

MANAGEMENT UNIT 7 – BONNIE LAKE

MANAGEMENT INTENT

The Bonnie Lake Management Unit is located just north of the Matanuska River on the southern flanks of the Talkeetna Mountains in the vicinity of the Chickaloon River.

This unit will be managed to provide a mixture of land for settlement, public recreation, habitat protection, and personal use timber harvest. The unit contains a scenic, complex mixture of rugged and rolling country including several rock escarpments, steep river drainages and a number of lakes. It is a popular hiking and fishing area with good potential for further recreational development and increased use. Land ownership is a mixture of public and private. Part of the unit is accessible by road. With good site design, DNR should be able to provide a significant amount of land for private settlement in this unit, while simultaneously maintaining and even improving opportunities for public use, including hunting, fishing, hiking and skiing. Final decisions on the appropriate location and amount of settlement may require either an extensive agency and public review process or completion of a more detailed management plan.

All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing. Public lands in this unit will remain open to mineral location and available for coal leasing except for the portions of subunit 7a designated for sale.

This management unit has been divided into two subunits: the area north of the Matanuska River (7a) and the river itself (7b). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these subunits and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The complete set of areawide management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2 of this plan. All of the guidelines potentially could apply to uses within this management unit; however, those that are most likely to be applicable are indicated with asterisks in the list below.

- Agriculture
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat
- *Forestry
- *Recreation
- *Settlement
- *Subsurface (Materials)
- *Transportation
- Instream Flow

- *Lakeshore Management
- *Public Access
- *Remote Cabin Permits
- *Stream Corridors
- *Trail Management
- Wetlands Management
- Resource Management

Management guidelines that apply to this management unit only are presented below, by subunit.

Subunit 7a (Bonnie Lake)

Visual Quality

Land sales and any new road construction shall be designed and sited to minimize their visibility from the Glenn Highway and to minimize adverse impacts on any especially attractive views visible from within the remainder of the subunit.

Public Access and Recreation

Sales and accompanying transportation improvements should be designed to improve public access into and through the area. Part of the settlement site design should be a system of roads and trails to serve public recreation needs. The locations of these roads and trails have not been determined. Any land use authorizations in this unit should be located so they do not preclude the option to build these roads and trails along feasible and efficient routes. The Chickaloon Trail specifically should be protected through retention of land approximately 500 feet on each side of the trail, but no less than 300 feet.

In addition to access improvements internal to this unit, DOT/PF is considering upgrading the Glenn Highway in this vicinity including a possible realignment of the highway. No final decision on these proposed road improvements has been made. Information on alternative alignments under consideration is available from DOT/PF. Land use authorizations in this unit should be located so as to not preclude the option to reconstruct the Glenn Highway along a feasible and efficient route.

Coal Development

This management unit is underlain by coal that has moderate potential for development. On either side of the unit are areas with high value for coal. One important criterion in designing land sales in this area is to minimize the area that would be closed to coal development due to sales of the surface estate. This will help reduce the cost to coal operators of developing coal.

Amount and Type of Settlement

Because of this area's topography, proximity to roads, scenic quality and high public recreation values, only subdivisions or prestaked homesteads sales will be allowed in the area. The total amount of sales should be limited to a net area of approximately 600 acres.

Remote Cabins

A limited number of remote cabin permits may be issued for land located between the Matanuska River and the Glenn Highway and east of T20N R6E S. M., section 27. This area can be considered for this use because, while it is near the highway, the large bluff below the highway makes construction of roads into the area very unlikely.