

MANAGEMENT UNIT 5 – CANYON CREEK

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Management Unit 5 is south of the Skwentna River and west of the Talachulitna River corridor. This area is accessible along the Skwentna and Talachulitna rivers, and via floatplane to a few lakes scattered throughout the region. Present land uses are boating, fishing, hunting, and fish and wildlife habitat. There are a number of seasonal or recreational dwellings in the subregion, primarily on past state land disposals. This unit contains some land with moderate/high coal potential, most of which is under lease. The area will be managed to support a variety of uses. Over half the management unit will be retained in long term public ownership to encourage public recreation, protect fish and wildlife habitat, and promote coal exploration. Other areas along the Skwentna River and west of the Talachulitna River will be sold for settlement. Open space areas, public access and personal use woodlots will be retained in public ownership within disposals. Management Unit 5 will remain open to mineral location and available for coal leasing except for the existing and proposed settlement areas in subunits 5c and 5d. All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing.

Construction of road access is not likely in this area. The right-of-way providing access to lands west of the Susitna River lies on the north side of the Skwentna River. Unless this road and a bridge crossing the Skwentna and/or Talachulitna rivers are built, access into Management Unit 5 will continue to be by boat or air. The development of public boat facilities along the Skwentna and Talachulitna rivers, a public airstrip and a trail system are recommended to provide access into existing and proposed settlement areas.

There are four subunits within Management Unit 5: Dickason Mt. and Thursday Creek (5a); the Mobil coal lease located along Canyon Creek (5b); the existing and proposed settlement areas west of Canyon Lake Subdivision, within the past Friday Creek remote parcel area, adjacent to Quartz Creek Remote and immediately west of the Talachulitna River corridor (5c); and the existing Canyon Lake Subdivision (5d). See maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses in each subunit.

Subunit 5a comprises the mountainous southern portion of the past Friday Creek remote parcel offering and lands between Canyon Creek and the Talachulitna River corridor, including land along Thursday Creek. This subunit will be retained in public ownership and managed to protect anadromous fish streams,

riparian habitat, and opportunities for hunting, fishing and other public recreational activities. There will be no additional land sales in this subunit, including the area within the past remote parcel offering, but it will be available for remote cabin permits.

Subunit 5b encompasses a 55-year coal lease held by Mobil Oil company. This area will be retained in long term public ownership and managed for coal prospecting and development. Public recreation and wildlife habitat are major surface uses associated with this subunit and will be the focus of management until coal development occurs. It also will be available for remote cabin permits.

Subunit 5c will be available for low density settlement. The subunit includes three areas: approximately 10,000 acres between Contact Creek and the Skwentna River including the northern portion of the past Friday Creek remote parcel area, 12,100 acres in the existing Quartz Creek Remote and adjacent lands to the west, and 9,300 acres west of the Talachulitna River corridor within the Deep Creek drainage. The Skwentna and Hayes rivers and a few fly-in lakes provide some access to this subunit, but access is difficult, especially into Friday Creek.

Subunit 5d is the existing Canyon Lake Subdivision. There are approximately 30 surveyed lots within the subunit that have not been sold yet. Unsold lots will continue to be available for sale over-the-counter.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The complete set of areawide management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2 of this plan. All of the guidelines potentially 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 and Wildlife
- *Forestry
- *Recreation
- *Settlement
- *Subsurface
- *Transportation
- Instream Flow
- *Lakeshore Management
- *Public Access
- *Remote Cabin Permits
- *Stream Corridors
- *Trail Management
- Wetlands Management
- Resource Management

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Mt. Susitna

MANAGEMENT UNIT 5 - Canyon Creek

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
5a Dickason Mt./ Thursday Creek	State	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	Forestry Remote Cabins	Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals	—
5b Mobil Coal Lease	State	Public Recreation	Remote Cabins Wildlife Hab.	Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals	—
5c Quartz Creek, Talachulitn a West, Friday Creek	State/ Private	Settlement (partly past disposals)	Forestry (personal use) Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	—	Estimated net disposal area = 6,000 acres
5d Canyon Lake	State/ Private	Settlement (existing subdivision)	Forestry Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Grazing Remote Cabins Trapper Cabins	Approximately 25 unsold surveyed lots remain available over-the-counter

*Other uses such as material sales, land leases, remote cabin permits, etc., that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement and management guidelines of this unit, and with the relevant management guidelines in chapter 2.

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

Subunit 5b (Mobil Coal Lease)

Remote Cabins

Subunit 5b will be available for remote cabin permits. However, permits will be available only in those portions of the subunit where it is determined, to the extent feasible, that there will be no conflicts between cabin construction and use and coal development for the life of the permit.

Subunit 5c (Friday Creek, Quartz Creek and Talachulitna West)

Stream Corridors

The management intent for land adjacent to the streams referenced below is to permit fishing, camping and other active uses, and to protect water quality and riparian habitat. Consequently, this land should be retained in public ownership. Corridor widths will be set on a case-by-case basis using policies in Chapter 2. The standard minimum buffer width (200' on each side of the river) should be used on Quartz Creek, Thursday Creek, Deep Creek and their tributaries, and the tributaries to the Skwentna River. The buffers on the Skwentna River itself and on tributaries to the Talachulitna River should be 300'. Wider buffers allow for protection of visual quality and opportunities for hunting on streams feeding the major boatable rivers in the subregion.

Lakeshore Management and Settlement

Property remaining in state ownership within 500' of lakes greater than 5 acres in size within the boundaries of the past Quartz Creek remote parcel area will not be sold when additional disposals are offered. These lands will be retained to keep public access to and around the lakes and to protect public recreation opportunities in the area. An area of public land connecting the new and reoffered disposal area to the Skwentna River also will be retained for future use as a local recreation site and/or campground.

River Corridor Management

Public boat launching facilities and accompanying trails will be identified within the Hayes, Skwentna and Talachulitna River corridors by the Divisions of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Land & Water Management to provide access to existing and proposed settlement and public recreation areas. Settlement projects will be designed to minimize the number of parcels located directly adjacent to the river corridors. This will help minimize visual and environmental impacts.