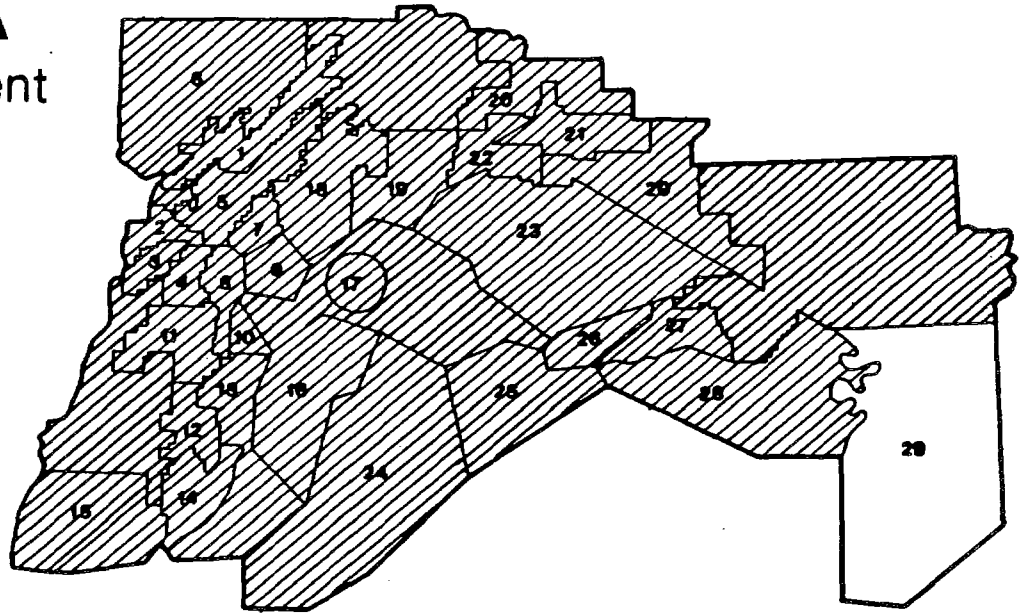


# KATALLA

## Management Unit 29



### Background

Federal land in this unit is a part of the federal Copper River Delta Game Management Area. Federal law (ANILCA) directs the Forest Service to manage the federal land in this unit for multiple use with conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitat being the primary purpose. The USFS Chugach National Forest plan and settlement agreement indicates that no federal timber harvest will occur from this area prior to the completion of a Management Area Analysis (a detailed Forest Service Management plan). Federal land in this unit is open to mineral entry.

The first oil and gas strike in Alaska occurred at Katalla. Currently, private lands are being explored for oil at Katalla and commercial production of oil may occur within the next 20 years. The oil would probably be transported by ship to a refining site. The off-loading site would most likely be near the old Katalla townsite.

Other private land in this unit includes the Native-owned Bering River Coal field. The coal

field area also contains high-quality timber. Timber harvest is likely within the next 20 years. The timber could be trucked along a proposed road to Cordova or to an off-loading site at tidewater near Katalla. The coal would probably be off-loaded to barges near Katalla.

The state has selected two upland parcels, Kayak Island and Katalla, and owns the tidelands in this unit. The Department of Natural Resources is a party to the Bering River - Controller Bay Trumpeter Swan Management Area Cooperative Agreement. The state legislatively designated Copper River Delta Critical Habitat Area is adjacent to this unit to the west.

The state previously selected land for commercial forest purposes at Suckling Hills. The selection was relinquished because its purpose is not consistent with the USFS interpretation of allowable selection purposes in section 6(a) of the Statehood Act.

Existing public recreation use of this management unit is limited because of its remoteness and inaccessibility and primarily consists of fly-in hunting and fishing.

According to a 1977 DPOR publication, Kayak Island is generally recognized as the discovery point of Alaska. It was visited by Vitus Bering and Georg Wilhelm Steller, naturalist, in 1741. In addition, it was visited by Cook in 1778 when he landed and buried a bottle with an appropriate note and two small pieces of silver a few miles south of the northwest tip of the island. The Bering-Steller Land Site has been declared a National Landmark. It is sometimes referred to as the "Plymouth Rock of Alaska."

## **Management Intent**

State management in this unit will emphasize protection of the exceptional wildlife habitat and the Kayak Island National Landmark, and support development of the upland resources. State land remains open to mineral entry, though the legislature may close the Kayak Island selection to new mineral entry if it designates the area as a marine park.

Additional management intent is described below for five subunits. The intent for **Subunit 29F**, the general use area, is reflected in the previous paragraphs.

**Subunit 29A - Kayak Island.** Management of the state-selected uplands and state-owned tidelands in this subunit should emphasize fish and wildlife habitat and harvest and the protection of cultural resources values, especially Bering's Landing and Steller's Walk. Public recreation facilities such as public use cabins that ease access to Kayak Island are appropriate if sited and designed to complement the cultural values of the subunit. Because of the importance of this site to Alaska's history, it should be considered by the legislature for designation as a state marine park. The tidelands near Kayak and Wingham islands are herring spawning habitat. The original Kayak Island selection has been expanded to

include the revised location of Steller's Landing and Steller's Walk according to information provided by Professor O. W. Frost's book: *Georg Steller, Journal of a Voyage with Bering, 1741 - 1742* to be published by Stanford University Press, August 1988.

**Subunit 29B - Okalee Spit.** The state owns land east of the planning area between Suckling Hills and Icy Bay, the proposed Yakataga State Forest. This state-owned forest land may not be economical to harvest unless a transfer facility to the west, possibly at Okalee Spit on Controller Bay, is developed. The optimum transfer site would likely be on the west end of the spit. If access is needed, the state will apply for a log-transfer site within this subunit. State tideland authorizations will protect the opportunity for a log transfer site at suitable locations within this unit.

Because the north side of the spit is shallow and the spit provides little shelter from the sometimes considerable wind, it is unclear whether a log-transfer site is environmentally or physically feasible. Reservation of a potential site is not meant to pre-judge answers to these questions. If a site is requested, on-site investigations and the permit review process will determine whether the location is feasible.

**Subunit 29C - Controller Bay.** The state-owned tidelands in this unit should be managed to protect fish and wildlife values consistent with the terms of the Bering River - Controller Bay Trumpeter Swan Management Area Cooperative Agreement. This does not preclude development of a log-transfer facility as discussed in subunit 29B, Okalee Spit. According to the U.S. Forest Service, a log-transfer facility may be needed in Redwood Bay. A determination of this site's feasibility, including consistency with the management intent and guidelines of this plan, will be made at the time an application is made.

**Subunit 29D - Katalla.** During the life of the plan, the various private upland owners are

likely to require a tideland site capable of off-loading oil, timber, or coal to tidewater.

Chugach Alaska Corporation owns rights to oil and gas and coal within a large area around Katalla, as well as the Bering River coal fields. A road corridor has been agreed upon to allow Chugach Alaska Corporation to build a road from the Copper River Highway to the coal field, then to the coast between Strawberry Point and the Martin islands. The best location for the townsite has not yet been determined.

State tidelands will be managed to maintain the option of developing access for a port site of other marine resource extraction described above. The state selected uplands at Katalla and the adjacent tidelands are reserved for

commercial or industrial settlement required to support the various resource developments in the area.

## **Management Guidelines**

The complete set of guidelines is presented in Chapter 2; any of the guidelines could apply to uses within this management unit. Guidelines that are most likely to apply to this management unit are listed below:

- Fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas
- Forestry
- Recreation, tourism, cultural and scenic resources
- Transportation and utilities

# LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

## Management Unit 29: Katalla

<u>SUBUNIT</u>	<u>LAND OWNERSHIP</u>	<u>LAND USE DESIGNATIONS</u>			<u>COMMENTS</u>
		<u>Primary Surface Use<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prohibited Surface Use</u>	<u>Subsurface<sup>1</sup></u>	
29A Kayak Island	State selected uplands; state-owned tidelands	Heritage resources Public recreation	Land offerings	Open; may be closed if marine park	Possible marine park
29B Okalee Spit	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Forestry	Land offerings	Open	Log transfer site may be needed
29C Controller Bay	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest		Open	Guidelines, permits, and leases subject to Bering River-Controller Bay Trumpeter Swan Cooperative Agreement; log-transfer site may be needed in Redwood Bay
29D Katalla	State-selected uplands; state-owned tidelands	Uplands: Settlement Tidelands: Habitat & harvest Shoreline development		Open	Settlement is for commercial/industrial purposes; acreage undetermined; resource transfer site may be needed
29E Remainder of Unit	State-owned tidelands	General use		Open	

<sup>1</sup>All areas are available for leasing of leasable minerals. Statements of whether or not the unit is open to mineral entry refer only to locatable minerals.

<sup>2</sup>Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits that are not specifically prohibited, may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement, management guidelines of this unit, and relevant management guidelines in Chapter 2. See Chapter 2, pages 2-11 and 2-12, for floathome policies. Trapping Cabin and Remote Cabin permits will not be given in the planning area. See guideline B-3, page 2-39.

## Resource Information Summary<sup>1</sup>

<b>Management Unit: 29. Katalla</b>					
SUBUNIT	Fish & Wildlife <sup>2</sup>	Recreation	Minerals	Settlement <sup>3</sup>	Forestry <sup>3</sup>
29A Kayak Island (uplands and tidelands)	Bird rookery; bear use	Infrequent dispersed use	No known minerals	Unknown	High/moderate
29B Okalee Spit (tidelands)	Concentration of bird rookeries; clams; moose; bear use	Infrequent dispersed use	No known minerals	Incapable	
29C Controller Bay (tidelands)	Clams; sport and commercial fishing; spring shorebirds	Infrequent con- centrated use	--	--	--
29D Katalla (uplands and tidelands)	Clams; seasonal waterfowl concentra- tions; bear use	Infrequent dispersed use	Oil and gas	Capable	Unknown;
29E Softuk Lagoon (tidelands)	Estuary; clams; seasonal waterfowl concentrations; bird rookery; spring shorebird concentra- tions	Infrequent dispersed use	No known minerals	--	--
29F Remainder of Unit (tidelands)	Sea lion haulout; clams	Infrequent dispersed use	No known minerals	--	--

<sup>1</sup> This resource summary describes only the resources for state uplands and tidelands.

<sup>2</sup> Resource list includes Crucial, Prime, and Important habitats as defined by ADF&G (see Appendix E). Anadromous fish streams are not listed; they exist in most subunits. See ADF&G anadromous fish stream catalogue.

<sup>3</sup> Land offering and timber harvest do not occur on tidelands. Therefore, settlement and forestry resources are not rated for tideland subunits.