

## MANAGEMENT UNIT 4: SKWENTNA FLATS

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### MANAGEMENT INTENT

Management Unit 4 consists largely of wetlands and open forests south of the Skwentna and Yentna Rivers. The Skwentna River floodplain, Eightmile Creek and Lake, Sevenmile Lake, and numerous smaller lakes are important features of the landscape. The town of Skwentna straddles the Skwentna River in the northern part of the management unit. The amount of subsistence-related fish and wildlife use in this area is the second greatest in the study area. The Iditarod Trail crosses the southern part of the area. The Skwentna River and Eightmile Creek are important anadromous fish streams and provide moose winter range. The lowlands offer some opportunities for additional remote, low density settlement. Existing and likely future access to the region is by air or along the Skwentna River. It is intended that this region will support a mixture of public and private uses. The population in this management unit is likely to grow on past and proposed land sales and other private lands in this area. State and/or borough land should be set aside for community facilities near Skwentna, and if it becomes necessary, near other growing settlements. (See also management guidelines regarding community facilities in subunit 5a). Management Unit 4 will be open to mineral location and available for coal leasing with the exception of the existing and proposed disposal areas (subunits 4c, 4e, and a portion of subunit 4a). All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing.

There are five subunits within this management unit: private and Native lands around the town of Skwentna (4a), Skwentna Flats (4b), land adjacent to the Skwentna River available for settlement (4c), borough lands at Sevenmile Lake (4d), and Skwentna Flats Subdivision (4e). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses for each subunit.

**Subunit 4a:** Private and Native lands around the town of Skwentna, including the existing Skwentna Station Subdivision, will be a focus of settlement activity. Unsold surveyed lots in the subdivision will remain available for sale over-the-counter.

**Subunit 4b,** state land in the Skwentna Flats, including the Eightmile Creek drainage, will be retained in public ownership for forestry, fish and wildlife habitat, and public recreation. The lands in this unit within the boundaries of the past Skwentna Flats and Skwentna Flats Addition remote parcel disposals will be closed to further land sales, but the lands east of Eightmile Creek will be open to remote cabin permits.

Retention of subunit 4b will protect Eightmile Creek, a particularly valuable salmon spawning stream. It also will help keep timber available for personal use by local residents. Consistent with the general subsurface policy in Chapter 2, the unstaked portions of the past Skwentna Flats remote parcel area will be reopened to mineral entry.

**Subunit 4c:** Additional low density settlement is the primary use. These are state-owned lowlands accessible from the Skwentna River.

**Subunit 4d,** borough lands around Sevenmile Lake, will be included in the borough land bank. These lands may be available for sale in the long term, but there are no plans for disposal in the near future. Reevaluation to determine the best long term use of this area will consider settlement, forestry, fish and wildlife habitat and public recreation values.

**Subunit 4e** is the existing Skwentna Flats Subdivision. Unsold surveyed lots in the subdivision will remain 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 & Wildlife Habitat
- \*Forestry
- \*Recreation
- \*Settlement
- Subsurface
- 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.

# LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Susitna Lowlands

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4 — Swentna Flats

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 Skwentna Station	Native Private	Primarily private land (part existing subdivision)	—	Closed within existing subdivision	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting within existing subdivision	—	Approximately 15 unsold surveyed lots remain available over-the-counter
4b Skwentna Flats	State	Forestry (personal use) Public Recreation Water Resources Wildlife Habitat	Remote Cabins (east of Eight-mile Creek)	Open	Available for leasing	Grazing Remote Cabins Land Disposals	—
4c Skwentna River Sale	State	Settlement (part past remote parcel offering)	Forestry (personal use) Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Grazing	Estimated net disposal area = 1,320 acres
4d Sevenmile L.	Borough	Borough Land Bank Values: Wildlife Habitat, Settlement, Public Recreation		Open	Available for leasing	—	—
4e Skwentna Flats Subdivision	State/ Private	Settlement (existing subdivision)	Forestry Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Grazing Remote Cabins Trapper Cabins	Approximately 20 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.

### **Subunit 4b (Skwentna Flats)**

#### **Remote Cabins**

Remote cabin permits will not be allowed within a corridor along Eightmile creek that is at least 200' wide on either side of the stream. [Note: the standard Chapter 2 policies on location of cabins near lakes, streams, trails and wetlands also will apply to this subunit.]

### **Subunits 4c and 4d (Skwentna River Sale and Sevenmile Lake)**

#### **Stream Corridors**

The management intent for land adjacent to the unnamed streams that appear on the 1:63,360 scale USGS topographic maps 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 these streams.