervious surface created within the riparian area should be minimized.
- **Guideline B-5. *Access Easements Adjacent to Waterbodies.*** A public use easement extending at least 50 feet upland of the OHW is to be imposed on all waterbodies as required by 11 AAC 51.045 for all disposals of state land or interests in state land, unless a suitable alternative is identified or not necessary to ensure access. The public rights retained in an easement shall be identified and noted in the DNR decision document and plat, if applicable. In areas that may be sensitive to vehicular travel, the easement should be reserved for non-motorized access only. Access easements may be used in combination with state land that is to be retained for public use or for the protection of environmental resources. In these situations, easements may be used to provide access to areas of state retained sensitive land or provide access corridors between lots or parcels within the subdivision.
- **Guideline B-6. *Protection Easements and Setbacks Adjacent to Non-Anadromous Waterbodies.*** Easements or building setbacks may be used in those instances where public recreation use is moderate or where sensitive habitat or other environmental resources exist but are not of the same importance as described under Management Guideline A-2. See the requirements for Sensitive Environmental Features Buffer in Table 2-3 when an easement is to be applied. The purpose of the easement or setback should be noted in the Department decision document and on the subdivision plat. Where a protection easement or setback is to be applied, vehicular use within the area of the easement is inappropriate and should not be authorized. Building setbacks may be used in lieu of a protection easement in those instances where it is not appropriate or necessary for the state to retain any easement rights *or* they may be used in combination with buffers, access easements, and protection easements. Building setbacks used in this fashion provide an added level of protection. See the requirements for 'Building Setback' in Table 2-3.
- **Guideline B-7. *Lakeshore Public Access.*** Despite the remote nature of many waterbodies within this planning area, a portion of the lakefront on lakes greater than 10 acres that have or may be expected to have public recreation and all inlets and outlets of lakes of this size shall remain in public ownership for habitat protection and public recreation. Adequate public access to these lakes shall also remain in public ownership or is to be provided through section line, 'to-and-along' easements, or

other types of public access easements. The amount of public ownership may vary on a site-specific basis, but, at a minimum, some portion of these lakes shall remain public. The size of the public reservation shall be appropriate to its expected long-range recreational use and relative to the size of the lake. A width of 150 feet or more measured from OHW is to be retained or protected through an easement along inlet and outlet streams.<sup>2</sup> Public use sites, created through the land disposal program, on lakes of 10-20 acres shall have at least 4 contiguous acres reserved for public access. For lakes larger than 20 acres, a public use site of at least 6 acres shall be provided.

- **Guideline B-8. Buffer, Easement, and Building Setback Widths.**
  1. The width of state retained land, access and protection easements, and building setbacks adjacent to waterbodies (lakes and streams) will vary, depending on whether the area is a retained parcel or imposed easement, and according to management intent and the specifics of the parcel under consideration. In addition, this width may vary along the area of the stream or lake that is to be protected. Establishing widths, especially for publicly retained lands, will be based on the following considerations: recreational activities to be accommodated, floodway and floodplain widths, habitat protection and management objectives, visual quality, use compatibility, prevention of erosion, or retention of a significant hydraulic resource (like a wetland).
  2. Although these widths may vary, the following criteria are provided to establish the minimum width that can be expected on various types of buffers, easements, and setbacks. They are specified here in order to establish some consistency in application and ensure a minimum level of resource and habitat protection or public access. Distances are measured horizontally landward from OHW along streams and other inland waterbodies. Because of the linear nature of streams and certain other habitat or hydraulic features, these minimum dimensions will apply to both sides of the feature that is to be protected. For example, the total protected area along a stream with a 100-foot setback would be 200 feet (100 feet each side). If state land is to be retained, it may be preferable to retain a larger width, often 200 feet on each side. Widths greater than 200 feet may also be warranted, depending on the specific site characteristics and the importance of the habitat or resources to be protected.
    - a) Riparian buffers along anadromous and high value resident fish streams and waters: 100 feet along each side of the anadromous waterbody or high value resident fish stream. Widths greater than this amount, up to 300 feet, may be authorized if, after consultation with ADF&G, it is determined that larger widths are necessary to protect fisheries, wildlife, or habitat.
    - b) Buffers on other freshwater waterbodies on retained public land: 50 feet along each side of the stream or 50 feet along the shoreline of lakes.

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<sup>2</sup> As measured from each bank of the inlet/outlet stream. This requirement applies whether or not the stream is anadromous.

- c) Easements used in areas of sensitive environmental features:<sup>3</sup> 50 feet on each side of important environmental features. Distances greater than 50 feet (up to 100 feet) may be appropriate if the feature being protected is considered to be especially sensitive to disturbance and is considered a particularly high value resource; such features might include lacustrine and riverine wetlands, springs, salt licks, or geologic hazards requiring additional distance separation for public safety. Consult ADF&G if there is a question as to whether a width greater than 50 feet should be considered.
  - d) Public access easements, including ‘to-and-along’ easements required under AS 38.05.127, or utility easements adjacent to lakes and streams: 50 feet.<sup>4</sup>
  - e) Building setbacks: 100 feet adjacent to anadromous and high value waterbodies and 50 feet adjacent to all other waterbodies. The use of a building setback is usually not required if a riparian buffer is being imposed in an authorization. Riparian buffers preclude principal and most accessory structures within the riparian area; only water-dependent uses are authorized in these areas. For more detail see ‘Riparian Buffers’ in Table 2-3.
- **Guideline B-9.** *Application Requirements for Easements and Buffers Along Waterbodies and Related Environmental Features.* Table 2-3 specifies widths and other requirements for easements, buffers, and public access in order to ensure consistency between authorizations along waterbodies and related environmental features. The table captures the information provided in Management Guideline B-8 but also provides guidance on when these requirements are to be applied as well as aspects related to types of uses that may be appropriate. On a case-by-case basis, widths may be wider, in order to accommodate floodplain width, bank characteristics, size of the waterbody, extent of present or expected future public use, the need to protect important environmental features, or other relevant factors. Similarly, widths can be narrower on a case-by-case basis if it is determined that the harm intended to be avoided by the requirement is not likely to occur because of site-specific circumstances. However, the strip of land must be of sufficient width to allow for public access and to screen the waterbody from development, where possible, with an undisturbed strip of vegetation. In all instances, requirements for easements shall be noted on the lease, patent, or subdivision plat. This requirement also applies to easements described in Management Guideline B-8.

**Objective C.** *Other Guidelines affecting Shorelands and Stream Corridors.* Nearly all the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect water resources in the planning area. The most commonly affected resource sections include Public Access, Fish and Wildlife, Transportation and Infrastructure, Subsurface Resources, and Recreation and Tourism; however other resources addressed in this chapter’s sections should also be considered.

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<sup>3</sup> See Table 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Other types of utility easements may be less than this width, depending on the purposes of the easement.

**Table 2-3: Application Requirements for Easements and Buffers Along Waterbodies and Related Environmental Features**

Guideline/ Application	Minimum Width/ Measured from	Where it Applies	Primary Purpose	Guidelines
<p><b>1. Public Access (To-and-Along Easement)</b> Adjacent to all waters as required under 11 AAC 51.035.<sup>5</sup></p>	<p><b>50'</b> * Landward from OHW line.</p>	<p>Along: * Lakes * Streams</p>	<p>Provide public access to and along waterbodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibited: Water Dependent<sup>6</sup> or Water Related<sup>7</sup> uses or structures that would obstruct passage by the public within the area of the easement. Alternate upland access needs to be provided if access is blocked.</li> <li>Allowed: Water Dependent or Water Related structures that would not significantly obstruct passage by the public within the area of the easement.</li> <li>'Along' easement is to be continuous unless topography or land status prevents a continuous easement. See 11 AAC 51.045.</li> <li>The 'To' easement has a minimum width of 50 feet but may be increased to 60 feet or more if DNR determines that the need for increased public access to waters may justify construction of a road along an easement.</li> <li>A section line easement can function as a 'To' easement if it provides a practical route to the shore or a river. See 11 AAC 51.045.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Riparian Buffers</b> Adjacent to anadromous waterbodies and high value fish streams.</p>	<p><b>100'</b> * Landward from ordinary high water line.</p>	<p>Along: * Anadromous and high value resident fish streams and lakes.</p>	<p>Protect riparian areas adjacent to anadromous and high value fish streams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed: Water Dependent uses or structures that do not require extensive de-vegetation and/or land clearing. This requirement applies to the first 60' measured from OHW. 'Extensive' means more than 20% of affected area within the project site. Water related uses or structures that do not de-vegetate more than 40% of the affected area are allowed in areas greater than 60' measured from OHW.</li> <li>Prohibited: Water related uses within the first 60 feet measured from OHW.</li> <li>The width of riparian buffers may be increased along waterbodies if recreation use is heavy, a wildlife corridor needs to be provided, or if increased protection of a riparian area is warranted. Consult with ADF&amp;G on decisions to increase buffer width.</li> </ul> <p>Note: the requirements for an 'along' easement also apply within the 50' upland of OHW.</p>
<p><b>3. Freshwater Waterbodies Buffer</b> Adjacent to waterbodies that are not protected under #2 but where a significant public use or resource is determined to exist.</p>	<p><b>100'</b> * Landward from OHW line along streams and lakes that are not covered in item #2 but are considered to have public significance or from the edge of the waterbodies, including wetlands, that are to be protected.</p>	<p>Along freshwater waterbodies that are determined to have public significance but where the requirements of #2 do not apply.</p>	<p>Protect areas adjacent to freshwater waterbodies that are important riparian areas or may be important for other public purposes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed: Water Dependent uses or structures that do not require extensive de-vegetation and/or land clearing. This requirement applies to the first 60' measured from OHW. 'Extensive' means not more than 20% of affected area within the project site. Water related uses or structures that do not de-vegetate more than 40% of the affected area are allowed in areas greater than 60' measured from OHW.</li> <li>Prohibited: Water related uses within the first 60 feet measured from OHW.</li> <li>The width of riparian buffers may be increased along waterbodies if recreation use is heavy, a wildlife corridor needs to be provided, or if</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> See 11 AAC 51.035 for determination of Navigable and Public Water. See also 11 AAC 51.045 for easements 'To and Along Navigable and Public Water'. Other waters may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

<sup>6</sup> Water Dependent: means a use or an activity that can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to a waterbody because the use requires access to the waterbody.

<sup>7</sup> Water Related: means a use or activity that is not directly dependent upon access to a waterbody, but which provides goods or services that are directly associated with water-dependent use and which, if not located adjacent to a waterbody, would result in a public loss of quality in the goods or services offered.

Guideline/ Application	Minimum Width/ Measured from	Where it Applies	Primary Purpose	Guidelines
<p><b>4. Sensitive Environmental Features Buffer</b></p>	<p><b>50'</b> ** Measured from edge of sensitive environmental feature.</p>	<p>Areas of important environmental features. These may include hydrologic features (wetlands, marshes), sensitive habitat areas, or areas subject to geotechnical constraints.</p>	<p>Protect sensitive environmental features not otherwise protected under Public Access, Riparian Buffers, or Freshwater Waterbodies.</p>	<p>increased protection of a riparian area is warranted. Consult with ADF&amp;G on decisions to increase buffer width.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive environmental features may include wetlands, important upland habitat, prominent scenic features, and the like.</li> <li>• The imposition of this requirement is discretionary and depends on the type and value of the area or resource that is to be protected.</li> <li>• Prohibited: Residential (or other) structures and associated out buildings but not including utilities or minor accessory structures.</li> <li>• Buffers can be created through easements or building setbacks, or both.</li> <li>• Where this easement is imposed as part of a municipal entitlement action, this width is also 50 feet.</li> <li>• Areas greater than 50 feet (up to 100') may be imposed on a case-by-case basis. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Building Setback</b> Adjacent to all public or navigable waters <u>except</u> anadromous and high-value resident fish waters (see guideline 6 below).</p>	<p><b>50'</b> * Landward from OHW.</p>	<p>Non-anadromous and non-high-value resident fish: * Lakes * Streams</p>	<p>Protect riparian habitat including access, recreation, and water quality along all waterbodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This requirement is imposed where feasible and prudent, and necessary to protect public values along the stream.</li> <li>• Does not apply to the exceptions listed at bottom of this table.</li> <li>• The imposition of this requirement is discretionary and depends on the type and value of the area or resource that is to be protected.</li> <li>• It is intended that the area of the setback remain vegetated to maintain habitat values or protect riparian areas.</li> <li>• Areas greater than 100 feet may be imposed on a case-by-case basis. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Building Setback</b> Adjacent to anadromous and high-value resident fish waters.</p>	<p><b>100'</b> * Landward from OHW.</p>	<p>Anadromous and high-value resident fish: * Lakes * Streams</p>	<p>Protect riparian fish habitat, water quality, and recreation values along anadromous and high-value resident fish waters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This requirement may be imposed if necessary to achieve or protect riparian areas or other sensitive environmental features.</li> <li>• The imposition of this requirement is discretionary and depends on the type and value of the area or resource that is to be protected.</li> <li>• Does not apply to the exceptions listed at bottom of this table.</li> <li>• It is preferred that the area of the setback remain vegetated to maintain habitat values or protect riparian areas.</li> <li>• Areas greater than 100 feet may be imposed on a case-by-case basis. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</li> </ul>

Where widths apply: \* Freshwater areas \*\* Sensitive Environmental Features

For the definition of *anadromous waters* and *high-value resident fish waters* (derived from AS 41.17.950) see the Glossary in Appendix A. Exceptions that apply to items 5 and 6 above: a) Structures such as docks, bridges, and culverts whose purpose is access to or across the stream or lake; b) Water-dependent or water-related uses such as placer mining, fish culturing, and water supply intakes will be evaluated for exception on a case specific basis in consultation with ADF&G.

## Subsurface Resources

The planning area in Northeast Alaska contains moderate amounts of subsurface resources, mainly gold, with potential for coal, oil and gas, and geothermal resources.

### Oil and Gas Resources

It is probable that oil and gas resources are present within the planning area. Exploration for petroleum reserves has been the focus of several investigations since the 1970s in the Yukon Flats Region. Those efforts have been centered around the Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek) area but extend eastward across the Yukon Flats and southeast into the Kandik sedimentary basin. In the Kandik basin, hydrocarbon source rocks have been identified and characterized through geochemical analysis as having oil-generating potential. The potential for petroleum reserves is believed to be moderate to high within these interior basins. Private industry is presently exploring in the area through agreements with the landowner – Doyon, Limited.

### Coal Resources

Historically, coal has been harvested for personal use at Tramway Bar, but there have been no commercial operations in the planning area. There are two areas where coal potential has been identified, near Coldfoot and Central, including some research that identifies likely coal resources within the Kandik sedimentary basin.

### Locatable Minerals

The development of locatable minerals has been an important part of the settlement and economy of this part of Alaska. There are extensive placer mining operations near Central, Wiseman, and Chandalar, but no major mines exist in the planning area. Placer mining in these areas focuses on gold.

There is some potential for harvest of Rare Earth Elements (REE). REEs recorded in the planning area, listed from greatest concentrations to least, are Cerium (Ce), Lanthanum (La), Scandium (Sc), Samarium (Sm), Dysprosium (Dy), Ytterbium (Yb), Europium (Eu), Terbium (Tb), and Lutetium (Lu). Based on the available data, state lands within the planning area with the highest concentrations are centered around Chandalar and the Dalton Highway.

## Goals

**Opportunities for Mineral Exploration and Development.** Provide opportunities for mineral exploration and development through state land management.

**Job Opportunities and Economic Growth.** Contribute to Alaska's economy by making subsurface resources available for development, which will provide job opportunities and stimulate economic growth.

**Environmental Quality and Cultural Values.** When developing subsurface resources, protect the integrity of the environment and affected cultural features to the extent feasible and prudent.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Where deemed appropriate, provide opportunities for mineral exploration and development to the maximum extent practicable without jeopardizing other resources.

- **Guideline A-1. *Mineral Exploration.*** By statute, exploration for locatable minerals is allowed on all state lands. A land use permit is required under most circumstances. Hand prospecting and exploration activities generally do not require a permit. DNR may determine that some forms of access will not be allowed in specific areas to avoid resource damage.
- **Guideline A-2. *Open to Mineral Location.*** By statute, all state lands are open to mineral entry unless specifically closed. Where an area is open to mineral location, a miner has the right to stake a mining location regardless of the surface use designation or classification. Any adverse effects of mining on surface resources or uses will be managed through compliance with state laws and regulations and the management guidelines in this plan. Except for areas designated Settlement, Public Facilities, or Water Resources, state land is considered appropriate for mineral exploration and development consistent with applicable state law, administrative regulation, and management intent and guidelines. Areas designated Settlement, Public Facilities, or Water Resources may be appropriate for mining activity but will likely require the use of stipulations to avoid or mitigate impacts to important public facilities, settlement areas, and large wetland complexes. Reclamation activities are directed by the Mining Reclamation Act (AS 27.19) and regulations (11 AAC 97).
- **Guideline A-3. *Mineral Closures.*** The decision to apply mineral location closures will be made by the Commissioner of DNR within the standards set by Alaska Statutes. AS 38.05.185(a) requires that the Commissioner determine that mining is incompatible with a significant surface use before an area can be closed to mining. The same section of the statute requires that the Commissioner determine that a potential use conflict exists before imposing leasing requirements for development of locatable minerals. The fact that an area is closed to new mineral location will not be cause for denying access across state land. Mineral closures do not affect valid existing mineral locations.
- **Guideline A-4. *Lands Closed to Mineral Entry.*** State mining law stipulates that mining must be determined to be in conflict with significant surface uses before an area can be closed to mineral entry (AS 38.05.300). This plan creates one mineral order, and the current mineral closing orders will be retained since these occur within streams and land disposal areas. The management intent section of parcels should be consulted to determine if a management unit is affected by a leasehold location order or mineral order recommendation. To determine the location of areas closed to

mineral entry in the planning area consult the DNR Alaska Mapper, available online at: <https://mapper.dnr.alaska.gov/>

- **Guideline A-5. *Leasable Mineral Development.*** State land within the planning area may be leased or opened for mineral or coal exploration and development if the Department determines it is in the best interest of the state to enter into a lease for such resources. Before authorization of a lease, the Department will determine if the surface values are significant enough to warrant restricting surface entry. The surface impacts of proposed underground mining shall be fully considered as part of the permitting process.
- **Guideline A-6.** All coal activities shall be completed in compliance with all applicable provisions provided by 11 AAC 90 and AS 27.21: The Alaska Surface Coal Mining Control and Reclamation Act.
- **Guideline A-7.** The DNR Mining Section shall be consulted when authorizing any subsurface coal activities.
- **Guideline A-8. *Oil and Gas Resources.*** The planning and decision-making processes for oil, gas, and geothermal resource allocation and development follow their own section of the Alaska Statutes (AS 38.05.125 through AS 38.05.184) as well as AS 38.05.035. These processes are not included as part of DNR area plans. State land, with few exceptions, is subject to oil and gas exploration and development, either through areawide leasing under AS 38.05.180 or by exploration licensing under AS 38.05.131. In addition, geothermal exploration and development may occur under AS 38.05.181. For this reason, the plan does not make any allocation or development decisions regarding these resources. All decisions regarding oil, gas, and geothermal resources are subject to DNR's existing oil, gas and geothermal permitting, licensing, and leasing processes.
  1. Oil and gas sales are not subject to the regional planning process; instead they follow the planning process identified under AS 38.05.180. The land use classifications of the plan are multiple use in character and do not preclude oil and gas development.
  2. It should be noted that mineral closing orders under AS 38.05.185 do not apply to oil and gas exploration and leasing, nor do they preclude reasonable surface access to these resources. However, rights reserved under AS 38.05.125 may not be exercised until provision is made for payment for all damages sustained by the landowner (AS 38.05.130).
  3. Geophysical exploration permits issued under 11 AAC 96 will conform to the maximum extent possible with the management guidelines in the applicable plans.

**Objective B.** When subsurface exploration and development is permitted, the protection, management, and enhancement of the environment, fish and wildlife species and habitat, and cultural values, is to be considered to the maximum extent practicable.

- **Guideline B-1.** To protect environmental and cultural values, DNR staff shall coordinate applications for subsurface resource exploration and development with appropriate ADF&G, DEC, and OHA staff.
- **Guideline B-2. *Reclamation of Mined Land.*** Reclamation activities are directed by the Mining Reclamation Act (AS 27.19) and regulations (11 AAC 97). The reclamation of mining operations, including placer mining, must meet the reclamation standards given in AS 27.19. The reclamation law provides a standard that miners must meet during and after mining. The mining operation must be conducted in a manner that prevents unnecessary and undue degradation of land and water resources and requires that reclamation occur “contemporaneously” with the mining operation. 11 AAC 97 (Mining Reclamation) details the specific requirements that must be followed. In designated habitat areas, annual reclamation will be required concurrent with mining and will be required to restore degraded fish and wildlife habitat and prevent hazards to navigation.
- **Guideline B-3. *Mining in Fish and Wildlife Habitat.*** A permit for mining in or adjacent to designated fish habitat will require, as stipulations of the permit, any necessary measures that will allow the operation to meet water quality standards, statutes, and regulations governing the protection of fish, such as: levees, berms, seasonal restrictions, and settling ponds. Mining in fish habitat may require permits from DEC and ADF&G. Waterbodies listed within the ADF&G Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC) represent a fraction of those actually used by anadromous species, and documentation of resident fish streams is not centralized. Therefore, DNR shall consult with ADF&G prior to the issuance of an authorization where lakes and stream channels are present and the likelihood of anadromous or high value resident fish is high, at least seasonally.
- **Guideline B-4. *Mining in Areas Co-Designated Minerals and Habitat.*** If this co-designation is used, it means that high mineral and habitat values exist within all or portions of the management unit. Mineral exploration and development are considered appropriate uses within units affected by this co-designation, although there may be sites within a management unit that may not be appropriate for mineral development. Determinations of this type are to be made as part of the regulatory/permitting processes related to the authorization of these uses. Although mineral exploration and development within the planning area are considered appropriate or may be appropriate with stipulations, mining or authorizations granted by DNR shall carefully consider the effects of a proposed development on the area’s fish and wildlife and their associated habitats, and the short- and long-term effects on human access to those resources. Those habitats considered significant within a management unit are identified in the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3. Some of these habitat areas are used on a seasonal basis and activities that occur at other times of the year than these periods may be appropriate. Consult the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section of this chapter for when these seasonal use periods occur. In all instances, consult ADF&G prior to issuing an authorization for mineral or coal exploration or development.

- **Guideline B-5.** Although mining is considered an appropriate use in areas designated Mineral or Mineral/Habitat and in areas designated Resource Management, there may be sites within a management unit that may not be appropriate for coal development or mining. Determinations of this type are to be made as part of the regulatory review/permitting processes related to the authorizations of these activities. It may also be appropriate in areas with other designations, except for areas designated Settlement. Although mining within the aforementioned areas is considered appropriate or may be appropriate with stipulations, mining authorizations granted by DNR shall carefully consider the effects of proposed mining operations on the Central Arctic Herd (CAH), the Porcupine Caribou Herd (PCH), the Fortymile Caribou Herd (FCH), and the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd (TCH) activities. CAH, PCH, FCH, and TCH activities often only affect an area on a seasonal basis. Consult the Resource Allocation Table and the Fish and Wildlife section of this chapter for the specific periods that such use may occur and the types of use that may be present. ADF&G shall be consulted prior to issuing an authorization for mining exploration or development.

**Objective C. Other Guidelines affecting Subsurface Resources.** Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect subsurface resources in the planning area. The most commonly affected resource sections include Public Access, Transportation and Infrastructure, Water Resources, Harvest, Fish and Wildlife Habitat, and Recreation and Tourism; however other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Transportation and Infrastructure

Much of the infrastructure within the planning area is along the Dalton and Steese Highways, reflecting the high concentration of mining activities. Generally, the infrastructure includes roads, gravel roads, and support infrastructure for mining. Major transportation resources in the planning area include community airports, the Dalton Highway, and the Steese Highway.

### Transportation

Transportation throughout the region varies significantly between the winter and summer months. Ground transportation throughout the planning area is centralized around the Dalton Highway and Steese Highway. The James Dalton Highway was originally built in 1974 as a haul road to provide industrial access to the newly discovered oil field in Prudhoe Bay and allowed for the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT/PF) is responsible for maintaining the highway and its associated structures. The highest pass on the Dalton Highway (4,739 feet) is at Atigun Pass at milepost 244, about 15 miles north of the planning area. The primary purpose of the Dalton Highway was to support oil and gas industry activities; however, it is open to use by the public and serves as an important transportation link for residents of local communities. The Alaska Legislature designated the Dalton Highway Corridor a Legislatively Designated Area (LDA), under AS 19.40. Numerous restrictions and stipulations are laid out in this statute and in the James Dalton Highway Master Plan, including motorized use within and outside of the highway corridor. The Dalton Highway is also a scenic byway, guided by the Dalton Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan.

Almost the entirety of the corridor adjacent to the Dalton Highway is federally owned lands managed by BLM. These lands were subject to Public Land Order 5150 and were unavailable for State selection under its statehood entitlement. Section 906(e) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) allowed the State to file future selection applications (so called top filings) on lands previously unavailable for selection, which the state did on the lands that were subject to PLO 5150. This plan establishes management intent for these lands in anticipation of their conveyance to the state.

The Steese Highway provides important access to recreation, mining claims, and communities. The highway was built to serve the Circle Mining District, where gold was booming in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The highway follows a trail that was originally used to carry mail by dogsled from Circle (on the Yukon River) southwest to the gold mines. The Steese Highway is a designated Scenic Byway, with three summits: Cleary, Twelve Mile, and Eagle.

Air transportation is the primary, year-round mode of transportation throughout the area. Most air transportation is centralized around the Fairbanks and Fort Yukon airports. Each community has a designated airport that provides passenger and cargo services as well as Search and Rescue and emergency services. There are 12 public airports in the planning area

managed by the State. The Arctic Village and Venetie airports are owned by the Venetie Tribal Government. The runways are gravel surfaced, and few have runway lights. Frequency of air service varies, but several communities have regularly scheduled air service.

Commercial riverine transportation opportunities are limited to the communities along the Yukon River. Barges deliver freight and fuel to Fort Yukon and other communities along the Yukon River by request. Riverine transportation is seasonally limited due to freezing rivers.

### **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure across the area varies greatly between communities. All of the Native villages have roads, but only Circle is connected to the state road system. Central, Wiseman, and Coldfoot are also on the road system. Airports provide a vital year-round link for these remote communities. Electrical power is generated through diesel or natural gas and most communities have associated infrastructure serving their homes and facilities. Education for students is provided by the Yukon Flats School District or correspondence schools. All villages and most communities have solid waste sites for disposal of refuse. For additional information about the communities, visit the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development Alaska Community Database online.

Aside from the communities and the Steese and Dalton Highway areas, industrial infrastructure throughout the remainder of the planning area is extremely limited and dispersed. Infrastructure along the Dalton and Steese Highways is primarily related to the maintenance of the Dalton and Steese Highways and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). Infrastructure in the communities include, but are not limited to, roads, pipelines, utility lines and facilities, and airports.

### **Mineral Infrastructure, Oil Wells, Pipelines, and Facilities**

Most mineral infrastructure is located on state lands within twenty miles of the Steese Highway. Since mineral exploration and development began, many placer mines have been developed.

There are three oil wells in the far eastern portion of the planning area, on Native land (Doyon, Ltd.). All are plugged and abandoned.

The 800-mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) originates at Pump Station 1 in Prudhoe Bay and transports oil to the Valdez Marine Terminal. Within the plan boundary, this pipeline runs generally parallel to the Dalton Highway and traverses a variety of terrain, crossing the Brooks Range. Of the 800-miles of pipeline, some 380 miles are buried while the remaining 420 miles are found above ground due to the presence of permafrost. Since TAPS was completed in May 1977, over 19 billion barrels of North Slope crude oil have passed through the pipeline.

### **Spill, Contaminated, and Solid Waste Sites**

Spills, contaminated sites, and solid waste sites are present within the plan boundary. Spill and contaminated sites are areas impacted by a release of oil or hazardous substances, and are regulated under 18 AAC 75 and also by DEC's Prevention Preparedness and Response Program (PPRP). Some spills have been transferred to DEC's Contaminated Sites Program (CSP). Solid waste sites within the planning area include Class III landfills and monofills and are regulated under 18 AAC 60.

Contamination and solid waste sites are cataloged within existing DEC databases where known. These sites are listed when they occur within plan units of Chapter 3 and are referenced via DMLW casefiles. These sites may be associated with oil and gas operations, early statehood military activities, municipal landfills, grind and inject facilities, treatment facilities, drilling waste monofills, and reserve pits. Where EPA Orders apply, DEC and EPA may coordinate their regulatory efforts in consultation and coordination with DNR and other landowners.

Information on known spill, contaminated, and solid waste sites can be obtained through the following resources:

DEC Contaminated sites database:

<https://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/SPAR/PublicMVC/CSP/Search/>

DEC Solid Waste Sites map:

<https://gis.data.alaska.gov/datasets/DEC::solid-waste-sites/explore>

DEC Spills database:

<https://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/SPAR/PublicMVC/PERP/SpillSearch>

For information regarding spills in the planning area, contact:

[decsparspilledata@alaska.gov](mailto:decsparspilledata@alaska.gov).

### **Abandoned and Derelict Vessels**

Commercial and residential goods are transported into the area seasonally via tug and barge to support communities. Other smaller vessels are used by local residents for hunting, fishing, and in support of subsistence activities. This area has the potential for abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV) on state shorelands.

## **Goals**

**Industrial Infrastructure.** Prioritize and encourage shared infrastructure and facilities within industrial areas to reduce the cost and footprint of new infrastructure.

**Community Connectivity.** Encourage opportunities for community connectivity through the development of new transportation routes, as well as through opportunities to plan industry infrastructure to support community access and use.

**Regional Transportation.** Encourage the use and development of shared ground, air, and water transportation routes and facilities that provide for both community and industry needs.

**Economic Development.** Contribute to Alaska's economy by improving access to various resources throughout the region to stimulate economic growth, generate job opportunities, and develop community connectivity.

**Spill, Contaminated, and Solid Waste Sites.** Identify these sites early in planning or adjudicating projects to avoid complications or delays. Consistently address site response, characterization, and closure.

**Pollution Liability Prevention.** Prevent releases of hazardous substances or contamination and avoid the acquisition of pollution liability for the state. Clearly document existing liabilities and work with responsible parties prior to expiration of their authorization to characterize and clean contamination to an unrestricted use standard when technically practicable.

**Contamination Management.** Ensure sites are cleaned with a goal of achieving unrestricted use.

**Spills and Releases.** When possible, a responsible party shall investigate, contain, and perform a cleanup of hazardous substance and oil and achieve site closure per 18 AAC 75.315 in consultation with DNR.

**Safety and Well Being.** Prioritize use of appropriate safety measures to encourage the well-being of Alaskans.

**Abandoned and Derelict Vessels.** Prevent and deter the abandonment of derelict vessels in the waters of the state and on state, municipal, and private property.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A. Industrial Transportation.** All transportation systems should be constructed in such a way that minimizes potential adverse impacts to the environment and surrounding resources to the maximum extent practicable without jeopardizing other resources and activities.

- **Guideline A-1. Protection of the Environment.** In the siting of regional and industrial facilities, consideration is to be given to the effect of the proposed project or improvement on the natural environment, fish and wildlife species, and habitats

identified in this plan as significant. ADF&G shall be consulted prior to the issuance of an authorization to determine whether significant impacts to fish or wildlife resources or their associated habitats are anticipated and can be mitigated.

- **Guideline A-2.** Development within the Dalton Highway Corridor LDA shall comply with the provisions of AS 19.40.
- **Guideline A-3.** Gravel roads, pads, and airstrips may be permitted on a case-by-case basis where year-round infrastructure is warranted, in consultation with DOG and ADF&G.

**Objective B. Community Transportation.** Transportation throughout the region should accommodate and balance the needs of resource development, subsistence uses, and community connectivity.

- **Guideline B-1.** When designing or authorizing transportation systems that may affect communities, consider the potential impacts on subsistence use, health and safety, and cultural preservation.
- **Guideline B-2.** When designing or authorizing transportation systems that may impact communities, consult with ADF&G, DEC, DOT/PF, and DNR Northern Regional Land Office.

**Objective C. Facilities and Infrastructure.** All facilities should be sited and constructed in such a way that minimizes potential adverse impacts to the environment and surrounding resources to the maximum extent practicable without jeopardizing other resources and activities.

- **Guideline C-1.** When designing or authorizing transportation systems that may affect communities, consider the potential impacts on subsistence use, health and safety, and cultural preservation.
- **Guideline C-2.** All new pipelines and other types of linear infrastructure should be co-located to minimize the area of resource disturbance and be built to specifications that will not impede fish and wildlife movements.
- **Guideline C-3.** When considering authorizations within the planning boundary, adjudicators should assess if there are any DEC-regulated sites and review the locations and extent of known and potential sites.

**Objective D. Spill, Contaminated, and Solid Waste Sites.** Ensure coordination between agencies responsible for mitigation of contaminated sites.

- **Guideline D-1.** DNR has the lead responsibility for determining cleanup standards and the approval of cleanup plans on state land before permittees or lessees are released from further liability. DNR will coordinate clean-up requirements with Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission and DEC. DEC is the state's environmental regulator. As such, DEC approves and oversees cleanup methods and

techniques proposed by parties who are potentially responsible for the release of a hazardous substance. This includes active and inactive reserve pits, contaminated sites, and hazardous releases to state land.

**Objective E. Safety and Well Being.** Ensure long term health and safety of Alaskans by prioritizing projects that either construct, upgrade, or rehabilitate existing health & safety facilities as well as those that improve or provide access to these facilities.

**Objective F. Abandoned and Derelict Vessels.** Mitigate the potential impacts of these vessels to State shorelands and the habitats they support.

- **Guideline F-1.** When notified of an abandoned or derelict vessel, DMLW will take steps to identify the vessel owner and have the responsible party recover the vessel and minimize the impacts to public resources. Where the vessel cannot be recovered, DMLW will work with the responsible party to develop a plan to address the vessel that minimizes impacts to public resources.

**Objective G. Other Guidelines affecting Transportation and Infrastructure.** Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect transportation and infrastructure in the planning area. The most commonly affected resource sections include Public Access, Fish and Wildlife Habitat, Materials, Water Resources, Harvest, Subsurface Resources, and Recreation and Tourism; however other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Water Resources

The planning area is hydrologically dynamic, containing a wide variety of water sources. There are a vast number of lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers present throughout the planning area. The area is also characterized by expansive wetlands. Wetlands are essential to the regulation and replenishment of stream flow and the maintenance of water quality throughout the region. These waterbodies collectively contribute significantly to the hydrology and ecology of the planning area.

Climate change is a factor affecting water resources within the planning area. Thawing permafrost can lead to metal mobilization into aquatic ecosystems, driving rusting of streams (termed orange streams). Orange streams may result in impaired water quality. Rusting coupled with placer mining source and non-source pollution could adversely impact water quality.

Snow is the most common form of precipitation in the region and remains on the land surface until it melts during the warmer spring and summer months. The majority of streamflow takes place during a brief two to three-week break-up period typically between late May and early June. Streamflow in all waterbodies, even the largest rivers, throughout the region comes to an almost complete stop during the winter months.

Major lakes in the planning area include the Chandalar, Chloya, Twin Island, and Bob Johnson lakes, and each support activities by a variety of users. Major river corridors in the planning area include the Yukon, Teedriinjik (Chandalar), Charley, Porcupine, Grass, Draanjik (Black), Christian, Coleen, Dall, Hodzana, Ikheenjik (Birch Creek), Nation, and Kandik rivers. While all of these river corridors are important to the region, some support frequent use by local residents, industry, subsistence hunters, hunting guides, and recreational users. Some of the largest and most important rivers include the Yukon, Teedriinjik (Chandalar), and Porcupine Rivers.

The State holds and controls all state water in trust for the use of the people of the state, maintaining legal access to and along waterbodies through easements or rights-of-way. For more information, please see the *Public Trust Doctrine* in the Appendix E. Where private property exists along waterbodies, the state will manage any state-owned beds of those waterbodies up to the ordinary high-water mark. The northern boundary of NEAAP was chosen because it approximately abuts the lands covered under PLO 82, which is a valid pre-Statehood withdrawal. The State did not receive title to the beds of the waters under PLO 82, and therefore NEAAP does not need to classify those shorelands; all other lands above the northern boundary are federal. The State asserts title to other beds of navigable “in fact” bodies of water in the planning area under the Submerged Lands Act and equal footing doctrine.

### **Categories of Waterbodies**

For the purposes of and within this plan, waterbodies are discussed as Navigable, Public, or Ancillary, as defined below. These definitions, for management purposes, are not necessarily the same as those used for conveyance purposes.

**Navigable Waters.** Waters that, at the time of statehood, were used, or were susceptible to being used, in their ordinary condition as highways for commerce over which trade and travel were or could have been conducted in the customary modes of trade and travel on water (“navigable in fact”); the use or potential use does not need to have been without difficulty, extensive, or long and continuous. “Navigable Waters” include rivers, lakes, creeks, streams, sloughs, anabranches, passages, or canals, or any other body of water or waterway within the territorial limits of the state or subject to its jurisdiction, that is navigable in fact for any useful public purpose, including but not limited to water suitable for commercial navigation, floating of logs, and public boating. “Navigable Waters” include all downstream distributaries, deltas, and braided channels containing the flowing waters of any navigable in fact waters. Those “Navigable Waters” in their liquid state remain navigable in their frozen state. (AS 38.05.965(14)).

**Public Waters.** Public waters are “Navigable Waters” and all other waters that are or could be used for recreational, commercial, mining, trapping, fishing, hunting, landing and takeoff of aircraft, industrial or other public purpose in any season in a frozen or liquid state. “Public Waters” may be meandered or unmeandered and may include small lakes, perennial streams, perennial creeks, and small sloughs. “Public Waters” include waters through which anadromous fish species pass and from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken for human consumption. Those “Public Waters” in their liquid state remain public in their frozen state. (AS 38.05.965(21)).

**Ancillary Waters.** Waters that due to their small catchment area, small surface area, small width, small depth, lack of anadromous or other fish population, lack of shellfish population or other limitations render them unsuitable for significant public purposes. “Ancillary Waters” may include isolated small lakes or ponds (normally with a surface area of less than 10 acres), small headwater streams or creeks with small catchment areas, intermittent streams or creeks, ditches, swales, springs, flushes, surface runoff, and ephemeral waters. “Ancillary Waters” include wetlands (areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions such as swamps, marshes, bogs, muskeg, and similar areas).

### **Uses of Water**

People, fish, wildlife, resource development, and mineral activities all require the use of water. Communities throughout the area use water resources, such as lakes and rivers, for subsistence resources such as anadromous and resident fish and waterfowl and to supply drinking and potable water. Recreational activities and other public uses on major waterbodies have increased in some parts of the planning area. Water resources across the

area shall be managed in such a way that meets the needs of users while simultaneously maintaining the long-term sustainability of the resource.

The Alaska Water Use Act (AS 46.15.010) states that the Department of Natural Resources “shall determine and adjudicate rights in the water of the state, and in its appropriation and distribution.” A number of water resource management practices have been established to satisfy this requirement and are defined in AS 46.15. Basic information related to these water resource management practices can be found in the guidelines below while more specific information can be found in the Alaska Water Use Act and other applicable state statutes and regulations.

This section will consider the water resources within the planning boundary. The Goals, Objectives, and Management Guidelines that follow apply to all state-owned waters throughout the planning area regardless of land classification.

## Goals

**Water Quality.** Protect water quality to support domestic, commercial and industrial uses, fish and wildlife production, and recreational activities. Protect watersheds that supply community drinking water.

**Water Dependent and Water Related Uses.** Provide for needed water-dependent and water-related uses.

**Habitat Protection.** Protect fish and wildlife habitats within and along lakeshores, stream corridors, and wetlands.

**Recreation.** Provide opportunities for a variety of recreational activities within publicly owned streams and lakes.

## Objectives and Management Guidelines

**Objective A.** Manage water responsibly and reserve sufficient water to maintain a specified instream flow or level of water on a stream or waterbody to protect and ensure the continuation of other uses of the area.

- **Guideline A-1.** ADF&G, DEC, and DNR Water Resources Section should be consulted when issuing or approving permits or authorizations affecting waterbodies within the planning area.
- **Guideline A-2.** *Public Trust Doctrine.* All activities and authorizations should take into consideration and comply with the Public Trust Doctrine. For information on the Public Trust Doctrine, see Appendix E.

- **Guideline A-3.** Proposals for new developments requiring the use of a significant amount of water as defined by 11 AAC 93.035 shall submit to the Department an application for water rights or temporary water use authorizations.
- **Guideline A-4.** *Process for Determining Reservations.* Applications for instream flow reservations are submitted to DNR for adjudication following the procedures identified in 11 AAC 93.141-147.
- **Guideline A-5.** *Considerations for Reservations of Water (General).* Streams, lakes, and other waterbodies may be considered for reservations of water under AS 46.15.145. Such reservations are intended to reserve sufficient water to maintain a specified instream flow or level of water on a stream or body of water for one or more purposes: 1) protection of fish and wildlife habitat, migration, and propagation; 2) recreation and park purposes; 3) sanitary and water quality purposes; and 4) navigation and transportation purposes.
- **Guideline A-6.** *Priorities.* Reservations of Water have been established according to AS 46.15.145 on the Middle Fork Koyukuk River and Beaver Creek (see DMLW Water Reservations webpage for current information). See Appendix F for applications pending on water bodies in the planning area.

**Objective B.** *Other Guidelines affecting Water Resources.* Nearly all of the resource guidelines found within Chapter 2 either directly or indirectly affect water resources in the planning area. The most commonly affected resource sections include Public Access, Fish and Wildlife, Shorelands and Stream Corridors, Transportation and Infrastructure, Subsurface Resources, and Recreation and Tourism; however other resources addressed in this chapter's sections should also be considered.

## Chapter 3

### Land Management Policies for Each Management Unit

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# **Chapter 3**

## **Land Management Policies for Each Management Unit**

### **Introduction**

Within the planning area there are approximately 37,947,239 total acres, of which 3,121,017 acres are state uplands and 616,546 acres are state shorelands. Additionally, there are approximately 1,616,266 acres of land that are state-selected or top-filed. This chapter presents specific land management policies for all state lands within the planning area. The planning area is further organized into regions based on geographic similarities. There are four regions identified in this plan: Arctic, Dalton Corridor, Yukon Flats, and Interior Highlands. Map 2 shows the planning regions and generalized land status.

Within the regions, lands are further subdivided into planning units. The units were developed based on similar land characteristics, resources, use patterns, topography, or other features. The management requirements of this plan do not apply to non-state land.

Before completion of this plan, there was no comprehensive land use plan for state lands in Northeast Alaska. Approximately 68,000 acres of land were previously classified without a comprehensive plan by DNR.

The Northeast Alaska planning area is extensive. Its northern boundary runs through the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and the area extends south to meet the borders of Eastern Tanana Area Plan (ETAP), Yukon Tanana Area Plan (YTAP), and Upper Yukon Area Plan (UYAP), just north of Fairbanks. It stretches east from the Dalton Highway to the Canadian border.

The state has approximately 1,616,266 acres of high-priority, top-filed, and selected lands within the planning boundary. Among these, top-filed and selected land within the Dalton Highway corridor are the highest priority for conveyance from BLM. As with the goals and objectives of Chapter 2, unit-specific management intent in this chapter is provided for all top-filed and state-selected lands.

The Dalton Highway, also known as the Haul Road, is one of the major public roads in the planning area. At over 400 miles, this highway originates south of the planning area at Livengood and extends north along the Dietrich River and Sagavanirktok River to its terminus in Deadhorse, approximately four miles from Prudhoe Bay. Though it opened to public automobile traffic in 1994, access within the corridor is restricted by AS 19.40.

Furthermore, hunting access within the corridor is restricted by state and federal agencies. These restrictions subsequently limit development and access to lands in the planning area.

The Steese Highway provides important access to recreation, mining claims, and communities. The highway was built to serve the Circle Mining District, where gold was booming in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The highway follows a trail that was originally used to carry mail by dogsled from Circle (on the Yukon River) southwest to the gold mines. The Steese Highway is a designated Scenic Byway, with three summits: Cleary, Twelve Mile, and Eagle. For more information on these highways, see the Public Access section in Chapter 2.

## Organization of Chapter

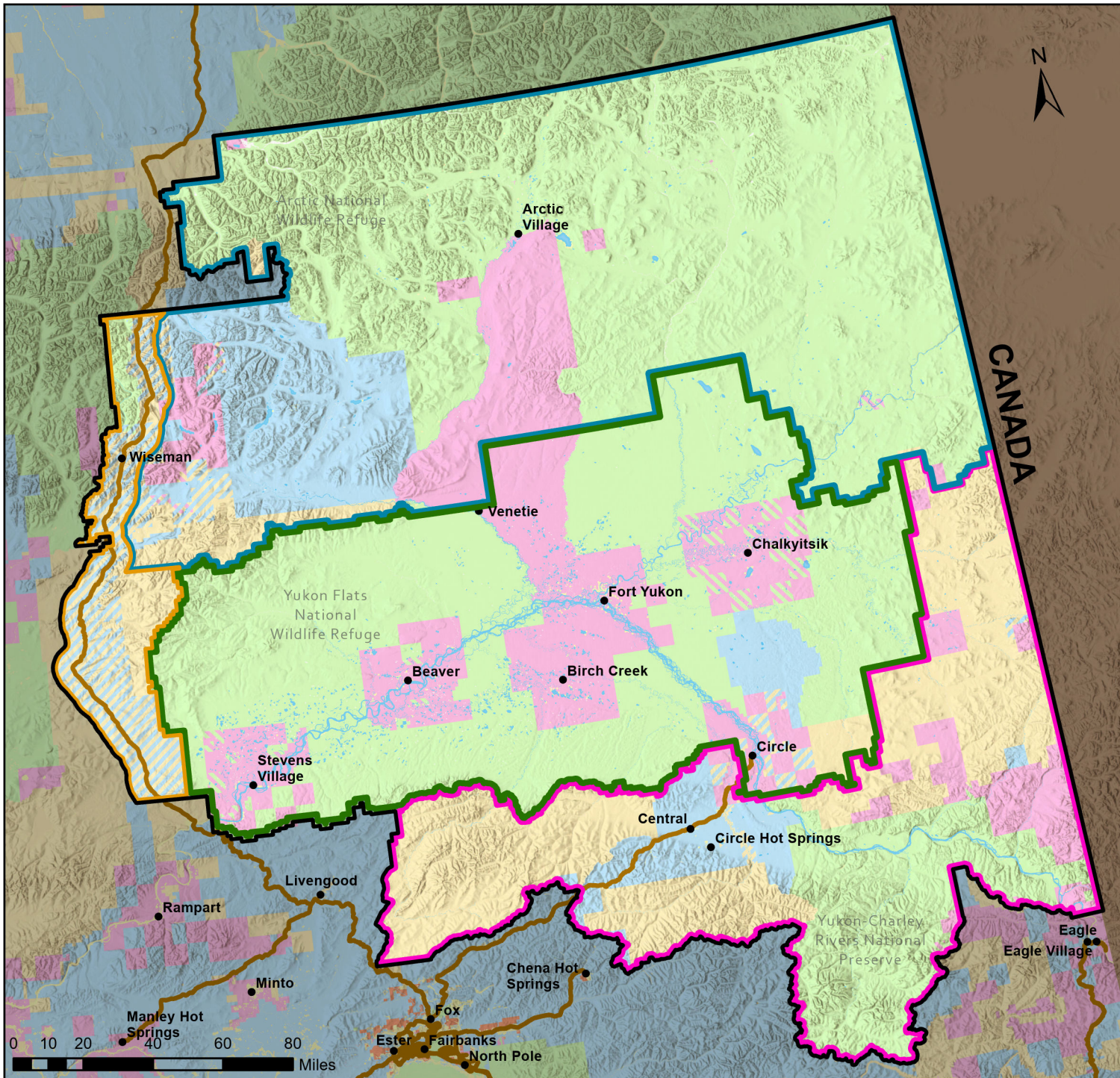
The chapter includes the following information:

- *Land Use Designations* describes the general management direction for specific parcels (units) of state land.
- *Management Intent* consists of an explanation of how specific units of state land are to be managed. Management intent language gives additional specificity to the general management direction provided by the land use classifications.
- *Plan Duration and Flexibility* indicates the planning period and requirements for plan amendment.
- *Regional Setting* describes the general landscape, uses, and character of the lands within the region.
- *Regional and parcel specific management* specifies direction for state land.

## Land Use Designations

A land use designation recognizes uses or resources that are of major importance within a management unit. Unit designations are based on readily available resource information; current and projected use patterns; and input from the public, organizations, agency staff, and other sources. The designations identified in this chapter convert to classifications identified under Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code. The conversions are identified in Table 4-2 in Chapter 4. Multiple designations may be applied to a single unit. DNR will manage activities in the unit to encourage, develop, or protect the uses or resources for which the unit is designated; however, all state land is intended for multiple use and should be managed in a manner that is consistent with this mission. DNR will manage state land according to these designations and the equivalent land use classifications.

When the plan assigns a designation to a unit, the designation is accompanied by region-wide management guidelines and by management intent specific to that unit. These three pieces of



**Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Map 2  
Planning Regions and  
Generalized Land Status**

-  Arctic Region
-  Yukon Flats Region
-  Interior Highlands Region
-  Dalton Corridor Region
-  Highways
-  State Land
-  State Selected Land
-  Private or Other Land
-  Native Land
-  Native Selected Land
-  BLM Land
-  NPS/USFWS



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Created: March 2026  
DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
UTM Zone 6 North



information – designations, management guidelines, and statement of intent – must be taken into consideration in determining how a parcel of state land is to be managed and in making disposal and authorization decisions. Management guidelines are found in Chapter 2.

## Designations Used in This Plan

**F – Forestry.** Land that is or has been forested and is suited for long-term forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions. Approving authorizations in these areas will be conducted in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95) and the specific management guidelines in the Forestry section of Chapter 2. This designation converts to a land use classification of Forest Land. Forest Land is to be retained by the state, although timber sales are recognized as appropriate.

**Ha – Habitat.** This designation applies to areas where fish and wildlife species experience sensitive life-history stages where alteration of the habitat or human disturbance could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species. Lands designated Habitat will remain in state ownership. The identified habitat values for which these lands are classified shall be maintained to the greatest extent practicable. If impacts to the habitat cannot be avoided, they should be minimized through stipulations contained in an authorization. This designation converts to a classification of Wildlife Habitat Land.

**Hv – Harvest.** Fish and wildlife harvest areas are subsistence, recreational and/or community harvest areas used for non-commercial, personal use where alteration of habitat could permanently limit sustained yield to traditional users; or are areas of intense harvest where the level of harvest has reached, or is projected to reach, the harvestable surplus for the resource. This land will remain in state ownership. This designation applies to uplands and shorelands. The identified harvest values for which these lands are designated shall be maintained to the greatest extent practicable. If impacts to the habitat cannot be avoided, they should be minimized through stipulations contained in an authorization. This designation converts to a classification of Wildlife Habitat Land.

**Ma – Materials.** Sites suitable for extraction of materials, which include common varieties of sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, pumicite, cinders, clay, and sod are designated Materials. Authorizations may occur if they do not impede the extraction of materials from the land. Consult the Resource Allocation Table for identification of potentially appropriate uses for a specific unit. This designation converts to a classification of Material Land.

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

**Pr – Public Facilities-Retain.** These sites are reserved for specific infrastructure to serve state interests. This may include areas intended as open space or to function as riparian buffers. Units designated “Public Facilities-Retain” will be retained in state ownership. If impacts to the identified resources cannot be avoided, they should be minimized through stipulations contained in an authorization. This designation converts to a land use classification of Reserved Use Land.

**Rd – Public Recreation-Dispersed.** This designation applies to those areas that offer or have a high potential for dispersed recreation or tourism and where desirable recreation conditions are scattered or widespread rather than localized. Some level of development or activities that facilitate dispersed recreation is anticipated and may include remote airstrips, trapping cabins, trails, and primitive campsites among other uses and activities. If impacts to the identified resources cannot be avoided, they should be minimized through stipulations contained in an authorization. Developments on these lands typically facilitate public use and recreation. This designation converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land.

**Rm – Resource Management.** Land that contains one or more resource values, none of which is of sufficiently high value to merit designation as a primary use, or, because of the size of the parcel, a variety of uses can be accommodated with appropriate siting and design controls is designated Resource Management. This designation may also apply where there is a lack of resource, economic, or other information with which to assign a specific land use designation. Lands within this designation may be important for harvest activities by local residents seasonally. Consult the Resource Allocation Table for the management unit designated Resource Management in each region to determine the resources and uses present in these areas. This designation converts to a classification of Resource Management Land.

**Se – Settlement.** This designation applies to state uplands suitable for sale into private ownership through one of the State’s land sale programs and generally excludes shorelands. This designation will generally be used for areas appropriate for land offerings for residential uses. Unsold land in the units will be managed for uses compatible with settlement including uses such as selling additional lots, expanding existing or laying out new subdivisions, identifying greenbelts or other parcels to be retained within subdivisions, reserving materials sites for subdivision roads and building lots, placing easements on access routes, or reserving lots for community facilities and open space. Areas designated Settlement should be closed to mineral entry prior to sale. This designation converts to a classification of Settlement Land.

**Sc – Settlement-Commercial.** This designation applies to lands that have been identified as suitable for sale into private ownership for commercial or industrial purposes generally excluding shorelands. This designation will generally be used for areas appropriate for land offerings for commercial or industrial uses. Unsettled or sold land in the management unit will be managed for uses compatible with eventual commercial or industrial activities. Areas designated Settlement-Commercial should be closed to mineral entry prior to sale. This designation converts to a classification of Settlement Land.

**Tc – Transportation Corridor.** This designation applies to land identified for the location of easements and rights-of-way under AS 38.04.065(f), including transportation, pipeline, or utility corridors, or is under consideration for a right-of-way lease. The intent of this designation is to provide a reserve of state land for the eventual development of easements and rights-of-way, including transportation, pipeline, or utility corridors or other linear transportation projects. This designation converts to a classification of Transportation Corridor Land.

**Wr – Water Resources.** This designation applies to important watersheds, or portions thereof, that are suitable for water sources, watershed protection, or hydropower sites. The identified values for which these lands are designated shall be maintained to the greatest extent practicable. If impacts to these values cannot be avoided, they should be minimized through stipulations contained in an authorization. This designation converts to a classification of Water Resources Land.

## **Explanation of Habitat Designations**

In this plan, the designation or co-designation of Habitat was applied to areas with a unique or rare assemblage of single or multiple species of regional, state, or national significance. Where these conditions exist, the unit is designated Habitat. In some cases, there is only a single species resource, but in other instances several resources exist. These resources sometimes occupy differing portions of the management unit. The type and spatial distribution of habitat within a unit is identified in the “Resources and Uses” column for each management unit in the Resource Allocation Tables. When granting authorizations within areas designated Habitat, DNR adjudicators should consider the most current species and habitat information available from ADF&G.

Fish and wildlife species and habitats used, in part, to identify Habitat (Ha) in this plan include the following:

- Moose calving, rutting, and winter range
- Dall sheep identified mineral licks
- Caribou calving and winter areas
- Black bear and brown bear concentration areas
- Wildlife habitat connectivity
- Important Bird Areas as defined by the Audubon Society
- Eagle nesting sites
- Waterfowl nesting and concentration areas
- Anadromous fish spawning, rearing, and overwintering areas

## Explanation of Mineral and Coal Designations

Except where state land is closed to mineral entry, DNR will treat mining as if it is compatible with the principal surface use. This is important to note because DNR area plans usually do not apply mineral resource designations to large areas, although in this plan significant areas are affected by Mineral designation. Chapter 2, Subsurface Resources, also includes additional guidelines and a summary of statutes regulating mining and reclamation activities.

## Resources and Uses and Management Intent

The Resource Allocation Tables (RAT) within this chapter of the plan identify the resources and uses and the management intent for each planning unit. The intent is based on the existing resources and the types of authorizations that currently exist or may be expected to occur within the planning units. Management intent describes how the Department intends to manage a resource, use, or activity within a unit and may describe what is intended to occur, and in some cases, what is not intended to occur. Management intent statements refer only to management of state lands.

**Disposal or Retention in State Ownership.** The Settlement Land classification identifies lands that may be conveyed into private ownership through one of the State land disposal programs. Within settlement areas, lands necessary for wildlife, public use and access, and for other uses associated with the disposal will be identified and retained in public ownership. An easement or right-of-way “to and along” appropriate waterbodies under AS 38.05.127 may be established to allow access to such waters. These easements or rights-of-way will be retained by the state for public use.

In this plan, the land use designation is the general indicator of whether land should be retained in state ownership or made available for disposal. However, some units have management intent that precludes disposal of all, or a portion of, the lands based on the interests of the State even though the designation and classification might otherwise allow disposal. When this occurs, this restriction is noted in the management intent statement specific to the management unit in the Resource Allocation Table. This includes units already under management by another state agency or that contain certain unique or sensitive uses or resources that merit retention by the state. In addition, units already under management agreements with other state agencies are usually not available for conveyance. In no case can DNR convey the subsurface estate to municipalities or individuals. Shorelands must be retained in state ownership unless law requires conveyance, or the conveyance is to a political subdivision of the state. These conveyances are subject to the Public Trust Doctrine, described in Appendix E.

**Shorelands.** DNR will provide reasonable access across state shorelands to upland owners. Upland access across state shorelands, including developed access facilities, may be allowed within all land use designations where DNR determines the proposed facilities are consistent

with the management intent and applicable guidelines of the plan. However, state shoreland designations do not give the public access rights to adjacent private uplands. ADF&G Habitat Section requires a Fish Habitat Permit if the shorelands are within an anadromous or potentially anadromous stream.

## **Duration and Flexibility of Plan**

This plan guides land uses for the next 20 years or until revised. The Department should review the plan periodically to determine if all or a portion of it should be revised. This document will guide the management of land within the plan area until the plan is formally revised. The Commissioner of DNR may revise all or a portion of the plan where appropriate at any time. The land use designations are intended to be flexible and provide for multiple use. DNR may permit uses not originally designated if DNR determines they are consistent with the management intent for the unit and consistent with applicable management guidelines.

## **Glossary**

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

## **Plan Structure**

### **Plan Regions**

The planning area consists of approximately 3.7 million acres of state lands, including shorelands. The plan encompasses the area northeast of Fairbanks from the Dalton Highway to the Canadian border, stretching north into ANWR (Arctic National Wildlife Refuge). Major drainages within the NEAAP boundary include the Yukon, Teedriinjik (Chandalar), Porcupine, and Charley rivers. The planning area is divided into four regions: Arctic, Dalton Corridor, Yukon Flats, and Interior Highlands. Regions are typically large geographic areas characterized by large blocks of state land, often contiguous to each other and located within an area with distinctive characteristics. They are often demarcated by political boundaries or major topographic or hydrologic features. The four regions contain state-owned and state-selected land, which is the primary focus of area plans. Map 1 in Chapter 1 depicts the plan boundary and generalized land status.

### **Management Units**

Areas of state land and water have been separated into smaller geographic units called management units. State resource management is specific to this level. Management units

range in size but generally have similar attributes; or they may be specific legal units, like a tract within a residential subdivision; or they may be a discrete area of state land affected by a management agreement that is to be administered for a public purpose, such as a port, vehicle storage facility, or airport.

All units have an identifying alpha character and number combination. The alpha character corresponds to the region, with the following convention: ‘A’ represents the Arctic Region; ‘D’ represents the Dalton Corridor Region; ‘Y’, the Yukon Flats Region; and ‘I’, the Interior Highlands Region. The alpha character is followed by a two-digit identifying number. For example, a parcel in the Arctic region has the identifier “A-01.”

These identifiers are depicted on the plan maps and are included in the Resource Allocation Table. The unique identifier provides a cross-reference between the plan maps and the tables containing information about the parcel. The table contains information on the resources found within the unit as well as plan designations, management intent, and, if required, management guidelines.

## Region Descriptions

The regions are described in this section of the plan. These descriptions are necessarily generalized and indicate only the general features or characteristics of an area and only give an overview of how the region is to be managed by the Department. For LDAs, refer to the establishing legislation as well as the plan’s management intent.

Descriptions of the regions include:

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

Distribution and Characteristics: The distribution of state-owned and state-selected lands within the region is explained. Distribution and amount of other lands is described.

Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land: Access, resources and uses of state-owned and state-selected land are described in this component. Major road access and the type of access that exists more generally within a region, including the types of access methods (e.g., snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, etc.), are described. This section includes descriptions of settlement, habitats, water resources, recreation uses, and minerals, if present.

Management Planning Constraints and Considerations: Local, state, and federal land and resource plans affecting the management unit are identified, if applicable to state land management.

Management Summary: This section describes the general way that state land is to be managed within the region. Detailed land management intent is provided at the management unit level, described in the Resource Allocation Tables of this Chapter.

## **Plan Maps**

There are six plan maps that cover the Northeast Alaska Area Plan. See Map 2 in Chapter 3 to locate the map(s) for a particular area. This map indicates the plan boundary (external boundary of the area plan), the boundaries of the four regions, and the generalized land status.

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

## **Land Status Depicted in Plan Maps**

The maps in this chapter are not intended to be detailed land ownership maps. Instead, they are a representation of state and federal land records current to the date of plan preparation. Caution should be used when using these maps since there may be inaccuracies in the source data or constraints imposed through the Geographic Information System (GIS). Land status for parcels, including private, Native corporation, municipal, and federal land are derived from the Department's GIS land status coverage. This information is generalized and for this reason the land status can be misleading. For complete information, consult the land records of the Department of Natural Resources, federal Bureau of Land Management, and Native corporations. Consult the Mental Health Trust Office regarding Mental Health Trust Land.

The plan maps show general patterns of land ownership by color; this includes the various types of state land (general state land, Legislatively Designated Areas, and lands under management agreements with other state agencies) as well as private lands. However, because of the way that GIS maps are created, which entails a decision hierarchy on what land status to represent in priority sequence, the colors that represent an ownership pattern may not coincide with the actual pattern of such ownership. The Department has tried to make general land status on the plan maps as accurate as possible, but the ownership patterns of other entities may be incorrect.

The location of state-owned or state-selected parcels is derived from information in the Department's land status records and the federal Master Title Plat. Both the status and spatial

boundaries of these parcels are accurately represented at the time of plan preparation. However, because state land status changes with time, the same caution exists for areas of non-state land.

## Resource Allocation Table

Resource Allocation Tables (RATs) provide information on specific parcels and correspond to the plan maps through the unit identifier. The Tables are meant to encapsulate the designation and management intent for each unit. Together, the Goals and Objectives from Chapter 2 and the Resource Allocation Tables found in this chapter provide a detailed description of state management guidelines and intent, as well as the resources and uses, for each unit.

More specifically, the information contained in the Tables includes:

Unit identifier: Each parcel of state land has a unit identifier. Units are preceded with a letter indicating the region that they are situated within; see previous “Management Units” section for an example.

Acreage: The approximate acreage in each unit is indicated.

Plan Designation: Land use designations indicate the primary use and resource for each unit. Although most units are only affected by a single designation, two or three compatible plan designations are sometimes specified. Where co-designations have been used, the uses reflected in the designations are recognized to be compatible or complementary to each other.

Management Intent: This column indicates the management direction for a specific parcel. It is consistent with the designation and includes more information on how state land is to be managed. In some small-sized parcels, the management intent is likely to be brief since the designation itself is often sufficient to indicate the management intent. This is not usually the case with sensitive parcels or large parcels, and, in these instances, the management intent statement is critical to an understanding of how the various resources within the parcel are to be managed. This section may also indicate if the parcel is to be retained in state ownership or if it is appropriate for transfer to a city, borough, non-profit entity, or private individuals. It often also describes those parcel resources that must be taken into consideration in land disposals, coal or mineral development, forest management activities, or other forms of development or use. In some instances, the development of a parcel is not appropriate during the planning period and, when this occurs, this is also stated. This is usually associated with units affected by the Resource Management designation since these units are often located in remote, inaccessible locations and their development is not considered likely or appropriate during the planning period.

Resources and Uses: This column summarizes the resources and uses for which the unit is designated, and which are considered important in the unit. It also provides a generalized

physical description of the unit and may indicate the presence (or absence) of certain other resources that are important to land management decisions. Typical among this type of information is the identification of heritage or cultural sites, significant concentrations of wildlife or habitat, vegetation and terrain features, current uses of the parcel, RS 2477 routes, and adjacent land ownership.



## **Arctic Region (A)**

The Arctic Region encompasses an area of 15,614,477 acres and is situated in the northern part of the planning area. The area, generally described, abuts the North Slope Area Plan and proceeds east to the Canadian border. Its southern border approximately follows the border of the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Arctic Village is located within this region. The Arctic Village area hosts a majority Native population with use by the Neets'aiti Gwich'in people since time immemorial. Nomadic, subsistence lifestyles characterized the area until the early 1900s when permanent settlement began. Residents continue to use the land for subsistence activities.

The Arctic Region is a matrix of mountains, tundra, lakes, rivers, and streams, underlain with continuous and discontinuous permafrost. The Arctic Region is an important area for caribou winter use areas, Dall sheep, and breeding for birds of conservation concern.

### **Distribution and Characteristics**

Land ownership is mixed throughout this region and includes state land, private land, Native land, and federal land. State land and state selected land is concentrated around the Chandalar Lake area and makes up 1,980,445 acres and 284,006 acres respectively. Private land, derived from land disposals and Native allotments comprise 10,171 acres. Native owned land is generally located in the Venetie Indian Reservation and in the mountains east of the Dalton Highway; these lands account for 1,617,089 acres. The remainder of the land is federally owned, 11,916,458 acres, mainly located within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in the northeastern area of the region.

### **Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land**

Access to this region is primarily by fly-in. Within the region, access is primarily with snowmachine in the winter and ATV in the summer. The natural resources of the Arctic Region are the abundant mineral and animal resources that can provide utility or economic benefit to humans. The mineral resources include major deposits of gold. Biological resources of the Arctic Region are primarily caribou, Dall sheep, and birds. Residents of the communities use the region for hunting, trapping, fishing, and general subsistence activities.

### **Management Planning Constraints and Considerations**

No state or local management plans have previously affected this area.

## Management Summary

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s), as specifically articulated through management intent found in the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3 and the applicable goals, objectives, and guidelines found in Chapter 2. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated. The table below provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this region and their acreages.

<b>Designation or Co-Designations</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Habitat	559,253
Mineral	162,488
Public Facilities-Retain	223
Habitat / Harvest / Public Recreation-Dispersed	20,260
Harvest / Habitat	451,230
Resource Management	822,405
Settlement	4,609
Public Recreation-Dispersed	23,013
Mineral / Habitat	218,389

Resource Allocation Table – Arctic Region

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
A-01 Brooks Range	Rm 421,407ac	3-1	<p>Due to the remote nature and mountainous terrain limitations of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact brown bear, caribou, and Dall sheep concentration areas.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Terrain is mountainous. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Brown bear spring and berry concentration areas occur in small parts of the far northeast corner of the unit. Caribou winter use areas are present in the eastern portions of the unit. Dall sheep habitat is present throughout the highest elevations of the unit.</p> <p>There may be areas of commercially viable quantities of REEs.</p> <p>A portion of this unit’s land is in selection status with the highest priority level. Selections occur in the following townships: F033N007W, F034N005W, F034N006W, F034N007W, F035N007W, F035N009W, and F036N009W. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-02 Thru Creek	Mi 38,628ac	3-1	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sheep habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with the Teedriinjik River is important.</p>	<p>There are extensive mineral occurrences throughout the unit with copper, silver, and zinc as the main commodities. Dispersed portions of the unit may have commercial quantities of REEs. This unit is characterized by mountainous topography. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present throughout most of the unit. A small portion of the southeastern corner of the unit has caribou wintering areas and a small portion of the northeastern part of the unit has bear concentrations in spring and around berry patches.</p> <p>Approximately 6 sections of this unit’s land is in selection status with the highest priority level. The selection occurs in township F035N006W. The remaining land is state owned.</p>
A-03 Mathews River	Ha 52,003ac	3-1	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat.</p> <p>Due to the remote nature and mountainous terrain of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact BLM regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact Dall sheep habitat, lambing areas, and mineral licks. Any authorizations that are issued should avoid riparian habitat.</p>	<p>Terrain is mountainous. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present throughout the highest elevations of the unit and mineral licks and lambing areas, identified as BLM Areas of Critical Environmental concern, occur in or adjacent to the unit.</p> <p>A portion of this unit’s land is in selection status with the highest priority level. Selections occur in the following townships: F033N009W, F034N009W, and F035N009W. The remaining land is state owned.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
A-04  Baby Creek	Mi 120,020ac	3-1	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and for its sheep and fish habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive sheep and fish habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with Baby and Willow Creeks is important because round whitefish have been recorded and previous mining operations have been located along these creeks.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>There are extensive closed mining claims in the northern portion of the unit with copper, gold, and zinc as the main commodities. The southern portion of the unit may have commercial quantities of REEs. This unit is characterized by mountainous topography. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present throughout the unit. Creeks transect the unit and host a variety of species, including round whitefish and Arctic grayling.</p> <p>Approximately 18 sections of this unit's land is in selection status with no priority level. The selection occurs in township F033N007W. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-05  Big Creek, Boulder Lake	Ha 326,075ac	3-1	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife, habitat, and subsistence values.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact wildlife habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the wildlife habitat and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize or mitigate any negative effects. Any authorizations that are issued should avoid riparian habitat. Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Topography is generally mountainous. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present at the higher elevations. Moose rutting occurs in the majority of the unit and winter concentrations occur along the eastern boundary of the unit. Caribou winter use areas occur throughout the unit. Two major anadromous waterbodies pass through: the Teedriinjik River mainstem and Middle Fork. A variety of fish are present in the waterways of this unit including Arctic grayling, slimy sculpin, and round whitefish. Venetic community members harvest fish and sheep along the edges of this unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 261) Caro - Big Creek Trail                      (RST 262) Caro - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 890) Middle Fork - Chandalar Trail                      (RST 263) Caro - Chandalar Mine Trail                      (RST 411) Chandalar - Chandalar Mine Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-06  Chandalar Mine	Mi, Ha 78,161ac	3-1	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and for its important moose, caribou, sheep, and fish habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive moose, caribou, sheep, and fish habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations that will have impacts upon sensitive caribou, moose, sheep, or fish habitat.</p>	<p>There are extensive mineral occurrences and mining operations mainly for placer deposits. This unit is characterized by mountainous topography. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Caribou wintering is prevalent throughout the unit. Moose rutting, along with some wintering areas, occur through most of the unit. Dall sheep habitat is present. An anadromous stream, Middle Fork Teedriinjik River, runs through the southernmost sections of the unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
			<p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with the Middle Fork Teedriinjik River is important, especially since some mining claims and mineral deposits are co-located with the river.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Potential hazardous sites (ADL 420218, ADL 421674, and ADL 420052) are associated with mining contamination.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 261) Caro - Big Creek Trail                      (RST 263) Caro - Chandalar Mine Trail                      (RST 411) Chandalar - Chandalar Mine Trail                      (RST 1959) Dictator Creek Trail                      (RST 890) Middle Fork - Chandalar Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>A-07  Thazzik Mountain, Ackerman Lake</p>	<p>Hv, Ha 451,230ac</p>	<p>3-1</p>	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact wildlife habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the wildlife habitat and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize or mitigate any negative effects. Any authorizations that are issued should avoid riparian habitat. Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Topography is mostly hilly and mountainous with the valleys coinciding with rivers and creeks. Vegetation is primarily shrubland with valleys hosting wetlands, mixed, deciduous, and evergreen forests.</p> <p>Caribou winter concentration areas cover the entire unit. Caribou calving areas occur on lands surrounding the North Fork Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River. Moose wintering and rutting areas are present in the northern half of the unit. Small pockets of Dall sheep habitat occurs in the most northern portions of the unit. Two major anadromous waterbodies pass through the unit: the Teedriinjik River mainstem and the Middle Fork. A variety of fish are present in the waterways of this unit including anadromous spawning Chinook and fall chum salmon, as well as Arctic grayling, slimy sculpin, burbot, longnose sucker, and round whitefish. The Upper Teedriinjik River and tributaries especially provide crucial habitat for Chinook fall chum and coho salmon.</p> <p>Venetie community members harvest furbearers, caribou, sheep, moose, bear, fish, and plants and berries throughout most of the unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 27) Beaver – Caro Trail                      (RST 1644) Caro - Ft. Yukon                      (RST 261) Caro - Big Creek Trail                      (RST 262) Caro – Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 1966) Caro - Coldfoot: West Fork Route                      (RST 263) Caro - Chandalar Mine Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
A-08  Glacier Creek Headwaters	Rm 82,662	3-1	Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.	<p>Terrain is mostly mountainous with some flatlands in the southern half of the unit. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland with isolated pockets of sedge, forest, and wetlands.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present throughout the northern half of this unit and some areas of the southern portion. Caribou winter use areas occur throughout. Venetie community members harvest sheep, moose, and caribou along the edges of this unit.</p> <p>There may be areas of commercially viable quantities of REEs.</p>
A-09  Lost Eastern Vales	Mi 3,840ac	3-1	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and for its caribou and sheep habitat.</p> <p>Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p>	<p>Minerals occur with copper and zinc as the main commodities. Commercial quantities of REEs may exist in dispersed locations throughout. This unit is characterized by mountainous topography. Vegetation is predominantly shrubland with pockets of evergreen forest.</p> <p>Caribou winter areas and Dall sheep habitat are present throughout the unit.</p>
A-10  Glacier and Bob Johnson Lakes	Rd 7,680ac	3-1	Manage for recreational values. It is intended that this unit continue in public ownership.	<p>This area consists of mainly mountainous topography with some flatlands present around the lakes. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland with pockets of evergreen forest around Glacier Lake.</p> <p>Bob Johnson and Glacier Lake, along with access to RS2477 trails allow for recreational opportunities. Bob Johnson Lake has Arctic grayling, northern pike, slimy sculpin, burbot, whitefish, and lake trout.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail</p> <p>A mineral occurrence is present and is associated with placer gold.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
A-11  Eider Creek, Wakeup Creek	Mi, Ha 15,768ac	3-1	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive Dall sheep habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations that will have impacts upon sensitive Dall sheep habitat.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>There are APMAs present and mining operations have been conducted on placer deposits. This unit contains mainly mountainous topography. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present with lambing areas and mineral licks in or around the unit.</p> <p>A small sliver of this unit’s land is in selection status with a high priority level. Selections occur in the following sections: F031N010W protracted sections 13, 24, 25, and 36. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-12  Poss Mountain	Ha 15,013ac	3-1	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact Dall sheep habitat or sensitive life stages as well as caribou calving. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the sheep and riparian habitat and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize or mitigate any negative effects. DNR may consult BLM for authorizations that involve uses that could impact Dall sheep critical environmental concern areas.</p> <p>Development is not anticipated in this unit and lands are generally not suitable due to terrain limitations.</p>	<p>Topography is mountainous. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Dall sheep habitat is present throughout, with lambing areas and mineral licks in or around the unit. The Poss Mountain area of critical environmental concern identified by BLM for Dall sheep mineral licks and lambing occurs in this unit. Caribou calving areas occur in the southern half of the unit.</p> <p>The entire unit is in selection status; all are ANILCA top-filed lands. These selections are a medium-low priority level.</p>
A-13  Chandalar Flats	Rm 318,336ac	3-1	<p>Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated. Any authorizations that are issued should avoid riparian habitat.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact anadromous waterbodies.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Terrain is mixed with mountainous and hilly portions in the northern and southern regions of the unit and flatlands in the middle and in valleys. Vegetation is shrubland at high elevations and a mix of wetlands, evergreen, deciduous, and mixed forest at lower elevations.</p> <p>Many anadromous streams run through this unit including the Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River (North, Middle, and West Fork), Monarch Creek, and Crooked Creek. Areas of the Teedriinjik River watershed in this unit are crucial spawning habitat for Chinook, summer and fall chum, and coho salmon, as well as resident whitefish, least cisco, Arctic grayling, lake chub, longnose sucker, slimy sculpin, burbot, and round whitefish. Small areas of moose wintering and rutting occur in the northwestern portions of this unit. Caribou winter use areas occur throughout most of the unit except the extreme western portions. Dall sheep habitat is present in the northwest</p>

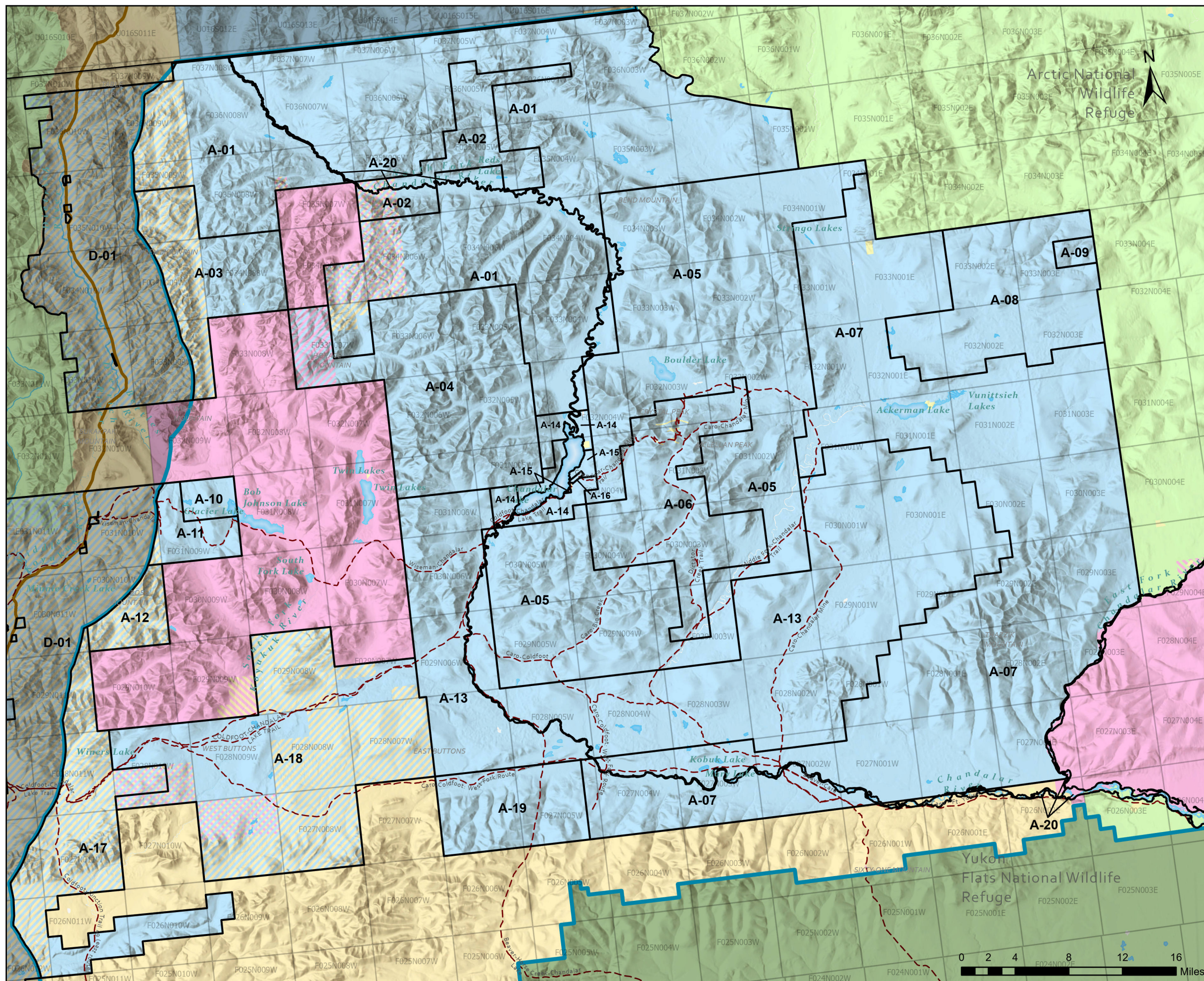
Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>corner of the unit.</p> <p>There may be areas of commercially viable quantities of REEs.</p> <p>Many RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 257) Beaver-Horse Creek - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 1966) Caro - Coldfoot: West Fork Route                      (RST 261) Caro - Big Creek Trail                      (RST 262) Caro - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 890) Middle Fork - Chandalar Trail                      (RST 263) Caro - Chandalar Mine Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-14  Chandalar Lake Recreation	Rd 15,333ac	3-1	<p>Manage for recreational values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This area consists of the northern and southern lands adjoining Chandalar Lake. The terrain is mountainous with small areas of flatlands in the northeast and southwest corners of the unit. Vegetation is primarily shrubland with isolated pockets of deciduous and evergreen forest.</p> <p>Caribou wintering occurs in the eastern portions of this unit. Moose rutting is present along the southeast border of the unit. Dall sheep habitat is present at high elevations. Anadromous Chinook salmon have been recorded in Chandalar Lake and at the inlet to the lake. Also, Arctic grayling, northern pike, slimy sculpin, burbot, whitefish, and lake trout presence has been documented in Chandalar Lake.</p> <p>Access to Chandalar Lake and RS2477 trails allow for recreational opportunities.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 411) Chandalar - Chandalar Mine Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
A-15  Chandalar Lake Settlement	Se 4,609ac	3-1	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Avoid moose rutting areas in siting. Consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations that will have impacts upon sensitive caribou, moose, or Dall sheep habitat.</p> <p>Public access on RS 2477 Trails will be maintained.</p> <p>The entire unit is affected by MCO 427.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Parcels in this unit have been classified as settlement since 1984. There have been past land disposals.</p> <p>Terrain is variable with flat areas around Chandalar Lake, with elevation steeply increasing from those areas. Vegetation is dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Caribou wintering is present throughout most of the unit. Dall sheep habitat occurs in the mountainous portions of the unit. A moose rutting concentration area occurs in the southeast corner of the unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 411) Chandalar - Chandalar Mine Trail (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-16  Arctic Region Public Facilities	Pr 223ac	3-1	<p>This unit consists of the Chandalar Airport. The parcel is under a management agreement with the Department of Transportation &amp; Public Facilities. Land should be managed according to FAA and DOT/PF operational requirements and with the management plan for the airport.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>The topography consists of mostly flat terrain. Vegetation is mostly shrubland with small areas of forests.</p> <p>Caribou winter use is present.</p> <p>The management agreement associated with the parcel in this unit is ADL 410106.</p> <p>An RS 2477 trail is located within this unit: (RST 411) Chandalar - Chandalar Mine Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
A-17  Sitkum Pass, Mosquito Fork	Mi, Ha 82,630ac	3-1	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and for its fish and caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou and fish habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations that will have impacts upon sensitive caribou or fish habitat.</p> <p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with the anadromous South Fork Koyukuk River and Mosquito Fork is important, especially since some mining claims and APMAs are co-located with the rivers.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>There are mineral occurrences, mines, mining claims (state and federal), and APMAs spread across the unit with copper, silver, and gold as the main commodities. Commercial quantities of REEs may exist in dispersed locations throughout. This unit is characterized by mountainous topography in the north giving way to gentler hills in the south. Vegetation is mixed with shrubland at high elevations and deciduous and evergreen forests in the valleys.</p> <p>Caribou calving areas occur throughout this unit. Dall sheep habitat is present in the northernmost reaches of the unit. This unit hosts a variety of fish in its rivers and creeks, including anadromous spawning Chinook and chum salmon and resident species such as Arctic grayling, round whitefish, Dolly Varden, and slimy sculpin. South Fork Koyukuk River and Mosquito Fork are anadromous waterbodies. There is crucial Chinook and summer</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
			<p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>chum salmon spawning habitat associated with the South Fork Koyukuk River drainage.</p> <p>Almost the entire unit’s land is in selection status. Selections closest to the highway have the highest priority level and ones further away have the lowest priority status.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 591) Coldfoot - Junction Trail 49 (east route)                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 262) Caro – Coldfoot Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>A-18 East and West Buttons</p>	<p>Ha 166,162ac</p>	<p>3-1</p>	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact BLM regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact crucial salmon spawning habitat or caribou calving areas. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the riparian habitat and caribou calving habitat and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects. Development is not anticipated in this unit and lands are generally not suitable due to mountainous terrain limitations.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This area consists of hilly topography. Vegetation is primarily shrubland with mixed forest and wetlands at low elevations.</p> <p>Caribou calving areas occur throughout the unit. Small areas of Dall sheep habitat occur in the northern areas of the unit. There is crucial Chinook and summer chum spawning habitat associated with the South Fork Koyukuk River and crucial habitat for Chinook, summer and fall chum, coho, whitefish and cisco associated with the Upper Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River drainage.</p> <p>Approximately 5 townships of this unit’s land are in selection status. Most selections are a high priority level with a few areas of medium-high and low priority. Selections occur in the following townships: F029N008W, F029N007W, F028N008W, F028N007W, F027N008W, F027N009W, F028N010W. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 262) Caro - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandlar Lake Trail                      (RST 1966) Caro - Coldfoot: West Fork Route</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
<p>A-19</p> <p>Lower Slopes Copper Prospect</p>	<p>Mi, Ha 41,830ac</p>	<p>3-1</p>	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and for its caribou and fish habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou and fish habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations that will have impacts upon sensitive caribou or fish habitat.</p> <p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with the anadromous West Fork Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River is important.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>Minerals occur with copper as the main commodity. Commercial quantities of REEs may exist in dispersed locations throughout. This unit is characterized by mountainous topography. Vegetation is mixed with shrubland at high elevations and deciduous and evergreen forests in the valleys.</p> <p>Caribou winter areas are present in the northeast corner of the unit. Caribou calving areas occur throughout the unit. Small areas of Dall sheep habitat occur in the southwest portion of the unit. This unit hosts a variety of fish in its rivers and creeks, including Arctic grayling, Chinook salmon, and slimy sculpin. The West Fork Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River is anadromous. The Upper Teedriinjik River drainage provides crucial habitat for Chinook, summer and fall chum, coho, whitefish and cisco.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 257) Beaver - Horse Creek - Chandalar Lake Trail (RST 1966) Caro - Coldfoot: West Fork Route</p>
<p>A-20</p> <p>North Fork Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River</p>	<p>Ha, Hv, Rd 20,260ac</p>	<p>3-1</p>	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, recreation, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and recreational use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in public ownership.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Arctic Region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Teedriinjik is a navigable waterbody. Cultural resources are present in this unit. Subsistence for furbearers, moose, plants and berries, bear, caribou, fish, waterfowl, sheep, small mammals, and wood occurs in and around this unit by the Venetie and Arctic Village communities.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Moose winter concentrations, calving, and rutting occur along the middle of the East Fork. Caribou winter concentrations are found throughout the unit. The river is anadromous and supports Chinook and fall chum salmon. Also present are slimy sculpin, burbot, Arctic grayling, longnose sucker, northern pike, round whitefish, broad whitefish, and least cisco.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including state, native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p>





### Northeast Alaska Area Plan Map 3-1

#### Arctic Region Planning Units and Designations

- Arctic Region
- Planning Units
- Dalton Highway
- RS 2477
- State Land
- State Selected Land
- Private or Other Land
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- BLM Land
- NPS/USFWS

#### Unit Designations

A-01 Rm	A-11 Mi, Ha
A-02 Mi	A-12 Ha
A-03 Ha	A-13 Rm
A-04 Mi	A-14 Rd
A-05 Ha	A-15 Se
A-06 Mi, Ha	A-16 Pr
A-07 Ha, Hv	A-17 Mi, Ha
A-08 Rm	A-18 Ha
A-09 Mi	A-19 Mi, Ha
A-10 Rd	A-20 Ha, Hv, Rd



Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide. Areas outside of the planning area and Arctic Region are shaded out. Colors may appear darker.

Created: March 2026  
 DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
 Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
 UTM Zone 6 North



## **Dalton Corridor Region (D)**

The Dalton Corridor Region encompasses an area of 1,607,448 acres and is situated on the western edge of the planning area. The region includes the Dalton Highway Corridor LDA and additional lands to the east. The additional lands are not part of the LDA. The region includes about 162 road miles of the Dalton Highway (MP 68-230) and the communities of Wiseman and Coldfoot.

The Wiseman/Coldfoot area has been host to many mining operations throughout the past century, causing boom and bust population patterns. Over the past two decades, the area has increased in population. Most infrastructure was built in the early to mid-1900s and use has discontinued over time, with the exception of the Dalton Highway.

The majority of this region is comprised of the southern portion of the James Dalton Highway legislatively designated area (LDA). This legislation established a 5-mile corridor on both sides of the highway ROW and limited activities and access within this area. For example, there are restrictions on disposing of state land, mining, hunting, and use of motorized vehicles. Refer to AS 19.40 for more information.

The Dalton Corridor is hilly or mountainous throughout with rugged mountain passes in the north and includes tundra, lakes, rivers, and streams, underlain with continuous and discontinuous permafrost.

### **Distribution and Characteristics**

Land ownership is mixed throughout this region and includes state land, private land, Native land, and federal land. State land and state selected land are concentrated within and adjacent to the Dalton Highway Corridor LDA and make up 7,647 acres and 1,147,148 acres respectively. Private land, derived from land disposals and Native allotments comprise 529 acres. Native owned land is located in one area near Wiehl Mountain; this land accounts for 7,682 acres. The remainder of the land is federally owned, 1,588,626 acres.

### **Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land**

Access to this region is primarily by the Dalton Highway. Within the region, access is with snowmachines in the winter and ATVs and boats in the summer. The James Dalton Highway legislatively designated area (LDA) includes significant restrictions on motorized use. The Alyeska Pipeline ROW for TAPS passes through the region, as well as other hydrocarbon transportation ROWs.

There are abundant mineral and wildlife resources. Caribou, bears, Dall sheep, and salmon have important habitat areas in the region. Residents of Stevens Village, Wiseman, and Coldfoot use the region for hunting, fishing, and general subsistence activities. There are mineral occurrences concentrated around Coldfoot, Wiseman, and the South Fork of the Koyukuk River that include gold, silver, and antimony. Recreation occurs in the area, especially along the highway corridor.

## Management Planning Constraints and Considerations

Management intent identified in the 1998 Dalton Highway Master Plan was considered for applicable units within this region. The James Dalton Highway LDA is present throughout most of this region. The LDA is managed under AS 19.40. This section of statute requires that state-owned land within five miles of the Dalton Highway right-of-way may not be disposed of, with exceptions. This statute also states that off-road vehicles are prohibited in the highway corridor, with some exceptions.

## Management Summary

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s), as specifically articulated through management intent found in the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3 and the applicable goals, objectives, and guidelines found in Chapter 2. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated. The table below provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this region and their acreages.

<b>Designation or Co-Designations</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Transportation Corridor / Habitat / Public Recreation-Dispersed	911,031
Habitat / Harvest	139,989
Settlement Commercial / Transportation Corridor	6,334
Habitat	91,127
Public Facilities-Retain	2,353
Materials / Habitat	4,485

Resource Allocation Table – Dalton Corridor Region

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
<p>D-01</p> <p>Dalton Highway Corridor</p>	<p>Tc, Ha, Rd 911,031ac</p>	<p>3-2</p>	<p>Manage the unit as a utility and transportation corridor to facilitate transportation of oil and gas resources from the North Slope to facilities in other areas of the state and to support hunting, fishing, gathering, and recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Minimize impacts to fish and wildlife habitat values and harvest opportunities. Decisions related to development shall consider potential impacts on the habitat and harvest values and include stipulations/conditions/measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential negative effects.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact caribou, brown bear, Dall sheep concentration areas, mineral licks, and anadromous waterbodies. DNR may consult BLM for authorizations that involve uses that could impact Dall sheep critical environmental concern areas.</p> <p>Lands within the proposed AKLNG and ASAP rights-of-way and other lands with infrastructure that is critical for oil and gas development, maintenance, or operations shall be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>Provide continuity in existing transportation and pipeline operations, and for future linear projects consistent with public and industrial needs. Maintain opportunities for subsistence. Under AS 19.40.200, lands are only available for disposal if it is for a public utility, necessary for oil or gas leasing and exploration, or for a state lease or materials sale related to oil, highway maintenance, or airports. Additionally, AS 19.40.210 prohibits off-road vehicles with some exceptions.</p> <p>DMLW Water Resources Section should be consulted prior to development to determine impacts to the reserved water resources in this unit. See Appendix F for more information.</p> <p>The unit is affected by MO 1162A01, MO 1162A03, MO 1118, MO 1045, MO 1147, and LLO 32.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This unit is comprised of state-owned, state-selected, and top-filed lands, shorelands, and waters within the Dalton Highway Corridor LDA and parcels extending to the western edge of the planning boundary. The unit roughly conforms to a 5-mile buffer on either side of the center line of the highway. These lands are the most accessible and heavily used by residents and visitors to this area. The terrain is hilly and mountainous throughout with rugged mountain passes in the north. Vegetation in the southern subunit is generally evergreen with wetlands in the stream corridors. The northern areas of the unit are dominated by shrubland.</p> <p>Many leases for pipeline ROWs exist in this unit. These leases include the Alyeska Pipeline ROW (ADL 63574), ASAP ROW (ADL 418997), AKLNG ROW (ADL 421297), and the Point Thomson Export Pipeline ROW (ADL 418975). Other authorized linear projects may occur in the future.</p> <p>Most of the unit was within Public Land Order 5150 (PLO 5150). Those lands are federal public lands managed by BLM and were top-filed by the State as a future selection application consistent with provisions of ANILCA. These lands are the highest priority selections in the state.</p> <p>Potential hazardous sites (ADL 418207, ADL 418208, ADL 418209, ADL 418210, and ADL 418211) are associated with Alyeska Pipeline spills. A private easement (ADL 418713) for the Alyeska Pipeline ROW is near the Prospect Creek airport.</p> <p>Caribou are present throughout the unit. Caribou calving areas occur along the eastern edges and southern half of this unit. The southernmost portions of the unit provide wildlife habitat connectivity between Kanuti and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges. Brown bear spring and berry concentration areas are along an approximately one-mile buffer of Middle Fork Koyukuk River, Hammond River, and Dietrich River. Dall sheep are present at high elevations in the northern half of the unit, as are lambing areas and mineral licks. Snowden Mountain, Poss Mountain, Nugget Creek, and Midnight Dome/Kalhabuk areas of critical environmental concern identified by BLM for Dall sheep habitat, mineral licks, and lambing occur in this unit. The Middle Fork and South Fork Koyukuk, Hammond, Ray, Bettles, and Dietrich Rivers, and Wiseman, Minnie, Marion, and Slate Creeks have anadromous fish, including spawning populations of Chinook, chum, and coho salmon. The Middle Fork Koyukuk River drainage provides habitat for other species such as Arctic grayling, longnose sucker, burbot, slimy sculpin, Dolly Varden, northern pike, and sheefish. The southernmost areas of the unit</p>

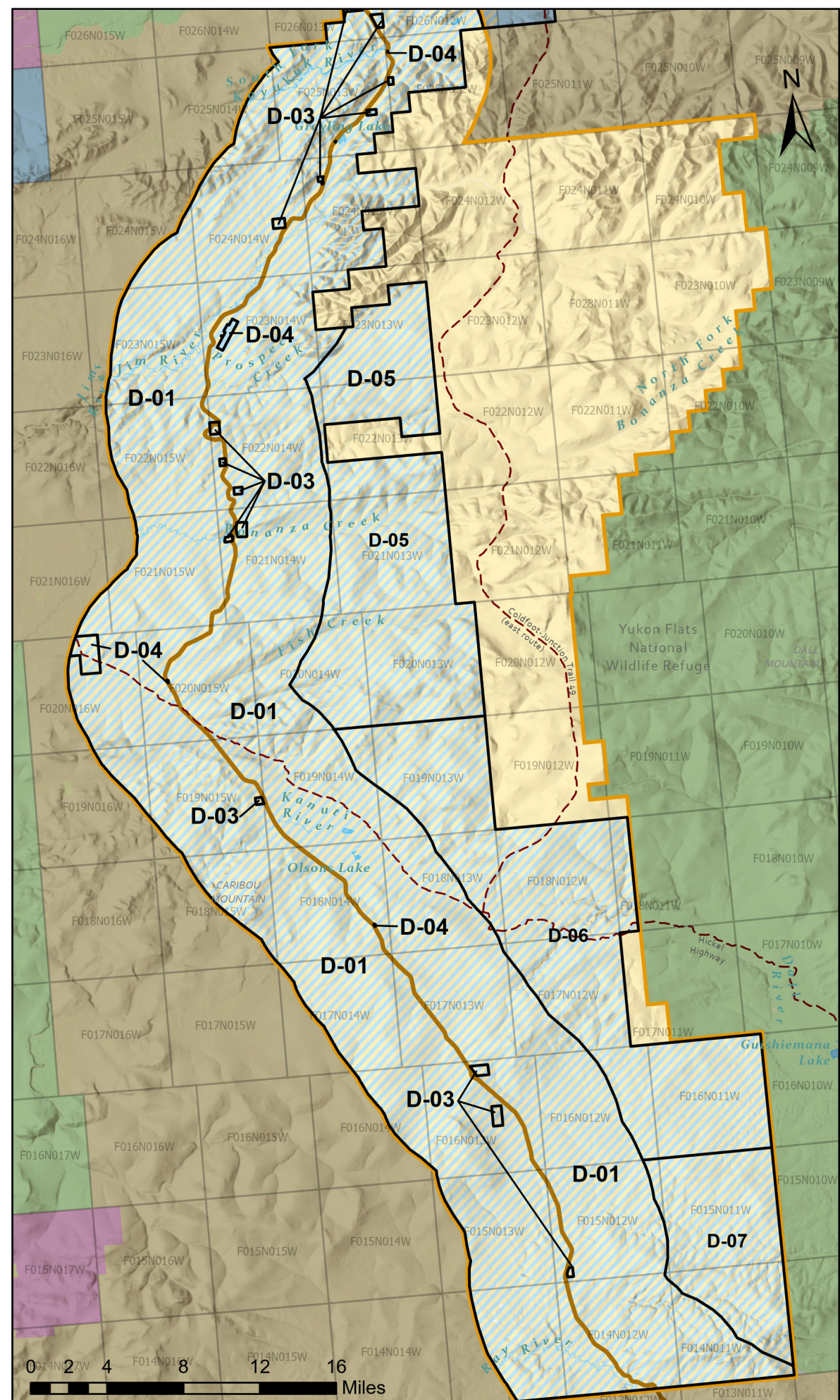
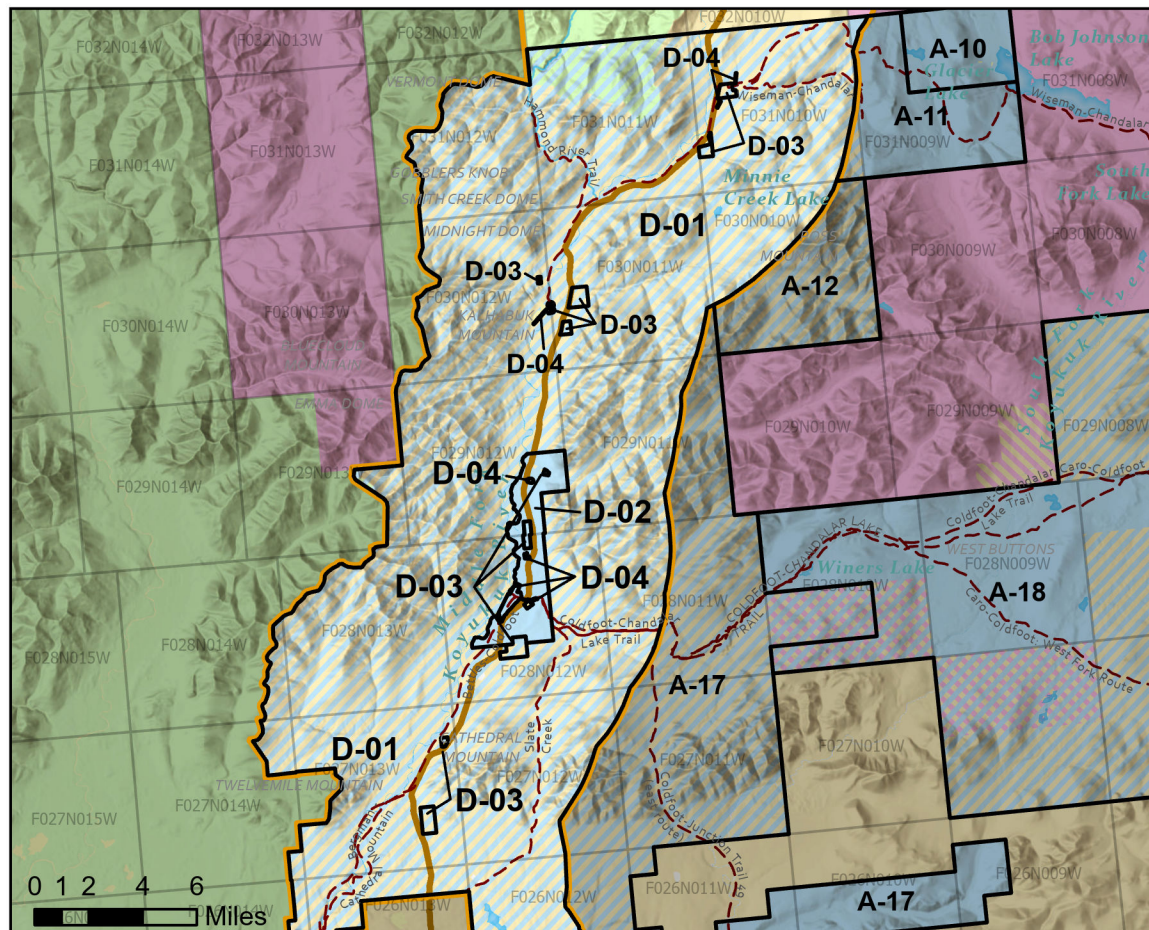
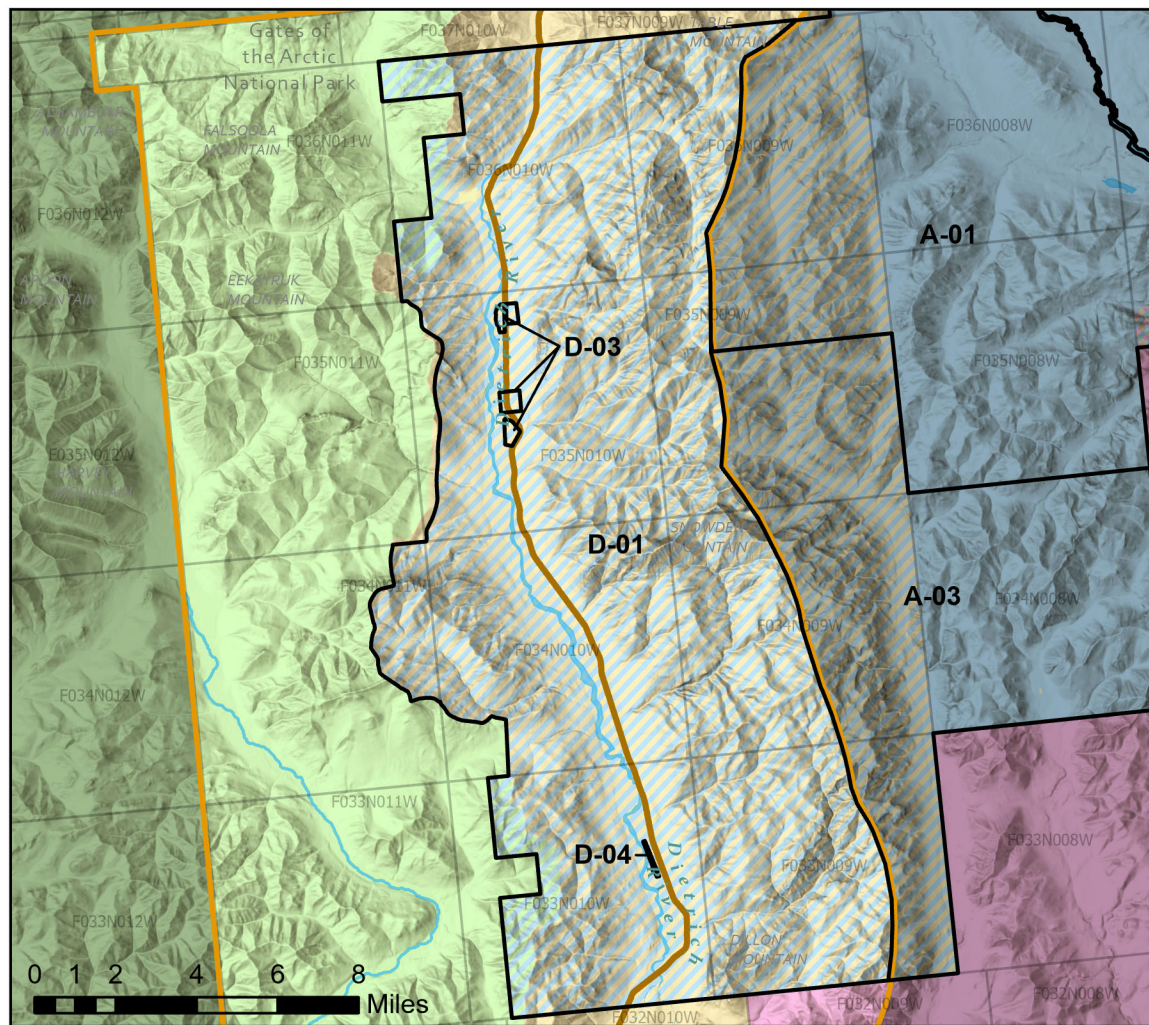
Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>contain important areas for Stevens Village subsistence harvest of black bear and furbearers. A reservation of water exists for the Middle Fork Koyukuk River within this unit.</p> <p>There are mineral occurrences concentrated around Coldfoot, Wiseman, and the South Fork of the Koyukuk River. The main commodities include gold, silver, and antimony. DGGs via SR 37 recognized the Tramway Bar coal field as bituminous coal beds of mineable thickness - Minimum 14 in.</p> <p>Geothermal springs exist in the southernmost areas of this unit.</p> <p>Recreation occurs throughout the unit, generally along the highway corridor.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 412) Slate Creek Trail                      (RST 209) Bettles - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 591) Coldfoot - Junction Trail 49 (east route)                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 262) Caro - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 899) Hammond River Trail                      (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail                      (RST 1611) Bergman - Cathedral Mountain Trail                      (RST 450) Hickel Highway                      (RST 38) Tramway Bar</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
D-02  Coldfoot Development Node	Sc, Tc 6,334ac	3-2	<p>Manage the unit as a utility and transportation corridor to facilitate transportation of oil and gas resources from the North Slope to facilities in other areas of the state and to support commercial development opportunities.</p> <p>Minimize impacts to fish and wildlife habitat values and harvest opportunities. Decisions related to development shall consider potential impacts on the habitat and harvest values and include stipulations/conditions/measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential negative effects. DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact brown bear, Dall sheep, and anadromous waterbodies.</p> <p>Lands within the proposed AKLNG and ASAP rights-of-way and other lands with infrastructure that are critical for oil and gas development, maintenance, or operations shall be retained in state ownership.</p>	<p>Many leases for pipeline ROWs exist in this unit. These leases include the Alyeska Pipeline ROW (ADL 63574), ASAP ROW (ADL 418997), AKLNG ROW (ADL 421297), and the Point Thomson Export Pipeline ROW (ADL 418975). Other authorized linear projects may occur in the future. There are two other leases within the unit: a communications site (ADL 421563) and an administrative parcel for the National Park Service (ADL 418903). A public easement (ADL 420158) for a pedestrian trail for visitors to access the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center is located off the Dalton Highway near Coldfoot. A private easement (ADL 415997) for utilities is near the Coldfoot airport. Potential hazardous sites (ADL 420306, ADL 420305, and ADL 420800) are located in Coldfoot.</p> <p>Brown bear spring and berry concentration areas are present throughout most of the unit, along an approximately one-mile buffer of Middle Fork Koyukuk River. Dall sheep are present at the eastern edge of the unit. The Middle Fork Koyukuk River is anadromous and provides spawning habitat for Chinook and chum salmon, and habitat for sheefish and other whitefish, as well as</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
			<p>Provide continuity in existing transportation and pipeline operations, and for future linear projects consistent with public and industrial needs. Under AS 19.40.200, lands are available for lease that are necessary for oil &amp; gas purposes or state leases or materials sales for highway maintenance or airport purposes. Leases should be complementary and not compete with existing development. Lands are also available for nonresidential leasing if the disposal will further local communities' interests or recreational opportunities and if there is adequate public facilities and market demand to support the disposal.</p> <p>DMLW Water Resources Section should be consulted prior to development to determine impacts to the reserved water resources in this unit. See Appendix F for more information.</p> <p>The unit is affected by MO 1045, 1118, 1147, 11602A01, 11602A03, and LLO 32.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>resident species such as Arctic grayling, longnose sucker, and slimy sculpin. A reservation of water exists for the Middle Fork Koyukuk River within this unit.</p> <p>A few small slivers of this unit's land are in selection status with the highest priority level. Selections occur in the following sections: F029N012W protracted sections 23, 24, and 26; F028N012W protracted sections 15 and 16. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 412) Slate Creek Trail                      (RST 209) Bettles - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 591) Coldfoot - Junction Trail 49 (east route)                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 262) Caro - Coldfoot Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>D-03  Dalton Highway Material Sites</p>	<p>Ma, Ha 4,485ac</p>	<p>3-2</p>	<p>Manage unit for its material values and resources consistent with the authorizations issued by DNR.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact bear or caribou habitat.</p> <p>Lands within the proposed AKLNG and ASAP rights-of-way and other lands with infrastructure that are critical for oil and gas development, maintenance, or operations shall be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>A portion of this unit is affected by MCO 529, MO 1162A01, MO 1162A03, MO 1147, and LLO 32.</p>	<p>This unit consists of parcels located on state-owned and selected land containing material sources within or near the Dalton Highway Corridor. Some sites may be open and active, or they may be closed and inactive. Usage at any one of these sites varies by demand. This unit is primarily used for gravel and construction material extraction. There is potential for further development of these resources.</p> <p>Caribou habitat is present throughout most of the Dalton Corridor. Caribou calving areas occur in the southern parcels of this unit. Bear spring and berry area concentrations are present throughout the parcels near Coldfoot. Some parcels in the southern half of this unit provide wildlife habitat connectivity between Kanuti and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges. The Middle Fork Koyukuk River and Minnie Creek cross through this unit and are anadromous fish-bearing streams. A reservation of water exists for the Middle Fork Koyukuk River within this unit. Subsistence occurs in and around this unit.</p> <p>Portions of the Alyeska Pipeline ROW (ADL 63574), ASAP ROW (ADL 418997), and AKLNG ROW (ADL 421297) are within this unit.</p> <p>An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit:                      (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
D-04  Dalton Highway Public Facilities	Pr 2,353ac	3-2	<p>This unit consists of multiple parcels of land under management agreements with other agencies with most located in and around Coldfoot. Some of the parcels are under management agreements for the Department of Transportation &amp; Public Facilities, including management for airports, camps, and facilities. Land should be managed according to FAA and DOT/PF operational requirements and with the management plan for the airport. Other facilities should be managed according to their agreement requirements.</p> <p>Lands that have oil and gas company agreements should be managed accordingly and for oil and gas values.</p> <p>The parcel with the National Park Service visitor's center and cabin, as well as Dalton Highway waysides and campgrounds, should be managed for recreational values.</p> <p>A portion of this unit is affected by MO 1118, 1162A01, 1162A03, 1045, and 1147; and LLO 32.</p> <p>DMLW Water Resources Section should be consulted prior to development to determine impacts to the reserved water resources in this unit. See Appendix F for more information.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>The topography consists of low-lying terrain. Vegetation is mixed with forests and shrubland.</p> <p>Brown bear spring and berry concentration areas occur throughout the northern half of the parcels. The Middle Fork Koyukuk River and Slate Creek cross through this unit and are anadromous fish-bearing streams. A reservation of water exists for the Middle Fork Koyukuk River within this unit.</p> <p>Management agreements associated with the parcels in this unit include: ADL 415082, ADL 415659, ADL 414962, ADL 415654, ADL 415688, ADL 415686, ADL 415656, ADL 415217, and ADL 410106. The Coldfoot, Wiseman, Linda Creek, Dietrich, and Prospect Creek airports and landing strips are included in this unit. The Arctic Circle Dump at MP 118 is located within this unit. Waysides and campgrounds along the Dalton Highway are also within this unit.</p> <p>Leases for pipeline ROWs exist in this unit, including the ASAP ROW (ADL 418997) and AKLNG ROW (ADL 421297). Other authorized linear projects may occur in the future. The other lease within the unit is a communications site (ADL 421563). A public easement (ADL 420158) for a pedestrian trail for visitors to access the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center is located off the Dalton Highway near Coldfoot. Private easements (ADL 415997 and ADL 415793) for utilities are near the Coldfoot airport. Potential hazardous sites (ADL 421094, ADL 420304, ADL 420305, and ADL 420800) are associated with Coldfoot Camp diesel leaks and other contamination in Coldfoot.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 209) Bettles - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 412) Slate Creek Trail                      (RST 450) Hickel Highway                      (RST 9) Coldfoot - Chandalar Lake Trail                      (RST 591) Coldfoot - Junction Trail 49 (east route)                      (RST 262) Caro - Coldfoot Trail                      (RST 411) Chandalar - Chandalar Mine Trail                      (RST 254) Wiseman - Chandalar Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
D-05  Prospect Creek, Bonanza Creek, Fish Creek	Ha 91,127ac	3-2	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact anadromous waterbodies or caribou calving habitat. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the riparian and caribou calving habitat and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects.</p>	<p>The terrain is hilly throughout. The vegetation is dominated by shrubland with pockets of forest along creeks and rivers.</p> <p>Commercial quantities of REEs may exist in dispersed locations throughout.</p> <p>Caribou calving areas occur throughout the unit. An area of Dall sheep habitat occurs in the southeast portion of the unit. Moose winter concentrations are present in about half of this unit. Anadromous streams, Unnamed and Prospect Creek, occur in the northern portion of this unit. Stevens Village community members harvest furbearers along the southern edge of this unit.</p> <p>The entire unit is in selection status; all are ANILCA top-filed lands. The selection priority assigned is low.</p>
D-06  Kanuti - Yukon Wildlife Habitat Connectivity	Ha, Hv 103,921ac	3-2	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may consult USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact wildlife habitat connectivity or caribou calving habitat. Authorizations should consider the potential impacts on wildlife habitat connectivity, caribou calving, and subsistence and should include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Topography is gently hilly in the south and becomes mountainous in the north. Vegetation is dominated by evergreen forests with pockets of shrubland and wetlands.</p> <p>Land in this unit provides wildlife habitat connectivity between Kanuti and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges. Caribou calving areas occur in the northern half of this unit. Stevens Village community members harvest furbearers within the unit.</p> <p>There is a small block of mining claims and commercial quantities of REEs may exist in the northern portion of the unit.</p> <p>The entire unit is in selection status; six sections are state-selected and the rest are ANILCA top-filed lands. The selections have a low priority level.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 450) Hickel Highway (RST 591) Coldfoot - Junction Trail 49 (east route)</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
D-07  Fort Hamlin Hills	Ha, Hv 36,068ac	3-2	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may consult USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact wildlife habitat connectivity. Authorizations should consider the potential impacts on wildlife habitat connectivity and subsistence and should include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize or mitigate any negative effects.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p>	<p>Terrain is hilly. Vegetation is dominated by evergreen forests with pockets of wetlands and shrubland.</p> <p>Land in this unit provides wildlife habitat connectivity between Kanuti and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges.</p> <p>Stevens Village community members harvest bear, furbearers, and moose in this unit.</p> <p>The entire unit is in selection status; all are ANILCA top-filed lands. The selection priority assigned is low.</p>



### Northeast Alaska Area Plan Map 3-2

#### Dalton Corridor Region Planning Units and Designations

- Dalton Corridor Region
- Planning Units
- Dalton Highway
- RS 2477
- State Land
- State Selected Land
- Private or Other Land
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- BLM Land
- NPS/USFWS


#### Unit Designations

- D-01 Tc, Ha, Rd
- D-02 Sc, Tc
- D-03 Ma, Ha
- D-04 Pr
- D-05 Ha
- D-06 Ha, Hv
- D-07 Ha, Hv

Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide. Areas outside of the planning area and Dalton Region are shaded out. Colors may appear darker.

Created: March 2026  
 DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
 Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
 UTM Zone 6 North





## **Yukon Flats Region (Y)**

The Yukon Flats Region encompasses an area of 12,483,460 acres and is situated in the middle of the planning area. The area, generally described, approximately matches the border of the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. The communities of Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Circle, Birch Creek, Beaver, and Stevens Village are located within this region and are located along the Yukon River. Nomadic, subsistence lifestyles characterized the area when permanent settlement began in the early 1900s. Settlement began as a response to school building, influx of gold interest, and trading, typically in areas that were already culturally significant. The communities' populations have remained steady or slowly decreased since their founding in the mid-1900s. Infrastructure has increased throughout the region to include schools, post offices, airstrips, stores, and more, centrally located within the villages. The communities are mainly Gwich'in people who have been with the lands since time immemorial. Residents continue to use the land for subsistence activities.

The Yukon Flats Region is a matrix of wetlands, lakes, rivers, and streams, underlain with discontinuous permafrost. The topography is generally flat, with a few isolated mountains and ridges. It is an important area for moose and breeding for birds of conservation concern; two extensive important bird areas, crucial habitats identified by the National Audubon Society, are within the region.

### **Distribution and Characteristics**

Land ownership is mixed throughout this region and includes state land, private land, Native land, and federal land. State land and state selected land are concentrated south of Chalkyitsik and north of the Yukon River and make up 336,752 acres and 115,467 acres respectively. Private land, derived from land disposals and Native allotments comprise 47,898 acres. Native owned land is generally located around villages and within the Venetie Indian Reservation; these lands account for 2,801,856 acres. The remainder of the land is federally owned, 8,807,407 acres, mainly located within the Yukon Flats Wildlife Refuge.

### **Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land**

Access to this region is primarily by fly-in, except Circle is accessible by the Steese Highway. Within the region, access is with snowmachines in the winter and ATVs and boats in the summer. The natural resources of the Yukon Flats are the animal resources that can provide utility or economic benefit to humans. Biological resources of the Yukon Flats are primarily moose, fish, and birds. Residents of the communities use the region for hunting, fishing, and general subsistence activities.

## Management Planning Constraints and Considerations

No state or local management plans have previously affected this area.

## Management Summary

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s), as specifically articulated through management intent found in the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3 and the applicable goals, objectives, and guidelines found in Chapter 2. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated. The table below provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this region and their acreages.

<b>Designation or Co-Designations</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Habitat / Harvest	42,280
Habitat	119,836
Settlement	7,039
Resource Management	307,319
Public Facilities-Retain	910
Materials / Habitat	63
Habitat / Harvest / Public Recreation-Dispersed	437,733

Resource Allocation Table – Yukon Region

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
<p>Y-01  Grass River Wetlands</p>	<p>Ha, Hv 15,262ac</p>	<p>3-3a</p>	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact moose and bird habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize or mitigate any negative effects. Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>Topography is mostly flat with one gentle hill centered in the southwestern portion of the unit. Vegetation is a mix of deciduous, mixed, and evergreen forest with wetlands covering the northern portion. The unit provides habitat for moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations in the western half of the unit. Duck nesting sites are present.</p> <p>The unit is within an Important Bird Area (IBA), Yukon Flats East. This area regularly holds significant numbers of flyway populations of local conservation concern, supports significant numbers or exceptionally high densities of a species, subspecies, or flyway population, and is the location of a long-running research or monitoring project, still in operation. All of these characteristics make this area important globally in supporting and protecting bird species. This area is core for the white-winged scoter. It is also important for black scoter, trumpeter swan, Arctic terns, bufflehead, canvasback, common loon, short-billed gull, Pacific loon and red-necked grebe production.</p> <p>Land in this unit is being considered for wood bison release and restoration efforts.</p> <p>Chalkyitsik community members harvest bear, waterfowl, furbearers, and moose within the unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 476) Circle - Chalkyitsik - Yukon Border Trail</p>
<p>Y-02  Mardow Lake</p>	<p>Ha 108,316ac</p>	<p>3-3a</p>	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact moose and bird habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects. Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>Topography is largely flat with gentle hills throughout. Vegetation is a mix of deciduous, mixed, and evergreen forest interspersed with wetlands which provide prime habitat for moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations in the western half of the unit. Duck nesting sites are present.</p> <p>The unit is within an Important Bird Area (IBA), Yukon Flats East. This area regularly holds significant numbers of flyway populations of local conservation concern, supports significant numbers or exceptionally high densities of a species, subspecies, or flyway population, and is the location of a long-running research or monitoring project, still in operation. All of these characteristics make this area important globally in supporting and protecting bird species. This area is core for white-winged scoter. It is also important for black scoter, trumpeter swan, Arctic terns, bufflehead, canvasback, common loon, short-billed gull, Pacific loon and red-necked grebe production.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>Land in this unit is being considered for wood bison release and restoration efforts.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 476) Circle - Chalkyitsik - Yukon Border Trail</p>
<p>Y-03  Two Lakes Remote Settlement</p>	<p>Se 3,840ac</p>	<p>3-3a</p>	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Avoid moose calving, rutting, and winter concentration areas in siting. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</p>	<p>Lands in this unit have been identified as a potential settlement area for disposal through the state land sales program.</p> <p>Terrain is generally flat with vegetation of evergreen and mixed forest interspersed with wetlands.</p> <p>Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentration areas are present throughout most of the unit.</p> <p>Land in this unit is being considered for wood bison release and restoration efforts.</p>
<p>Y-04  Three Lakes Remote Settlement</p>	<p>Se 3,199ac</p>	<p>3-3a</p>	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Avoid duck nesting areas and damage to Important Bird Area habitat in siting. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</p>	<p>Lands in this unit have been identified as a potential settlement area for disposal through the state land sales program.</p> <p>Terrain is generally flat with evergreen and deciduous forest.</p> <p>Duck nesting sites are present.</p> <p>The unit is within an Important Bird Area (IBA), Yukon Flats East. This area regularly holds significant numbers of flyway populations of local conservation concern, supports significant numbers or exceptionally high densities of a species, subspecies, or flyway population, and is the location of a long-running research or monitoring project, still in operation. All of these characteristics make this area important globally in supporting and protecting bird species. This area is core for white-winged scoter. It is also important for black scoter, trumpeter swan, Arctic terns, bufflehead, canvasback, common loon, short-billed gull, Pacific loon and red-necked grebe production.</p> <p>Land in this unit is being considered for wood bison release and restoration efforts.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
Y-05  Big Creek	Rm 241,335ac	3-3a	<p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact moose and duck habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects. Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>Gentle hilly terrain characterizes the landscape. Vegetation is generally deciduous, evergreen, and mixed forest with a few areas of shrub and wetlands.</p> <p>Moose calving, rutting, and wintering areas occur in the northern edges of this unit and near the Yukon River. Duck nesting sites are present in a small portion of the unit.</p> <p>Land in this unit is being considered for wood bison release and restoration efforts.</p> <p>Approximately 57 sections of this unit’s land are in selection status with the lowest priority level. Selections occur in the following townships: F014N019E and F013N18E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 476) Circle - Chalkyitsik - Yukon Border Trail</p>
Y-06  Paddle Creek	Rm 65,984ac	3-3a	<p>Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p>	<p>Gentle hilly terrain characterizes the landscape, with more mountainous elevations in the northern and southern portions of the unit. Vegetation is almost entirely shrubland with a few pockets of forest and wetlands.</p> <p>Moose wintering areas occur in the northeastern edges of this unit.</p> <p>The entirety of this unit’s land is in selection status with the lowest priority level. It is considered unlikely this parcel will be conveyed to the state.</p>
Y-07  Yukon River Wetlands	Ha 11,520ac	3-3a	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact moose and bird habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects. Due to the remote nature of these lands and presence of wetlands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>Topography is flat. Vegetation is wetlands-type throughout. Habitat for moose winter concentration areas are in the western half and eastern edges of the unit. White-fronted geese nesting, fall, and spring concentrations sites are present nearby. High concentrations of waterfowl are present throughout the unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 270) Circle - Fort Yukon Trail.</p> <p>The entirety of this unit’s land is in selection status with the lowest priority level. It is considered unlikely this parcel will be conveyed to the state.</p>

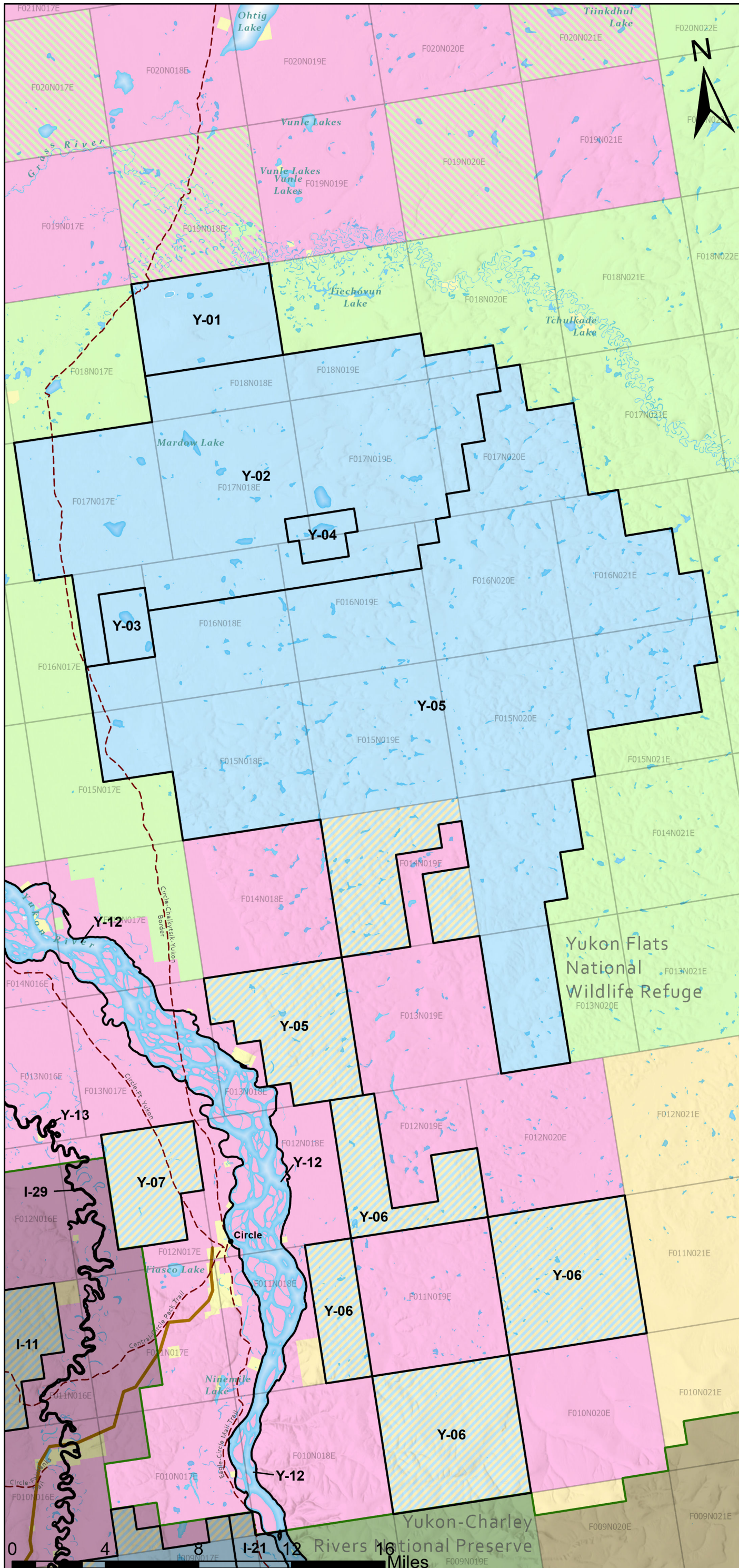
Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
<p>Y-08</p> <p>Yukon Flats Region Public Facilities</p>	<p>Pr 900ac</p>	<p>3-3b</p>	<p>This unit consists of multiple parcels of land under management agreements with other agencies or deeded for specific purposes. Airport sites should be managed according to FAA and DOT/PF operational requirements and with the management plan. Other DOT/PF owned or managed lands should continue to be managed for public purposes.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>The topography consists of low-lying terrain, with sparse mixed forest and small areas of wetlands.</p> <p>Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations occur throughout the parcels. There are white-fronted geese and duck nesting areas, and geese spring and fall concentration areas. Stevens Village and Chalkyitsik community members harvest game in and around this unit.</p> <p>Management agreements associated with the parcels in this unit include: ADL 81341, ADL 75845, ADL 416831, ADL 54391, ADL 53230, and ADL 416875.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within the southwestern subunit (ADL 416875) and include: (RST 257) Beaver-Horse Creek - Chandalar Lake Trail (RST 27) Beaver - Caro Trail (RST 476) Circle - Chalkyitsik - Yukon Border Trail.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>Y-09</p> <p>Yukon Flats Region Material Sites</p>	<p>Ma, Ha 63ac</p>	<p>3-3b</p>	<p>Manage the unit for its material values and resources consistent with the authorizations issued by DNR. DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact moose or waterfowl habitat.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>This unit consists of 4 parcels located on state-owned shorelands containing material sources within the Yukon River and Draanjik (Black) River. Some sites may be open and active, or they may be closed and inactive. Usage at any one of these sites varies by demand. This unit is primarily used for gravel and construction material extraction. There is potential for further development of these resources.</p> <p>Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations are present. Duck nesting sites are also present throughout the parcels. Subsistence occurs in and around this unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within the northeastern subunit (ADL 419711) and include: (RST 476) Circle - Chalkyitsik - Yukon Border Trail</p>
<p>Y-10</p> <p>Fort Yukon Sewage Site</p>	<p>Pr 3ac</p>	<p>3-3b</p>	<p>Manage this unit for sewage purposes only. This unit is to be retained in state ownership and managed in accordance with deed restrictions.</p>	<p>The topography consists of low-lying terrain with sparse forest.</p> <p>Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations occur throughout the parcel. There are white-fronted geese and duck nesting areas and geese spring and fall concentration areas.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
<p>Y-11</p> <p>Yukon Flats Region Public Purpose Lands</p>	<p>Pr 7ac</p>	<p>3-3b</p>	<p>This unit consists of dispersed parcels. Manage this unit for school or other public purposes only.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>School infrastructure is present on the Fort Yukon school parcel. Infrastructure is present on OSL 1466 near the Chalkyitsik airport. No infrastructure appears to exist on the Stevens Village parcel. The topography consists of low-lying terrain with limited vegetation.</p> <p>Potential hazardous site (ADL 420163) resulted from the old BIA school building that had three 4,000 gallon ASTs and the hazards occur throughout most of the Stevens Village parcel.</p> <p>Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations occur throughout the parcels. There are white-fronted geese and duck nesting areas and geese spring and fall concentration areas. Subsistence activities occur in and around this unit.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>Y-12</p> <p>Yukon River</p>	<p>Ha, Hv, Rd 413,363ac</p>	<p>3-3a 3-3b</p>	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, recreation, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and recreational use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in state ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Yukon River as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Yukon Flats region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Yukon River is a navigable waterbody. Cultural resources are present in this unit. Subsistence for moose, bear, waterfowl, fish, furbearers, plants, and wood occurs in and around this unit by the Birch Creek, Venetie, and Stevens Village communities.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Duck and geese nest and have spring and fall concentrations throughout the unit. Eagles nest in various locations along the river. Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations occur throughout the unit. The river is anadromous, supporting anadromous fish such as Arctic lamprey and Chinook, chum, and coho salmon that are migrating to their spawning tributaries. Anadromous sheefish, humpback whitefish, broad whitefish, and Bering cisco spawn in this portion of the river during the fall. This is one of only 3 places in Alaska where Bering cisco spawn.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including state, native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
<p>Y-13</p> <p>Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek)</p>	<p>Ha, Hv, Rd 7,048ac</p>	<p>3-3a</p>	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, recreation, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and recreational use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in state ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river and to BLM's Steese National Conservation Area.</p> <p>Maintain and protect opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek) as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Yukon Flats region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Ikheenjik River is a navigable waterbody. Cultural resources are present in this unit. Subsistence for furbearers, moose, bear, waterfowl, small game, fish, and plants occurs in and around this unit by the Birch Creek community.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Ducks nest throughout the unit. Moose winter concentrations are present in the southern portion of the unit. The river is anadromous and Chinook, chum, and coho salmon spawn in the Ikheenjik River. In addition, the river has sheefish, Arctic grayling, slimy sculpin, whitefish, burbot, and longnose suckers.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including state, native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p>
<p>Y-14</p> <p>Draanjik (Black) River</p>	<p>Ha, Hv, Rd 17,322ac</p>	<p>3-3b</p>	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, harvest, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and subsistence use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in state ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Draanjik (Black) River as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Yukon Flats region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Draanjik River is a navigable waterbody. Cultural resources are present in this unit. Subsistence for bear, moose, caribou, waterfowl, furbearers, fish, small game, plants, and wood occurs in and around this unit by the Chalkyitsik community. The entire length of the river has been used for trapping and homesteading purposes.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Ducks nest on the lower portion of the river. Moose winter concentrations occur throughout the unit, with calving and rutting on the lower river. The river is anadromous, supporting spawning Chinook, chum, and coho salmon. Other species present include Arctic lamprey, Arctic grayling, lake chub, longnose sucker, northern pike, trout perch, slimy sculpin, and round whitefish.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
Y-15  Beaver Creek	Ha, Hv 6,898ac	N/A	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, harvest, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and subsistence use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in state ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of Beaver Creek as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Yukon Flats region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. Beaver Creek is a navigable waterbody. Subsistence for moose, furbearers, waterfowl, and bear occurs in and around this unit by the Birch Creek and Stevens Village communities.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Ducks nest and molt on the lower portion of the creek. Moose winter concentrations occur throughout most of the unit, with calving and rutting on the lower creek. The river is anadromous, supporting spawning populations of Chinook, chum, and coho salmon. In addition, Beaver Creek supports populations of burbot, Arctic grayling, lamprey, longnose sucker, northern pike, slimy sculpin, lamprey, and round whitefish.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p>
Y-16  Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River	Ha, Hv 20,120ac	N/A	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, harvest, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and subsistence use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in state ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Yukon Flats region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Teedriinjik River is a navigable waterbody. Cultural resources are present in this unit. Subsistence for moose, caribou, bear, furbearers, waterfowl, small game, fish, and wood occurs in and around this unit by the Venetic community.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Ducks nest on the lower portion of the river. Moose winter concentrations, calving, and rutting occur on the lower river. The river is anadromous, supporting spawning populations of Chinook and fall chum salmon. Also present are Arctic grayling, longnose sucker, northern pike, slimy sculpin, round whitefish, lake chub, and burbot.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p>





**Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Map 3-3a**

**Yukon Flats Region  
Planning Units and  
Designations**

- Yukon Flats Region
- Planning Units
- Steese Highway
- RS 2477
- State Land
- State Selected Land
- Private or Other Land
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- BLM Land
- NPS/USFWS

**Unit Designations**

- Y-01 Ha, Hv
- Y-02 Ha
- Y-03 Se
- Y-04 Se
- Y-05 Rm
- Y-06 Rm
- Y-07 Ha
- Y-12 Ha, Hv, Rd
- Y-13 Ha, Hv, Rd

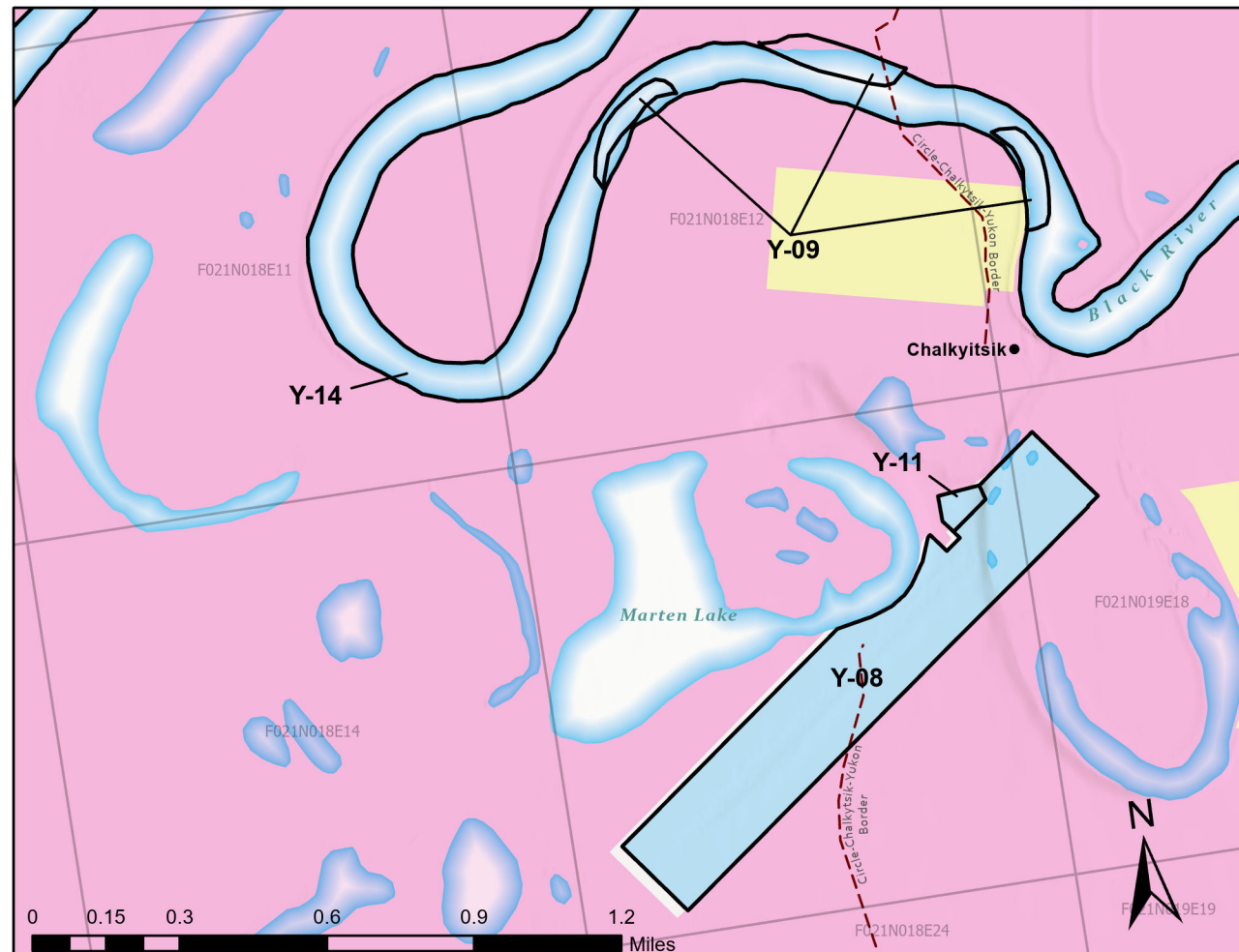
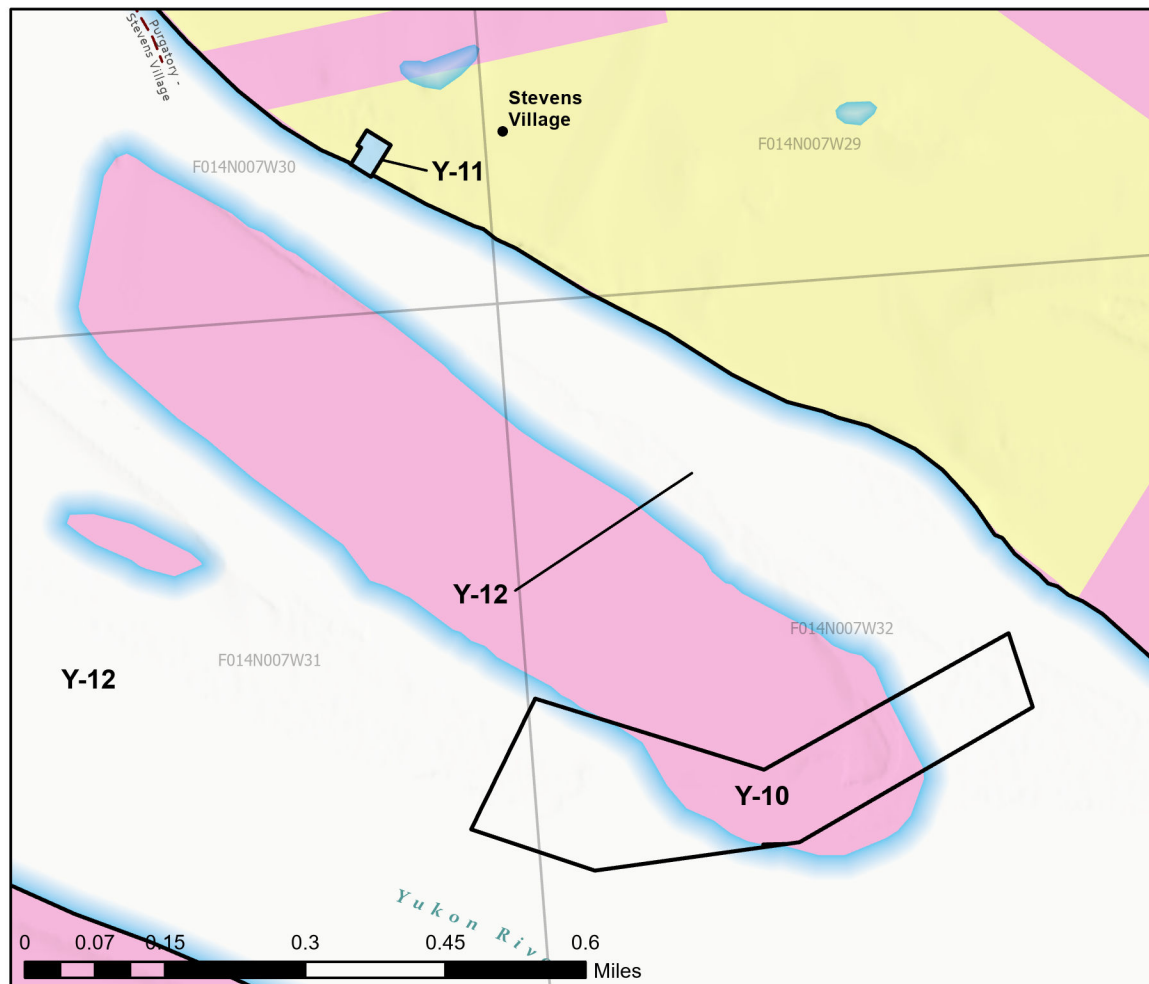
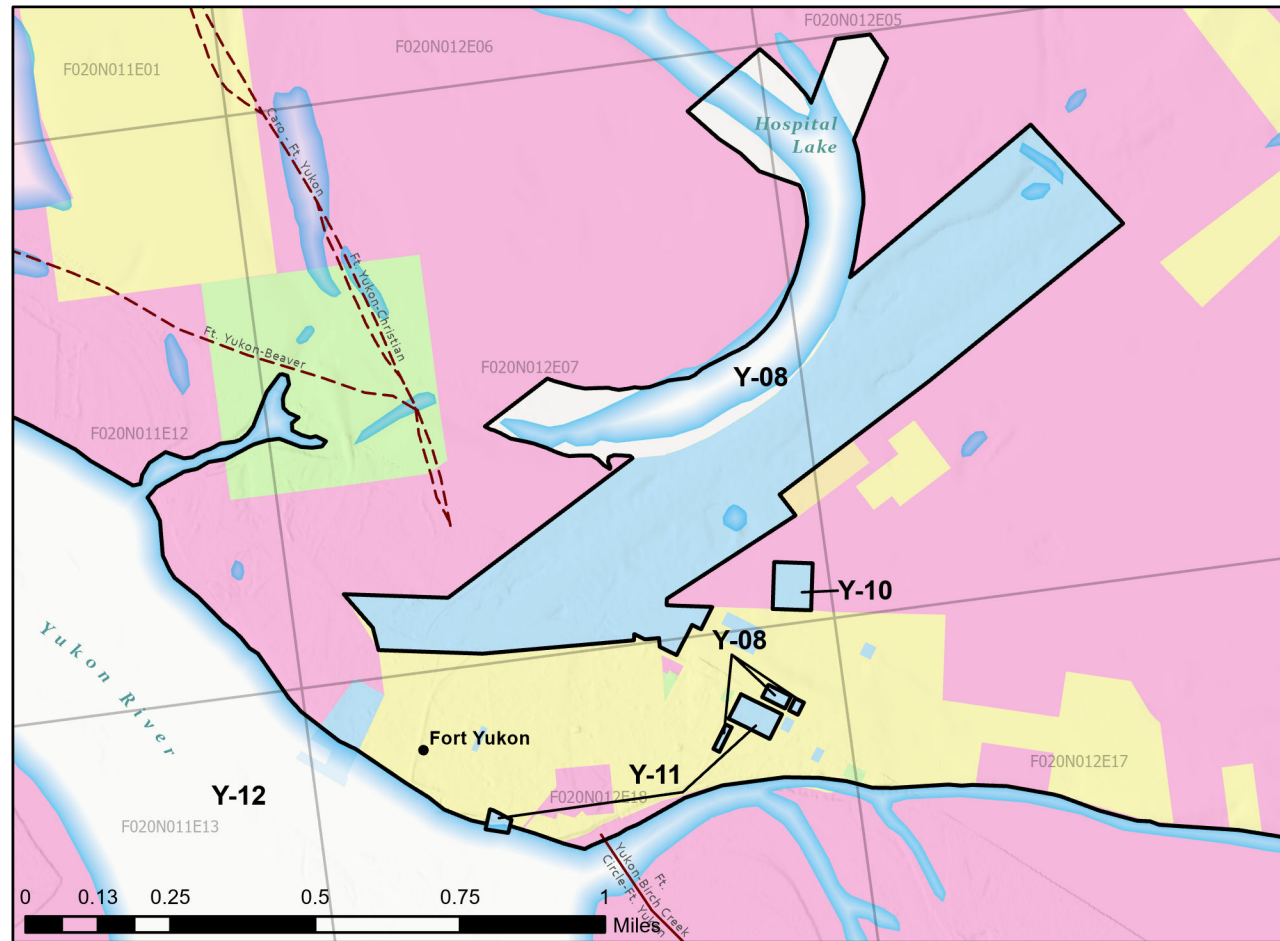
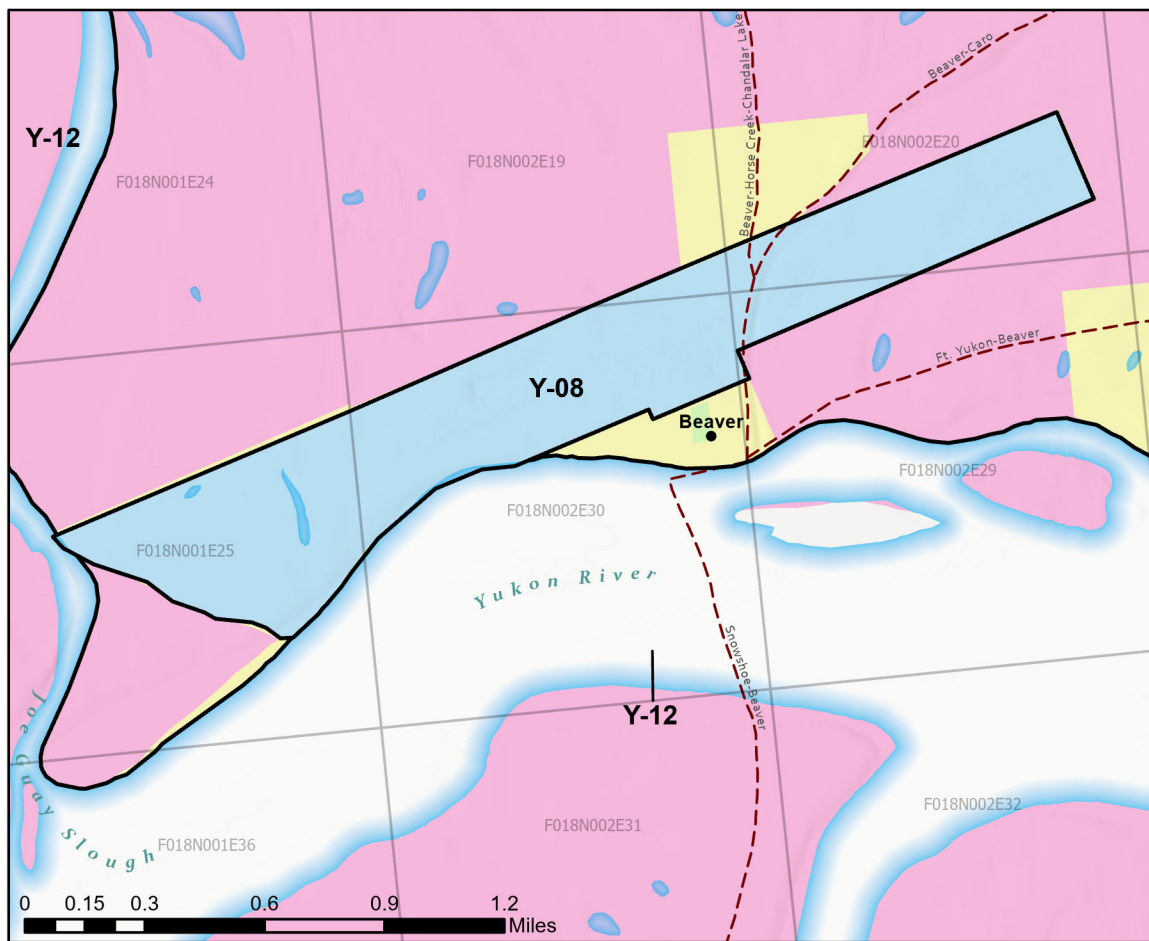


Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide. Areas outside of the planning area and Yukon Flats Region are shaded out. Colors may appear darker.

Created: March 2026  
DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
UTM Zone 6 North





**Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Map 3-3b**

**Yukon Flats Region  
Planning Units and  
Designations**

- Planning Units
- RS 2477
- State Land
- State Selected Land
- Private or Other Land
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- BLM Land
- NPS/USFWS

**Unit Designations**

- Y-08 Pr
- Y-09 Ma, Ha
- Y-10 Pr
- Y-11 Pr
- Y-12 Ha, Hv, Rd
- Y-14 Ha, Hv, Rd



Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide.

Created: March 2026  
DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
UTM Zone 6 North



## **Interior Highlands Region (I)**

The Interior Highlands Region encompasses an area of 8,242,053 acres and is situated in the southern part of the planning area. The area, generally described, abuts the border of the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge to the north and follows the borders of the Upper Yukon Area Plan, the Eastern Tanana Area Plan, and the Yukon Tanana Area Plan on its southern edge. The community of Central is located within this region. Mining operations dominated the region throughout the past century. Central's location as a stopping point between the mining in the mountains to the southwest and Circle has allowed its population to remain steady over the decades. Infrastructure in the area mainly consists of dispersed cabins and homes. Intensive infrastructure also exists in Circle Hot Springs but has been abandoned and become dilapidated.

The Interior Highlands Region is mountainous with streams and rivers bisecting the area. Isolated wetlands occur near the Yukon River. It is an important area for caribou, Dall sheep, and breeding for birds of conservation concern; one extensive important bird area, crucial habitats identified by the National Audubon Society, is within the region.

### **Distribution and Characteristics**

Land ownership is mixed throughout this region and includes state land, private land, Native land, and federal land. State land and state selected land are concentrated along the Steese Highway and between the Ikheenjik and Yukon Rivers and make up 800,031 acres and 61,298 acres respectively. Private land, derived from land disposals and Native allotments comprise 9,885 acres. Native owned land is generally located around villages and in the mountains north of the upper Yukon River; these lands account for 862,173 acres. The remainder of the land is federally owned, 6,500,490 acres, mainly located within the Yukon-Charley River National Preserve, the Steese National Conservation Area, and the White Mountains National Recreation Area.

### **Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land**

Access to this region is primarily by the Steese Highway or fly-in. Within the region, access is with snowmachines in the winter and ATVs in the summer. The natural resources of the Interior Highlands are the abundant mineral and animal resources that can provide utility or economic benefit to humans. The mineral resources include major deposits of gold. Biological resources of the highlands are primarily caribou, Dall sheep, and birds. There is high use of the region for hunting, fishing, and general subsistence activities.

## Management Planning Constraints and Considerations

No state or local management plans have previously affected this area.

## Management Summary

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s), as specifically articulated through management intent found in the Resource Allocation Table in Chapter 3 and the applicable goals, objectives, and guidelines found in Chapter 2. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated. The table below provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this region and their acreages.

<b>Designation or Co-Designations</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Habitat / Harvest / Public Recreation-Dispersed	145,117
Minerals	5,082
Mineral / Habitat	55,827
Settlement-Commercial	378
Settlement	58,528
Habitat / Public Recreation-Dispersed	13,867
Habitat	209,311
Resource Management	350,001
Forestry	20,959
Public Facilities-Retain	413
Materials / Habitat	388
Habitat / Harvest / Water Resources	66,207

**Resource Allocation Table – Interior Highlands Region**

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-01  Steese Highway Corridor	Rd, Ha, Hv 145,117ac	3-4a	<p>Manage the unit to support subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering, recreation, hunting opportunities, and preservation of water quality.</p> <p>Minimize impacts to fish and wildlife habitat values and harvest opportunities. Decisions related to development shall consider potential impacts on the habitat and harvest values and include stipulations/ conditions/measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential negative effects. DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact caribou or moose.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained. Lands within easements, including the Pinnell Mountain trail, shall be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>Provide continuity for existing transportation and for future linear projects consistent with public and industrial needs. Maintain opportunities for subsistence.</p> <p>Portions of this unit are affected by MCO 621.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This unit is comprised of state-owned and state-selected uplands, as well as shorelands and waters within the Steese Highway Corridor. The unit is comprised of an approximately 5-mile buffer on either side of the center line of the Steese Highway from where the highway enters the planning boundary to MM 117.5. This unit is very accessible and heavily used by visitors to this area. The terrain consists of rugged highlands and mountain passes. Vegetation is generally shrubland with pockets of evergreen forest in the mountain valleys.</p> <p>Authorized linear projects may occur in the future. There are leases (ADL 419000, ADL 415293, and ADL 419867) for communication systems on Porcupine Dome. There are public easements (ADL 412098, ADL 412443, ADL 412099, ADL 418969, and ADL 415583) for access. A potential hazard site (ADL 420459) for the Ptarmigan Creek dump is located off the Steese Highway.</p> <p>Caribou have calving and winter use areas throughout the unit, along with a migration corridor. There are known winter use areas for moose along an approximately one-mile buffer of Crooked Creek. Hunting for caribou is extensive in this unit. There is also a notable amount of upland bird hunting, particularly for ptarmigan. The Ptarmigan Eagle Creek Study Area utilized by ADF&amp;G is within this unit.</p> <p>Recreation occurs throughout the unit, generally along the highway corridor.</p> <p>Many slivers of selected land are present in this unit and are a high priority status. Selections occur in the following townships: F007N011E, F008N009E, F008N010E, F009N011E, F008N012E, F008N013E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail                      (RST 280) Chatanika - 12 Mile Summit (Winter) Trail                      (RST 815) Birch Creek Trail                      (RST 1604) Frying Pan Creek Trail                      (RST 1856) Mastodon Creek - Eagle Creek Trail                      (RST 1477) Mastodon Creek - Mastodon Dome - Deadwood Creek Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-02 Bonanza Creek	Mi, Ha 5,713ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its important caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>There are many APMAs and mining operations that have been conducted on placer deposits.</p> <p>Caribou calving and wintering occur throughout the unit.</p> <p>A small sliver of this unit’s land is in selection status with a high priority level. The selection occurs in F008N012E Section 7. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-03 Butte Creek	Mi, Ha 2,655ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its important caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Mining operations have been conducted on placer deposits.</p> <p>Caribou calving and wintering occur throughout the unit. Moose winter concentrations are present throughout the unit.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-04 Mastodon Dome	Mi, Ha 8,002ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its important caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou habitat and the Ptarmigan Eagle Creek Study Area. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>There are many APMAs and mining operations that have been conducted on placer deposits.</p> <p>Caribou calving and wintering occur throughout the unit. Moose winter concentrations are present in the western portion of this unit. A portion of the Ptarmigan Eagle Creek Study Area conducted by ADF&amp;G is within this unit.</p> <p>Multiple RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 1477) Mastodon Creek - Mastodon Dome - Deadwood Creek Trail (RST 1604) Frying Pan Creek Trail (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail</p>
I-05 Harrison Fork of Independence Creek	Mi, Ha 752ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its important caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p>	<p>Many mining operations have been conducted.</p> <p>Caribou calving and wintering occur throughout the unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-06  Birch Creek Commercial Recreation	Sc 378ac	3-4a	See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance for settlement.  Manage disposal in this unit with an emphasis on maintaining wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. Avoid siting projects in caribou calving areas. Consult with ADF&G.  Protect heritage sites.	Lands in this unit have been identified as a potential settlement area for disposal through the state land sales program. Commercial settlement may be appropriate to accommodate recreational opportunities.  The area is along the Steese Highway and adjacent to the Upper Birch Creek pull-out and is gently sloping northward. Vegetation consists of shrubs with pockets of evergreen and mixed forests.  Caribou and moose wintering and caribou calving areas are present. Dispersed recreation and hunting/subsistence occurs within the unit.  The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.
I-07  Bachelor Creek	Rd, Ha 13,867ac	3-4a 3-4b	Manage for recreational values and to protect and maintain habitat values. Protect access corridors into the Steese National Conservation Area. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.  DNR shall consult ADF&G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact caribou habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects.  The entire unit is affected by MCO 398.  Protect heritage sites.	This area consists of mountainous topography and is associated with Bachelor Creek. Vegetation is primarily shrubland, with wetland and forests along Bachelor Creek.  Caribou wintering and calving occurs throughout the unit.  This area provides primitive road access to the recreational trails and values of the Steese National Conservation Area.  The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.
I-08  Mount Ryan Remote Settlement	Se 17,196ac	3-4a 3-4b	Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.  Avoid siting projects in caribou calving areas. Consult with ADF&G.  Public access on RS 2477 Trails will be maintained.  This unit is affected by LLO 30 and 39.	This area was classified Settlement by TBAP in 1986 and there have been a significant number of land disposals throughout the unit, all of a rural recreational type. A project area (ADL 417817) covers the entire unit.  Terrain is generally mountainous, with vegetation predominately shrub at higher elevations and evergreen in the valleys.  A caribou wintering and calving area is present throughout the unit. Moose winter concentrations occur along the northern edge of the unit.  An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit: (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-09 Far Mountain Remote Settlement	Se 11,015ac	3-4a	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Avoid siting projects in caribou calving areas. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</p> <p>This unit is affected by MCO 200.</p>	<p>A portion of the unit was classified Private Recreation in 1982 and there have been a few land disposals in the area, all of a rural recreational type. A project area (ADL 417414) covers a portion of the unit.</p> <p>The terrain consists of rugged mountain passes. Vegetation is generally evergreen, with shrubland increasing at higher elevations.</p> <p>Caribou wintering and calving areas are present throughout the unit.</p>
I-10 Far Mountain Highlands	Ha 10,831ac	3-4a	<p>Due to the remote nature and terrain limitations of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Avoid siting projects in caribou calving areas. Consult with ADF&amp;G.</p>	<p>Mountainous terrain characterizes this unit. Vegetation is largely evergreen forest with areas of shrubland at the highest elevations.</p> <p>Caribou calving occurs in the northern half of the unit and wintering occurs in the southern half.</p>
I-11 Crazy Mountains	Ha 161,171ac	3-4a	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact crucial wildlife habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects. Any authorizations that are issued should avoid riparian habitat. Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>A portion of this unit is affected by MCO 552.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Many streams occur through the unit and provide prime habitat area. Winter use areas for caribou and moose are present. Waterfowl and forest bird concentrations are present along stream corridors. There is an anadromous stream in the northeast corner of the unit, Bluff Creek.</p> <p>Approximately 25 sections of this unit’s land are in selection status with the lowest priority level. It is considered unlikely, given the selection priority assigned, that all of these areas will be conveyed to the state. The selection occurs in township F011N016E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 467) Central - Circle Pack Trail (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-12 Albert Creek	Rm 19,801ac	3-4a	<p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Portions of this unit are affected by MCO 201.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Lowland terrain characterizes this unit with increasing elevations in the northern blocks of the parcel. Vegetation is largely evergreen forest. Smaller areas of wetlands, deciduous forest, and shrubland occur along creeks and at higher elevations. There is a public easement (ADL 409468) for access to an existing trail.</p> <p>Caribou winter use areas are present throughout the unit. Moose winter use areas occur along the northern and southern edges of the unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 467) Central - Circle Pack Trail (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-13 Crooked Creek	Mi 5,082ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its caribou and moose habitat.</p> <p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with Crooked Creek is very important, especially since the location of the mining claims and reported mineral deposits are co-located with the waterbodies within this area.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>There are many APMA's and mining operations have been conducted on placer deposits. This unit contains mainly lowland topography, with increasing elevation in section 31. Vegetation varies and includes deciduous, evergreen, and mixed forests along with mixed shrubs and some wetlands.</p> <p>Moose and caribou wintering is prevalent in this area.</p> <p>A small sliver of this unit's land is in selection status with a high priority level. Selections occur in the following sections: F009N013E protracted sections 31 and 32. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit: (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-14 Central; Albert Creek Settlement	Se 17,014ac	3-4a	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Consult with ADF&amp;G prior to disposal.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Portions of this unit are affected by MCO 201, 204, 296, 554, 582, 577, and 780.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Parcels in this unit were previously classified Settlement and Private Recreation and there have been a significant number of land disposals throughout the unit. Multiple land sale project areas (ADL 417478, 419850, and 419354) cover the unit. A lease (ADL 419381) for the museum in Central is located in the southern portion of the unit, along the Steese Highway. There is a public easement (ADL 409468) for access to an existing trail in the southcentral portions of the unit.</p> <p>Terrain is generally flat, with some hills in the eastern subunit. Vegetation is predominately evergreen forest with isolated areas of shrub and wetlands.</p> <p>Caribou and moose wintering is present throughout the unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>Approximately 2 sections of this unit’s land are in selection status with a medium-high priority level. It is somewhat likely that all or some of these areas will be conveyed to the state. Selections occur in the following sections: F009N016E protracted sections 4, 5, 8, and 17 and F009N014E protracted sections of 29 and 32. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 467) Central - Circle Pack Trail                      (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail                      (RST 1607) Leech Cutoff Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-15  Boulder Creek, Ikheenjik Wetlands	Rm 136,025ac	3-4a	<p>This unit provides for a variety of uses. Manage the unit to continue to provide opportunities for public access and for the protection of wildlife habitat.</p> <p>A portion of this unit is affected by MCO 201 and 577.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Terrain is mixed, with lowland wetlands throughout the eastern portion of the unit. Increasing elevations in the western portions become mountainous with shrublands and mixed forests.</p> <p>Moose wintering areas occur in the northern and eastern edges of this unit. Caribou winter use areas occur throughout, with calving in the southwestern corner of the unit. Waterfowl concentrations are present in the eastern half of the unit.</p> <p>Some APMAs and mining claims exist along the Leech Cutoff Trail and the arterial roads off the Steese Highway. There is a public easement (ADL 409468) for access to an existing trail in the southcentral portions of the unit. A lease (ADL 415290) for a communication system is located in F007N015E section 26. A restricted use authorization (ADL 421149) is in effect for the lease site described due to lead and diesel contamination. A potential hazard site (ADL 420432) for the unauthorized Central Landfill is located off the Steese Highway.</p> <p>Approximately eight sections of this unit’s land is in selection status with a medium priority level along the Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek) and high priority in all other areas of selection. Selections occur in the following townships: F008N017E, F007N017E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>Many RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 1607) Leech Cutoff Trail                      (RST 1800) Circle Hot Springs - Medicine Lake Trail                      (RST 823) Graveyard Creek - Cabins Trail                      (RST 810) Boulder Creek Trail #2                      (RST 1477) Mastodon Creek - Mastodon Dome - Deadwood Creek Trail                      (RST 618) Central - Deadwood Creek Trail                      (RST 8) Harrison Creek - Portage Creek Trail</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>(RST 230) Bielenberg Trail (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>I-16 North Fork Harrison Creek</p>	<p>Mi, Ha 1,890ac</p>	<p>3-4a</p>	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its important caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>There are many APMA's and mining operations have been conducted on placer deposits.</p> <p>Caribou calving and wintering occur throughout the unit.</p> <p>Multiple RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 1477) Mastodon Creek - Mastodon Dome - Deadwood Creek Trail (RST 8) Harrison Creek - Portage Creek Trail</p>
<p>I-17 Ketchum Dome, Deadwood Creek</p>	<p>Mi, Ha 36,815ac</p>	<p>3-4a</p>	<p>Manage unit for its mineral values and resources and for its important caribou habitat.</p> <p>Any mineral development shall, in addition to the management guidelines of the Fish and Wildlife section of Chapter 2, consider impacts upon sensitive caribou habitat. Consult ADF&amp;G prior to issuing an authorization involving a long-term or permanent use.</p> <p>Consideration of the impacts upon hydrologic values associated with the numerous creeks and wetlands located throughout this unit is very important, especially since the location of the mining claims and reported mineral deposits are co-located with the waterbodies within this area.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>There are many APMA's and mining operations. The terrain consists of rugged mountains. Vegetation is largely shrub, with evergreen, deciduous, and mixed forests in the valleys and along streams.</p> <p>Caribou wintering is prevalent in this area, with calving areas in the western portion of the unit.</p> <p>Many slivers of selected land are present in this unit and are a high priority status. Selections occur in the following townships: F007N014E, F008N014E, F007N015E, and F008N015E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>Multiple RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include: (RST 810) Boulder Creek Trail #2 (RST 618) Central - Deadwood Creek Trail (RST 8) Harrison Creek - Portage Creek Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>I-18 Circle Hot Springs Settlement</p>	<p>Se 5,790ac</p>	<p>3-4a</p>	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Consult with ADF&amp;G prior to disposal.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Portions of this unit are affected by MCO 780 and MO 1165 and 1042.</p>	<p>Parcels in this unit have been classified as open-to-entry and homesite entry. There have been a significant number of land disposals. There are public easements (ADL 415858 and ADL 411998) for meteorological instruments and navigation and hazards, respectively, located in dispersed, isolated instances in the unit.</p> <p>Terrain is generally flat, increasing in elevation in the southern portion of the unit. Vegetation predominately evergreen and deciduous forest, with some areas of shrub and wetlands at lowest elevations.</p>

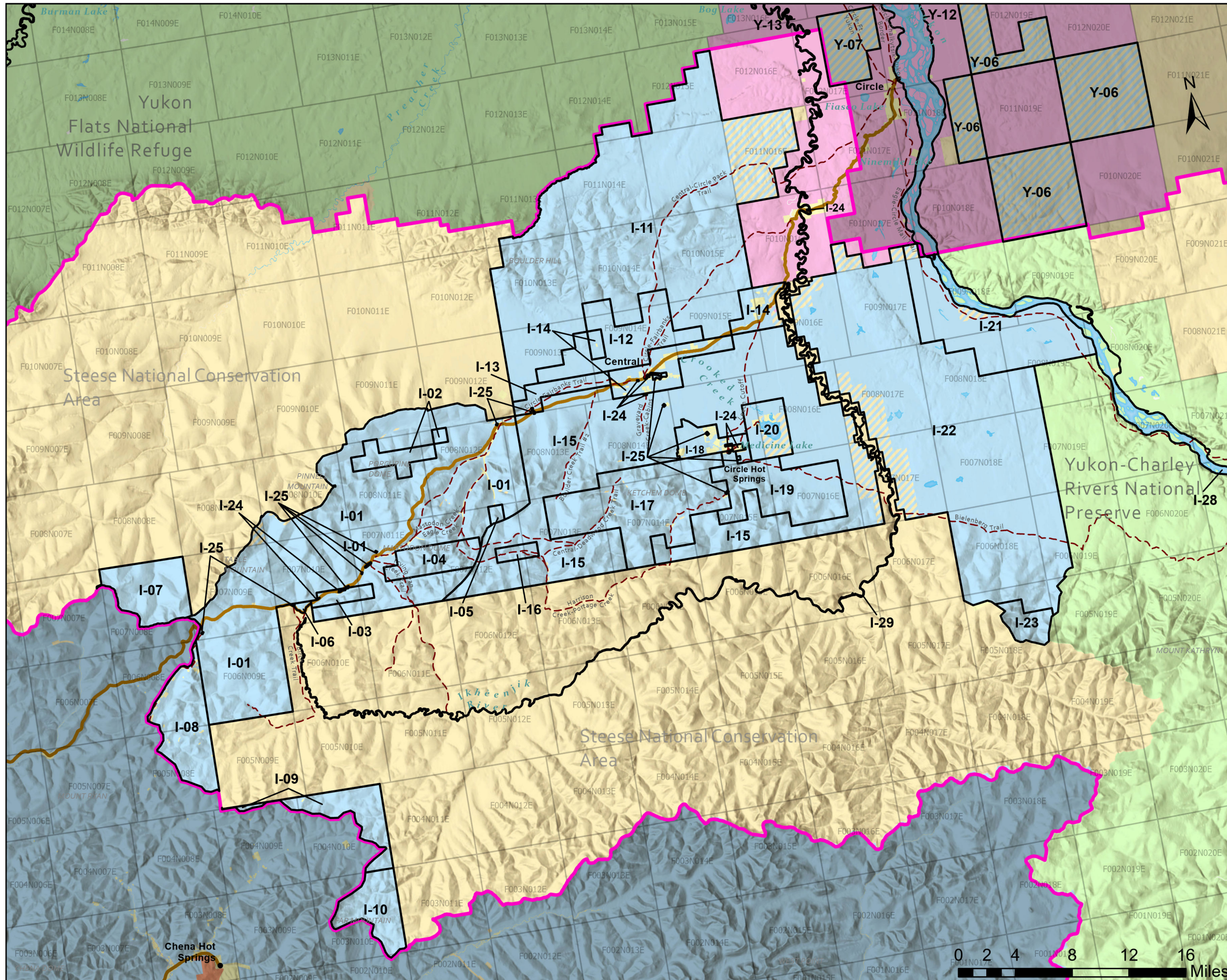
Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
			Protect heritage sites.	<p>A small selection area occurs in the southwest corner of the unit, F008N015E30.</p> <p>Caribou wintering is present throughout the unit.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 1607) Leech Cutoff Trail                      (RST 1800) Circle Hot Springs - Medicine Lake Trail                      (RST 230) Bielenberg Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-19 Portage Creek Forest	F 20,959ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its forestry values. Management emphasis will be focused on maintaining the natural character of the unit, while providing opportunities for personal harvest, and forest management activities, while maintaining habitat, wildlife, and recreational values.</p> <p>See Chapter 2 for specific management guidelines. Specifically, the Forestry, Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Shorelands and Stream Corridor sections.</p>	<p>Mountainous terrain characterizes this unit, with decreasing elevation to the north. Vegetation is largely a mix of deciduous and evergreen forest with a few pockets of shrubland.</p> <p>Caribou wintering occurs throughout the unit.</p> <p>Some APMA's and mining claims exist along Portage Creek Road.</p> <p>A couple small slivers of this unit's land are in selection status with a high priority level. The selection occurs in F007N015E Sections 2 and 4. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit:                      (RST 230) Bielenberg Trail</p>
I-20 Medicine Lake Settlement	Se 7,513ac	3-4a	<p>Land disposal during the planning period is appropriate. See Chapter 2 requirements for additional guidance.</p> <p>Manage unit with an emphasis on maintaining wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Consult with ADF&amp;G prior to disposal.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Lands in this unit have been identified as a potential settlement area for disposal through the state land sales program.</p> <p>The area is near Portage Creek Road and surrounds Medicine Lake. Terrain is flat, consisting almost entirely of wetlands. Mixed forests are present along the southern outskirts of the unit and in the complex of waterbodies north of Medicine Lake.</p> <p>Caribou and moose wintering areas are present. An eagle nest occurs within the unit.</p> <p>Approximately 6 sections of this unit's land are in selection status with the highest priority level. The selection occurs in township F008N016E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 1800) Circle Hot Springs - Medicine Lake Trail</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>(RST 1607) Leech Cutoff Trail (RST 230) Bielenberg Trail</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
<p>I-21 Yukon River Wetlands</p>	<p>Ha 32,380ac</p>	<p>3-4a</p>	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact crucial wildlife habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects. Due to the remote nature of these lands and presence of wetlands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>This unit is characterized by low-lying wetlands, which are located south of the Yukon River. Vegetation consists primarily of woody wetlands with pockets of shrubland.</p> <p>Winter use areas for caribou and moose are present. Very high concentrations of waterfowl are present throughout the unit.</p> <p>Approximately three sections of this unit’s land are in selection status with a medium or low priority level. Selections occur in the following sections: F009N018E 27 and 28, F010N017E 36. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit: (RST 67) Eagle - Circle Mail Trail</p>
<p>I-22 Yukon-Birch Creek Interfluve</p>	<p>Rm 155,947ac</p>	<p>3-4a</p>	<p>Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Lowland terrain characterizes most of the landscape. Areas of high elevation include a north-south running plateau in the northeastern portion of the unit and mountainous terrain in the southernmost portions of the unit. Vegetation on and along the southern side of the plateau is a mix of deciduous and evergreen forest, while wetland vegetation is located within the complex of lakes and ponds and north of the plateau. Shrubland is present at the highest elevations.</p> <p>Caribou and moose wintering areas are present, as well as high concentrations of waterfowl.</p> <p>Approximately 26 sections of this unit’s land are in selection status, mostly occurring along the Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek) with a medium priority level. Selections occur in the following townships: F007N017E, F010N017E, F09N016E, and F008N17E. The remaining land is state owned.</p> <p>An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit: (RST 230) Bielenberg Trail.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-23 Thanksgiving Creek Source	Ha 4,929ac	3-4a	<p>Manage to protect and maintain wildlife and habitat values. Unit is to be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G and may contact USFWS regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact caribou habitat or sensitive life stages. Authorizations must consider the potential impacts on the habitat values and include general mitigation measures that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate any negative effects.</p>	<p>The shrub-covered, mountainous topography of the unit provides habitat for caribou wintering and calving areas. Dall sheep, as well as most furbearers and small game are also present.</p>
I-24 Interior Highlands Region Public Facilities	Pr 413ac	3-4a	<p>This unit consists of multiple parcels under management agreements with other agencies. Some of the parcels are under management agreements for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, including management for rights-of way and airports. Land should be managed according to FAA and DOT/PF operational requirements and with the management plan for the airport.</p> <p>LSH 36 is included in this unit and contains a portion of a landing strip and a highway maintenance facility.</p> <p>A 10-acre parcel is co-managed by ADF&amp;G, BLM, and DOT/PF for the Lower Birch Creek Wayside. This boat launch should be managed according to ADF&amp;G for recreational values and public access. Disposal of the parcel is prohibited.</p> <p>Portions of this unit are affected by MCO 428.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>The topography consists of low-lying terrain, with sparse mixed forest and small areas of wetlands. There is a public easement (ADL 409468) for access to an existing trail.</p> <p>Moose and caribou winter concentrations occur in most parcels. Caribou calving is present in the two southernmost parcels.</p> <p>Management agreements associated with the parcels in this unit include: ADL 418541, ADL 403720, ADL 411561, ADL 24662, ADL 403861, ADL 418694, and ADL 418693.</p> <p>A parcel contains the Central Cemetery.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-25 Interior Highlands Region Material Sites	Ma, Ha 388ac	3-4a	<p>Manage unit for its material values and resources consistent with the authorization issued by DNR. DNR shall consult ADF&amp;G regarding authorizations involving uses that may impact moose or caribou habitat.</p> <p>Lands within the easements shall be retained in state ownership.</p> <p>A portion of this unit is affected by MO 1165 and MCO 428.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This unit consists of multiple parcels located on state-owned and selected uplands and shorelands containing material sources within or near the Steese Highway and arterial roadways. Some sites may be open and active, or they may be closed and inactive. Usage at these sites varies by demand. This unit is primarily used for gravel and construction material extraction. There is potential for further development of these resources.</p> <p>There are public easements (ADL 412443 and ADL 409468) for access for DOT/PF and for an existing trail.</p> <p>Moose winter concentrations are present in the parcels along the Steese Highway. Caribou winter concentrations occur in most parcels. Caribou calving areas are present in the western parcels.</p> <p>Small slivers of this unit's land are in selection status with a high priority level.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
				<p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p> <p>Multiple RS 2477 Trails are located within this unit and include:                      (RST 8) Harrison Creek - Portage Creek Trail                      (RST 1604) Frying Pan Creek Trail                      (RST 237) Circle - Fairbanks Trail</p>
I-26  Grayling Fork, Canadian Border	Rm 15,227ac	3-4b	<p>Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p> <p>Authorizations that may impact RS 2477 routes should ensure access is maintained.</p>	<p>Hilly terrain characterizes this unit. Vegetation is largely a mix of deciduous and evergreen forest, with shrub cover in the valleys.</p> <p>High concentrations of waterfowl are present throughout the unit.</p> <p>The entirety of this unit’s land is in selection status with no priority level. It is considered unlikely this parcel will be conveyed to the state.</p> <p>An RS 2477 Trail is located within this unit:                      (RST 466) Nation River - Rampart House Trail</p>
I-27  Kandik River Uplands	Rm 23,001ac	3-4b	<p>Due to the remote nature of these lands, development is not anticipated.</p>	<p>Hilly and mountainous terrain characterizes this unit. Vegetation is variable, including deciduous and evergreen forests at higher elevations and shrub and wetlands along the Kandik River and valleys.</p> <p>High concentrations of waterfowl are present throughout the unit.</p>
I-28  Upper Yukon River	Ha, Wr, Rd 57,136ac	3-4a	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, recreation, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and recreational use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in public ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Yukon River as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Interior Highlands region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Yukon River is a navigable waterbody. Cultural resources are present in this unit.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Eagles nest in various locations along the river. The unit is within an Important Bird Area (IBA), Yukon-Charley Rivers. Moose calving, rutting, and winter concentrations occur throughout the unit. Caribou wintering occurs throughout. The river is anadromous, supporting Chinook and fall chum salmon. In addition, slimy sculpin, Arctic grayling, burbot, round whitefish, longnose sucker, sheefish, and northern pike are present.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including state, native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>

Unit # / Name	Designation/ Acres	Map	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
I-29  Upper Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek)	Ha, Wr, Rd 4,809ac	3-4a	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, recreation, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and recreational use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in public ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of the Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek) as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Interior Highlands region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. The Ikheenjik River is a navigable waterbody.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Moose winter concentrations occur in the lower portion of the river. Caribou calving and wintering areas are present upstream. The river is anadromous, supporting spawning populations of Chinook and chum salmon. Also present are Arctic grayling, burbot, slimy sculpin, longnose sucker, and round whitefish. Birch Creek community members harvest bear and moose within the unit.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by multiple property owners including native, federal, and privately owned parcels.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>
I-30  Upper Beaver Creek	Ha, Wr, Rd 4,262ac	3-4b	<p>Manage this unit for the protection of habitat, recreation, and hydrologic values. Emphasis should be on preserving water quality, sensitive habitat, and recreational use of the river.</p> <p>Retain land in public ownership.</p> <p>Maintain public access on trails and easements that provide access to and across the river.</p> <p>DMLW Water Resources Section should be consulted prior to development to determine impacts to the reserved water resources in this unit. See Appendix F for more information.</p> <p>Protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>This management unit consists of the portions of Beaver Creek as measured from bank-to-bank from ordinary high water mark which are located within the Interior Highlands region. Besides the water column itself, islands and exposed gravel bars are also included in this unit. Beaver Creek is a navigable waterbody. A variety of motorized and non-motorized boats are used for travel on Beaver Creek. A reservation of water exists for Beaver Creek within this unit.</p> <p>The river has abundant habitat resources. Moose and caribou winter concentrations occur throughout the unit. Dall sheep occur in the mountainous portions of the unit. The river is anadromous, supporting spawning populations of Chinook and chum salmon. Also present are slimy sculpin, burbot, and Arctic grayling.</p> <p>The land surrounding the river is owned by the Bureau of Land Management.</p> <p>The AHRS reports heritage sites in or around this unit.</p>



**Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Map 3-4a**

**Interior Highlands Region  
Planning Units and  
Designations**

-  Interior Highlands Region
-  Planning Units
-  Steese Highway
-  RS 2477
-  State Land
-  State Selected Land
-  Private or Other Land
-  Native Land
-  Native Selected Land
-  BLM Land
-  NPS/USFWS

**Unit Designations**

I-01	Hv, Ha, Rd	I-15	Rm
I-02	Mi, Ha	I-16	Mi, Ha
I-03	Mi, Ha	I-17	Mi, Ha
I-04	Mi, Ha	I-18	Se
I-05	Mi, Ha	I-19	F
I-06	Sc	I-20	Se
I-07	Rd, Ha	I-21	Ha
I-08	Se	I-22	Rm
I-09	Se	I-23	Ha
I-10	Ha	I-24	Pr
I-11	Ha	I-25	Ma, Ha
I-12	Rm	I-28	Ha, Wr, Rd
I-13	Mi	I-29	Ha, Wr, Rd
I-14	Se		

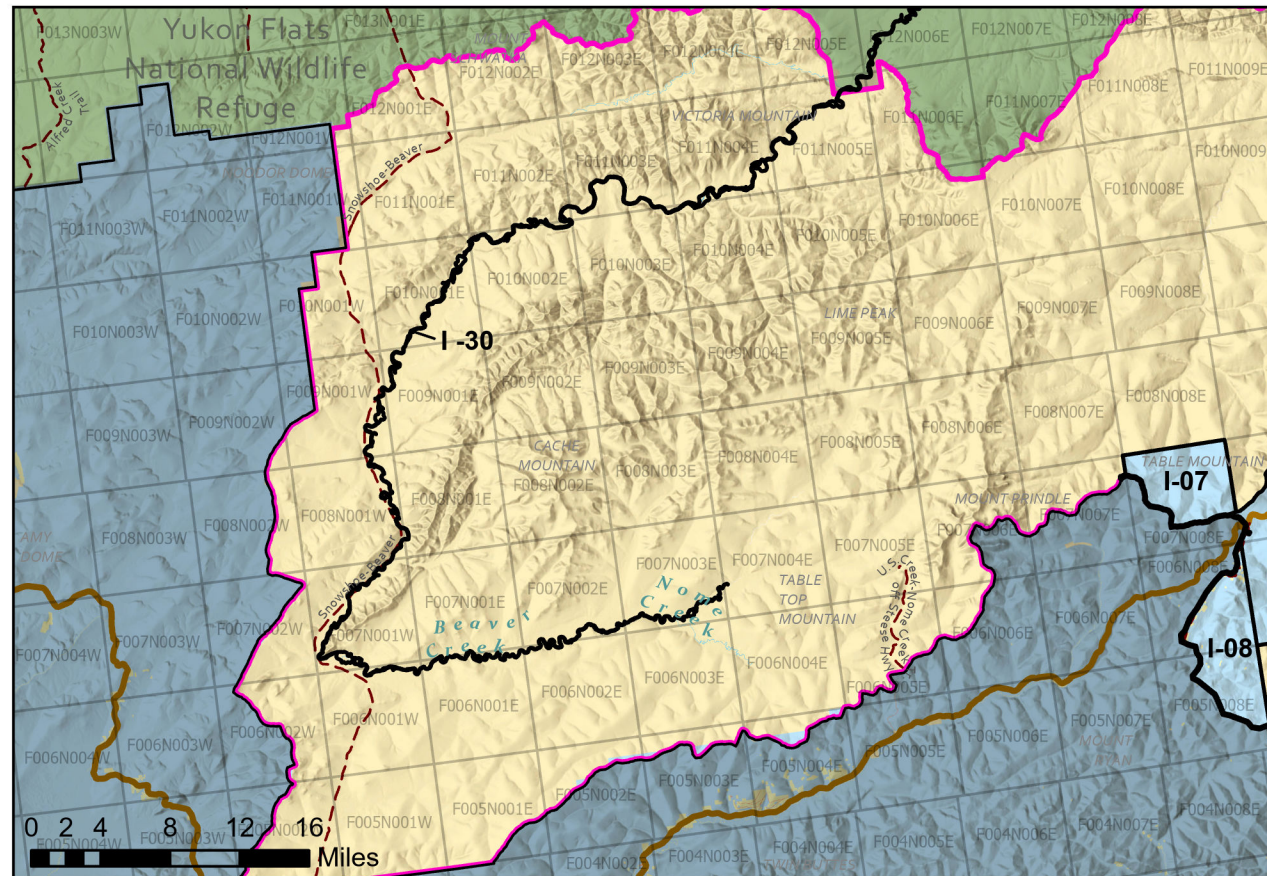
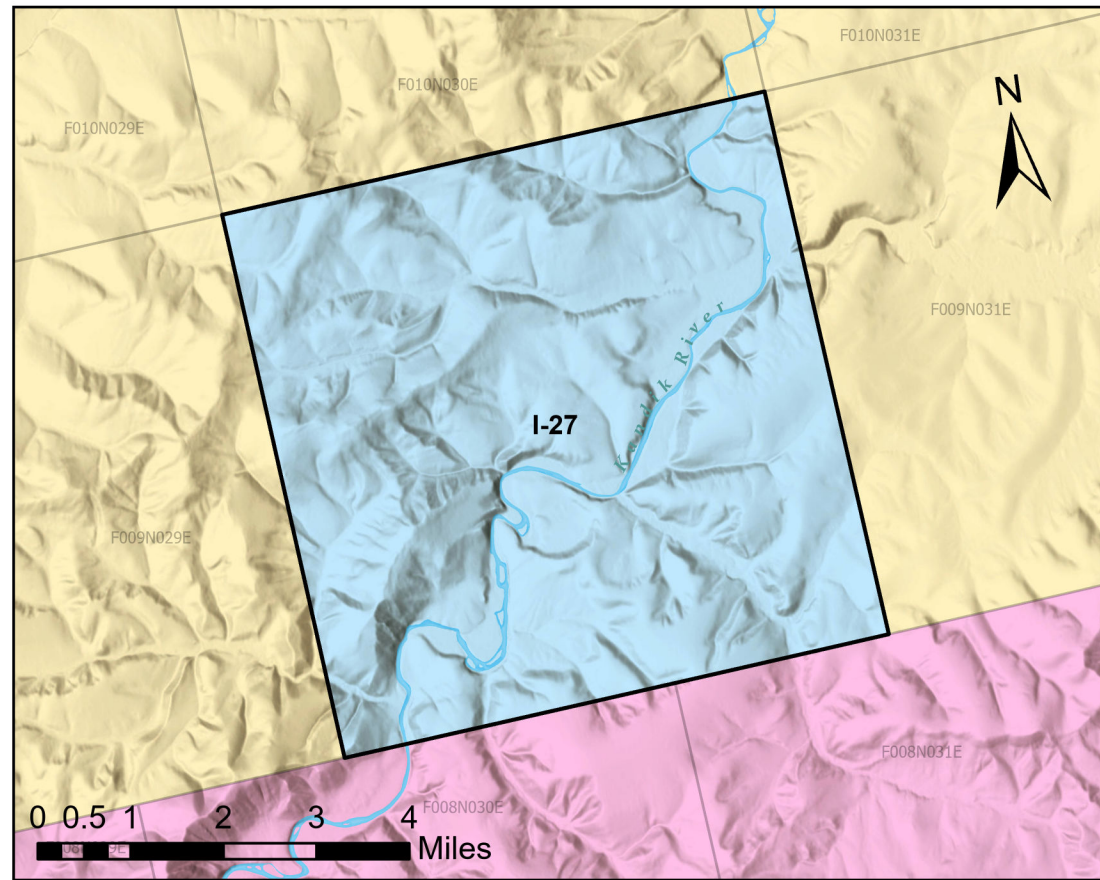
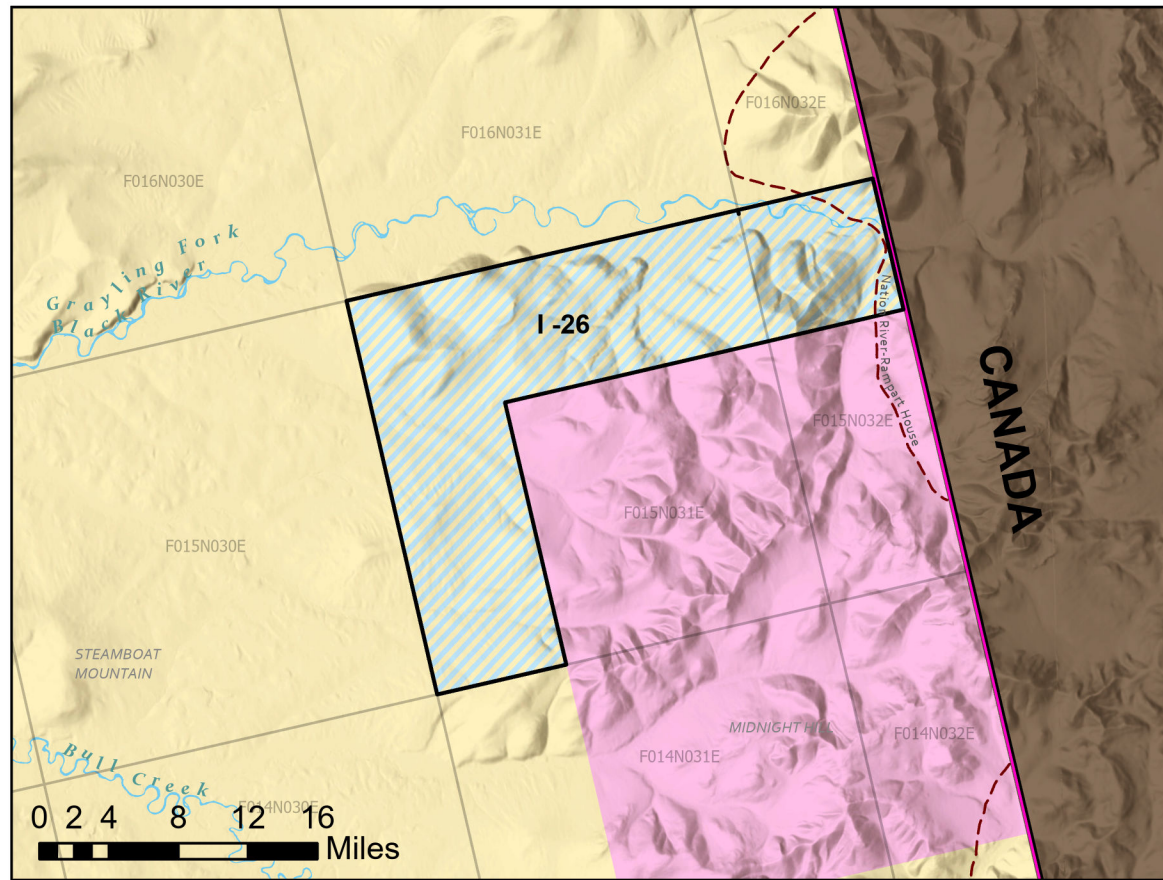


Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide. Areas outside of the planning area and Interior Highlands Region are shaded out. Colors may appear darker.

Created: March 2026  
 DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
 Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
 UTM Zone 6 North





### Northeast Alaska Area Plan Map 3-4b

#### Interior Highlands Region Planning Units and Designations

-  Interior Highlands Region
-  Planning Units
-  Steese Highway
-  RS 2477
-  State Land
-  State Selected Land
-  Private or Other Land
-  Native Land
-  Native Selected Land
-  BLM Land
-  NPS/USFWS

#### Unit Designations

- I-07 Ha, Rd
- I-08 Se
- I-26 Rm
- I-27 Rm
- I-30 Ha, Wr, Rd



Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide. Areas outside of the planning area and Interior Highlands Region are shaded out. Colors may appear darker.

Created: March 2026  
DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
UTM Zone 6 North



## Navigable Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes

### Management Intent of Navigable Waterbodies

#### Background

The intent of the plan is to designate and provide management intent for the shorelands under all navigable waterbodies. There are so many navigable rivers and lakes in the planning area that it is not practical to state the management intent for each individual waterbody. Therefore, the plan identifies general management intent and designations for most of the waterbodies within the planning area. In some cases, however, specific designations are identified for a particular waterbody because of the size, uniqueness, or particular values and functions of a river or lake.

The term “shorelands” is defined as land belonging to the state which is covered by non-tidal water that is navigable under the laws of the United States up to the ordinary high-water mark as modified by accretion, erosion, or reliction (AS 38.05.965(23)). See Figure 1-1 at the beginning of Chapter 1 for a diagram that illustrates the differences between shorelands, submerged lands, and uplands.

Shorelands are not identified on the plan designation maps. Identification of all such waterbodies is impractical on maps of the scale used in this plan. *The DNR records on navigability and hydrology must be consulted in order to determine whether a specific stream or lake is likely to be navigable.* These records are available in the Public Access Assertion and Defense unit in the Division of Mining, Land and Water in Anchorage. For further information on the state’s navigability policy, go to: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/paad/nav/policy/>

#### Public Trust Doctrine

The Public Trust Doctrine provides that public trust lands, waters, and living natural resources in a state are held by the state in trust for the benefit of all the people and establishes the right of the public to fully utilize the public trust lands, waters, and resources for a wide variety of public uses. See the Public Trust Doctrine in Appendix E for more information.

## **Management Intent: Specific Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes<sup>1</sup>**

Some navigable rivers and lakes are given specific use designations because of their importance for recreation, water resources, harvest, and habitat. These are listed in Tables 3-1 and 3-2. Anadromous streams and lakes are designated Habitat and those rivers and lakes that are particularly significant for public recreation are designated Public Recreation-Dispersed. In those instances where the stream or lake is important for both purposes, these are co-designated Habitat and Public Recreation-Dispersed. Some streams are also designated Harvest because they must be protected to sustain subsistence culture. If a listed river is bounded by a unit, the unit identifier is noted.

Streams that are neither anadromous nor significant for public recreation acquire the designation of the management unit<sup>2</sup> they cross. Since there may be numerous parcels that may have differing designations, these streams may have different designations on various segments. Consult the plan maps to determine the appropriate designation(s).

## **Management Intent: Other Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes**

The following designations apply to the navigable rivers and lakes *not* specified in Tables 3-1 and 3-2:

### Navigable Rivers and Lakes within LDAs.

Anadromous streams within LDAs are co-designated Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat. Streams that are not anadromous are designated Public Recreation-Dispersed.

### Navigable Waters (Rivers and Lakes) within Federal Conservation Units.

Navigable waters within Federal Conservation Units (National Parks, National Preserve, National Wildlife Refuge, etc.) that are anadromous are co-designated Habitat and Public Recreation. Navigable waterbodies that are not anadromous are designated Public Recreation.

### All other Navigable Rivers and Lakes

The designation and management intent for navigable waterbodies that cross or are surrounded by state land are the same as those of the upland tract, except those portions of navigable waters that are anadromous are designated Habitat.

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<sup>1</sup> Management of all rivers and lakes are subject to AS 38.05.126 as defined in AS 38.05.965(14) and AS 38.05.965(21). Refer to the Glossary in Appendix A for the definition of streams.

<sup>2</sup> This assumes that the uplands are owned by the state.

Navigable rivers and lakes that are not within general state land or LDAs are designated General Use and are to be managed consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine.

**Table 3-1: Navigable Rivers, Streams, and Creeks**

<b>Rivers, Streams, and Creeks</b>	<b>Designation(s)</b>
Beaver Creek – Interior Highlands Region (Unit I-30)	Ha, Wr, Rd
Beaver Creek – Yukon Flats Region (Unit Y-15)	Ha, Hr
Bettles River	Ha, Rd
Bonanza Creek	Ha, Rd
Charley River	Ha, Rd
Christian River	Ha, Rd
Coleen River	Ha, Rd
Crooked Creek	Ha, Rd
Dall River	Ha, Rd
Draanjik (Black) River (Unit Y-14)	Ha, Hr
East Fork Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River	Ha, Rd
Fish Creek	Ha, Rd
Grass River	Rd
Grayling Fork Black River	Ha, Rd
Hodzana River	Ha, Rd
Ikhèenjik River (Birch Creek) – Interior Highlands Region (Unit I-29)	Ha, Wr, Rd
Ikhèenjik River (Birch Creek) – Yukon Flats Region (Unit Y-13)	Ha, Hr, Rd
Kandik River (Charley Creek)	Ha, Rd
Middle Fork Koyukuk River	Ha, Rd
Nation River	Ha, Rd
Nome Creek	Ha, Rd
Porcupine River	Ha, Rd
Preacher Creek	Ha, Rd
Ray River	Ha, Rd
Salmon Fork Black River	Ha, Rd
Sheenjik River	Ha, Rd
South Fork Koyukuk River	Ha, Rd
Sucker River	Rd
Tatonduk River	Ha, Rd
Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River – Arctic Region (A-20)	Ha, Hr, Rd
Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River – Yukon Flats Region (Y-16)	Ha, Hr
Yukon River – Interior Highlands Region (Unit I-28)	Ha, Wr, Rd
Yukon River – Yukon Flats Region (Unit Y-12)	Ha, Hr, Rd

**Table 3-2: Navigable Lakes**

<b>Navigable Lakes</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Chloya Lake	Rd
Chandalar Lake	Rd
Twin Island Lake	Rd
Bob Johnson Lake	Rd
South Fork Lake	Rd
Twin Lakes	Rd

## **Chapter 4**

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# Chapter 4

## Implementation and Recommendations

### Introduction

This chapter includes information and recommendations necessary to implement plan goals, management intent, and guidelines. Information is included on the following:

- State Land Classification
- Relationship of Land Use Designations in the Plan to State Land Classifications
- Leasing of State Land
- Classification Order
- Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps
- State Land Selections
- Mineral and Leasehold Location Orders
- Legislatively Designated Areas
- Generally Allowed Uses
- Types of Plan Changes

### State Land Classification

To implement the plan on state lands, DNR must “classify” state lands to reflect the intent of “land use designations” made by this plan. State law requires that land classification precede most conveyance or leasing of state uplands or tidelands. According to state statute, classification means, “. . . the designation of lands according to their apparent best use.” It “. . . identifies the primary use for which the land will be managed . . .” but “. . . all other uses are initially presumed as compatible with the primary use.” For this reason, all plan classifications are intended for multiple uses. In this plan, most management units are assigned a single designation.

In some instances, more than one designation is identified; these are termed “co-designations” and indicate that two (or more) uses are considered to be compatible within a specific management unit of state land. The Resource Management (Rm) designation is used in this plan, typically applying to the large management units where two or more resource values exist but none is of sufficiently high value to merit designation as a primary use and

uses are judged to be compatible within specific portions of the management unit. Compatibility of uses should be able to be achieved through separation, or siting and design techniques that should reduce or preclude the undesirable effects of a particular use.

Following is a list of land classifications, and their associated definitions in Alaska regulations (the Alaska Administrative Code – AAC), which will apply to state lands in the planning area as a result of plan adoption. DNR will manage state lands and resources consistent with these classifications, with the management directions given in Chapter 3 for specific management units of state land, and with the Chapter 2 area-wide guidelines.

**11 AAC 55.120. Material Land.** Land classified material is land that is suitable for the extraction of common varieties of sand, gravel, stone, peat, clay, and other similar materials.

**11 AAC 55.130. Mineral Land.** Land classified mineral is land where known mineral resources exist and where development is occurring or is reasonably likely to occur, or where there is reason to believe that commercial quantities of minerals exist.

**11 AAC 55.160. Public Recreation Land.** Land classified public recreation is land that is suitable for recreation uses, waysides, parks, campsites, scenic overlooks, hunting, fishing or boating access sites, trail corridors, or greenbelts along bodies of water or roadways.

**11 AAC 55.170. Reserved Use Land.**

(a) Land classified reserved use is land that:

- 1) is reserved for transfer to another governmental or non-governmental agency that is performing a public service;
- 2) is reserved for transfer through land exchanges; or
- 3) has been designated for a public facility.

(b) Nothing in this section requires classification of land identified for a future land exchange under AS 38.50.

**11 AAC 55.200. Resource Management Land.** Land classified resource management is either:

- 1) land that might have a number of important resources, but for which a specific resource allocation decision is not possible because of a lack of adequate resource, economic, or other relevant information; or for which a decision is not necessary because the land is presently inaccessible and remote and development is not likely to occur within the next 10 years; or
- 2) land that contains one or more resource values, none of which is of sufficiently high value to merit designation as a primary use.

**11 AAC 55.202. Settlement Land.** An upland area classified settlement is land that is, by reason of its physical qualities and location, suitable for year-round or seasonal residential or private recreational use or for commercial or industrial development.

**11 AAC 55.205. Transportation Corridor Land.** Land classified transportation corridor is land that is identified for the location of easements and rights-of-way under AS 38.04.065(f), including transportation, pipeline, or utility corridor purposes, or is under consideration for a right-of-way lease.

**11 AAC 55.215. Waterfront Development Land.** Land classified waterfront development is tideland, submerged land, or shoreland that is suitable to be used for commercial or industrial activities such as fish processing, aquatic farming, mineral and log transfer facilities, or commercial recreation.

**11 AAC 55.222. Water Resources Land.** Land classified water resources is land encompassing watersheds or portions of watersheds and is suitable for such uses as water supply, watershed protection, or hydropower sites.

**11 AAC 55.230. Wildlife Habitat Land.** Land classified wildlife habitat is land which is primarily valuable for:

- 1) fish and wildlife resource production, whether existing or through habitat manipulation, to supply sufficient numbers or diversity of species to support commercial, recreational, or traditional uses on an optimum sustained yield basis; or
- 2) a unique or rare assemblage of a single or multiple species of regional, state, or national significance.

## **Relationship of Land Use Designations in the Plan to State Land Classifications**

The classifications contain no specific land management directives; those directives are expressed through the use of land use designations in the plan and described in detail for individual regions and management units in Chapter 3. However, the designations used in the area plan must be converted into land classifications outlined in state regulation (11 AAC 55) that reflect the intent of the plan.

Since plan designations are central to the management of state land in this area plan, knowledge of the amount of area associated with each designation is important and allows for a comparison between the designated uses. Table 4-1 identifies the acreage associated with the designations recommended in this plan. Descriptions of each of the following designations are also provided at the beginning of Chapter 3. Note: Acreages associated with plan classifications are given in Table 4-3.

**Table 4-1: Acreages Associated with Land Use Designations**

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Ha	Habitat	979,527
Ha/Hv	Habitat/Harvest	633,499
Ha/Tc/Rd	Habitat/Transportation Corridor/Public Rec-Dispersed	911,031
Pr	Public Facilities-Retain	3,899
Mi	Minerals	167,570
Ha/Rd	Habitat/Public Recreation-Dispersed	13,867
Sc/Tc	Settlement - Commercial/Transportation Corridor	6,334
Ha/Hv/Rd	Habitat/Harvest/Public Recreation-Dispersed	603,110
Ma/Ha	Materials/Habitat	4,936
Mi/Ha	Minerals/Habitat	274,216
F	Forestry	20,959
Rd	Public Recreation-Dispersed	23,013
Sc	Settlement - Commercial	378
Ha/Rd/Wr	Habitat/ Public Recreation-Dispersed /Water Resources	66,207
Rm	Resource Management	1,479,725
Se	Settlement	70,176
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,258,447 acres</b>

The conversion of land use designations used by this plan into state land classifications is indicated in the table below. These are intended to identify the allowable uses of a state upland or shoreland area, consistent with the definitions described previously and with any management intent given in Chapter 3.

**Table 4-2: Land Designations – Conversion to Classifications**

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Ha	Habitat	Wildlife Habitat Land
Hv	Harvest	Wildlife Habitat Land
Ma	Materials	Material Land
F	Forestry	Forest Land
Pr	Public Facilities-Retain	Reserved Use Land
Rd	Public Recreation-Dispersed	Public Recreation Land
Rm	Resource Management	Resource Management Land
Mi	Mineral	Mineral Land
Sc	Settlement-Commercial	Settlement Land
Se	Settlement	Settlement Land
Tc	Transportation Corridor	Transportation Corridor Land
Wr	Water Resources	Water Resources Land

## Leasing of State Land

Under the authority of AS 38.05 and 11 AAC 58.300-.340, state land within the planning area is available for surface leasing, provided that the project is consistent with the land's classification and with the management intent set forth in this area plan. This plan does not change or supersede existing terms or conditions of contracts or leases. Applications for uses of state land within the planning area will be considered by the Regional Manager for the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, Northern Region, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Under the authority of AS 38.35 and 11 AAC 80, the State reserves the right to lease any state-owned land for pipeline construction, transmission, or operation within its boundaries as defined by the Right-of-Way Leasing Act. Applications for uses of state land within the planning area will be considered by the State Pipeline Coordinator for the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil & Gas, Anchorage, Alaska.

## Classification Order

State land is classified under the authority of AS 38.04, AS 38.05.300, and 11 AAC 55.010 - .280 according to the management intent set forth in this area plan.

Land Classification Order (LCO) NC-24-001 classifies all state land within the plan area. See Appendix B.

The potential for the reclassification of state land in the future is authorized under 11 AAC 55.240, but this action will require the revision of LCO NC-24-001 and may require, in some cases, the revision of this area plan. An amendment to the area plan is required under 11 AAC 55.030(f)(1)(A) if the proposed authorization would modify the basic management intent for one or more of the units or if the authorization would conflict with the plan's allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. Also refer to the following section: *Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps*. This section describes how lands inadvertently omitted in the area plan or acquired by the State subsequent to this area plan are to be treated in terms of plan designation and classification.

Table 4-3 provides estimates of the acreage by classification and co-classification for uplands and shorelands.

**Table 4-3: Acreages Associated with Land Classifications and Co-classifications**

<b>Classification(s)</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Wildlife Habitat Land	1,613,026
Wildlife Habitat Land/Transportation Corridor Land/Public Recreation Land	911,031
Reserved Use Land	3,899
Mineral Land	167,570
Wildlife Habitat Land/Public Recreation Land	616,977
Settlement Land/Transportation Corridor Land	6,334
Material Land/Wildlife Habitat Land	4,936
Mineral Land/Wildlife Habitat Land	274,216
Forest Land	20,959
Public Recreation Land	23,013
Settlement Land	70,554
Wildlife Habitat Land/Water Resources Land/Public Recreation Land	66,207
Resource Management Land	1,479,725
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,258,447 acres</b>

## **Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps**

This section deals with those state lands that are not designated in the NEAAP or classified in the Land Classification Order. Such lands include those state lands inadvertently omitted in the NEAAP and those lands that may be acquired by the State in the future but not designated or classified in the area plan. The State has acquired and will continue to acquire isolated parcels of land through foreclosure, escheat, and other methods. The purpose of this section is to give direction to the designation of these lands by the Department when future issues of parcel classification and management arise. If state land is identified after the adoption of this plan (and is not state-selected land identified herein) and the requirements of this section are followed, a formal plan amendment or revision of the Land Classification Order is not required.

The following guidelines of plan designation/classification and potential disposal out of state ownership are to apply:

- **Parcels in or near Existing Communities.** If the parcel is in, or is immediately adjacent to, an existing community or past state land offering, the designation of Settlement and classification of Settlement Land apply. Such land can be considered for disposal use unless it is appropriate as a site(s) for schools, material sites, roads, parks, or other similar public use. Unsold lots identified for disposal in existing

subdivisions and lots that return to state ownership will be available for lease, sale, or conveyance. Tracts identified for community purposes in existing subdivisions will not be sold but may be conveyed to municipalities or homeowner associations if they are not needed for state purposes and community purposes will be protected.

- Parcels near other State Land. If the parcel adjoins or is surrounded by other state land, the designation of that area(s) applies. It is to be managed according to the management intent and guidelines applicable to the adjacent lands. If there are two different designations of the abutting parcels, the designation of the larger parcel shall apply. Such lands can be considered appropriate for disposal if they are designated Settlement unless it is appropriate as a site(s) for schools, material sites, roads, parks, or other similar public use. They may also be conveyed to a municipality even if it is suitable for these public uses if the proposed uses are for comparable municipal (public) use.
- Parcels not near Other State Land. Parcels not near other state land or that occur within areas designated Resource Management are to be designated and classified Resource Management. These lands are to be managed according to the management intent and guidelines applicable to the adjacent lands. Disposal of these lands to the adjacent landowner may be appropriate but will require reclassification to Settlement Land.
- Newly Acquired State Lands. Lands that were acquired proactively through exchange, purchase, or other methods will be managed and classified consistent with the purposes for which they were acquired. If the purpose of the acquired land cannot be determined with precision, the designation of abutting or surrounding land will apply to the newly acquired parcels of state land. If there are no abutting or surrounding lands, then the designation of Resource Management land will apply.
- Other Lands. If the designation/classification of a parcel of acquired or omitted state land cannot be adequately determined, the parcel is to be designated and classified Resource Management.

## State Land Selections

### State Land Selections

Under the Statehood Act, Alaska is entitled to approximately 103 million acres of federal land. The selections made by the state in the planning area occurred under the “General Grant” and “Community Grant” programs, and much of the original state selections of federal land have been either conveyed to the state through patent or are in Tentative Approval (TA) status, which gives management authority to the state. However, many state selections must still be adjudicated by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and it is uncertain as to when the adjudication of state selections will occur. Some of these selections are within areas also selected by Native corporations and until BLM adjudication has been completed land ownership patterns in this planning area will remain uncertain. The areas

noted as state-selected lands on the plan maps or in the plan text indicate those areas of federal land selected for eventual conveyance to the state. Areas of state selections on the plan maps include, in addition to state selections proper, ANILCA top-filed selections and areas subject to Public Land Orders.

There may be areas of state selections that this plan has not identified. In these instances, land conveyed to the state is to be considered classified under this plan and land classification order. In those instances where a plan designation has not been specifically assigned to a state selection, classifications are to be assigned according to the standards described in the section, “Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps.” Land designated or classified according to these requirements does not require a formal plan amendment or change to the LCO.

Because the NEAAP plan maps indicate the status of state land and state land selections to a specific date (2024), DNR adjudicators must review the status of state land at the time of an adjudicatory decision. It would be imprudent to rely upon the land status information contained in this plan given the changing character of state land selections. Consult DNR Alaska Mapper for the most recent state selection information.

### **ANILCA Top-filed Lands**

There are certain areas that are top-filed by the state under the provisions of Sec. 906 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). These are selections made by the state that become valid when Native regional or village Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) selections are relinquished. It is uncertain how many of these state selections will become valid during the planning period because the amount of Native selections, in terms of acreage, greatly exceeds that allowed under the corporation’s selection entitlement and the adjudication process of BLM has slowed appreciably. BLM is currently adjudicating all prioritized Native village and regional corporation selections so the corporations and state can receive their land. The category of “State-Selected Land” on region plan maps includes areas of ANILCA top-filed selections in addition to areas of state-selected land.

The same caution in the use of plan maps for state land selections exist as that for ANILCA top-filed lands (see above), and the same procedures for classification are to be followed for areas of top-filed lands that ultimately become state land but were not identified on the plan maps. See ‘State Land Selections’ above.

### **Public Land Orders**

Public Land Orders (PLO) of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management withdraw federally owned land for a specific federal use. PLOs may be rescinded if the specific use no longer occurs or the affected area is no longer needed for a federal purpose. These withdrawals may

be conveyable to the state, depending on a variety of considerations. All major PLOs have been top-filed by the state.

### **PLO 5150**

PLO 5150 was originally established to prevent third-party interests in the utility corridor for the Trans Alaska Pipeline. Title 12 of ANILCA allowed the state to select/top file BLM lands within PLO 5150. The selected lands within this corridor are the highest priority selections for the state. PLO 5150 was lifted which allows the state top file selections to attach for eventual conveyance, and fulfillment of the State's entitlement.

## **Mineral and Leasehold Location Orders**

Alaska Statute 38.05.185 requires the Commissioner of DNR to determine that mineral entry and location is incompatible with significant surface uses in order to close state-owned lands to mineral entry. There are 21 existing mineral orders within the planning boundary. Refer to Appendix D for more information. One mineral closing order is recommended through this plan, MO 1291. See Appendix C for more information.

## **Legislatively Designated Areas**

### **Existing Legislatively Designated Areas**

There are two Legislatively Designated Areas (LDA) within the planning area which encompass approximately 12 million acres: the Dalton Highway Corridor LDA and the Arctic National Wildlife Range State Game Refuge LDA. While the NEAAP establishes land classifications and management intent for state lands within the LDAs, adjudicators shall refer to Alaska Statute 19.40 and 16.20 for the comprehensive law concerning authorizations on and adjacent to the Dalton Highway Corridor and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, respectively.

### **Additions to Legislatively Designated Areas**

This plan does not recommend any additions to the Legislatively Designated Areas within the planning area.

## **Generally Allowed Uses**

Under 11 AAC 96.020 there are a variety of uses and activities that are allowed on state land that usually do not require a permit from DNR. These uses are listed in 11 AAC 96.020 and are explained further in a DNR Factsheet on Generally Allowed Uses (GAUs) that may be

obtained from a DNR Public Information Center. In some instances, it may become necessary to limit or preclude certain uses on state land that would otherwise be permitted as a Generally Allowed Use under 11 AAC 96.020. Uses may be limited under the authority of 11 AAC 96.014 when land use or natural resource management requires it, but limits to such uses must be codified in all cases in state administrative code. No such limits to GAUs are recommended to be imposed on state-owned land in this plan.

## **Types of Plan Changes**

The various kinds of changes allowed in 11 AAC 55.030 are:

“A revision to a land use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a ‘revision’ is an amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:

An ‘amendment’ permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying the basic management intent for one or more of the plan’s subunits or by changing its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. For example, an amendment might close an area to new mineral entry that the plan designated to be open, allow a land use in an area where the plan prohibited it, or allow land to be opened to homestead entry in an area that the plan designated for retention in public ownership.

A ‘special exception’ does not permanently change the provisions of a land use plan and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan’s provisions, without changing the plan’s general management intent or guidelines. For example, a special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan would be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the exception.

A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A ‘minor change’ is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections.”

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## Appendix A

### Glossary

**17(b) Easement.** Easement across Native corporation land reserved through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Uses of the easements are limited to transportation purposes and other uses specified in the act and in conveyance documents.

**AAC.** Alaska Administrative Code

**Access.** A way or means of approach. Includes transportation, trail, easements, rights of way, and public use sites.

**Adequate.** Sufficient for a specific need or requirement.

**ADF&G.** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

**AHRS.** Alaska Heritage Resources Survey – a statewide inventory of cultural resources, including historic, prehistoric, and archaeological sites. The Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) within DNR maintains the AHRS database.

**Anadromous waters.** A river, lake or stream that is specified under AS 16.05.871(a) as important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fishes; or is not so specified but has been determined to contain or exhibit evidence of anadromous fish. The anadromous designation applies from the waterbody’s mouth to its uppermost specified point, including all sloughs and backwaters adjoining the listed water, and that portion of the streambed or lakebed covered by ordinary high water. Anadromous waters are shown in “The Atlas and Catalog of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes” (referred to as the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC)) compiled by ADF&G and adopted by regulation.

**ANCSA.** Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971)

**ANILCA.** Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (1980)

**APMA.** Application for Permits to Mine in Alaska – a multi-agency application form used by miners to apply for permits to explore for and mine locatable minerals.

**Area Plan.** A plan approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources under the authority of AS 38.04.065 that establishes the land and resource management policies for state land within a planning area. Such plans also assign land use designations to

individual parcels of state land, which are subsequently converted to land use classifications in a Land Classification Order.

**AS.** Alaska Statutes

**ASLS.** Alaska State Land Survey

**Authorized Use.** A use allowed by DNR by permit or lease.

**AWC.** Anadromous Waters Catalog, see “Anadromous waters”

**Best Interest of the State.** As used in this plan, refers to a decision made by the Department that, after considering the merits of a proposed use or activity, that the use or activity has a unique and important value or interest to the state and that this value or interest is higher than competing values and interests. This is not to be confused with, nor does it refer to a ‘Best Interest Finding’, a written decision required under AS 38.05.035(e) when land, or an interest in land, is being conveyed out of state ownership.

**Best Interest Finding.** Refers to the written decision required under AS 38.05.035(e) when land, or an interest in land, is being conveyed out of state ownership.

**Buffer.** An area of land between two activities or resources managed and used to reduce the effect of one activity upon another. These areas are usually vegetated or are required to be re-vegetated if the original vegetation has been removed.

**Classification.** Land classification identifies the primary purpose for which state land will be managed, subject to valid existing rights and multiple uses. (11 AAC 55.040(c)). Land classifications are converted from plan designations through a Land Classification Order. Other land uses may be authorized by the Department that do not conflict with the land use plan.

**Classification Order.** See “Land Classification Order”

**Closed to mineral entry.** Areas where the staking of new mineral claims is prohibited because mining has been determined to conflict with significant surface uses in the area. Existing mineral claims that are valid at the time of plan adoption are not affected by mineral closures.

**Co-designation.** When more than one land use designation is identified in a management unit. These two (or more) designations reflect uses or resources that are of equal importance, are considered compatible within a specific management unit, and apply to the entirety of the management unit. (See also “Land use designation”)

**Commissioner.** The Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources

**Contamination.** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines contaminants as “any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance found in air, water, soil or biological matter that has a harmful effect on plants or animals; harmful or hazardous matter introduced into the environment.” Contamination is regulated by numerous state and federal regulations.

**DEC.** Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

**Department.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources or DNR

**Designated use.** An allowed use of major importance in a particular management unit. Activities in the unit will be managed to encourage, develop, or protect this use. Where a unit has two or more designated uses, the management intent statement and guidelines for the unit; the Chapter 2 guidelines; and existing statutes, regulations, and procedures, will direct how resources are managed to avoid or minimize conflicts between designated uses.

**Designation.** See “Land Use Designation”

**Developed recreational facility.** Any structure or facility that serves either public or private recreational needs.

**Development node.** A distinct and compact cluster of development for public and private commercial facilities related to road traffic.

**Director.** The division director of the state division responsible for managing state land. Most often, director refers to the Director of the Division of Mining, Land and Water; for lands administered by the DOF, Director of Forestry.

**Dispersed recreation.** Recreational pursuits that are not site specific in nature, such as hunting, fishing, recreational boating or wildlife viewing. The designation of “Public Recreation-Dispersed” is used to indicate such uses where public recreation within a management unit is especially great or significant. These types of uses are allowed on nearly all state general domain land and are those uses that are permitted as Generally Allowed Uses in 11 AAC 96.020.

**Disposal.** Refers to the conveyance of state land or an interest in state land to another entity. Disposal, as used in this plan, is meant to convey this general meaning. The term “Land Disposal” describes particular types of disposal. See also “Land Disposal”. Such disposals are evidenced by conveyance documents, including either a patent or Quit Claim Deed. The issuance of an easement or lease does not utilize these forms of conveyance documents.

**DMLW.** Division of Mining, Land and Water – a division of DNR

**DNR.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources

**DOF.** Division of Forestry – a division of DNR

**DOT/PF.** Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

**DR&R.** Dismantlement, Removal, and Restoration

**Easement.** Generally, an interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use. Easements may be issued within areas that are designated by the plan to be retained.

**Feasible.** Means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, technical, and safety factors.

**Feasible and Prudent.** Means consistent with sound engineering practice and not causing environmental, social, or economic problems that outweigh the public benefit to be derived from a proposed action.

**Fish and wildlife.** Any species of aquatic finfish and amphibian, reptile, bird or mammal in any stage of their life cycle found in or which may be introduced into Alaska, except domestic birds and mammals. The term “area(s)” in association with the term “fish and wildlife” refers to both harvest and habitat areas.

**FLUP.** Forest Land Use Plan. FLUPs are prepared by the Division of Forestry and precede state timber sales.

**FRPA.** See “Forest Resources and Practices Act”

**Forestry.** Land that is or has been forested and is suited for long-term forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions. Also refers to the plan designation of Forestry or the land classification of Forest Land.

**Forest Resources and Practices Act.** That section of Alaska Statute (AS 41.17.010-.955) that deals with the use, management, and protection of forest resources within the State of Alaska. More formally described as the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act.

**Generally allowed use (GAU).** An activity conducted on state land managed by the Division of Mining, Land and Water that is not in a special category or status. For the most part these uses are allowed for 14 days or less, and a permit is not required (11 AAC 96.020).

**Goal.** A statement of basic intent or general condition desired in the long term. Goals are not usually quantifiable and do not have specified dates for achievement.

**Guideline (or Management Guideline).** A course of action to be followed by DNR resource managers or required of land users when the manager permits, leases, or otherwise authorizes the use of state land or resources. Guidelines also range in their level of specificity from giving general guidance for decision making or identifying factors that need to be considered,

to setting detailed standards for on-the-ground decisions. Some guidelines state the intent that must be followed and allow flexibility in achieving it.

**Habitat.** Areas that serve as a concentrated use area for a single or multiple species of fish and wildlife during a sensitive life history stage or are highly important to the maintenance or management of a single or multiple species of fish or wildlife. This designation, when used, applies to localized areas having particularly valuable or sensitive habitat within the planning boundary. The “Ha” designation does not preclude human uses that are compatible with the designation. Also refers to the plan designation of Habitat or the land classification of Wildlife Habitat Land.

**High value resident fish.** Resident fish populations that are used for recreational, personal use, commercial, or subsistence purposes (from AS 41.17.950(9)).

**ILMA or ILMT.** See “Interagency Land Management Agreement/Transfer”

**Improvements.** Buildings, wharves, piers, and other similar types of structures permanently fixed to the uplands or submerged lands that were constructed and/or maintained by the applicant for business, commercial, recreation, residential, or other beneficial uses or purposes. In no event shall fill be considered a permanent improvement when placed on the submerged lands solely for the purposes of disposing of waste or spoils. However, fill material utilized for beneficial purposes by the applicant shall be considered a permanent improvement (11 AAC 62.840 (14)). DNR practice is to apply this requirement to shorelands since similar conditions exist.

**Instream flow.** An instantaneous flow rate of water through a stream during specified periods of time, from a designated location upstream to a designated location downstream.

**Instream flow reservation.** The legal water reservation for instream uses such as fish, wildlife, recreation, navigation, and water quality.

**Interagency Land Management Agreement/Transfer (ILMA/ILMT).** An agreement between DNR and other state agencies that transfers some land management responsibility to these other agencies.

**Land Classification Order (LCO).** An order approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources that classifies state land into specific land use categories (AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300). The Land Classification Order in this area plan classifies all state lands within the planning area according to the land use designations assigned to individual land parcels in the Resource Allocation Tables contained in Chapter 3 of the area plan.

**Land disposal.** Same as Land offering, defined below – except that land disposal areas referenced in Chapter 3 may include lots reserved for lease or sale for public, commercial, or industrial facilities.

**Land offering.** Transfer of state land to private ownership as authorized by AS 38.04.010, including fee simple sale and sale of agricultural rights. They do not include leases, land use permits, water rights, rights-of-way, material sales, or other disposals of interest in lands or waters. (See also “Land disposal”)

**Land use designation.** A category of land allocation determined by a land use plan. Designations identify the primary use or uses of state land. Chapter 4 sets out how the land use designations of this plan will be classified according to 11 AAC 55. Referred to in this plan as Designation. A designation is only applied where the authorizing statute indicates that Title 38 (Public Land) authorities are to be retained for certain aspects of LDA management or if the LDA is not completely removed from the general public domain.

**Leasable minerals.** Leasable minerals include deposits of coal, sulfur phosphates, oil shale, sodium potassium, oil and gas.

**Lease.** A Department of Natural Resources authorization for the use of state land according to terms set forth in AS 38.05.070-105. The State Pipeline Coordinator’s Section holds authority for surface authorizations that pertain to pipeline infrastructure as defined in AS 38.35.

**LDA or Legislatively Designated Area.** An area set aside by the state legislature for special management actions and retained in public ownership. Examples are State Game Refuges and State Recreation Areas. Does not include sites that have been administratively designated for a special purpose, such as a state recreation site of less than 640 acres.

**Leasehold Location Order.** The order used by the Department to manage the leasing of state land for locatable minerals.

**Locatable minerals.** Minerals that are subject to location under the mining laws of the United States on January 3, 1959, and that are described in AS 38.05.185. These include both metallic and non-metallic minerals.

**Management intent statement.** The statements that define the department’s near and long-term management objectives and the methods to achieve those objectives. As most often used in the plan, it refers to the management objectives and methods to achieve those objectives for a management unit. Management intent statements function to provide more specific guidance than that provided by a plan designation or land classification and are to be interpreted as intended to be consistent with that designation or classification.

**Materials.** “Materials” include but are not limited to common varieties of sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, pumicite, cinders, clay and sod. Materials may also refer to the designation of Materials or the land classification of Materials Land.

**MCO.** See “Mineral Closing Order”

**Mineral Closing Order (MCO).** Mineral closing orders close state lands (mineral estate) to mineral entry. All state lands are open for the prospecting and production of locatable minerals unless the lands are specifically closed to mineral entry. The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources may close land to mineral entry if a finding has been made that mining would be incompatible with *significant surface use* on state land (AS 38.05.185). A significant surface use of the land has been interpreted by DNR to include not only residential and commercial structures, but may also include fish and wildlife habitat, recreational, and scenic values where there is very high sensitivity, use, or value.

**Mineral entry.** Acquiring exploration and mining rights under AS 38.05.185-38.05.275.

**Mineral Order (MO).** An order approved by the Commissioner that either closes or opens land to mineral entry. The use of this term is fairly recent. Previously the Department issued mineral opening orders or mineral closing orders. Reference in this plan is to ‘mineral closing order’ since this is the instrument that was used by the Department to close areas within the planning area and since graphic representations applicable at the time of review make reference to ‘Mineral Closing Orders’.

**Mining.** Any structure or activity for commercial exploration and recovery of minerals, including, but not limited to resource transfer facilities, camps, and other support facilities associated with mineral development.

**Mining claim.** Rights to deposits of minerals, subject to AS 38.05.185-38.05.275, in or on state land that is open to claim staking may be acquired by discovery, location and recording as prescribed in AS 38.05.185-38.05.275. The locator has the exclusive right of possession and extraction of the minerals lying within the boundaries of the claim, subject to AS 38.05.185 -38.05.275.

**Minor Change.** A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A minor change is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections (11 AAC 55.030(f)(2)).

**MP.** Milepost.

**Multiple use.** Means the management of state land and its various resource values so that it is used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; it includes:

- a) the use of some land for less than all of the resources, and
- b) a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the short-term and long-term needs of present and future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals,

## *Appendix A: Glossary*

watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values (AS 38.04.910).

**Native-owned land.** Land that is patented or will be patented to a Native corporation.

**Native-selected land.** Federally owned land that is selected by a Native corporation but not yet patented.

**Navigable.** Used in its legal context, it refers to lakes and rivers that meet federal or state criteria for navigability. Under the Equal Footing Doctrine, the Alaska Statehood Act, and the Submerged Lands Act, the state owns land under navigable waterbodies.

**Navigable Water.** Means any waterbody of the state that is navigable in fact for any useful public purpose and as specifically described in AS 38.05.965(14).

**NEAAP.** Northeast Alaska Area Plan

**NRO.** Northern Regional Land Office of the Division of Mining, Land and Water, Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

**Objective.** A concise statement of what we want to achieve, how much we want to achieve, when and where we want to achieve it, and who is responsible for the work. Objectives are derived from goals.

**Ordinary high-water mark (OHWM).** The mark along the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the non-tidal water are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to leave a natural line impressed on the bank or shore and indicated by erosion, shelving, changes in soil characteristics, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other distinctive physical characteristics (from 11 AAC 53.900(23)).

**Permanent use.** A use that includes a structure or facility that is not readily removable. Permanent facilities are improvements that do not need to be removed and usually involve the construction of a foundation for the improvement.

**Permit.** A Department of Natural Resources authorization for use of state land according to terms set forth in 11 AAC 96.

**Planning period.** Refers to the length of time that the plan covers, which is 20 years. However, the area plan, and the land use classifications that derive from the plan, remain valid until the area plan is revised.

**Policy.** An intended course of action or a principle for guiding actions; in this plan, DNR policies for land and resource management include goals, management intent statements, management guidelines, land use designations, implementation plans and procedures, and various other statements of DNR's intentions.

**Pollutant.** A substance that contaminates the natural environment including air, water, or land.

**Pollution.** The introduction of harmful materials into the environment.

**Primary use.** The primary intended use of state land or water, which is indicated through a primary land use designation. In this plan there may be two compatible uses within a management unit. When this occurs, it is represented by a co-designation. These types of uses are most often expressed through a land use designation (see “Designation”) in this plan.

**Prohibited use.** A use not allowed in a management unit because of conflicts with the management intent, designated primary or secondary uses, or management guideline. Uses not specifically prohibited nor designated as primary or secondary uses in a management unit are allowed if compatible with the primary and secondary uses, the management intent statements for the unit, and the plan’s guidelines. Changing a prohibited use to an allowable use requires a plan amendment.

**Public Trust Doctrine.** A doctrine that requires the state to manage tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands for the benefit of the people so that they can engage in such things as commerce, navigation, fishing, hunting, swimming, and ecological study. See Appendix E.

**Public use.** Any human use of state land, including commercial and non-commercial uses.

**Public Water.** Means navigable water and all other water, whether inland or coastal, fresh or salt, that is reasonably suitable for public use and utility, habitat for fish and wildlife in which there is a public interest, or migration and spawning of fish in which there is a public interest (AS 38.05.965(21)).

**Recreation.** Any activity or structure for recreational purposes, including but not limited to hiking, camping, boating, anchorage, access points to sport hunting and fishing areas, and sightseeing. “Recreation” does not refer to subsistence hunting and fishing. See the term Subsistence.

**REE(s).** Rare Earth Element.

**Region.** A spatial unit used in area plans to describe major geographic areas within the plan boundary. Often regions occupy state lands that are contiguous or are generally close to each other and that may have similar resource and use characteristics. In this plan, there are four regions that encompass state-owned and selected land.

**Remediation.** The act of remedying something, in particular of reversing or stopping environmental damage.

**Resource management.** A land designation or classification used for lands which are presently inaccessible or remote and may have a number of resources; where the lack of

adequate resource, economic or other relevant information combined with the unlikelihood of resource development within the next 20 years makes a specific resource allocation decision unnecessary; or where a number of uses can be accommodated in a given area, which tend to be of considerable size in this plan. In previous area plans, this designation was referred to as General Use.

**Retain in state ownership (Retained Land).** Uplands, shorelands, and waters that are to remain in state ownership. Certain plan designations indicate whether state land is to be retained on a general basis. (See the section, ‘Designations Used in This Plan’ in Chapter 3 for more information.) Retained land may also exist within specific areas and, if so, this intent applies to individual management units. (See the Resource Allocation Tables in Chapter 3 for more information.) Easements granted under AS 38.05.850 are not considered to be ‘retained land’ within the context of this plan.

**RS 2477.** RS 2477 stands from Revised Statute 2477 from the Mining Act of 1866, which states that “The public right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public use, is hereby granted.

**Right-of-way.** The legal right to cross the land of another.

**Riparian Areas.** Areas adjacent to streams, rivers, and lakes. Standards for the management of riparian areas are contained in the Shorelands and Stream Corridors section of Chapter 2.

**ROW.** Right-of-way.

**Settlement.** The sale, leasing, or permitting of state lands to allow private recreational, residential, commercial, industrial, or community use. May also refer to the designation of Settlement or the land classification of Settlement Land.

**Shall.** Same as “will.”

**Shoreland.** Land belonging to the state that is covered by navigable, nontidal water up to the ordinary high-water mark as modified by accretion, erosion or reliction. (See definition of Navigable.) Shorelands are generally lake bottoms or the beds of navigable rivers and streams. (See Figure 1-1, Chapter 1.)

**Should.** States intent for a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. Guidelines modified by the word “should” state the plan’s intent and allow the manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent or whether circumstances justify deviations from the intended action or set of conditions. Includes the concept of ‘feasible and prudent.’ Any deviation from a management intent statement or management guideline in an authorization requires an explanation for the variation in the written decision. See also “Will.”

**Spill and Contaminated Sites.** Areas impacted by a release of oil or hazardous substances and regulated under 18 AAC 75.

**State land.** A generic term meaning all state land, including all state-owned and state-selected uplands, all shorelands, tidelands, and submerged lands. See also definitions of state-owned land and state-selected land as well as definitions for shorelands, tidelands, and submerged lands. Refer to Figure 1-1 in Chapter 1 for a graphical depiction of these areas. ‘State Land’ excludes lands owned by the University of Alaska, the Mental Health Trust Authority, or by state agencies that have acquired it through deed.

**State-owned land.** Land that is patented or will be patented to the state, including uplands, tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands.

**State-selected land.** Federally owned land that is selected by the State of Alaska, but not yet patented nor Tentatively Approved (TA) by the Bureau of Land Management.

**Stream.** A general term for a body of flowing water. Rivers and creeks are types of streams.

**Submerged Lands.** Land covered by tidal waters between the line of mean lower low water and seaward to a distance of three geographic miles or as may hereafter be properly claimed by the state. (AS 38.05.965 (25)) (See definition of Tidelands and Figure 1-1, Chapter 1.)

**Subsistence.** The noncommercial, customary and traditional uses of wild, renewable resources by a resident domiciled in a rural area of the state for direct personal or family consumption as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools, or transportation, for the making and selling of handicraft articles out of nonedible by-products of fish and wildlife resources taken for personal or family consumption, and for the customary trade, barter, or sharing for personal or family consumption; in this paragraph, “family” means persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, and a person living in the household on a permanent basis. See AS 16.05.940, especially subsections 31 and 32 (fishing), 33 (subsistence hunting), and 34 (subsistence uses) for further information.

**Suitable.** Land that is physically capable of supporting a resource development.

**Sustained Yield.** Means the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high level of annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of state land consistent with multiple use. (AS 38.04.910(12))

**Temporary use.** A use that is one year or less in duration requiring a state permit. Any structure associated with the use must be readily removable.

**Tidelands.** Lands that are periodically covered by tidal waters between the elevation of mean high water and mean lower low water. (AS 38.05.965(26)) (See Figure 1-1, Chapter 1.)

**Top-filed (also Top Filing).** A future state selection for lands which were not available on the date of filing. These selections automatically become effective without further action by the state on the date the lands become available for state selection.

**Unsuitable.** Land that is physically incapable of supporting a resource development (usually because that resource doesn't exist in that location).

**Uplands.** Lands above mean high water. (See Figure 1-1, Chapter 1.)

**USFWS or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.** United States Fish and Wildlife Service, a division of the U.S. Department of Interior.

**Viewshed.** A viewshed is an area of land, water, or another environmental element that is visible to the human eye from a fixed vantage point. Viewsheds tend to be areas of scenic or historic value that are readily visible from public areas such as roadways, rivers with important recreation functions, or regional trails.

**Water Resources.** Refers to the plan designation of Water Resources or the land classification of Water Resources Land.

**Water-dependent.** Means a use or activity which can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to water areas because the use requires access to the water body.

**Water-related.** Means a use or activity which is not directly dependent upon access to a water body, but which provides goods or services that are directly associated with water-dependence and which, if not located adjacent to water, would result in a public loss of quality in the goods or services offered.

**Wetlands.** References freshwater wetlands. “Freshwater wetlands” means those environments characterized by rooted vegetation which is partially submerged either continuously or periodically by surface freshwater with less than 0.5 parts per thousand salt content and not exceeding three meters in depth. Note: This definition may be inconsistent with the federal definition of wetlands as applied by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

**Will.** Requires a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. A guideline modified by the word “will” must be followed by land managers and users. Deviation from plan designations, management intent, or management guidelines requires a plan amendment consistent with 11 AAC 55.030(f). (See Chapter 4 - Types of Plan Changes.)

**Working Forest.** A “working forest” refers to actively managed forest lands that provide wood for personal and commercial use, while protecting fish and wildlife habitat, providing the public with recreation and other multiple use of state land, and maintaining public benefits such as clean air, land, and water.

STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER

# Appendix B

## Land Classification Order No. NC-24-001

- I. Name: Northeast Alaska Area Plan (NEAAP)
- II. The classifications in Part III are based on written justification contained in one of the following plans:

Area Plan: **Northeast Alaska**  
Adopted ( x ) Revised ( ) Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Management Plan:  
Adopted ( ) Revised ( ) Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Site Specific Plan:  
Adopted ( ) Revised ( ) Dated \_\_\_\_\_

III. Legal Description	Acreage	Acquisition Authority	Existing Classification	Classification by this Action
See plan maps	5.3 million	GS, CG	Several site specific plans	See plan maps

IV. This order replaces and supersedes all existing land classification orders within the plan boundary of the NEAAP.

V. This order is issued under the authority granted by AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300 to the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. The above described lands are hereby designated and classified as indicated. Additionally, state land under contract for conveyance remains classified Settlement Land until this land is conveyed out of state ownership. Nothing shall prevent the reclassification of these lands if warranted in the public interest.

Classified: John Crowther Date: 02/25/2026  
 John Crowther, Commissioner Designee  
 Department of Natural Resources

*Appendix B: Land Classification Order*

STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND & WATER

COMMISSIONER'S ADMINISTRATIVE FINDING  
MINERAL ORDER 1291

AS 38.05.185(a)

NORTHEAST ALASKA AREA PLAN

The Northeast Alaska Area Plan (NEAAP), developed in accordance with AS 38.04.065, proposes closing land in Units designated either Settlement or Settlement-Commercial and classified as Settlement Land in the Northeast Alaska Area Plan, and as listed in Table C-1 and depicted in the plan maps.

The Division of Mining, Land and Water requests the mineral estate of approximately 72,300 acres, identified in the attached mineral order, be closed to mineral entry and location, in accordance with AS 38.05.300 for future land disposals. Mining activity on the project area would be incompatible with the current and proposed land estate uses.

The Division of Mining, Land and Water also requests the mineral estate of approximately 8,094 acres, identified in the attached mineral order, be opened to mineral entry and location. This will rescind portions of MCO 554 and MCO 201. Given the absence of need or the presence of physical features that preclude settlement, it is recommended these areas be opened to mineral entry.

Public notice of the comment period for the proposed mineral order was conducted in accordance with AS 38.05.945.

In accordance with AS 38.05.185(a) and AS 38.05.300, I find that the best interests of the State of Alaska and its residents are served by closure of the land to entry under the mineral location and mining laws of the State of Alaska as described by Mineral Order 1291. This order is subject to valid existing rights.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Crowther, Commissioner Designee  
Department of Natural Resources

02/25/2026  
Date

# Appendix C

## Mineral Order 1291

STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER  
MINERAL ORDER 1291

X Closing Lands to Mineral Entry X Opening Lands to Mineral Entry

- I. **Name:** Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Land Classification Order NC-24-001
- II. **Reason for Mineral Order:** This Mineral Order is based on the attached Commissioner's Administrative Finding and Northeast Alaska Area Plan.
- III. **Authority:** Alaska Statute (AS) 38.05.185 and AS 38.05.300.
- IV. **Location and Legal Description:** This order affects lands in management units classified as Settlement Land.

See Map C-1, Lands to be Included in Mineral Order 1291, for reference.

- V. **Mineral Opening and Closing:** This mineral order is subject to valid existing rights and is issued under the authority granted by AS 38.05.185 and AS 38.05.300 to the Department of Natural Resources. In accordance with AS 38.05.185(a), I find that the best interests of the State of Alaska and its residents are served by closing land and opening other specified land described in this mineral order to entry under the mineral location and mining laws of the State of Alaska. The above-described lands are hereby modified to entry under the locatable mineral and mining laws of the State of Alaska with the adoption of the Northeast Alaska Area Plan.

Concur: Christy Colles 2/25/2026  
Christiana Colles, Director Date  
Division of Mining, Land, and Water

Approved: John Crowther 02/25/2026  
John Crowther, Commissioner Designee Date  
Department of Natural Resources










**Table C-1: Units Affected By MO 1291**

MO #	ACRES	MAP	Management Units	MTRS
MO 1291, Closing	72,300	C-1	D-02, Y-03, Y-04, I-06, I-08, I-09, I-14, I-18, I-20	See Map C-1
MO 1291, Opening	8,094	C-1	I-11, I-12	See Map C-1



**Northeast Alaska Area Plan  
Map C-1**

**Mineral Order 1291**

-  Planning Units
-  MO 1291 Closing Areas
-  MO 1291 Opening Areas
-  Highways
-  RS 2477
-  Arctic Region
-  Yukon Flats Region
-  Interior Highlands Region
-  Dalton Corridor Region

**Unit Affected by MO 1291**

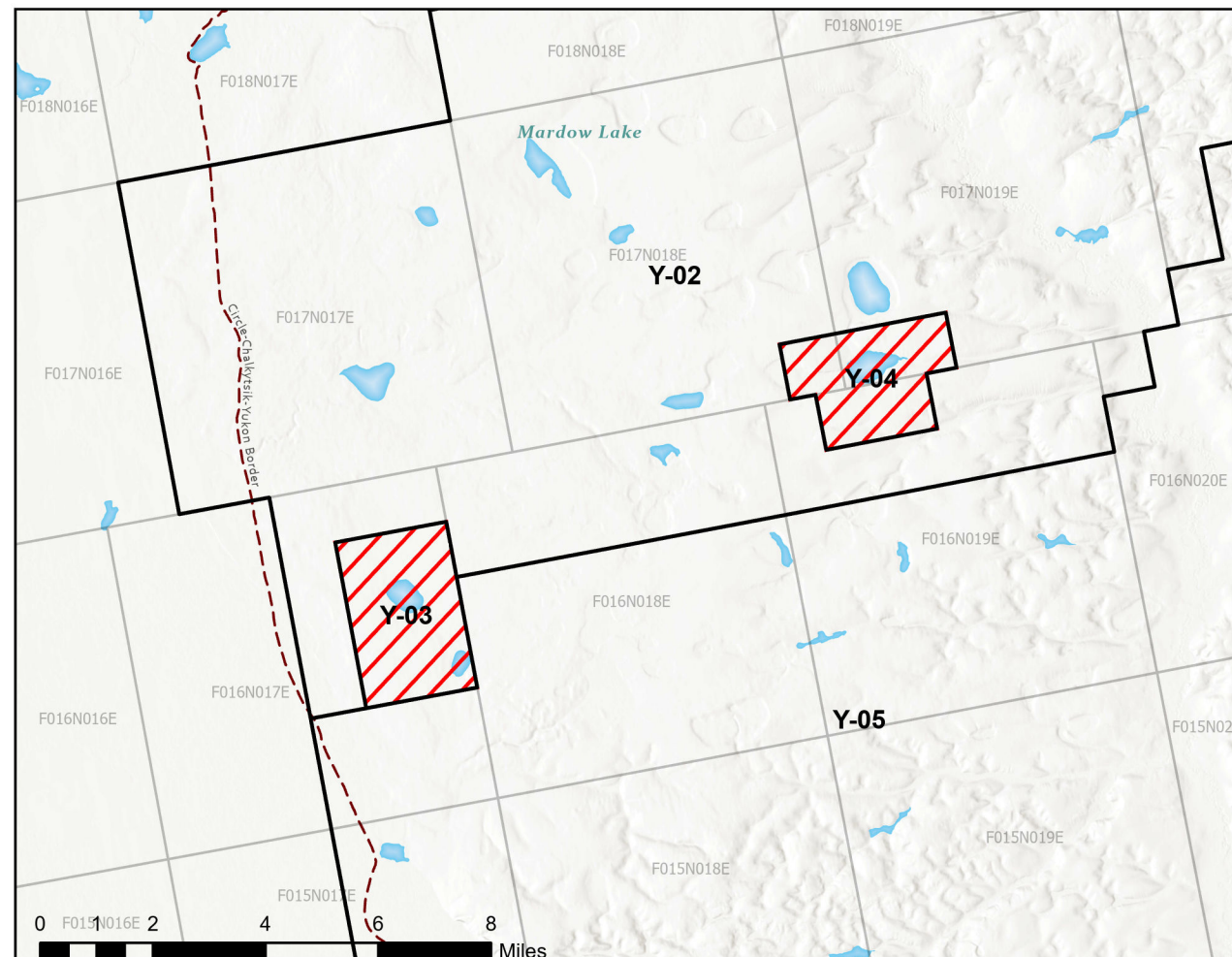
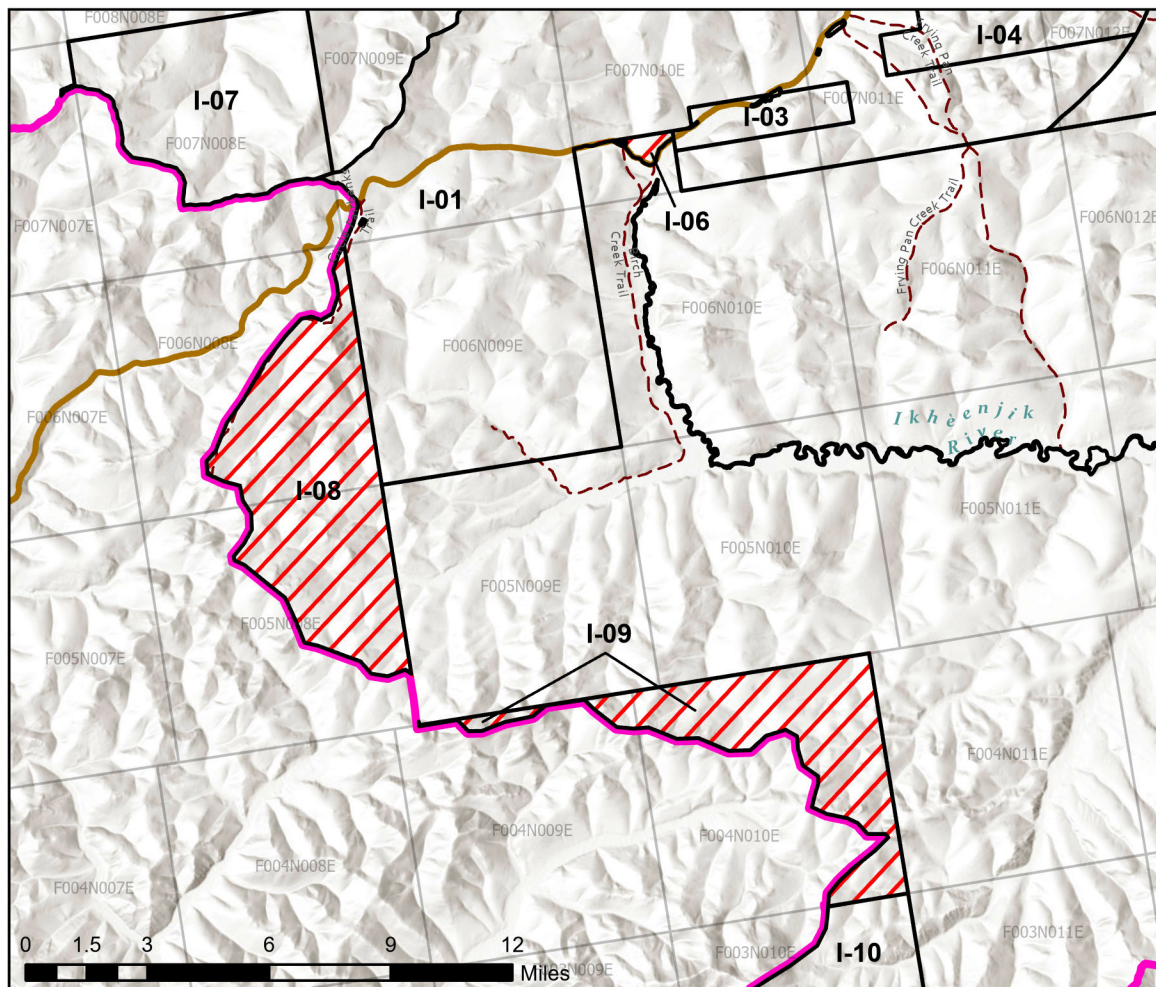
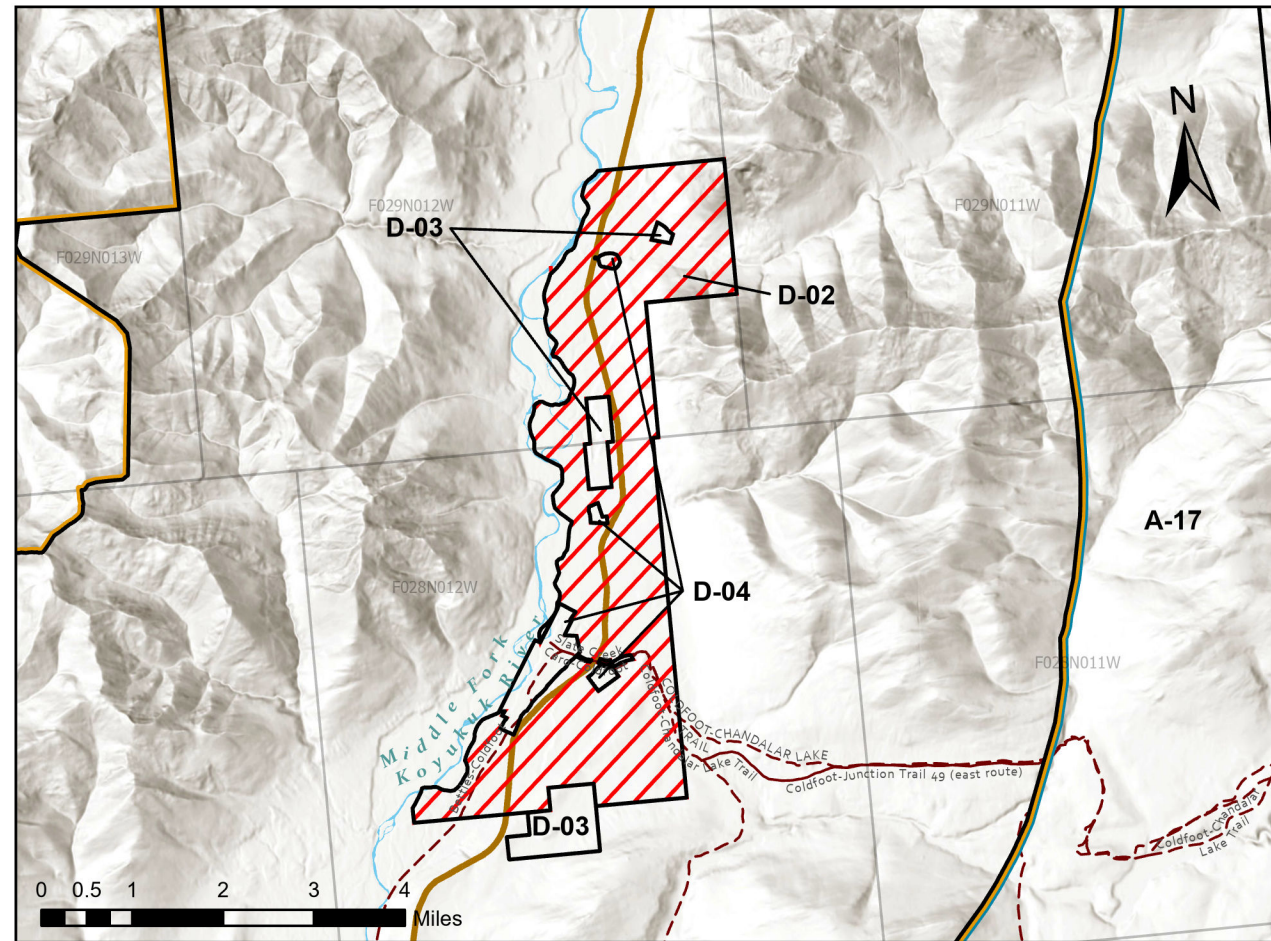
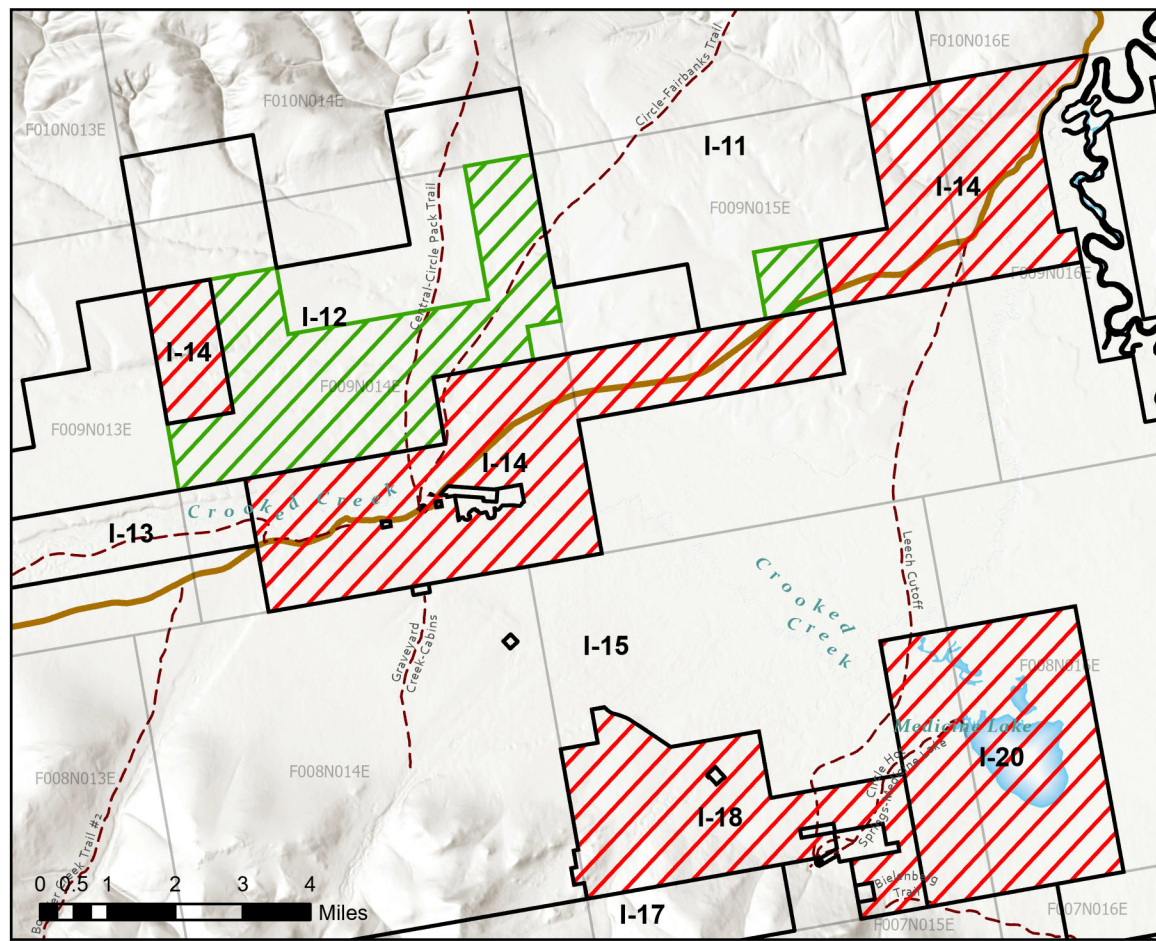
Opening	Closing
I-11	D-02
I-12	I-06
	I-08
	I-09
	I-14
	I-18
	I-20
	Y-03
	Y-04



Land use designations only apply to land owned by the State Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on this map. There are some small private parcels contained within these units but the designation does not apply to these non-state lands.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide.

Created: March 2026  
DS, DNR, DMLW, RADS  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983  
UTM Zone 6 North





# Appendix D

## Current Mineral Orders and Leasehold Location Orders Retained by this Plan

Table D-1: Current Mineral Orders and LLOs Retained By This Plan

MO #	LLO #
MCO 780	LLO 30
MCO 627	LLO 32
MCO 621	LLO 39
MCO 582	
MCO 577	
MCO 554	
MCO 552	
MCO 428	
MCO 427	
MCO 398	
MCO 296	
MCO 201	
MCO 200	
MO 1236	
MO 1165	
MO 1162A03	
MO 1162A01	
MO 1147	
MO 1118	
MO 1045	
MO 1042	

*Appendix D: Current Mineral Orders and  
Leasehold Location Orders Retained*

## Appendix E

### Public Trust Doctrine

The Public Trust Doctrine provides that public trust lands, waters, and living natural resources in a state are held by the state in trust for the benefit of all the people, and establishes the right of the public to fully utilize the public trust lands, waters, and resources for a wide variety of public uses. Each state has the authority and responsibility for managing these public trust assets to assure the public rights are upheld.

The Public Trust Doctrine applies whenever navigable waters or the lands beneath those waters are altered, developed, conveyed, or otherwise managed. It also applies whether the trust lands are publicly or privately owned. Shorelands below the ordinary high-water mark are considered public trust lands. In summary, all lands beneath navigable waters, be they shorelands, tidelands, or submerged lands out to the three mile limit are public trust lands.

The Alaska Constitution contains numerous provisions embracing principles of the Public Trust Doctrine that require the state to exercise authority to ensure that the right of the public to use navigable waters for navigation, commerce, recreation, and related purposes is protected. In Alaska, the Public Trust Doctrine extends beyond those submerged lands in which the state holds title to include all waters that are navigable. The state's waters are themselves reserved to the people for common use.

The Alaska Constitution (Article VIII, sections 1, 2, 3, 6, 13, and 14) and Alaska Statutes (38.05.127 and 38.05.128) contain some of the provisions, which are the legal basis for applying the Public Trust Doctrine in Alaska. In Alaska, this doctrine guarantees the public's right to engage in activities such as commerce, navigation, fishing, hunting, trapping, and swimming, while also providing for the protection of areas for ecological study.

The Alaska Constitution provides that "free access to the navigable or public waters of the state, as defined by the legislature, shall not be denied any citizen of the United States or resident of the state, except that the legislature may by general law regulate and limit such access for other beneficial uses or public purposes." The Alaska Supreme Court has concluded "the provisions in Article VIII [of the Constitution] were intended to permit the broadest possible access to and use of state waters by the general public." *Wernberg v. State*, 516 P. 2d 1191, 1198-9 (Alaska 1973). The Alaska legislature has broadly defined the navigable and public waters available for public use in AS 38.05.965. Moreover, the legislature has endorsed a broad interpretation of the Public Trust Doctrine in Article VIII of Alaska's Constitution in finding that:

## *Appendix E: Public Trust Doctrine*

“Ownership of land bordering navigable or public waters does not grant an exclusive right to the use of the water and any rights of title to the land below the ordinary high-water mark are subject to the rights of the people of the state to use and have access to the water for recreational purposes or any other public purposes for which the water is used or capable of being used consistent with the public trust.” Sec. 1, Ch. 82, SLA 1985.

The legislature has also declared that the right to use state waters does not include the right to enter or trespass upon private lands. Nevertheless, with 99 percent of Alaska in public ownership at statehood, state laws regarding the transfer of land to private parties provide for public access to navigable waters. For instance, AS 38.05.127 implements the state’s constitutional guarantee of access to navigable waters under Article VIII, Section 14. Under the statute, the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources must “provide for the specific easements or rights-of-way necessary to ensure free access to and along the body of water, unless the Commissioner finds that regulating or eliminating access is necessary for other beneficial uses or public purposes.” The State’s responsibilities to implement the Public Trust Doctrine are considered and used throughout this plan. Any management actions will be consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine as defined by the Alaska Constitution, statutes, court decisions, and public involvement.

## Appendix F

### Reservations of Water

This appendix includes specific information for planning units containing a body of water with existing or pending reservations of water (Table F-1). Table F-1 describes the units by region, the water body, the LAS number, the map number, the customer name and the legal description of the reservation. See Chapter 2 for more information on reservations of water.

**Table F-1: Reservations of Water**

Region/Unit	Waterbody	LAS	Plan Map No.	Customer/Cert holding/applying agency	Description
<b>Arctic Region</b>					
A-20	Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River	33351	3-1	ADF&G	<b>Application Pending</b> Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River, beginning at its confluence with the Yukon River and continuing upstream approximately 70 river miles to its confluence with the East Fork Teedriinjik River.
<b>Dalton Corridor Region</b>					
D-01	Middle Fork Koyukuk River	30712	3-2	ADF&G	<b>Certificate</b> Middle Fork Koyukuk River from the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) of the outer bank (of the outside braid, where braided) of the left bank up to the OHWM of the outer bank (of the outside braid, where braided) of the right bank, including any sloughs, braids, or channels which carry water and are an integral part of the river beginning at the mouth of the Middle Fork Koyukuk River (at its confluence with the North Fork Koyukuk River) and extending upstream approximately 55 river miles to the confluence with the Hammond River.
D-02					
D-03					
D-04					
D-01	Jim River	13700	3-2	ADF&G	<b>Application Pending</b> Stream flows within the Jim River and its floodplain from the mouth of the Jim River at its confluence with the Koyukuk River to approximately river mile 14.0.

Appendix F: Reservations of Water

Region/Unit	Waterbody	LAS	Plan Map No.	Customer/Cert holding/applying agency	Description
D-01	Jim River	26581	3-2	BLM	<b>Application Pending</b> The location to which this reservation is appurtenant is stream flow within the Jim River and its associated sloughs and floodplain from the confluence of Grayling Creek downstream to the confluence of Prospect Creek.
<b>Yukon Flats Region</b>					
Y-09	Draanjik (Black) River	25585	3-3b	USFWS	<b>Application Pending</b> Draanjik River and its flood plain, Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge, with the upstream limit at the confluence of the Draanjik River and the Salmon Fork of the Draanjik River and the downstream limit at the confluence of the Draanjik River and the Porcupine River.
Y-14					
Y-13	Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek)	24000	3-3a	USFWS	<b>Application Pending</b> Upper mouth Birch Creek and its floodplain, beginning at the point where Birch Creek bifurcates into upper mouth Birch Creek and lower mouth Birch Creek. The stream segment is approximately 65.21 river miles in length and ends at the confluence of upper Mouth Birch Creek and the Yukon River.
		24003			<b>Application Pending</b> The lower mouth Birch Creek and its flood plain, Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. The upstream limit is that point where the main stem, single-channel Birch Creek bifurcates into lower mouth Birch Creek and upper mouth Birch Creek. The downstream limit is the confluence of lower mouth Birch Creek and the southernmost channel of the Yukon River.
		24004			<b>Application Pending</b> The lower main stem Birch Creek and its flood plain beginning at the confluence of Birch Creek and Preacher Creek, and extending approximately 48.83 river miles downstream. The downstream limit is the point where Birch Creek bifurcates into lower mouth Birch Creek and upper mouth Birch Creek.
		24005			<b>Application Pending</b> The upper main stem Birch Creek and its flood plain with the upstream limit at the confluence of Birch and Big Creek, a point approximately 5 river miles upstream of the exterior boundary of the

Appendix F: Reservations of Water

Region/Unit	Waterbody	LAS	Plan Map No.	Customer/Cert holding/applying agency	Description
					refuge and the downstream limit at the confluence of Birch Creek and Preacher Creek.
Y-15	Beaver Creek	24007	N/A		<b>Application Pending</b> Beaver Creek and its floodplain beginning below the confluence of Victoria Creek and Beaver Creek. The stream segment is approximately 190.52 river miles in length and ends at the confluence of Beaver Creek and the Yukon River.
Y-16	Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River	33351		ADF&G	<b>Application Pending</b> Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River, beginning at its confluence with the Yukon River and continuing upstream approximately 70 river miles to its confluence with the East Fork Teedriinjik River.
<b>Interior Highlands Region</b>					
I-29	Ikheenjik River (Birch Creek)	24386	3-4a	BLM	<b>Application Pending</b> The upper main stem Birch Creek with the upstream limit at the beginning of the creek and continuing approximately 43 miles to the downstream limit at Section 21, Township 7 North, Range 17 East, Fairbanks Meridian.
		24005		USFWS	<b>Application Pending</b> The upper main stem Birch Creek and its flood plain with the upstream limit at the confluence of Birch and Big Creek, a point approximately 5 river miles upstream of the exterior boundary of the refuge and the downstream limit at the confluence of Birch Creek and Preacher Creek.
I-30	Beaver Creek	11997	3-4b	BLM	<b>Certificate</b> The main stem of Beaver Creek from the vicinity of the present confluence of the Bear and Champion Creeks to the east boundary of Section 1, Township 11 North, Range 5 East, Fairbanks Meridian.

Appendix F: Reservations of Water

Region/Unit	Waterbody	LAS	Plan Map No.	Customer/Cert holding/applying agency	Description
<b>Water Reservations Not Within a Unit</b>					
No unit; refer to Navigable Waters Section in Chapter 3	Hadweenzic River	23997	N/A	USFWS	<b>Application Pending</b> The Hadweenzic River and its floodplain beginning below the confluence of Forty-two Mile Creek and Hadweenzic River. The stream segment is approximately 72.82 river miles in length and ends at the confluence of the Hadweenzic River and the Yukon River.
	Hodzana River	23998	N/A	USFWS	<b>Application Pending</b> The Hodzana River and its floodplain beginning below the confluence of Pitka Fork and Hodzana River. The stream segment is approximately 85.94 river miles in length and ends at the confluence of the Hodzana River and the Yukon River.
	Sheenjek River	23999			<b>Application Pending</b> The Sheenjek River and its floodplain, beginning below the confluence of Thluichohnjik Creek and Sheenjek River. The stream segment is approximately 108.88 river miles in length and ends at the confluence of the Sheenjek River and the Porcupine River.
	Lakes	23642 – 23662 23665 – 23672 23674 – 23677			<b>Application Pending</b> Various lakes with the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Refer to LAS casefiles for further information.
	Preacher Creek	24001			<b>Application Pending</b> Preacher Creek and its flood plain beginning at the confluence of north fork Preacher Creek and Preacher Creek and extending approximately 71.92 river miles downstream. The downstream limit is the point where Preacher Creek discharges into Birch Creek.
	Little Black River	24006			<b>Application Pending</b> Little Black River and its floodplain, beginning below the confluence of Paddle Creek and the Little Black River. The stream segment is approximately 130.35 river miles long and ends at the point where the Little Black River bifurcates into the distributaries Sucker River and Grass River.