

MANAGEMENT UNIT 3 – WESTERN TALKEETNAS

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Management Unit 3 is located on the west side of Talkeetna Mountains and includes the upper end of the drainages of the Talkeetna, Sheep and Kashwitna Rivers and Chunilna, Iron, Montana and Sheep Creeks. This unit will be retained in public ownership and managed to protect fish and wildlife habitat and provide opportunities for public recreation. Portions of the area have natural vegetation suitable for grazing domestic livestock and grazing is a secondary use in most of these areas. Settlement is allowed in this area only if required for resource development such as mining. All lands within this unit will remain open to mineral location except for specified sheep mineral licks. These areas will be open under leasehold location. More on this subject is presented in the subregion overview at the beginning of this subregion section. All public lands will be available for coal and oil and gas leasing.

This management unit is divided into four subunits: the Rainbow Lake area (3a), a corridor along the Talkeetna River (3b), the northern and western portions of the management unit open to grazing (3c), and the sheep habitat closed to grazing in the vicinity of the headwaters of the Kashwitna and Sheep rivers (3d). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses.

Subunit 3a, the land surrounding Rainbow Lake, has been considered in the past for a state land sale. The decision has been made to not sell any land here due to the poor capability of the land to support settlement and impacts of the proposed sales on public use. The area will be open to a limited number of remote cabin permits.

Subunit 3b is comprised of the land roughly ½ mile on either side of the Talkeetna River. This area will be retained in public ownership and, like the portion of the river further downstream, be proposed for legislative designation as a state recreation river. This subunit should be managed in the same way as the lower portion of the river, the management intent for which is presented in the South Parks Highway Subregion (subunits 5b and 6a).

Subunit 3c (Wells Mountain) will be retained and managed for protection of wildlife and public recreation values and for grazing. This area comprises the middle portions of the drainages of several clear water streams that, in their lower stretches are heavily used for fishing and other public recreation activities. These streams include Sheep Creek, Montana Creek, the

North Fork of the Kashwitna River and all of the upper drainage of Chunilna Creek (Clear Creek). Consequently, a major objective for this area will be to control land uses to protect the quality of these streams. The area is also important for moose hunting and provides valuable spring, summer, and fall moose habitat. Portions of this management unit are suitable for remote cabins. Settlement is allowed in this subunit only if required for resource development, such as mining.

Subunit 3d will be managed in the same way as subunit 3c, except grazing will not be allowed. Grazing is prohibited in this area because of concern over conflicts between livestock and Dall sheep. This prohibition will not have much effect on the supply of grazing lands, because relatively little of this subunit has vegetation suitable for grazing.

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 following list.

- *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

Subunit 3b (Talkeetna River)

Management Planning and Remote Cabins

It is recommended that a management plan be prepared jointly for subunit 3b and South Parks Highway subunits 5b and 6a. The management plan will determine among other things, whether remote cabins will be permitted in this subunit. Remote cabin permits will not be offered until and unless areas open to remote cabins are designated by a management plan.

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Talkeetna Mountains

MANAGEMENT UNIT 3 — Western Talkeetnas

| SUBUNIT | LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED) | LAND USE DESIGNATIONS | | | | PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)* | COMMENTS |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | SURFACE | | SUBSURFACE | | | |
| | | PRIMARY USE(S) | SECONDARY USE(S) | LOCATABLE MINERALS | LEASEABLE MINERALS | | |
| 3a Rainbow Lake | State | Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat | Remote Cabins Grazing | Open | Available for leasing | Land Disposals | --- |
| 3b Talkeetna River | State | Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat | Forestry (personal use) | Open | Available for leasing | Trapper Cabins Land Disposals Grazing | Recommended for legislative designation |
| 3c Wells Mountain | State/ State Selected | Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat | Grazing Remote Cabins | Open | Available for leasing | Land Disposals | --- |
| 3d Sheep Haven | State | Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat | Remote Cabins | Open | Available for leasing | Grazing Land Disposals | --- |

*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.