

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4: MOOSE CREEK CORRIDOR

MANAGEMENT INTENT

This management unit is a corridor of land one-half to two miles wide along Moose Creek. Moose Creek is part of the Deshka River system, the most important waterway in the entire Susitna area for riparian habitat and public recreation. Salmon populations in this stream contribute to the Cook Inlet commercial fishery as well as sport fishing.

Public lands in Management Unit 4 will be retained in public ownership and managed for public recreation and fish and wildlife habitat. There are two subunits within management unit 4 — the main part of the corridor that is in state and borough ownership (4a), and lands close to the Petersville Road that have been sold for agricultural development (4b). See the 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. All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing. Subunit 4a will be closed to mineral entry and unavailable for coal leasing due to its value for public recreation, habitat, and water resources and the potential for conflict between these uses and mining. Subunit 4b was closed to mining prior to its sale for agricultural purposes.

The Petersville Road and Oilwell Road currently provide year-round access to the central portion of this management unit. One of the borough's highest priorities for road building is construction of a bridge across Moose Creek to extend Oilwell Road south and west. This would provide additional access to the southern part of the unit. Bridge construction may begin as early as the summer of 1985. Improvements of Petersville Road also have been proposed (see transportation section in Chapter 4).

Subunit 4a, the state and borough lands in the Moose Creek corridor, will be retained in public ownership and proposed for legislative designation to protect riparian habitat and provide opportunities for public recreation. Because Moose Creek receives intensive public recreational use and provides highly valuable riparian habitat, including moose winter range and salmon spawning areas, no land sales will be permitted in Subunit 4a. It is recommended that public use cabins be built within this subunit to support recreational use of Moose Creek. Road crossings should be held to the absolute minimum necessary to achieve the recreation and habitat management objectives. Forestry is a secondary use in this subunit. Timber harvesting for personal use will be allowed when consistent with the habitat and recreation objectives for the subunit.

Although most of the subunit is in public ownership, numerous private parcels line the banks along segments of the creek and limit public access. It is recommended that public land be acquired at the junction of Moose Creek and Oilwell Road to provide public access to the creek. The junction is a major starting point for fishing trips and float trips on Moose Creek.

Subunit 4b includes lands just south of Petersville Road which already have been sold by the state and borough for agricultural use. These are primarily private lands and therefore unaffected by this plan.

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 & Wildlife Habitat
- *Forestry
- *Recreation
- Settlement
- Subsurface
- *Transportation
- *Instream Flow
- Lakeshore Management
- *Public Access
- Remote Cabin Permits
- *Stream Corridors
- *Trail Management
- Wetland Management
- Resource Management

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

Subunit 4a (Moose Creek corridor)

Transportation

Bridges and road improvements must be designed in consultation with the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the Department of Fish and Game.

Oil and Gas

Oil and gas exploration and development activities will be sited and/or timed to mitigate impacts on the fish and wildlife habitat and public use values of the Moose Creek corridor. Specific mitigation measures necessary

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Petersville Road

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4 — Moose Creek Corridor

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
4a Moose Creek corridor	State/ Borough	Public Recreation Water Resources Wildlife Habitat	Forestry	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Trapper Cabins Land Disposals Grazing	Recommended for legislative designation
4b Moose Creek Ag.	Private	Primarily Private Land (past agricultural disposals)	—	—	—	—	—

151 *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.

to protect the values for which the river corridor was established will be developed as part of the lease sale process. Mitigation measures will be developed on a case-by-case basis considering timing, topography, vegetation and other factors affecting the impact of oil and gas exploration and development activities on fish and wildlife, habitat and public use values.

Land Use Permits

Activities and facilities requiring land use permits (e.g., gravel extraction and airstrips) generally will be permitted only where there are no feasible and prudent alternatives.

Management Planning/Remote Cabins

A management plan should be prepared for the area proposed for legislative designation in Subunit 4a in conjunction with planning for the other portions of the Moose Creek and Kroto Creek corridors in Subunit 1b and Susitna Lowlands Subunit 11b. The management plan will determine, among other things, whether remote cabins will be a permitted use in this subunit. Remote cabin permits will not be offered in this subunit until and unless remote cabin areas are designated by a management plan.

Interagency Consultation

Since protection of habitat and recreation values is of such importance in this unit and the area is being recommended for administrative or legislative designation, special consideration should be given to consulting with the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation and the Department of Fish & Game when reviewing permit or lease applications in this unit.