

Hatcher Pass Management Plan



**Adopted November, 2010
Amended In Part March, 2012**



**Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section**

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November 2010**

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March 2012**

Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land and Water

In Consultation With
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
and Matanuska-Susitna Borough

This document has been released by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, for the purpose of informing the public about the Hatcher Pass Management Plan, at a cost of \$17.56 per copy, in Anchorage, Alaska.

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The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources finds that the Hatcher Pass Management Plan (HPMP) meets the requirements of AS 38.04.065 and 11 AAC 55.010-.030 for land use plans, and hereby adopts the plan as both the management plan and area plan for this planning area. State lands and waters within the planning boundary of the HPMP will be managed by the Department consistent with the requirements of this plan.

The HPMP also fulfill the requirements of AS 41.23.110, which requires the Commissioner to adopt a management plan for the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (PUA), and the HPMP is hereby adopted for that purpose as well. State lands and waters within PUA will be managed by the Department consistent with the requirements of this plan.



Tom Irwin, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

11/17/10
Date

1/10/2011
Effective Date

PREFACE

Background and Acknowledgements

The preparation of the Hatcher Pass Management Plan was completed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources with the assistance of a number of representatives from agencies within and outside of the Department. The following representatives and contacts variously contributed text, recommendations and review, and assisted in resolving issues with regard to the management plan. The project staff greatly appreciates their help and assistance. We are also indebted to Ruth Booth for checking, formatting, and indexing the text in preparation for printing.

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Cover Photographs

The photographs on the cover of this plan were taken within the Hatcher Pass Management Plan area. Ralph Baldwin provided the photo of the skiers at on the summit ridge of Marmot Mountain. Wayne Biessel provided the photos of Heini Snider Cabin in the Upper Independence Bowl, Summit Lake from the April Bowl Trail, and the Gold Mint Trail. The photo of the snowmachiner near Hatcher Pass was provided by Jason Nielsen.

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Chapter 1: Introduction, Background, and Purpose

Summary of Purpose

The Hatcher Pass Management Plan (2010 Management Plan) is the land use plan for public lands in the Hatcher Pass management plan area. As such, it provides the basis for the management of state and borough lands and affects all authorizations issued by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Matanuska Susitna Borough (borough). It designates the uses that are to occur on public lands¹ and establishes a general direction for public lands management within the planning area. Because of its size, the planning area is separated into ten discrete management units that occupy areas with generally similar characteristics and management direction. For these units, management intent, management guidelines, and management recommendations are also identified.

Planning Area

The area encompassed by the management plan, termed the ‘planning area’, includes the foothills and mountains of the Talkeetna Mountains (Maps 1-1 through 1-3). This large area, consisting of 301,301 acres, extends from the Kashwitna River drainage in the north to the foothills of privately owned land in the south, and from the boundary with the Southeast Susitna Area Plan to the west then east to the boundary of the Matanuska Valley Moose Range. It consists of mostly mountainous topography, much of it covered by glaciers, separated by several large river valleys.

This area is depicted in a series of maps:

- Map 1-1: Land Status
- Map 1-2: Land Status, Topography and Management Boundaries
- Map 1-3: Topographical View of Plan Area
- Map 1-4: Satellite View of Plan Area

Consult these maps to get a better understanding of land status, topography, plan and management unit boundaries, and the distribution of river drainages and cultural features.

¹ ‘Public Lands’ refers to the lands owned or managed by the State of Alaska and Matanuska Susitna Borough. When the term ‘state land’ is used it refers to only state land, and when the term ‘Borough Land’ is used, this refers to only that land owned or managed by the Matanuska Susitna Borough.

Description of Planning Area (General)

The planning area is situated in the southwestern corner of the Talkeetna Mountains. Except for river bottoms of the larger streams and some of the foothill areas in the western part of the planning area, topography is characteristically mountainous with numerous glaciers, cirques, and lakes. The area is avalanche prone². Vegetative patterns reflect the climatic influences and topography. Evergreen-deciduous forests, consisting mostly of spruce and poplars, occupy the relatively few areas of level terrain in the western and southern parts of the planning area and extend up the larger river valleys. Most of the management area is found at or above timberline and consists primarily of alder and willow brushfields, meadows consisting primarily of bluejoint plant communities, and, at higher elevations in the alpine zone, low-growing woody plants and alpine tundra. The Little Susitna, Willow, Sheep, and Montana Creeks and the Kashwitna and Talkeetna Rivers all flow through the planning area. All are considered navigable under state navigability criteria and all are anadromous.

The principal natural resources within the planning area are associated with the fish and wildlife populations and mineral resources. There is a significant concentration of moose in the western most part of the planning area, near the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area and extending south into the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit. Other wildlife includes caribou, sheep, black and brown bears, wolf, wolverine, coyote, beaver, fox, martin, mink, and weasel. Resident ptarmigan, spruce grouse, and nesting tundra birds also occur within the area as well as raptors, song birds, and bird species associated with wetlands.

There are many anadromous streams in the planning area in which high value resident fish species are also present. Placer and hard rock mining has occurred in this area since the early 1900s and is within the Willow Creek Mining District. There are over 500 mining claims, both federal and state, primarily within the Independence and Craigie Creek management units, as well as but extending southward into the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit along Grubstake Gulch and Homestake Creek.

Other than mining, the Hatcher Pass area is primarily used for public recreation, which has increased significantly over the last 25 years since the initial plan was prepared. The open, rolling terrain, steep-walled valleys and jagged peaks provide a variety of recreational opportunities. Popular summer uses include sight-seeing, photography, hiking, river kayaking, mountaineering, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, hang-gliding, rock collection, off-road vehicle use in designated locations, and berry picking. Winter use includes various types of cross-country skiing, telemarking, boarding, sledding, and down-hill skiing, dog mushing, and snow-machining. Both summer and winter use has increased dramatically, but especially winter recreation. This is at least partly because of the area's deep powder snow, which comes early in the fall and remains late into spring, which makes for diverse skiing, boarding, and snow-machining opportunities and for an extended winter use period.

² An Avalanche Study was conducted during the 1986 Management Plan Process. A map of the original planning area that depicts the results from that study is included as Appendix E of this plan.

A more detailed description of the area's uses and natural resources is contained in Chapters 2 and 3; consult those chapters for detail.

Land Ownership and Land Status

The Hatcher Pass management area³ consists of a mixed ownership pattern of private, borough, and state land, although the state is the principal land owner. There are 301,301 acres within this area. Map 1-2 provides an indication of both the amount of the various types of land ownership as well as its distribution. Private ownership generally coincides with current or patented federal mining claims in the Independence, Craigie Creek and Archangel units and constitutes only 1% of the total planning area. The Mat-Su Borough land ownership totals 3,369 acres, most of which (3,272 acres) is situated within the Government Peak unit. The remainder of the management area consists of state land, or 294,652 acres.

Table 1-1: Land Ownership Summary

<u>Land Owner</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
State:	294,652
Mat-Su Borough:	3,369
Private:	2,965
Federal Mining Claim:	315
Planning Area Total:	301,301

**Note: Plan recommendations do not apply to private land or federal mining claims.*

General Domain Land. Most of the state land consists of 'general domain' land, which is governed by AS 38 statutory requirements and by associated Administrative Code (11 AAC 96). This land is to be managed for multiple use and sustained yield of the area's renewable resources, although state land use plans can direct this management toward particular uses.

Special Purpose Land. 'Special purpose' land differs from general domain land in that the legislature can, under statute and the state constitution, designate certain areas as a special purpose site, withdrawing the land from the general domain. Examples include state park, state game refuges, critical habitat areas, recreation areas, and public use areas. Termed Legislatively Designated Areas (LDAs), two occur within the management area. These include the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area (CHA) in the western part of the planning area, and the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (PUA) generally situated along the Little Susitna river drainage. These areas are to be managed according to the statutory requirements of the pertinent LDA. The remainder of the planning area is affected by AS 38.04 and 38.05 planning and use requirements.

³ The term 'management area' as used in this plan refers to the area encompassed by the plan boundary.

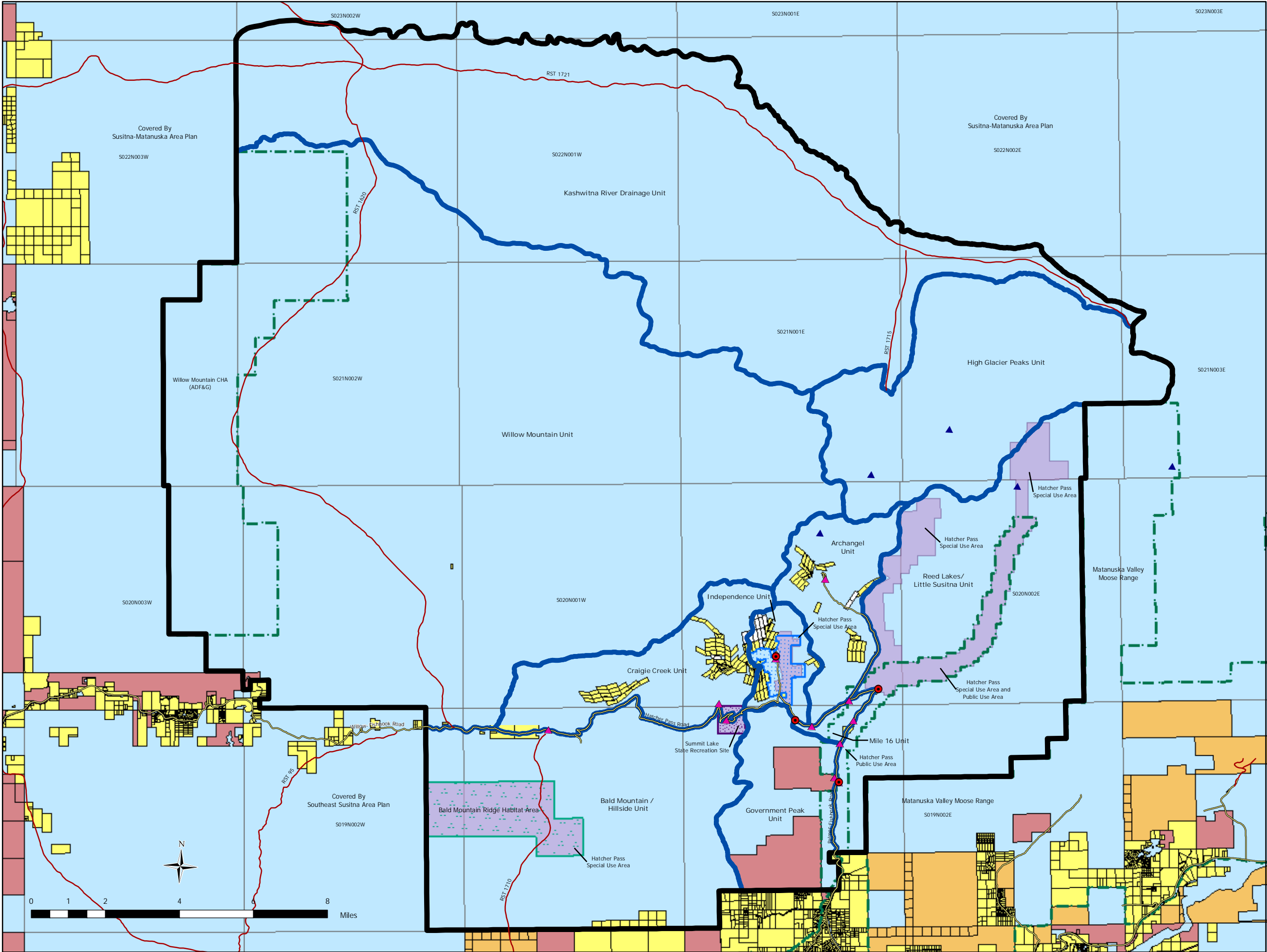
Legislatively Designated Areas. Management requirements pertaining to the two LDAs:

- The Hatcher Pass PUA is managed under AS 41.23.130. This section of statute requires that the state owned land within the PUA be managed to be consistent with “their primary function as public use land.” DNR interprets this broadly in the sense a variety of uses may be allowed within the Hatcher Pass PUA if they do not interfere with public recreation. A Public Use Area is also subject to the requirements of AS 38.04 and AS 38.05.
- The Willow Mountain CHA is controlled by AS 16.20.500-530, which is the general authority for Critical Habitat Areas, and more specifically by 5 AAC 95.420, which lists the activities that require a permit. The latter precludes certain activities from occurring within a CHA unless a special permit is issued by ADF&G Division of Habitat which affirms that the use is compatible with statutory intent. Among the uses that are prohibited (except by permit) are construction or the continuing use of structures, destruction of vegetation, off-road use of wheeled or tracked equipment, and grazing and general husbandry. ADF&G has routinely issued special area permits to the general public, which authorizes certain types of off road use in the CHA. ADF&G should be contacted for current information regarding routes and off road vehicle uses.

The CHAs are to be managed under a management plan prepared by ADF&G as required by AS 16.20.620(b). Until such a plan is prepared, ADF&G decisions are to be consistent with the management intent for the Willow Mountain unit in the 1986 HPMP. ADF&G intends to develop a management plan for the CHA in the near future. Once that plan is prepared, it will control activities within the CHA that are of the type listed in 5 AAC 95.420. The HPMP will only have limited applicability once the CHA management plan is approved.

Land Administered Under ILMAs. There are two other areas that, while not LDAs, are managed for specific purposes that are defined in an Interagency Land Management Agreement (ILMAs). ILMAs are issued by the Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW) to another state agency (like Alaska Department of Fish & Game) or to another division within DNR for the purpose of transferring management authority for the administration of state land and waters from DMLW to another entity for specific site and areas. In the case of Hatcher Pass, there are two such ILMAs, both of which are issued to the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR): one for the Summit Lake State Recreation Site and another, for the Independence Mine. These areas are to be managed consistent with the requirements of the ILMA and with the requirements that the DPOR may impose under their general park authorities in Administrative Code (11 AAC 12). While these specific areas are not withdrawn from state general domain land, they are administered under the more restrictive DPOR authorities of 11 AAC 12.

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan
Map 1-1
Land Status



- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 1986
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- State Land
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claim
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas
- Parking and Restrooms

* All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
* Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
* Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only
* Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 41.23.130



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section
Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

*This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N*

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 1-2

Land Status, Topography and
Management Boundaries

- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 1986
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claim
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas
- Parking and Restrooms

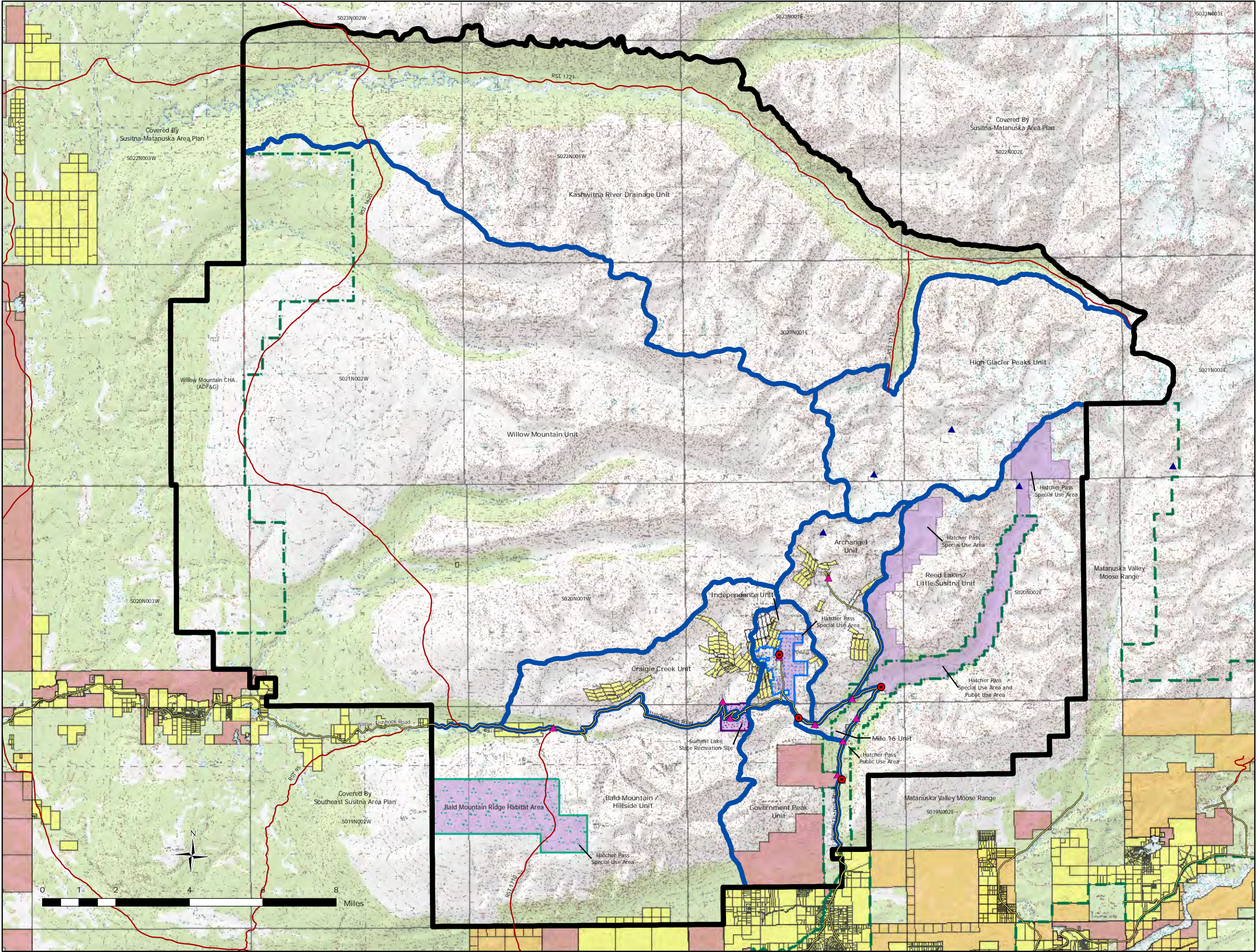
* General State Land Is Clear Topography
* All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
* Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
* Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only
* Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 41.23.130

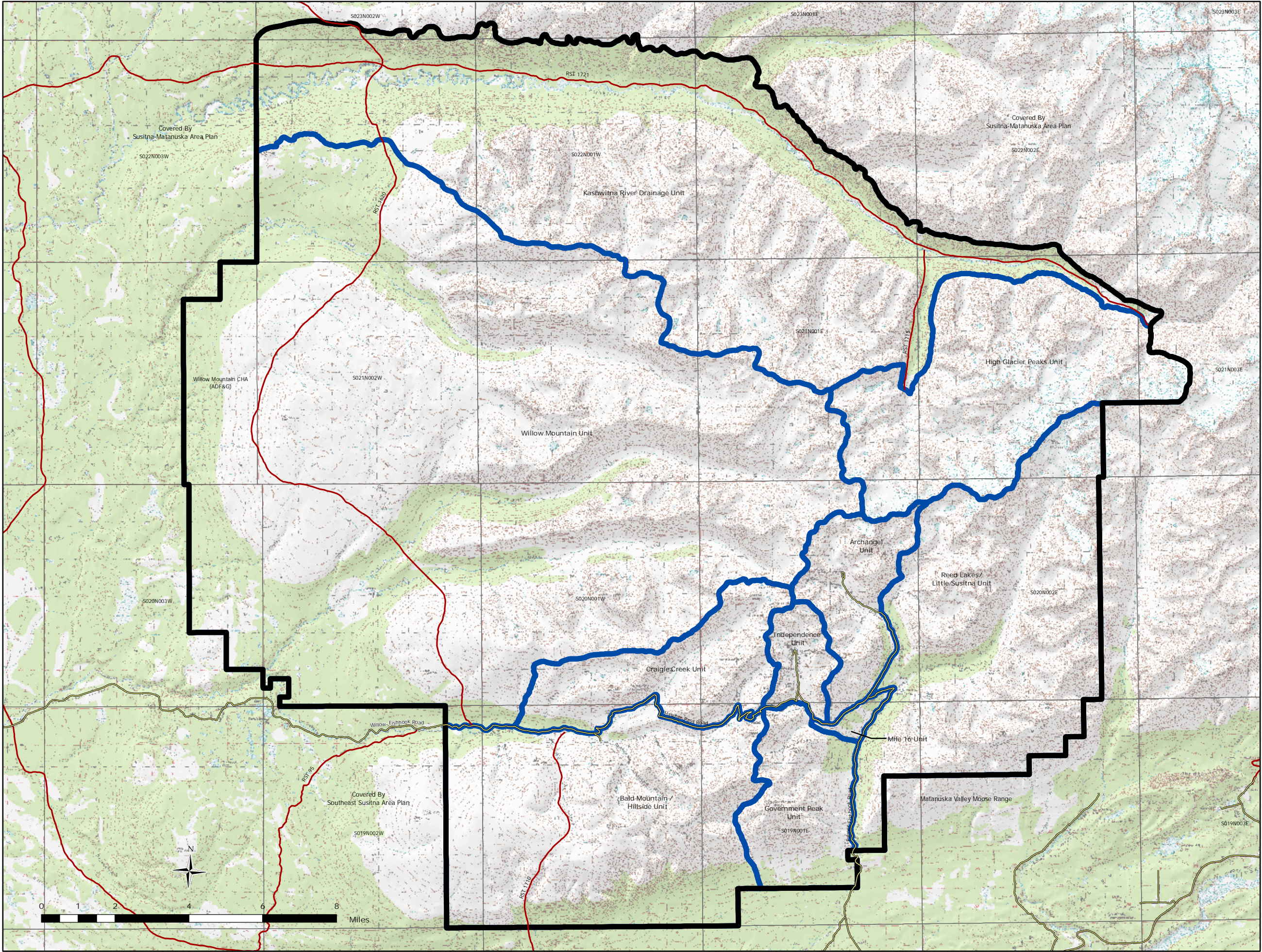


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Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 1-3

Topographical View
of Plan Area

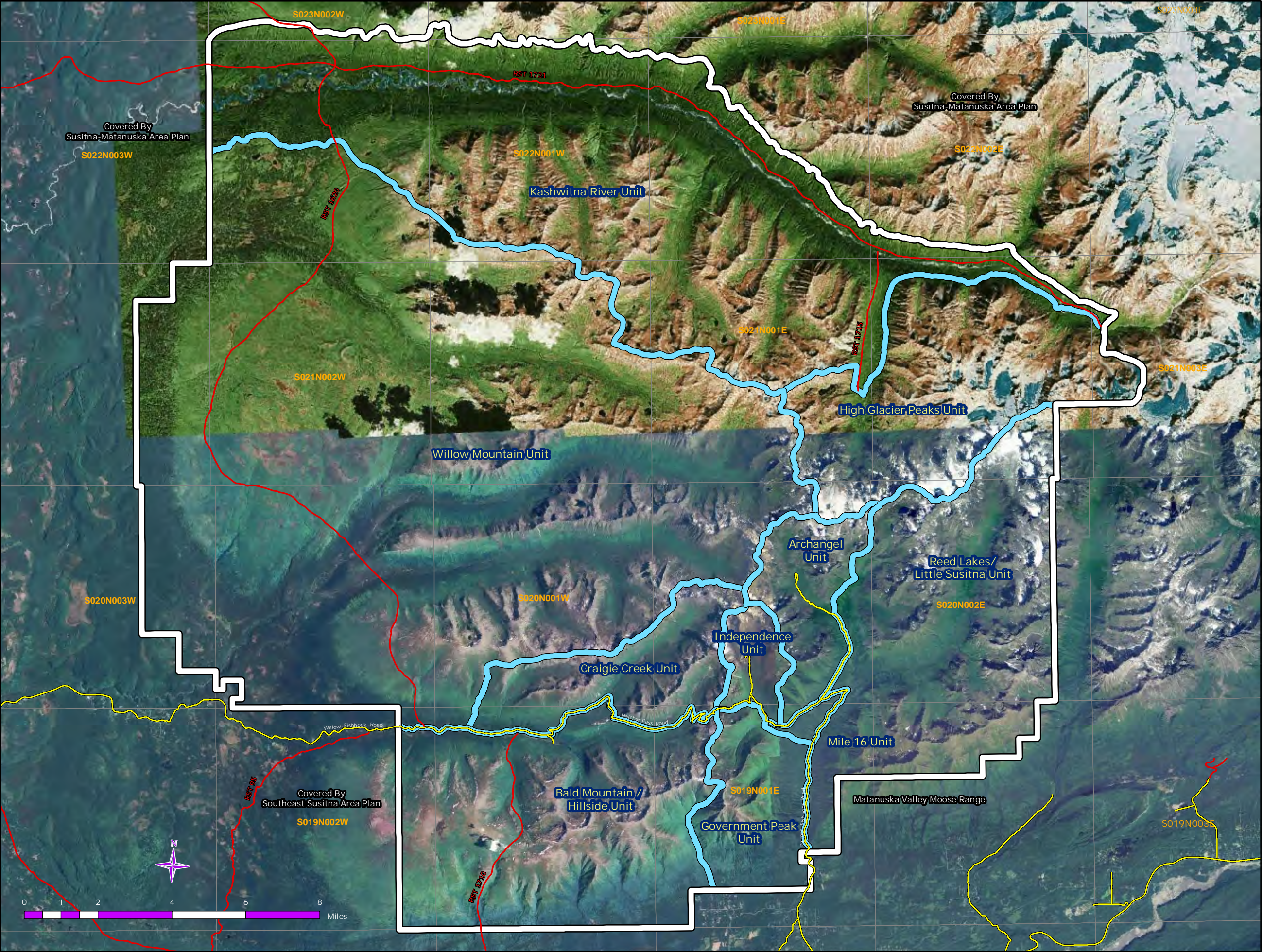
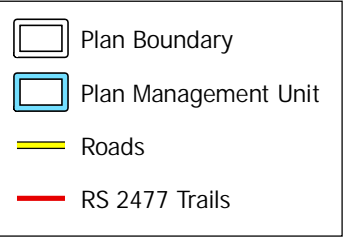
- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails



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Coordinate System: NAAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

Planning History

There has been the recognition for some time that, because of the amount and diversity of use within the Hatcher Pass area, active management and planning is necessary.

The first management plan was prepared in the early 1980s and adopted in October, 1986⁴. The reasons given for the initial plan development are similar to those that are driving this revision, but are also somewhat different. The initial planning effort was undertaken in response to the increasing, year-round recreational use in the Hatcher Pass area, the conflict between uses in the narrow road corridor, the need for improved access and parking facilities and interest in developing a major ski resort on state land in the Government Peak unit. Except for the parts of the plan affected by a 1989 Plan Amendment, the 1986 Management Plan remains the basis for the current management of the Hatcher Pass area until the 2010 Management Plan is adopted formally.

There was a significant amendment of a portion of the 1986 Management Plan in 1989.⁵ This amendment focused on revision of the Government Peak unit and revised the 1986 Management Plan to provide detailed management guidelines and requirements for the development of a downhill (Alpine) ski area and four-season resort. Other than the extensive revision of this and adjacent units to accommodate the proposed ski development, little else in the plan was changed through the 1989 Amendment, with certain exceptions. The Reed Lakes subunit was modified to create a non-motorized special use area, and the Little Susitna subunit was changed to extend this non-motorized area to the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area.

A revision of the Government Peak subunit was also attempted in 2008, but did not proceed to adoption. The borough developed a draft Special Land Use District (SPUD) for the area of the Government Peak subunit, which would have the effect of placing specific land use controls on any development that would occur on borough owned land for the ski resort and on state owned land that contained the proposed ski runs. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) had developed a plan amendment that would have implemented the proposed SPUD on state land, the effect of which, if adopted, would have rescinded the 1989 Plan Amendment. The Borough Assembly did not take action on the proposed SPUD and, instead, directed the borough administration to develop a Development Suitability Analysis and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prior to action being taken on the SPUD. DNR postponed any action on Hatcher Pass until the borough had developed a position on development within the Government Peak subunit. The borough completed the EIS on May 5, 2010.

⁴ The original plan is termed the '1986 Management Plan' in this document.

⁵ Termed the '1989 Plan Amendment' in this document.

Reasons for Plan Revision

Many of the reasons for the preparation of the initial plan in the early 1980s remain valid or have increased in urgency. There has been increasing use of the Hatcher Pass area for both winter and summer recreation activities, and conflicts between uses, primarily during the winter, have intensified in areas near the road in the East Side⁶ of the planning area. However, there are somewhat different reasons for the 2010 revision of the management plan. These include but are not limited to:

- Changes in land ownership. The Borough owned large portions (3,000 acres) of the Government Peak Management Unit. This land was obtained by the borough as a conveyance of state land as part of their municipal entitlement. An additional 272 acres were conveyed to the borough through a land exchange in March 2012. (See ADL 231234 and LCO SC-09-003AO1 for more information on this land exchange).
- Transfer of interest in and management responsibility for the development of a ski area/resort in the Government Peak unit. In addition to the conveyance of state land in this area to the borough, DMLW established a Development Lease⁷ that affects over 11,000 acres of land, which transfers the authority for the development of public ski facilities in that area to the Borough.
- Enactment of LDAs and ILMAs. These did not exist in the original plan, are now enacted, and impose different management requirements for state land and waters than in general domain land (which they previously were a part of).
- Changes in the technology of snow machines which are more powerful and can traverse slopes greatly in excess of the types of machines in use in the 1970s and 1980s. This has provided access to areas previously not accessible to snowmachines.
- Difficulties in plan interpretation and use by DMLW and DPOR. Both divisions have responsibility for the management of state land in Hatcher Pass, including the issuance of authorizations. Because the plan is outdated, it is not immediately evident what the management recommendations and requirements are for specific areas. This has resulted in confusion and a misunderstanding of what the plan requires.
- Mapping inconsistency between DPOR maps for snowmachine use, maps within the 1986 Management Plan, and maps associated with regulations promulgated under 11 AAC 96. In some cases regulations close an area to motorized use that, as a

⁶ *East Side*: the area that is situated generally east of the road summit at Bullion Mountain near Summit Lake. It encompasses the following units: High Glacier Peaks, Reed Lakes / Little Susitna, Independence, and Government Peak. The *West Side* is to the west of that location and includes the following units: Cragie Creek, Bald Mountain / Hillside, Willow Mountain, and the Kashwitna River Drainage (since the bulk of the latter area is situated west of Bullion Mountain. See the Adopted Plan Map (Map 2-5) for detail.

⁷ The Development Lease is explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

matter of practice, has been open to that use for many years and, conversely, areas designated in DPOR maps for motorized use are actually closed to this use. This needs to be fixed so that it is clear what areas are open or not open to motorized use.

- Expansion of the area used for winter recreation and increasing back-country use.
- Increase in population growth and recreation demands during both the summer and winter.

Management Restrictions and Authorities Related to Statute and Administrative Code

This management plan applies to state general domain land, the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (a legislatively designated area), and borough land. It does not apply to private land and normally does not apply to state land conveyed to municipalities. However, the borough has agreed, in settlement litigation, to conform to the requirements of the management plan as it pertains to borough land.

Most of the land within the Hatcher Pass management area is state land designated as general domain land. Such areas are controlled under AS 38 (General Land Management) and are subject to those standards and the associated requirements of Administrative Code in 11 AAC 96. Certain components of statute and administrative code are particularly relevant to the management of general domain land and to decisions on certain types of land use activities within the Hatcher Pass management area.

Traditional Means of Access (AS 38.04.200). This section of statute places restrictions on the authority of DNR to manage state land and water so that “a traditional means of access for traditional outdoor activities is restricted for the purpose of protecting aesthetic values.” AS 38.04.200(a). Traditional means of access means those types of transportation on, to, or in state land for “which a popular pattern of use has developed.” Traditional outdoor activities means those types of activities that people may use for sport, subsistence, or personal enjoyment and that have been historically conducted as part of individual, family, or community life pattern on state land. Aesthetic values means those values that are an expression of the social or cultural viewpoint held by a portion of the population. Based on this statute, an area(s) cannot be closed to motorized use when a popular pattern of use has been established if the intent is related to ‘aesthetic’ reasons, which are defined in statute as “those values that exist as an expression of the social or cultural viewpoint held by a portion of the population.”

Under certain conditions an area can be closed to motorized use: if the area is less than 640 contiguous acres in size, if the closure is temporary in nature and if it is effective for less than a period of eight months in a three-year period, for the protection of public safety and public or private property, or is necessary for the development of natural resources and a reasonable alternative is available and approved by the Commissioner. AS 38.04.200(a)(1). DNR interprets and applies this restriction as it is stated. That is, there must be issues of

public safety, protection of private or public property (which can include habitat degradation), or conflict with actual or potential natural resources for DNR to close an area to motorized use when such use has been established as a popular pattern of recreational use.

Special Use Land (11 AAC 96.014). This section of regulation permits DNR to impose special requirements or additional protections on state land when DNR determines that an area possesses special scenic, recreational, or resource values that warrant this additional protection. In 1987, DNR created a Special Use Land area (ADL 223585) in portions of the Hatcher Pass management area⁸ in order to protect certain natural features and manage certain forms of motorized use. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3). These areas are shown in Map 1-5, which depicts two areas of closure: one seasonal (summer) and one year-round. The affected areas include the following units: Independence, Reed Lake / Little Susitna, and Government Peak. These are subject to a year-round closure to motorized use. A small portion of the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit has a summer closure.

Changes to the non-motorized areas depicted on Map 1-5 are subject to the requirements of AS 38.04.200 and revisions to this map can only occur when the requirements of this portion of statute are satisfied.

General Park Provisions (11 AAC 12). This section of administrative regulation permits DPOR to impose its General Provision regulations on state general domain land when there is a management agreement between DMLW and DPOR that transfers management authority for the control of certain uses (in this case, for recreation). A management agreement exists and includes management units⁹ that experience heavy recreation use, allowing DPOR to exercise its authorities on state general domain land. This practice occurs throughout the state when the types of uses and activities on state land can best be managed by DPOR. Usually, small areas are involved. These authorities do not affect land owned by the borough.

This revision affects all general domain land within the management area and is intended to supersede the 11 AAC 12 authorities now used to close areas to motorized uses. Other aspects of the 11 AAC 12 authorities are intended to continue.

Relationship of Management Plan to Area Plans, Land Use Regulations, and Hatcher Pass PUA Management Plan

Area Plan (AS 38.04.065(a)). DNR is required to develop a ‘land use plan’ for the management of state lands and waters on general domain land, and authorizations that DNR issues shall be based on such plans. DNR has two general types of land use plans: area plans

⁸ The Government Peak unit is not actually closed by this regulation since the Special Use Area Map that was adopted with the regulation did not depict this area as being affected. Rather, this area, while closed to motorized use, is closed under 11 AAC 12.

⁹ Includes all or portions of the Government Peak, Independence, Archangel, Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management units.

and management plans. Area plans typically cover a very large geographic area and establish plan designations, management intent, and management guidelines. Management plans are often developed for smaller geographic areas, are usually focused on the management of a land use or resource at a detailed level, and may or may not also perform the functions of an area plan. The Hatcher Pass Management Plan is a type of management plan, but it has been developed to also provide the functions of an area plan. It classifies state land within the management area and exercises other authorities related to AS 38.04.065(a). It is stand-alone management plan that functions as both a management plan and an area plan.

Other Area Plans and Management Plans. Adjoining area plans include the Southeast Susitna Area Plan and the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan¹⁰. Neither of these area plans pertain to or contain requirements affecting the Hatcher Pass management area. Adjoining management plans include the Moose Range Management Plan, the Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan, and Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan. The HPMP is to function as the basis for decision-making within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area until a management plan is developed by ADF&G.

Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Management Plan. The statute that created the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (AS 41.23.100) requires the Commissioner of DNR to adopt (and revise) a management plan for the Hatcher Pass PUA (AS 41.23.110(c)). This plan is to be consistent with the purposes of the PUA (AS 41.23.100) and, under AS 41.23.130, the Commissioner may prohibited or restrict incompatible uses. It is also intended that the plan designate routes for motorized and non-motorized access within the Hatcher Pass PUA. If uses are designated as incompatible, the plan must indicate the determination of incompatibility, the area where and when the specific restriction is to apply, and the reasons for the incompatibility.

It is intended that the 2010 Management Plan function to fulfill the requirements of the management plan indicated in AS 41.23.110(c).

Special Use Land Regulations (11 AAC 96.01). This plan is to form the basis for the regulations enacted under 11 AAC 96.014. The current regulations are based on the 1986 Management Plan and have been partially modified by the recommended changes in non-motorized use areas contained in Chapter 2 (section on Recreation) and Chapter 3 (management units). See Appendix D to review the regulations that are proposed to be revised.

¹⁰ The Susitna-Matanuska Area Plan has been developed and is in final form, but is awaiting Commissioner approval. It will replace the 1986 Susitna Area Plan when adopted, but at this time (2011) the 1986 Susitna Area Plan functions as the area plan.

What the Management Plan Will and Will Not Do

Although the management plan is intended to be the basis for the management of state and borough land within the management area, it is also constrained in its application.

What the Plan Will Do:

- Provide for the planning and management of state and borough land.
- Supersede all management direction and requirements from the 1986 Management Plan and the 1989 Plan Amendment.
- Reclassify all state and borough lands within the planning area.
- Provide the basis for the designation of motorized and non-motorized areas, both seasonal and year-round.
- Provide the basis for the revision of the current regulations affecting motorized uses (11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)).
- Provide the basis for the management of recreational uses, both winter and summer.
- Restrict development within the management area to those uses provided by law (mining) and identified in this management plan.

What the Plan Will Not Do:

- Affect Native Corporation or private land, including native allotments.
- Close large, additional areas to mineral entry under AS 38.05.185 and .300¹¹.
- Affect existing surface leases.
- Amend the regulations that affect motorized uses.¹²
- Provide the basis for the management of the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area.
- Affect the authorities of ADF&G to manage fish and game or ADF&G harvest regulations.

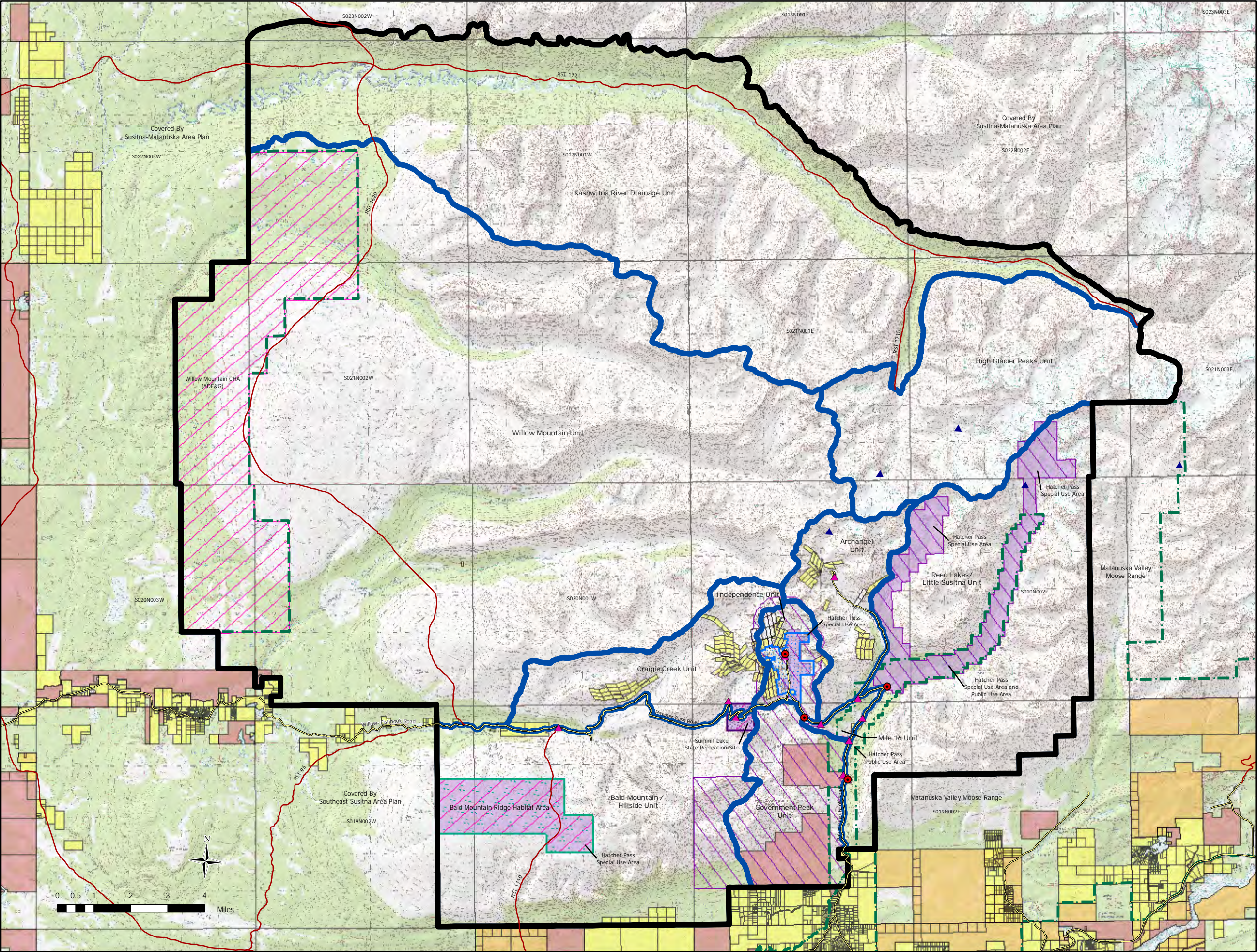
¹¹ Two small areas of state land are, however, recommended to be closed in the Independence and Archangel management units.

¹² Although the plan is intended to provide the basis for the regulation of these uses within the management area, it cannot do so directly. A separate process, which is to occur subsequent to the adoption of this plan, must be followed to enact regulations or changes to regulations.

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 1-5

Land Status, Topography,
and 1986 Recreational
Motorized Closures



- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 1986
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year - 1986)
- Non-Motorized (Summer - 1986)
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claim
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas
- Parking and Restrooms

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
* All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
* Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
* Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only
* Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 41.23.130



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section
Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

*This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N*

How the Management Plan Will be Used

The plan has several major functions. It will:

- Provide an overall management strategy for the management area as well as specific management strategy for individual management units.
- Provide the basis for DNR and borough management of its lands during the planning period, which is 20 years or until revised.
- Function as the Hatcher Pass Management Plan as mandated under AS 41.23.110(c).
- Provide the basis for the management of recreation uses, both summer and winter.
- Provide the basis for the revision of regulations under 11 AAC 96.014 that manage certain types of motorized uses within the management area. Said differently, it will provide the basis for the designation of non-motorized areas (seasonal and year-round) within the planning area.
- Identify allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses on an areawide basis and for individual management units.
- Identify recommendations to implement the plan and to keep it current.

Organization and Scope of Plan

The Hatcher Pass Management Plan is divided into four chapters containing the following topics:

Chapter 1. Introduction, Background, and Purpose

This chapter provides a description of the planning area, the type and distribution of land ownership and land status, an analysis of applicable statutes and regulations that affect planning within the management area, descriptions of planning history and the reasons for plan revision, an indication of what the plan is intended to accomplish and those actions that it cannot implement, the relationship of this plan to area plans and to other management plans, and a summary of major issues encountered during the plan preparation process.

Chapter 2. Areawide Goals, Policies, and Recommendations

This chapter describes the goals, management guidelines, and management recommendations for each of the major resources with the management area (Subsurface Resources, Water Reservation, Material Sites, Fish and Wildlife Habitat, Recreation, Cultural Resources, and Public Access and Transportation). These goals, guidelines, and recommendations affect each of the 10 management units within the planning area. It also identifies those uses that are allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed on an areawide and individual management unit basis.

Chapter 3. General Management Strategy and Management Units

This chapter describes the overall management approach for the management area recommended in this plan as well as specific management strategies for individual management units, consisting of:

- General Management Intent: provides an overview of general management intent, especially related to public recreation activities.
- Management Strategy for Individual Management Units: provides a detailed description of the resources, general management intent, management guidelines for uses and structures, and management recommendations. Also provides a listing of allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses within each management unit.
- A summary of allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses for the management area.

Chapter 4. Implementation

This chapter describes those actions necessary to implement the recommendations of this plan, including, most importantly, the basis for the issuance of DNR and borough authorizations, a land classification order that classifies the state land within the management area, a mineral closing order within the Independence and Archangel management units, and recommended additions to the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area. Also included are a listing of facility recommendations and a listing of agency responsibilities for plan implementation.

Summary of Issues

A wide variety of issues were addressed during the plan revision process:

- The overriding issue throughout the planning area was the determination of non-motorized areas for winter recreation use. By far the majority of public comments and discussion focused on this issue. Recreationists who use non-motorized forms of transportation favored all of the East Side becoming non-motorized while those favoring motorized transportation wanted to expand access to more remote areas through the use of corridors within or adjacent to current non-motorized areas.
- The need to revise regulations related to non-motorized uses was very much related to the issues of winter non-motorized/motorized uses, and focused on the revision of those regulations intended to implement the plan recommendations.
- The development of motorized forms of transportation within both the West Side and East Side during the summer emerged as important issues, although not as significant as winter recreation issues. In the East Side, this focused on the identification of

routes, some of which could be joint winter-summer routes, while others would be used during the summer only. On the West Side, the degradation of areas affected by ATVs, need for facilities, and identification of routes emerged as primary issues.

- The development of motorized use corridors, particularly within the Government Peak management unit, was very contentious. An even split emerged amongst the public during scoping and focus group meetings over whether motorized routes within the East Side of the planning area were appropriate. Supporters of these facilities felt that it would be appropriate to develop such corridors in order to provide access routes to the more remote areas for winter recreation use faster. They felt that the routes would decrease conflict in the popular areas. Those opposed to motorized corridors felt that additional access routes through traditionally non-motorized areas would increase recreational user conflict.
- The need to develop facilities to support increasing levels of recreational use; this focused on the need to develop use corridors, parking facilities, highway pull-outs, scenic pull-outs, and sanitation facilities. There was general agreement about the need to develop such facilities.
- Expansion of the planning boundary to correspond to actual use areas was also significant, and resulted in the inclusion of the Kashwitna River Drainage and High Glacier Peaks management units.
- Underlying all of these issues, however, was clarification of the uses that the Hatcher Pass management area was to be managed for. Most individuals felt that this area had progressed over time to a principal recreational area for the Valley and Anchorage, and that the type of uses allowed within this area should be compatible with this changed orientation. They felt that the management plan should be developed to fulfill a primary recreation orientation.

Relationship of 2010 Management Plan to 1986 Management Plan and 1989 Plan Amendment.

The 2010 Plan supersedes and replaces the 1986 Plan and 1989 Plan Amendment. The provisions of the 1986 Plan and the 1989 Plan Amendment no longer apply.

Special Use Designation (ADL 223585) and 11 AAC 96 Regulations

The Special Use Designation (ADL 223585), derived from the 1986 Plan, remains valid and continues to apply. This special use designation (SUD) formed the basis for the development of regulations (2002) under 11 AAC 96.014 that closed certain areas to motorized uses. In terms of application, the SUD applies to the Independence, Archangel, Reed Lakes / Little Susitna River, Mile 16, High Glacier Peaks, and Government Peak management units. Generally, this is the same area of application as originally identified, although the specific

areas of application changes under the provisions of the 2010 Plan. Since somewhat different management units are used in the 2010 Plan, the references to management units also need to be changed to correspond to the nomenclature used in the 2010 Plan. The 2010 Plan recommends changes to the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014, and a separate regulation revision and adoption process is to occur in 2011-2012.

Planning Period

The 2010 Management Plan guides state and borough land use and resource decisions for the next 20 years (from the date of adoption¹³) or until the plan is revised.

Public Participation Process

An extensive Public Participation Process was conducted over a two year period in order to identify issues important to the public and to obtain their comments and recommendations. Over 20 meetings were held for the public and over 2,000 comments were received during the planning process. The involvement of the public helped shape the recommendations made in this plan. Their attendance at meetings, written comments, recommendations, and public statements were an integral part of this plan revision. Nearly all of the comments were related to recreational use and, specifically, to issues associated with motorized and non-motorized recreation.

Below is a general description of the Planning Process that DMLW follows during plan development and revisions, which was adhered to through the Hatcher Pass Management Plan Revision.

Planning Process Overview

There are certain distinct steps that are followed in the development of state area or management plans, and the 2010 Management Plan adhered (generally) to the same processes as used for other DNR plans. All of the steps that are described have been completed.¹⁴

Review Existing Plan.

Review the existing management plan to determine what needed to be revised and what aspects were still working and could be retained. The review of the HPMP indicated that the 1986 plan needed to be revised.

¹³ November 17, 2010.

¹⁴ For more detail about the Hatcher Pass Management Plan Revision process, comments and meetings, see Appendix E.

Gather Information about the Planning Area

Contact affected state agencies to inform them that the planning process has begun and request their participation in the process. Review land ownership records and available resource data to determine current use patterns, such as mining, habitat, forestry and recreation. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough was also involved in this plan revision.

Identify Issues

Notify the public that a plan revision process has begun according to the requirements in Alaska Statute AS 38.05.945. Hold public meetings and encourage public comments in order to determine what issues are important to the public and need to be addressed in the plan.

Preparation of an Agency Review Draft (ARD)

Develop a draft of the plan for review by the effected state and borough agencies based on data received from those agencies, land research, and public input and request their comments and recommendations. Revise where appropriate.

Public Review Draft and Comment Period

The revised ARD becomes the Public Review Draft (PRD). The PRD is released for public review and comments. Additional meetings are held with the public to provide substantial opportunities for public input and education about the information in the revised plan. A public comment period is typically 45 – 60 days.

The Issue Response Summary and Final Plan

An Issue Response Summary is developed to address the public comments and recommendations received regarding the PRD. Changes that will be made to the final plan are detailed in the Issue Response Summary and extracted into a “List of Approved Revisions”.

Adoption by DNR Commissioner

The PRD and Issue Response Summary constitute the final plan. These documents are sent to the commissioner for adoption and once adopted, serve as the management plan until the plan is finalized. The Hatcher Pass Management Plan was adopted by the DNR Commissioner on November 17, 2010.

Request for Reconsideration

A 30 day review period is provided for the public to submit requests for reconsideration of the plan adoption. If no requests are received, the plan is formerly adopted. If requests are received, the Program Support Unit develops the “Commissioner’s Decision” to respond to each issue raised and provide and revisions to the plan, if found appropriate.

Final Plan

Once the commissioner has adopted the plan and any appeals for reconsideration have been resolved, the plan is final and goes into effect. At this point it becomes the basis for DNR decision-making within the plan boundary.

Chapter 2:

Areawide Goals, Policies, and Management Guidelines

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Chapter 2:

Areawide Goals, Policies, and Management Guidelines

Scope of Chapter 2

This chapter presents the goals, policies, management guidelines, as well as specific management recommendations that cover and affect the entire management area. The goals, policies, and requirements that follow focus on the management of the principal natural resources and uses (or activities) that require specific management direction within the management area. Only those uses that are appropriate within the planning area and require detailed policies to guide their use or development are included in this Chapter. Guidelines for uses that *could occur* within the management area *but are not considered appropriate* within the planning area are *not* included. Uses considered inappropriate must go through a written decision and/or plan amendment process to be authorized. These requirements do not pertain to what is termed the Generally Allowed Uses on state land under 11 AAC 96.

The 1986 plan recommended that the entire Hatcher Pass Management Planning Area be managed with recreation as a primary use, and this revision maintains that orientation. The uses and resources that are managed in this revision of the management plan do not greatly differ from those dealt with in the 1986 plan and the 1989 plan amendment. However, certain use recommendations made in the 1986 plan are no longer relevant because they have not occurred in the area during the life of the existing plan or are no longer consistent with the primary use of the area, which is recreation. Because some of those uses are no longer relevant, they are not dealt with in this revision. Accordingly, this chapter provides a discussion of recreation and the other uses that can be expected to occur in the planning area.

A discussion of the relationship of Generally Allowed Uses on state land to this management plan is also provided. The latter is provided since certain aspects of public use within the planning area are not affected (are not under the jurisdiction) of this plan, and there is widespread confusion over what a plan may affect and what is allowed as a matter of right under state law and regulations. For example, the plan does not control the use of motorized vehicles whereas the regulations do.

Central Management Direction: Recreation

Although the 1986 Management Plan dealt extensively with recreation, the plan also dealt with a broad range of issues, some of which are no longer relevant in the area. Uses were identified in the 1986 Management Plan that could be described as extractive or commercial in character. Grazing, commercial timber harvest and private commercial facilities (involving structures) were recognized as appropriate. Since the 1980's, the Hatcher Pass

has experienced marked additional recreation use, the development of regulations to manage recreation use, the active management of recreation on the East Side by DPOR and the Borough, and indications are that the use patterns of the Hatcher Pass area will continued to evolve in the direction of further recreation use. Most people think of this area now as a recreation area and, based on the results of the recent public participation process, have expressed the desire that area be used primarily for recreation and managed with this use as a focus. This revision reflects this shift in public perception and in use.

The central management orientation of this plan is to manage the Hatcher Pass area for recreation and for those uses compatible with this activity or otherwise allowed by law, including mining.

DNR recognizes that certain areas may best be managed for particular uses that are compatible with each other, and incompatible activities prohibited as long as the prohibited types of uses are allowed elsewhere on adjacent state land. To this end, certain uses are prohibited in the 2010 Management Plan: grazing, agriculture, general commercial development in most parts of the planning area, settlement (including remote settlement), and commercial timber harvest. This chapter, accordingly, does not deal with these uses or land use patterns.

Important exceptions to this general orientation exist and should be noted. Mineral exploration, development, and processing is allowed, consistent with state mining law and regulation except for the Government Peak unit which is closed to mineral exploration and development, the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area, and certain small areas associated with recreation facilities. Additionally, the development of ski or similar types of recreational facilities that involves private (or public) commercial use is recognized as appropriate on borough and state land within the Government Peak unit. Residential uses are not permitted outside the Government Peak unit. Material extraction (gravel) is allowed within the West Side and is also allowed for public road and trail construction; public facilities related to utilities; roads; and trail development and maintenance, emergency facilities are on the East Side. A listing of allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses are listed in Table 2-1.

Generally Allowed Uses

Certain uses are allowed under state law and administrative regulation on *state* land¹ that is designated as general domain land. With the exception of the two LDAs and the two ILMAs (see Chapter 1 for description), all of the state land in the management area is general domain land and subject to management under AS 38.04 and AS 38.05. The requirements of

¹ This discussion of generally allowed uses relates to *state owned* land. GAU requirements do not affect private or borough land, land withdrawn or designated by the state legislature for management as a special purpose site, or state selected land.

11 AAC 96.020 (Generally Allowed Uses) applies to these lands. That is, all of those uses allowed in 11 AAC 96.020 may take place within the plan area except for certain areas that may be constrained by regulation (11 AAC 96.014).

11 AAC 96.020 states that certain uses either alone or in combination on state land do not require a permit or other form of authorization from DNR. Uses that are generally allowed include non-motorized and motorized forms of transportation. Some allowable non-motorized uses include hiking, climbing, skiing, bicycling, or travel by horse or dogsled. Motorized use is allowable for highway vehicles up to 10,000 pounds on road easements and all-terrain vehicles up to 1,500 pounds, on or off road, provided the use does not cause adverse effects to water quality, ground disturbance and significant rutting. See 11 AAC 96.020 for complete list of allowable uses.

Generally allowed uses under 11 AAC 96.020 *are not directly affected* by this management plan, *and may only be constrained or limited by regulation*. Certain motorized uses are, however, currently constrained by regulation within the Hatcher Pass management area under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3). Within the area of the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area and portions of the Independence, Archangel, Reed Lakes/Little Susitna, and Government Peak, motorized uses are prohibited on a year-round basis. Summer restrictions on motorized use occur within portions of the Independence and Bald Mountain / Hillside management units. The areas of current closure are depicted on Map 1-5. It is important to emphasize that, other than these areas, *all uses allowed in 11 AAC 96.020 can occur within the Hatcher Pass management area subject to adherence to the requirements of 11 AAC 96.025²*.

Note: The final plan continues to recommend the closure of certain areas on a year-round or summer closure basis, but with a somewhat different pattern. The closure areas recommended in the 2010 Plan, and those are contained in draft regulations, are reflected in Map 2-5 and are explained in detail in Chapter 3.

Uses within Hatcher Pass Management Area Requiring Authorization

Most uses within the management area do not require a permit; that is, they are one or more of the uses that are generally allowed on state land under 11 AAC 96.020.

However, there are some uses that require authorization by DNR before the activity can proceed and are likely to occur or could occur within this area. Uses on borough owned land are to be consistent with the management intent of the Government Peak management unit.

² 11 AAC 96.025 establishes the conditions for generally allowed uses.

The uses listed in Table 2-1 constitute the principal types of uses, by general category, that *could* occur within the management area and that *require authorization* by DMLW³. This table identifies uses as allowed, prohibited, or allowed conditionally and applies to both borough and state land⁴. All authorizations issued by the borough or state are to be consistent with the management intent and management guidelines of this plan. If a prohibited activity is found appropriate through a written best interest finding, a plan amendment would be required to authorize the use. In instances where a proposed use is not listed in this table, adjudicators are given the authority to determine if the proposed use is similar to one or more of the uses included in the table. If so, it shall be treated in a similar fashion to that use. If not, it shall be treated as a conditional use. The units identified in Table 2-1 correspond to the management units identified in Maps 1-1 through 1-5.

It should be noted that this table indicates the appropriateness of use at an areawide level. There may be additional conditions to consider at the management unit level, which follows in Chapter 3. Consult both this table and the applicable management unit table to determine whether a use or activity is allowed within a specific management unit and the appropriate action.

Table 2-1: Listing of Uses on Areawide Basis

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Implementation	Comment
Agriculture	Not allowed.		
Cabins (not including trapping and remote cabins)	Public use, administrative, or commercial recreation cabins are Conditionally Allowed. Personal or Private Use Cabins are prohibited.	DMLW will issue authorizations consistent with the divisional procedures and with management intent and management guidelines for specific management units.	
Commercial Recreation Facilities and Activities	Allowed but registration is required under 11 AAC 96.	This use includes the various types of commercial recreation services that may occur within the management area. Examples include services like guided fishing, hunting or mountain climbing, or helicopter skiing, or commercial tours. All such uses require authorization by DMLW.	

³ That is, they are not Generally Allowed Uses as defined in 11 AAC 96.020. Constraints on Generally Allowed Uses (GAU) are identified by management unit under the section 'Generally Allowed Uses'. All other GAU uses are authorized within the management unit.

⁴ Note: This table does not list all activities that may be considered. The DMLW will use discretion when adjudicating uses not specifically listed on this table.

*Chapter 2: Areawide Goals, Policies,
and Management Guidelines*

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Implementation	Comment
Developed Ski Facilities	<p>Alpine: Allowed within the Government Peak management unit. May be allowed as a conditional use in other management units, subject to adherence to management intent and guidelines specific to the unit.</p> <p>Nordic: Allowed throughout the planning area.</p>		<p>There are two general types of ski facilities: Alpine and Nordic.</p> <p>The term 'ski facilities' means those uses and structures related to Alpine and Nordic ski complexes.</p>
General Commercial	<p>Not allowed on East Side except on borough land in the Government Peak management unit and under certain conditions.</p> <p>Commercial uses of small scale and related to recreation may be appropriate and can be conditionally allowed on the West Side if consistent with the management intent and guidelines of the management unit.</p>	On the East Side, commercial use is subject to the stipulations that may be imposed in Borough adopted development plan or contained in a Special Land Use District.	<p>In the context of this plan, 'general commercial' is to be interpreted as including all commercial uses except those related to commercial recreation. It does not include facilities that are related to communication, the generation of power through wind or water, utility lines, or other uses of this type.</p> <p>The appropriateness of commercial uses within the Government Peak management unit is to be determined through borough planning and legislative processes. See Table 3-10 in the Government Peak management unit for detail.</p>
Grazing (leases)	Not allowed.		
Hydroelectric Facilities	Conditionally allowed.		
Industrial, including uses similar to industrial in character	Not allowed.		

*Chapter 2: Areawide Goals, Policies,
and Management Guidelines*

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Implementation	Comment
Material Extraction	<p>Allowed as a conditional use on West Side except within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area, where they are prohibited.</p> <p>Not allowed on East Side projects except as related to public safety and public transportation (road, trails, and the like), and development of commercial Alpine, Nordic or other recreational facilities.</p>		<p>Special care must be taken in the siting of material extraction adjacent to the Hatcher Pass Road⁵. Either the use must be screened or not visible from the road. Authorizations are to follow the requirements of the viewshed management zone.</p> <p>Materials extraction directly related to a mining operation are to be managed as part of the mining operation and the review of this aspect of mine development is to occur through the review of the plan of operations for a proposed mine.</p>
Material Sales	<p>Not allowed in the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area and Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area.</p> <p>Not allowed on East Side projects except as related to public safety and public transportation (road, trails, and the like), and development of commercial Alpine, Nordic or other recreational facilities.</p> <p>Allowed as a conditional use in West Side management units.</p>		
Mining (including placer mining)	<p>Allowed in areas with valid existing rights and in areas open to mineral entry consistent with applicable requirements under 11 AAC 96.025, 11 AAC 97, and AS 27.19, as well as other pertinent state and federal requirements affecting mining activities.</p>	Not allowed in areas closed to mineral entry.	State mining laws applicable to placer mining and lode operations control this type of use.

⁵ The term 'Hatcher Pass Road' as it is used in this plan refers to the entirety of this road within the planning area.

*Chapter 2: Areawide Goals, Policies,
and Management Guidelines*

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Implementation	Comment
Personal use firewood harvest and general forest management activities	Personal use firewood gathering is allowed if a collection area is identified by DOF and DMLW or by the Borough on Borough land.		DOF or the Borough may conduct timber removal operations for such administrative purposes as timber salvage, habitat manipulation, insect control, fire fuel reduction, or other forest management purposes determined by DOF or the Borough on their respective lands, to be necessary for forest health or where improvements will be located including roads, trails, utilities, etc.
Public Safety Facilities	Public facilities related to public safety are allowed.		Emergency and safety facilities provided by private entities are also allowed.
Recreation Facilities	Public Recreational facilities: allowed. Includes public recreational facilities such as: trails, parking areas, signs, trailheads, sanitation facilities, snow grooming. These uses require authorization by DMLW. Private Recreational facilities; conditionally allowed.	All public recreation facilities require authorization by DMLW. Similarly, all private recreational facilities require authorization by DMLW.	See specific restrictions for Government Peak in Table 3-1.
Settlement	Not allowed except that settlement may occur within the Government Peak Unit under certain conditions.	Settlement is subject to the stipulations that may be imposed in the Borough's development plan and Special Land Use District.	See Table 3-1 in the Government Peak management unit for detail.
Timber Harvest (Commercial)	Not allowed on state land except for salvage and management for forest health and fire safety. Not allowed on Borough land.	All such activities by DOF are to be coordinated with SCRO & ADF&G and, if permitted, are to be consistent with the management intent and any specific requirements identified in this plan for a management unit.	Very little merchantable timber exists within the management area. Commercial logging is intended to take place in SSAP or SMAP. Personal use harvest is permitted. See below.
Trail Development and Management	Allowed.	Trails on state land are to be developed according to DPOR Sustained Trail Standards. Trails on borough land are to be developed according to the MSB Recreational Trails Plan.	The management of trails on state land shall be consistent with the 2010 Management Plan and, within borough land, any step-wise plan approved for the Assembly.

*Chapter 2: Areawide Goals, Policies,
and Management Guidelines*

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Implementation	Comment
Trapper Cabins	Not allowed in Government Peak unit. Conditionally allowed in remainder of planning area.		
Utilities (Including Telecommunication Facilities)	Conditionally allowed.		See Management Guidelines for Utilities in this chapter.
Other Uses Not Otherwise Identified	Conditionally allowed.	Only uses consistent with the management intent and management guidelines for a management unit may be allowed.	Since not all uses that might occur in this area can be anticipated, such uses may be allowed but must go through DNR adjudication.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following general guidelines pertain to the entirety of the planning area and are to be followed in the granting of authorizations as well as the overall land management of the Hatcher Pass area.

- All authorizations for the use of state land within the planning area will be consistent with the overall management intent of this plan and of individual management units.
- In considering authorizations for the use of state land, DNR will adjudicate applications consistent with the uses allowed in this plan generally and within specific management units, and with the intent to:
 - Avoid anticipated, significant adverse effects on fish, wildlife, or their habitats through siting, timing, or other management options;
 - Minimize damages to streambeds, fish and wildlife habitats, vegetation, trails, and other resources of significance;
 - Minimize conflicts between resources and uses and ensure a high level of public safety; and
 - Manage the area and its resources for long-term sustainable use.
- State land will be managed to protect public access and public resources.
- State land will be open to mineral entry unless specifically closed in current (2010) mineral orders.
- State land within the planning area is to be retained.⁶
- In management units where a primary use or co-designation is designated, activities and authorizations that may be issued are to be consistent with that use(s). The primary designated use(s) are to take precedence over other uses. Other uses may only be allowed if that use is a permitted or conditionally permitted use in a management unit and only if that use is compatible with the primary use(s).

Areawide Land Management Policies

The remainder of this chapter presents land management policies for each of the major resources or activities affected by this plan: fish and wildlife, materials, mineral resources, cultural and heritage resources, and recreation. These policies apply to state land throughout the planning area regardless of land use designation.

⁶ Leases and rights of way that are functionally irrevocable (which are types of disposals) are allowed.

The management intent statements and management guidelines apply to all state land within the planning area and are to be applied when issuing authorizations or making management decisions on state land. They are also to apply to state selected federal land when that land is conveyed to the state by BLM.

- **Goals:** Goals are the general conditions that the state attempts to achieve through its management actions. They express desired end-states and may not be realized during the planning period.
- **Management intent (statements):** These are the statements that describe the general management approach that the state is intending to pursue within management units. They define the Department's near and long-term land management objectives and, sometimes, the methods to achieve those objectives. They are similar to goals in being of long-term duration and of general scope, but differ in that they are applied to the management of specific uses or resources within a management unit.
- **Management guidelines:** These are the intended course of actions; as used in this plan, they are usually specific to a resource or management unit and identify the action or approach that is to be used in managing a resource or area. Guidelines are intended to guide DNR decision making on all aspects of land management within the planning area.
- **Management recommendations:** These are specific recommendations for improvements, operations, administrative, or fiscal actions.

SUBSURFACE RESOURCES

Background

Mining for locatable minerals (primarily gold and some silver) has occurred in the Hatcher Pass area since the placer gravels of Grubstake Gulch were first worked in 1897. Since then, both placer and lode mining have occurred: placer mining has been concentrated in Wet Gulch, Grubstake Gulch, Craigie Creek, and the Little Susitna River and lode mining has occurred at Skyscraper Mountain and Granite Mountain Ridge, where the Independence Mine is situated within the Independence management unit. The areas of mineral potential generally correspond with the distribution of mining claims, both state and federal.

Most of this area is open to mineral entry, exploration, and development (about 94%). Closed areas, which can be viewed on Alaska Mapper⁷, coincide with the Legislatively Designated Areas⁸, specific management areas (Independence Mine and Summit Lake), and the Government Peak management unit, the latter coinciding with the area of the borough's Development Lease. The remainder of the planning area is open to mineral entry. Mining claims, both state and federal, concentrate along Peters Creek, Willow Creek, Wet Gulch, and Grubstake Gulch. The Craigie Creek and Independence management units are also blanketed by claims. Claims can also be viewed on Alaska Mapper.

Coal, leasable minerals and oil and gas resources do not occur within the planning area, except for very small areas associated with the Susitna geologic basin. Coal and leasable minerals generally do not occur within this area since the most common widespread rock is quartz diorite which has no potential for coal or oil or gas. There is some limited potential for coal and oil and gas along the southern and western peripheries where sedimentary rocks are present.

Current mining and reclamation authorities, both under statute and administrative code, are considered sufficient to deal with most aspects of mining development and reclamation and this plan does not recommend additional restrictions, with some few exceptions. Mineral exploration and development are governed by AS 38.05.185-.275 (mining rights) and AS 29.19 (mining reclamation). Other state and federal requirements also apply. Mining under state mining claims must conform to these requirements. Specific requirements also exist for recreational mining businesses. The latter types of operations either fit within the generally allowed uses on state land or require authorization through a permit or lease,

⁷ <http://dnr.alaska.gov/Mapper>

⁸ Differing authorities exist for mineral entry under the two LDAs: in the Hatcher Pass PUA this area is closed to mineral entry (after September 1, 1986) except for valid mining claims existing at that date. The Willow Mountain CHA requires the issuance of a permit from ADF&G for any surface altering activity under 5 AAC 95.420.

depending on the scale of the operation. Recreational gold panning and hard-rock prospecting or mining using light portable field equipment are allowed under generally allowed uses but must conform to the conditions of GAUs in 11 AAC 96.025. No DNR permit or other authorization is required for these uses. Mining or placer operations in waters cataloged by ADF&G in the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC) must also obtain an authorization from ADF&G under Title 16 requirements. Together, these authorities provide a comprehensive review of a proposed placer or hard-rock mining operation and provide the authority to impose stipulations related to water quality and quantity, dredging, the disposal of mine waste, off-site runoff, and other aspects of mineral development.

Goals

- Allow mineral exploration and development in those areas where locatable minerals are present, which generally coincides with the distribution of mining claims.
- Maintain the historic mining character of the area.
- Protect historic structures and areas associated with past lode mining activity.

Management Intent

Provide for the continued exploration and development of lode and placer mineral resources, maintain the historic character of the Independence Mine area, and protect areas with historic mining activity. Current areas of mineral closure are to be maintained, although no additional large closures are recommended. The management area remains open to oil and gas exploration and development.

Management Guidelines

Broadly, this plan assumes that the extensive requirements under 11 AAC 96, 11 AAC 97, AS 27.19 as well as other state and federal requirements will be sufficient to manage aspects of mining activity related to water quality and quantity, the control of runoff and off-site water pollution, and tailings and overburden disposals for both lode and placer operations without additional stipulations identified in this plan. These authorities require a plan of operation and a reclamation plan to be submitted and approved for mining operations.

Additional requirements are identified, however to ensure that the scenic and cultural resources are not degraded to a significant degree.

Review of Plans of Operation (General Requirement). DMLW review of Plans of operations for mineral development are to consider the impact of the proposed operation on public access, the disturbance of visual resources (especially as viewed from the Hatcher Pass Road), and public recreation, while taking into account the environmental and economic

requirements of the mineral development. Authorizations should consider methods to minimize visual impact including use of topography and vegetation, provide for the screening of facilities from view, and consider the grouping of locating of facilities to minimize visual impact or to avoid blocking access to public land. Additionally, consideration should be given to storing operating equipment compactly and in a location and manner that minimizes visual prominence. Abandoned and unusable equipment should be removed as soon as practical and construction material should be stored in an area that is screened from view.

Scenic Resources. During the review of the plan of operations for proposed mineral development, authorizations should consider methods to minimize impact of the development on the scenic resources of Hatcher Pass. The consideration should take into account the potential effect of on scenic resources, recreation, and the economic effect of stipulations on the development. Methods of minimizing impacts may include:

- Locating facilities away from the maintained road system and established recreational trails;
- Screening facilities with natural contours or vegetation;
- Minimizing or grouping facilities;
- Other methods to blend facilities with the landscape;
- Abandoned and unusable equipment should be removed as soon as practical and construction material should be stored in an area that is screened from view.

Utilities. Given the prominence of these features, special care is to be taken in their siting. To the extent practical, utilities are to be located so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road. Depending of the site context and feasibility, they are to be screened or buried, or situated sufficiently distant from this road to limit adverse visual impacts. If they are visible from this road, they should be positioned to blend with ridgelines rather than standout as prominent skyline features, and should use structures and materials than are not visually prominent or limit their prominence.

- **Fish and Wildlife.** Mining operations will avoid impacts on fish and wildlife resources to the extent practicable. ADF&G needs to be contacted before mining exploration occurs to determine if there are any impacts to streams, fish, or wildlife resources and to mitigate adverse effects.
- **Cultural Resources.** Mining operations will avoid areas with cultural resources to the extent practicable. Where this is not possible, adverse impacts to these resources shall be minimized. The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Prior to the initiation of a mining project, the DPOR Office of History and Archeology (OHA) shall be contacted. This office reviews authorizations, construction projects, and land uses for potential conflict with cultural resources. It determines if there may be adverse impacts on heritage resources and makes recommendations for mitigation.
- If determined by OHA during an agency review of a proposed project that a cultural survey may be required, further coordination between OHA and the project agency is to occur. Cultural surveys are required if OHA reported sites exist or where there is a potential for such sites to exist. The extent and area of the cultural survey within the area of the proposed project or activity shall be determined by OHA in consultation with DMLW. Detailed procedures exist governing when a survey is required and the extent of such a survey and are to be considered by DMLW adjudication of authorizations.
- If artifacts are discovered while mining, the discovery must be reported to OHA. Work that would disturb the artifacts is to stop until OHA has provided directions as to the preservation of the artifacts in accordance with AS 41.35.010.
- Preservation of historic remains of earlier mining operations is encouraged. As part of the Plan of Operations submitted with the mining project, historic remains shall be identified. To the extent practicable such remains shall be preserved and subsequently flagged, signed, or otherwise identified if the Plan of Operation determines that mining remains should be preserved.

Management Recommendations

- Initiate⁹ a mineral order (closing) within the Independence and Archangel management units; see these management units for detail. These closures affect small areas associated with recreation facilities in the Archangel unit and within the area of the Independence Mine State Historical Park in the Independence unit. A total of 180 acres are recommended for closure. See Appendix C.
- Maintain the existing mineral closing orders that affect the Hatcher Pass Management Plan area, which primarily occur within the Government Peak management unit.

⁹ A mineral order (MO 1107) was adopted on November 17, 2010 that closed the two areas to mineral entry.

MATERIAL SITES

Background

Material extraction has occurred within the area west of Summit Lake at various locations along the Hatcher Pass Road, primarily by ADOT/PF in support of road and bridge projects, both within the planning area as well as immediately west thereof. All of these material sites immediately adjoin the road and several are visible, and some are sufficiently set back so they are not obvious. The current authorizations have not expired, and the pits remain active. They are currently issued to ADOT/PF and may be used subject to the stipulations of their authorization.¹⁰

Although new and additional gravel extraction sites have not been identified by ADOT/PF, it is likely that additional sites will be needed, particularly in support of the improvement of Hatcher Pass Road in the part west of the Independence Mine area. Because the costs of haulage are such a large component of cost in material extraction operations, it can be expected that new pits will occur along or in close proximity to the highway.

Goals

- Provide sufficient, suitably located material sites to meet the needs of ADOT/PF for road and public projects.
- Material sites shall be designed and developed so that they do not adversely affect the scenic, fish, wildlife, water quality, and recreational values and uses within the planning area.

Management Intent

The primary intent for material site development in the planning area is to provide sufficient materials for future road and public facilities consistent with the protection of values and uses mentioned previously. The excavation and removal of gravel for use by the public is a secondary objective. Where appropriate, it is intended that completed gravel extraction sites be made available for recreational parking or for fisheries enhancement. ADF&G needs to be contacted before extraction occurs to determine if there are any impacts to streams, fish, or wildlife resources.

¹⁰ Material extraction is prohibited in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area and the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area.

Management Guidelines

In general, the requirements of 11 AAC 97, and specifically 11 AAC 97.310, are viewed as sufficient to manage most aspects of site reclamation. The plan of operations that accompanies these types of activities requires the preparation of a reclamation plan, which must be provided for authorization by DNR prior to the commencement of operations. This plan may also require additional stipulations under AS 38.05.035(e). The following guidelines apply.

- Material sites are conditionally allowed located within the Willow Mountain, Craigie Creek, and Bald Mountain / Hillside management units. Except for the emergency extraction of material for road rehabilitation in Government Peak management unit or the other uses of gravel identified in Table 2-1, other management units are not considered appropriate for this use.
- Material sites should be sited and designed to be minimally visible from the Hatcher Pass Road. A natural, topographic, embankment screen, or other screening techniques sufficient to shield the material site and equipment from the Hatcher Pass Road is to be provided.
- If stream crossings are required, ADF&G will be consulted to determine how bridges or culverts should be designed to allow for fish passage and potential high water flows. Contact ADF&G to obtain a Fish Habitat Permit before beginning work and determine appropriate stipulations.
- Access roads should be constructed of sufficient curvature to prevent direct view of the open excavation from Hatcher Pass Road.
- A riparian buffer shall be provided adjacent to anadromous waterbodies. DMLW procedural standards¹¹, or the riparian standards identified in the Southeast Susitna Area Plan, shall apply.

Management Recommendations

- Visual Screening. The material site development plan that is submitted to DMLW shall, in addition to the information typically included in such plans, include information on visual screening from the Hatcher Pass Road.
- Coordination with Borough. Prior to granting authorizations for material sites, DMLW should coordinate with the Matanuska Susitna Borough to determine applicable local requirements.

¹¹ DMLW riparian buffer standards are generally consistent with the requirements of existing area plans but will provide more specificity in allowed uses, appropriate widths, and guidance as to when these standards are to be applied.

FISH AND WILDLIFE: HABITAT

Background

Wildlife. The Hatcher Pass Management Area contains a high diversity of wildlife and habitats. Over 160 species of animals, fish, and birds are represented in this area. Wildlife habitats include grassland, shrubland, and wetland; tundra plant communities; coniferous, deciduous, and mixed forests; and riparian zones. The diversity and abundance of wildlife and habitats is one of the reasons the area has become such a popular destination.

The Hatcher Pass area also provides excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation. Winter activities include snowmobile riding, backcountry skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and Nordic skiing. Summer include recreational ATV use, hiking, berry picking, hunting and fishing, trapping, wildlife viewing, bird watching and photography. Some of these activities can affect wildlife and their habitats in the planning area.

Wildlife species in the planning area include moose, black and brown bear, wolf, wolverine, coyote, fox, and lynx. Caribou and Dall sheep are uncommon, but occur in the high drainages of the eastern and northern parts of the area. Small alpine mammals commonly seen along the Hatcher Pass Road corridor include marmots, pikas, red squirrels, ground squirrels, lemmings, and hare. Beaver, mink, weasel, otter and marten are also common.

Moose are the most abundant large mammal in the Hatcher Pass area. In the vicinity of the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area, moose concentrations are periodically high and range between 300 - 600 animals. There is also a large moose population of 500 - 800 animals found south of Bald Mountain Ridge. Willow Mountain and Bald Mountain Ridge provide exceptional quantities of alder and willow browse which is interspersed with forest, shrub, and alpine plant communities. These areas support significant summer and winter moose habitat and breeding activities. Important summer and winter areas are also found along Peters and Purches Creek. Important calving areas are found along the wetlands, lowlands and riparian areas of the Little Susitna River and Willow Mountain areas. (See Map 2-1 Moose Habitat)

Brown and black bears inhabit the Willow Mountain subunit and occasionally are seen in other parts of the planning area. Caribou occur in the eastern and northern portions of the management area. They are part of a resident population of about 200 - 250 animals that generally ranges further east and is considered part of the Nelchina Herd. (See Map 2-2 Caribou Habitat.) Dall sheep are at the fringe of their distribution range in the Hatcher Pass Management Area but occasionally inhabit higher elevations on Willow Mountain, Arkose Ridge, and the southern slopes of the upper Kashwitna drainage.

Birds. The Hatcher Pass Management Unit has over 140 species of birds. Riparian and mixed forest habitats are used by bald and golden eagles, sharp-shinned hawks, red-tailed hawks, merlins, kestrels, gyrfalcons, peregrine falcons, and several owl species. Ptarmigan (willow, rock, and white-tailed), spruce grouse, and small mammals provide important prey species for these raptors and hunting and viewing opportunities for visitors. In addition to these birds, wandering tattlers, rosy finches, white-crowned sparrows, Wilson's warblers, Swainson's thrushes, and downy and hairy woodpeckers and a variety of other song bird species are present. This area is unique to at least five species of migratory tundra birds nesting on Bald Mountain Ridge. These are the long-tailed jaeger, lesser golden plover, Lapland longspur, northern wheatear, and whimbrel. As tundra birds normally nest much further north, this is a fairly unusual concentration in south-central regions and warrants the continuation of special management considerations and retention of the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area. Because of the wide array of bird species in Hatcher Pass, bird watching will remain an important public activity.

Fish. Anadromous fish present in the Hatcher Pass planning area include Chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink salmon. Resident species include rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, grayling, round whitefish, burbot, three-spine and nine-spine stickleback, and long-nose suckers.

The headwaters of the Little Susitna River, Willow Creek, and Little Willow Creek occur within the management area. These streams have important sport fisheries in their lower reaches just outside of the management area and produce a significant harvest of all five salmon species. Additionally, the Little Susitna River and Little Willow Creek are important salmon spawning and juvenile rearing water bodies. Aerial surveys have identified Chinook spawning habitat in the upper reaches of the Little Su River and Archangel Creek. Peters and Purches Creeks are important for resident Dolly Varden populations.

Goals

- Protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat while allowing for continued recreation use, including hunting.
- Maintain and protect the publicly owned habitat base in order to supply sufficient numbers or diversity of species to support recreational and traditional uses on a sustained yield basis.
- Protect unique or rare assemblages of a single or multiple species of regional, state, or national significance.

Management Intent

Manage the Hatcher Pass area so that fish and wildlife species are protected while allowing for recreational uses, mining operations authorized under AS 38.05.185, or other applicable statutes, and uses deemed appropriate on borough land in the Government Peak management unit in an adopted land use plan. The primary method for achieving this management intent is through implementation of the allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses in Table 2-1 and through the management guidelines that follow. Intensive uses, which may adversely affect habitat, are only to occur in portions of the Government Peak management unit and will be limited to those sites determined to be appropriate for such uses in a DNR authorization.

Management Guidelines

Many of the management guidelines that follow are typically applied in state area plans for uses that can be expected within a planning area. Although few such uses are expected or intended in the Hatcher Pass management area, management guidelines are included should uses of the type that might produce adverse habitat impacts be under consideration for authorization by DNR. Other guidelines have been developed specifically for the planning area:

- Uses in areas designated Habitat in Chapter 3 of this plan are to be consistent with the standard requirements for the authorizations of uses in the Southeast Susitna Area Plan. These requirements are contained in Chapter 2 of this plan under the section titled, ‘Allowing Uses in Fish and Habitats (Ha)’.
- Habitat restoration through water control, removal of pollution sources, or other measures may be used to improve habitat for certain fish and wildlife species where ADF&G determines that such actions are beneficial to the species or habitat and where DNR determines that it is compatible with other primary uses.
- Land within the planning area is to be managed to avoid the introduction of and reduce the spread of invasive non-native plants and animals, consistent with 11 AAC 34.
- Uses that are likely to produce levels of acoustical or visual disturbance sufficient to disturb moose or caribou calving, rutting, or post-calving aggregations that cannot be seasonally restricted should not be authorized in these areas. Uses may be authorized in these areas at other times of the year. Authorizations should include seasonal restrictions on activities that would produce significant acoustical or visual disturbance during sensitive life-cycle periods.
- Riparian areas adjacent to anadromous waterbodies are to be provided and are to be at least 100’ in width, consistent with FRPA requirements under AS 41.17.115-119 and criteria identified in the Southeast Susitna Area Plan or DMLW Riparian Buffer Standards.

- All new trails (new and up-graded, expanded, or re-routed) and associated facilities should be sited and designed to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats. If impacts to these species and habitats cannot be avoided, they are to be minimized and/or restored.
- Facilities and other structures are to avoid anadromous waterbodies; if this cannot occur and the use is determined in a Title 16 ADF&G authorization review to be appropriate and consistent with the standards of this plan and ADF&G habitat standards, the impacts are to be minimized and must meet the requirements imposed by ADF&G to mitigate impacts.
- Habitat enhancement activities are not to occur within areas of diverse habitats, or scenic areas. The diversity of habitats will be retained during enhancement activities in order to protect other species. The quality of the foreground scenery near or along roads, including old growth trees, shall be maintained during habitat enhancement or timber harvesting efforts.
- In-stream flow (termed Water Reservations in this plan) requirements apply within the HPMP area. Authorizations issued by DNR are to ensure that water quality and quantity are maintained sufficient to protect human, fish, and wildlife resources and uses within the planning region. Although not generally expected within the planning area, proposals for major new developments that will negatively impact instream flow needed to protect fish, sustain water quality, or recreation shall include an evaluation of the need for an in-stream flow reservation or other forms of instream flow protection.
- Wildlife viewing opportunities, particularly for special features such as dead trees, beaver ponds, waterways, and wildlife concentration areas shall be preserved wherever possible.

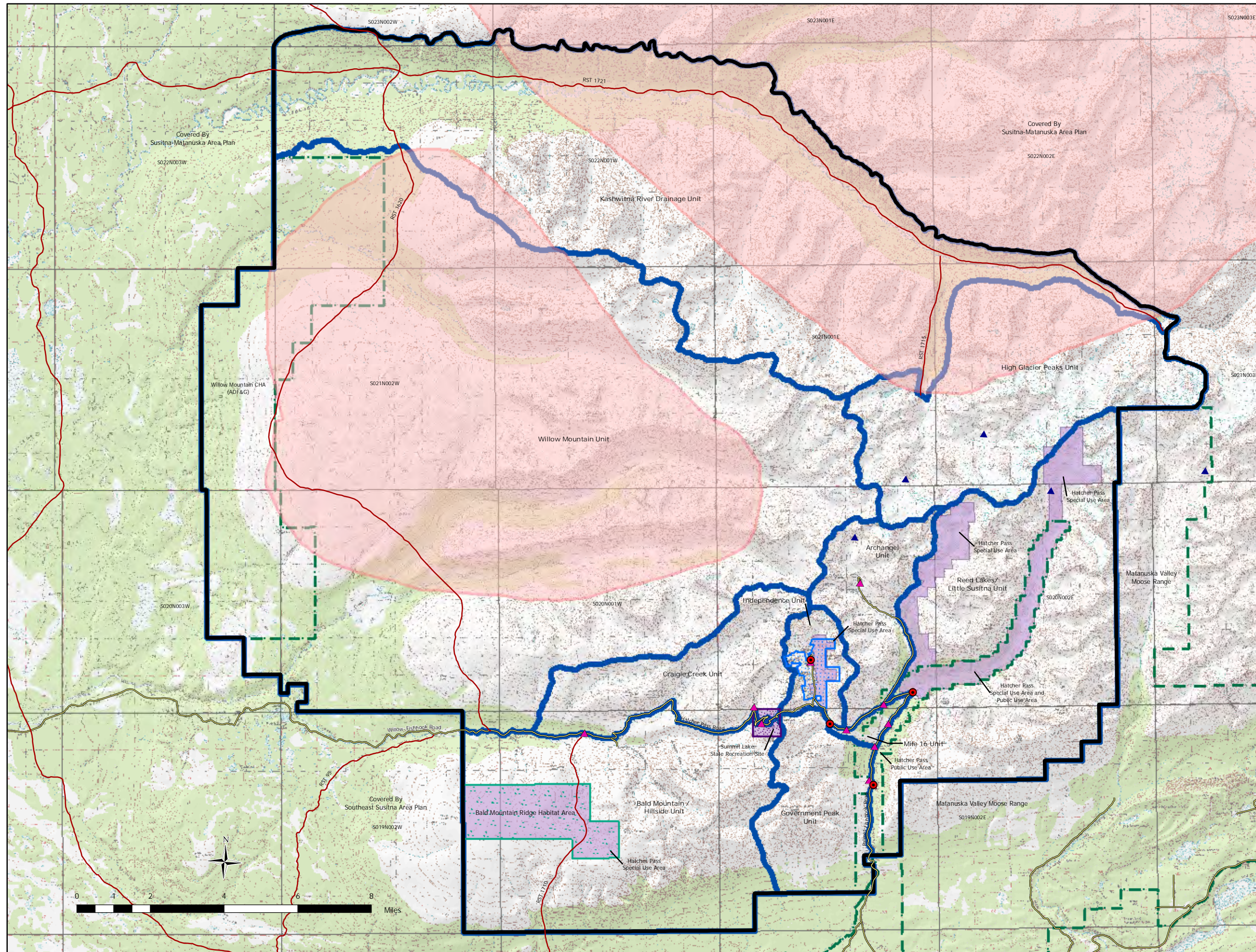
Management Recommendations

- **Habitat Enhancement.** Habitat enhancement activities for fish and wildlife species may occur within the planning area when biological and/or population statistics indicate that improvements in survival, reproduction, and/or population numbers can be or need to be increased, as determined by ADF&G.

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 2-1

Caribou Habitat



- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * *Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only*
- * Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 41.23.130



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

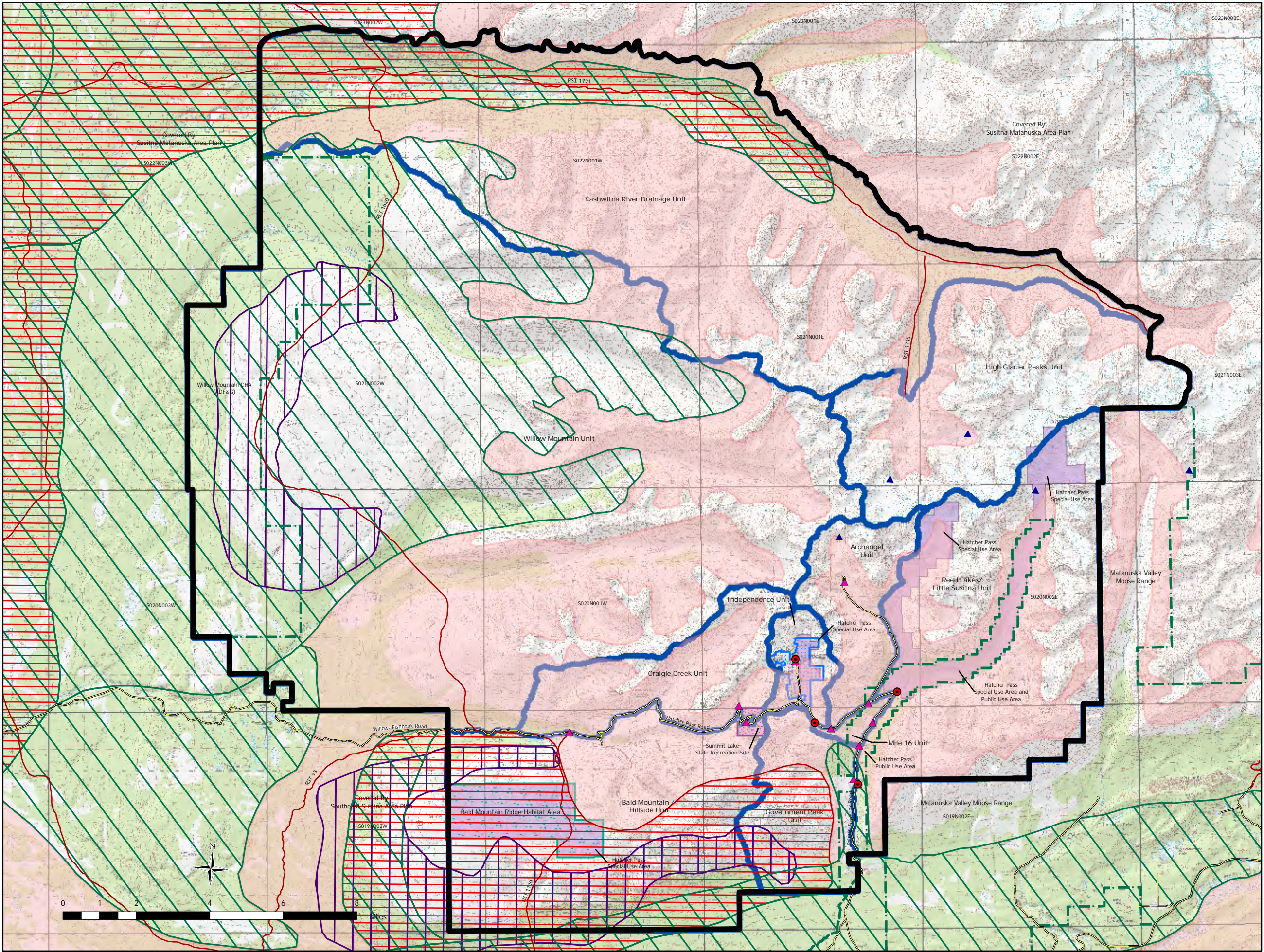
Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

*This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N*

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 2-2

Moose Habitat



- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 1986
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Moose - General Habitat
- Moose - Calving
- Moose - Wintering
- Moose - Rutting
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas
- Parking and Restrooms

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
* All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
* Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
* Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
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Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section
Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

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RECREATION

Background

Recreation has been the main use within the Hatcher Pass planning area for at least the last 30 years. The importance of recreation activity within the Hatcher Pass planning area has always been significant, and has been increasing rapidly over the last 10 years. Winter recreational use and visitation on the east side of the planning area has more than doubled (see Table 2-2 below). This importance reflects the intrinsic value of this area for summer and winter recreation, the large and early snowfalls that occur there, relatively easy access, facilities to accommodate recreational users, and the presence of a large population base, which includes residents of Anchorage as well as the Matanuska-Susitna Valley (Valley). Recreation use is expected to grow significantly in the future, reflecting the growth of the population base generally as well as the presence of the other factors mentioned previously. Based on the results of public meetings and focus group meetings held throughout 2009 and agency observations, regular patterns of seasonal recreational use of all kinds occur. Most of this use is carried out in specific areas and only some of these use patterns generate user conflicts.

Significant recreational use occurs in both winter and summer. Non-motorized use occurs on a year-round basis throughout the main parts of the Independence, Reed Lakes / Little Susitna, Government Peak, and Archangel management units. The western part of the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit is also used during the summer months. Motorized use during the winter occurs throughout the planning area, including areas that are now closed to such use under regulation, particularly the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit. Winter motorized use patterns are particularly heavy in the Willow Mountain and Craigie Creek units and within a motorized corridor along the Hatcher Pass Road. General recreation patterns are depicted on Map 2-1.

Winter use is of two types: motorized (snowmachine) and non-motorized, which includes cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, snow boarding, snowshoeing, and sledding. Non-motorized activity tends to occur within areas relatively close to the road system and within the areas designated (2010) for non-motorized uses in regulation such as the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit, Archangel, Independence, and Government Peak. Winter motorized use occurs virtually throughout the entirety of the planning area, reflecting the power and capability of the new snowmachines, except for certain areas that are remote and are technically difficult to access.

Summer motorized use occurs primarily on the West Side of the planning area and includes both Off-Road and On-Road vehicles including ATVs and 4 X 4 trucks. There is also use by road vehicles and ORVs on the Archangel Road, which is intended for backcountry access. Limited motorized use occurs illegally during the summer in a non-motorized area established in regulation as the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area.

Non-motorized activity is more varied and includes hiking, photography, paragliding, rock and mountain climbing, bicycling, and kayaking/canoeing. Summer non-motorized uses also tend to occur in areas that are closer to the road system. These activities also occur in the areas that have related geologic features such as mountain and rock climbing in the High Glacier Peaks unit. The east side management units have terrain for trails suitable for hiking and bicycling, especially the Independence, Archangel, and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna units. The eastern and central management units are suitable for paragliding. A popular area is near the Summit Lake Recreation Site.

Map 2-4 depicts areas identified by the public as having a higher level of joint use; these areas also largely coincide with the areas identified as having ‘overlapping concerns.’ Areas of ‘overlapping concern’ were identified by both motorized and non-motorized users and represent their perception of actual or perceived conflict. During the winter these areas of ‘overlapping concerns’ occur throughout the more accessible parts of the East Side and are especially great within the corridors that are used by both motorized and non-motorized users. There is little to no conflict in the areas identified as ‘shared use areas’ on this map, which includes the majority of the planning area. The area of conflict is generally similar during the summer, occurring in the same locations except for the addition of the western parts of the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit.

Table 2-2: Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Analysis of Recreational Visitation to the East Side of the Planning Area¹²

Year	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Summer</u>
2009	109,298	143,701
2008	94,694	134,401
2007	76,587	135,996
2006	99,355	69,907
2005	77,040	98,840
2004	56,558	137,736
2003	24,087	151,586
2002	41,181	155,473
2001	55,189	126,106
2000	47,364	124,748
1999	46,727	107,302

¹² The DPOR Hatcher Pass East Management Area includes the area up to and including the Summit Lake State Recreation Site from approximately Mile 8 on the Palmer-Fishhook/Hatcher Pass Road.

Hatcher Pass Management Plan Map 2-3 Recreational Use Patterns (Reported 2009)

- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislative Designation Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 1986
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Ski Areas
- Hunting Areas
- Mountaineering Areas
- Mountaineering Huts
- ATV/ORV ATV/ORV Use Area
- Berry Berry Picking
- PARA Paragliding Areas
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Non-Motorized Trails
- Ski Runs - DPOR
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Parking Areas
- Parking and Restrooms

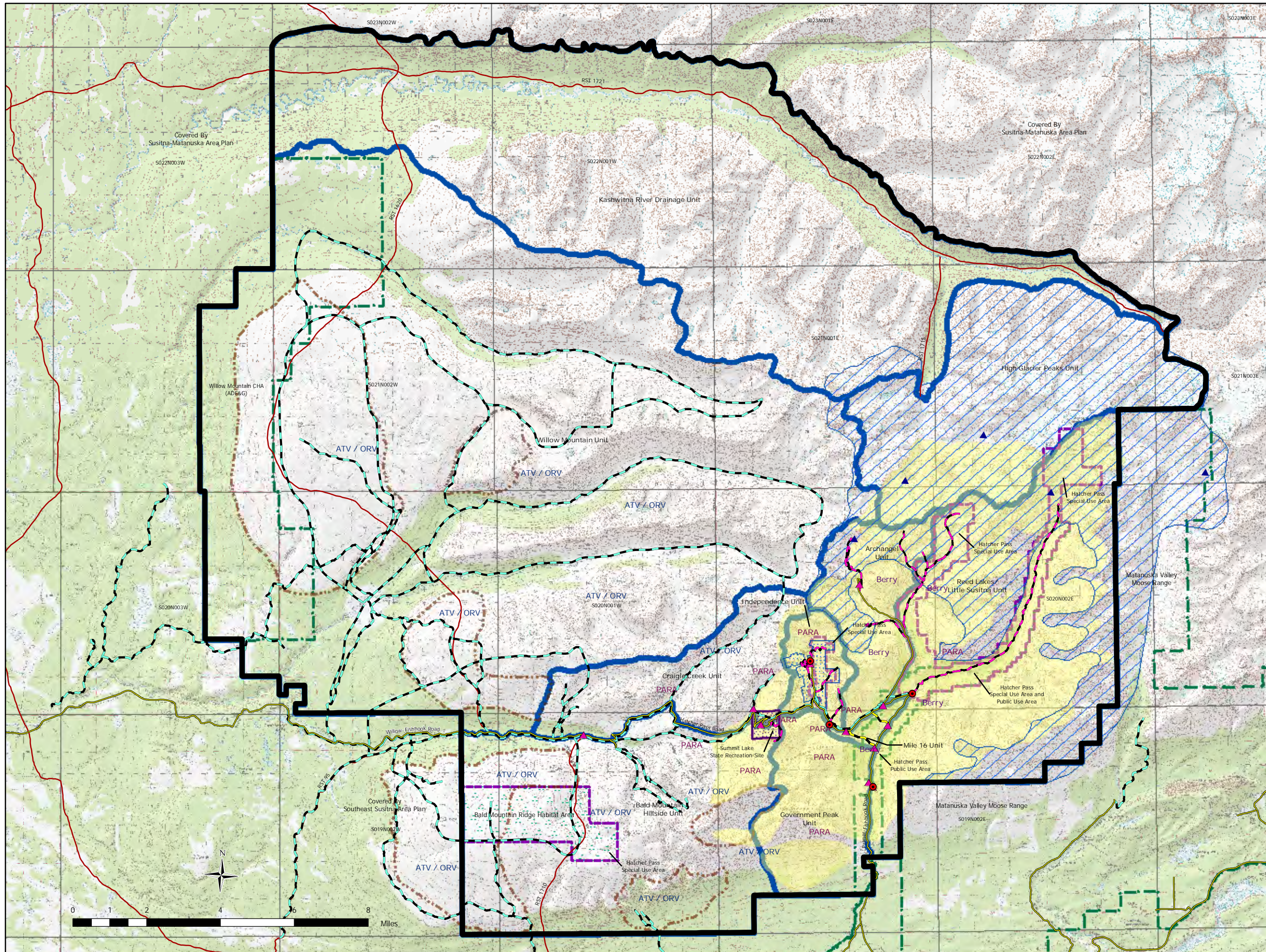
***This Map Is NOT a Guide*
for Recreational Use**

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Goals

- Continue to provide a broad spectrum of dispersed motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities, including developed facilities at select sites along the road system.
- Where appropriate, separate motorized/non-motorized uses in the East Side.
- Provide facilities at select locations to support recreational activities, especially in high-use areas and areas where problems of public safety exist or can be expected to occur.
- Maintain the high scenic values and cultural resources of the planning area.
- Improve public safety and reduce conflicts in use.
- Designate routes or areas for specific types of uses, including use corridors that provide access to areas of attraction but where motorized/non-motorized uses are separated.

Management Intent

The planning area will be managed with recreation as the primary use. Throughout this area, dispersed recreational uses such as hunting, skiing, hiking, trapping, fishing, and snowmachining will be the main management emphasis. Only those uses that are identified as allowed or conditionally allowed uses in Table 2-1 are to be authorized in this area, and nearly all uses involving the conversion of state land to another use are to be prohibited. Exceptions to this policy are mining (where open to mineral entry), materials extraction in certain areas, public facilities, commercial recreation, and commercial or related uses on borough land in the Government Peak management unit authorized through borough planning processes. It is intended that large portions of the planning area will remain in an undeveloped state and managed as undeveloped open space, and that concentrated, developed recreational uses and facilities only occur on borough land within the Government Peak management unit and only if such uses are authorized in a land use plan adopted by the borough.

Improvements related to dispersed recreation use and upgrade of the Hatcher Pass Road in the remainder of the planning area is recognized as appropriate. Such facilities may include parking areas, road pull-outs, sanitary facilities, and other types of facilities related to dispersed recreation or public safety.

The planning area will be managed to provide designated non-motorized areas. Changes to the regulations constraining motorized uses are proposed. The current regulations are to be changed to improve public safety, to expedite and recognize current motorized movement corridors, and to improve management and administration of the planning area, particularly in the East Side. These changes are explained more fully in the section that follows on

management recommendations and for the individual management units in Chapter 3. Map 2-5 is the 'Adopted Plan Map'. It depicts topography, land status (current to March 2012) and the non-motorized boundaries recommended for inclusion in the revised regulations. Consult individual management units and Appendix D for more detail. For comparison, the current regulatory closures are depicted in Map 1-5.

A specific component of management intent concerns motorized uses. The general intent is for the East Side to be managed for mixed motorized and non-motorized uses, with emphasis placed on the management of the area for non-motorized uses. The West Side is intended to be primarily managed for motorized uses, although non-motorized uses are also appropriate and may constitute an aspect of the management focus for specific areas.

Different policies apply to summer and winter periods.

- Summer: Motorized use is authorized on the West Side, except for the area of important bird habitat situated in the western portion of the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit and within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area. Non-motorized uses are allowed but the management focus, in terms of recreation, is on the management of state land for motorized uses. Motorized use in the East Side will be designated on those roads and trails able to accommodate such use, where facilities to support motorized use exist, and where this use is designated on plan maps or text¹³.
- Winter: Motorized uses are authorized throughout the planning area except for specific areas designated for year-round non-motorized use in the East Side.
- Specific recommendations are included for each of the management units in Chapter 3 and are more fully explained in the recommended changes to regulation.

Management Guidelines

- The following guidelines apply to the location of facilities (which are to be related to dispersed recreation needs on state land¹⁴):
 - Picnic and campsites are to be located off the road system and in areas not visible from the road. A spur road from the Hatcher Pass Road with suitable signage is recommended.

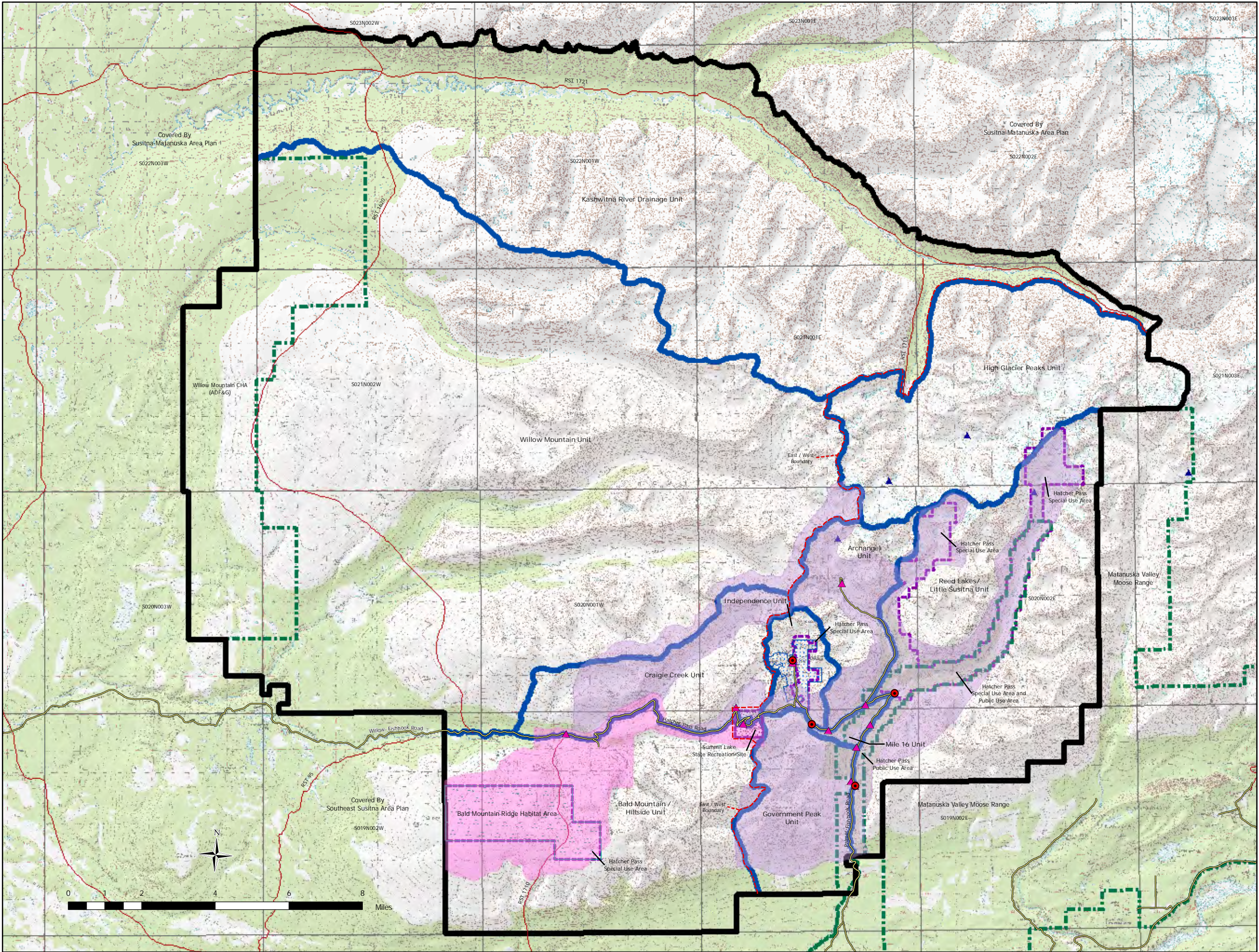
¹³ Generally, motorized use on the East Side is only authorized on state or borough roads and highways and within developed parking areas.

¹⁴ These recommendations do not affect the area of borough owned land that is the subject of ski development and is the subject of a current borough planning process. It is intended that the kind and design of facilities within this area derive from this planning process. All such facilities shall conform to the borough land use plan.

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 2-4

Overlapping Use
Concern Areas



- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislative Designation Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 1986
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Overlapping Use Winter
- Overlapping Use Summer
- East / West Boundary
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas
- Parking and Restrooms

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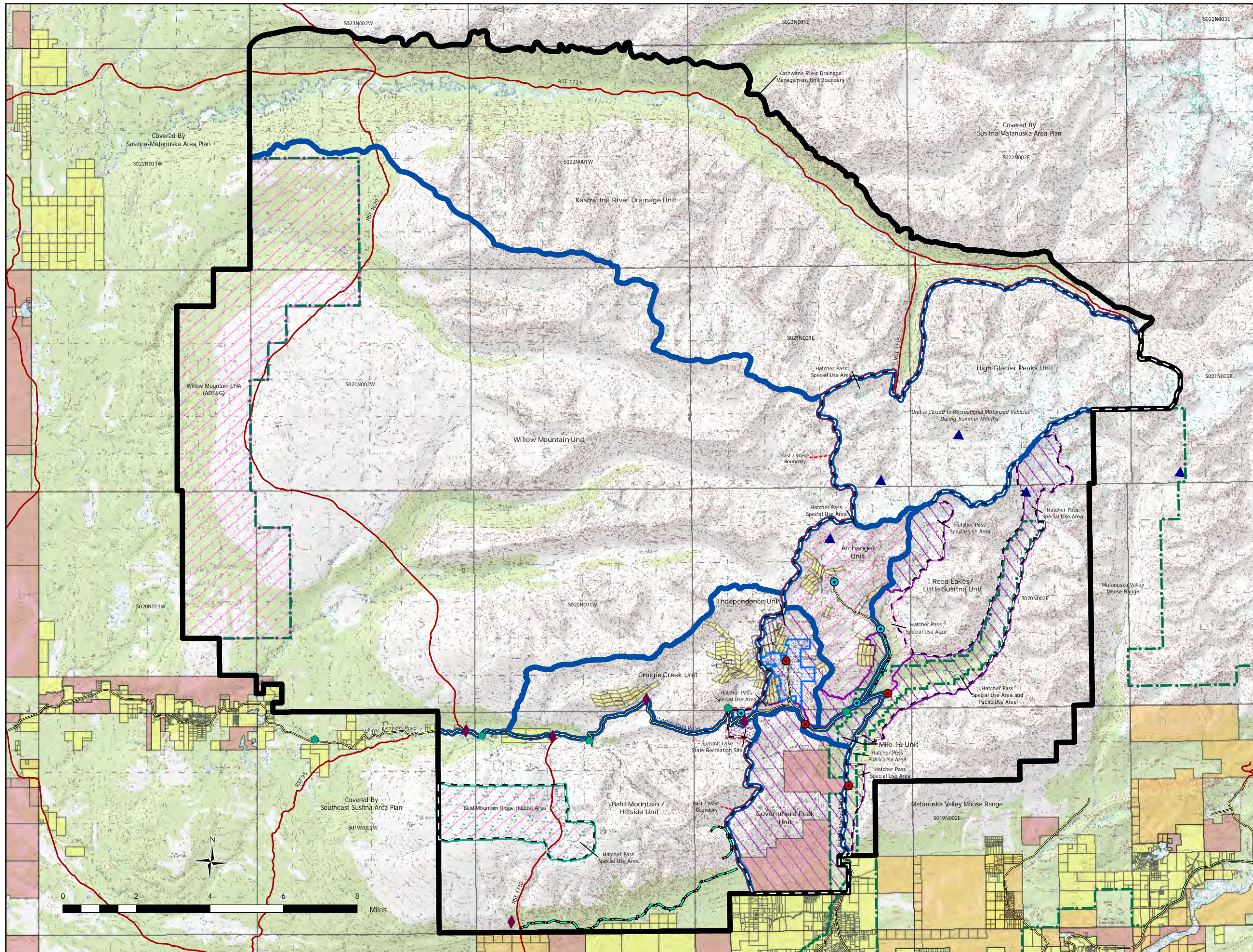
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Hatcher Pass
Management Plan

Map 2-5

Adopted Plan Map



- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislative Designation Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- East / West Boundary
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

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- Parking areas are to be developed and expanded where appropriate to support dispersed recreation needs. General parking demand may also be included if public use of the parking areas is expected to be high.
- Utilities shall be placed underground. If that is not practical at specific locations or an overhead location is necessary by virtue of the type of facility, the types of poles and structures are to be selected to minimize visual disturbance and the utility is to be screened from view of users to the Hatcher Pass area.
- Trails intended for pedestrian movement are to be developed according to the Sustainable Trail standards (2009)¹⁵. They are to avoid wetlands and other sensitive features.
- Tourism activities are considered an important part of the recreational experience that the Hatcher Pass management area provides. This management plan supports the use of the Hatcher Pass management area for tourism purposes, consistent with the availability of infrastructure.
- The following guidelines pertain to public safety:
 - The discharge of firearms is prohibited in administratively designated sites and campgrounds, picnic areas, developed trailheads, adjacent to developed trails and roads, and designated public use areas or facilities consistent with 11 AAC 20.770.
 - Permanent structures involving the use of a foundation are not to be sited within (high) avalanche prone areas or floodways/floodplains.
 - Winter trails identified by DNR should avoid high avalanche prone areas or floodways unless no feasible alternative exists.
 - ORV use is prohibited on maintained public roads, consistent with 13 AAC 02.455.

Management Recommendations

- Addition to Hatcher Pass PUA. Add the Reed Lakes corridor and the Mile 16 management unit to the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (PUA). The Reed Lakes area is included in the Special Use Designation (ADL 223585) that regulates uses in the Hatcher Pass area, and this area is appropriate for inclusion in the PUA because of its uniqueness and public values. This area was recommended to be added to the PUA in the 1989 Plan and its addition continues to receive public support. It is also appropriate to add the Mile 16 area to the PUA since it contains many of the features that are common to the Public Use Area. The management objectives of the Hatcher Pass PUA and these areas are essentially the same.

¹⁵ Standards adopted (2009) by DPOR for the development and maintenance of trails and similar facilities.

- Uniform Sign System. Establish a uniform sign system which is compatible with and is complementary to the character of the area. DPOR is the lead agency.
- Recreational Mining conducted as a business. Recreational Mining (business) is recognized as an appropriate use within the principal placer streams within the management area, including Craigie Creek and Little Susitna. All such uses shall adhere to the requirements for such uses issued by DMLW. In general, these standards are related to the size of the activity. Day use activity that do not require facilities are considered a Generally Allowed Use. Uses using camps or structures require a commercial recreation permit, a land use permit, or a negotiated (short-term) lease.
- Revise Regulations designating Non-Motorized Areas. Revise the current (2002) regulation that designates non-motorized areas under 11 AAC 96.012(b)(3). These changes conform to the management intent for motorized and non-motorized uses described previously and that are indicated as 'plan recommendation' in affected management units, which includes Independence, Government Peak, High Glacier Peaks¹⁶, Archangel, Mile 16, and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna. Change to the text of the current regulations is to be limited to reflect the areas that are recommended for closure in this plan. These changes are included in the draft regulations in Appendix D, and Map 2-5 (the Adopted Plan Map) identifies the spatial boundary of these revisions. In instances where there is uncertainty in boundary location, the more detailed management unit maps are to prevail.¹⁷
- Public Safety. Public safety was a major concern raised by the public and it is the primary reason additional areas have been closed to winter recreational motorized use in the planning area. The non-motorized areas recommended in this plan are intended to increase public safety, reduce user conflict, and to facilitate enforcement efforts. The non-motorized areas have been modified to include areas that are popularly used by non-motorized users, which are close to the road system and parking facilities, including a section of the Archangel Road. The boundaries have been modified to follow recognizable topographical features where possible. The proximity of many of these areas to the road system should allow for easier on the ground recognition by all recreational users and for park rangers when they are patrolling the area. These areas are reflected on Map 2-5. Information related to the closures in each management unit is included in Chapter 3.
- Hatcher Pass Road. Design and develop the Hatcher Pass Road to be complementary to the recommendations of this plan. In general, the upgrade of this road on the West Side shall follow the recommendations for its reconstruction developed by DPOR in documents dated September 19, 2002 (or successor plans to this document). It is intended that these recommendations be viewed as advisory, with DPOR having the

¹⁶ The High Glacier Peaks unit is not currently closed to motorized use by regulation; amendment of the current regulations will be necessary to effectuate closure (summer only). The draft regulations include the closure of the High Glacier Peaks unit during the summer period to motorized use.

¹⁷ See also footnote 9.

- authority to deviate from these recommendations in final road project design. ADF&G should be consulted to ensure there will not be habitat damage or disturbances. The general intent of developing western portion of this road with necessary pull-outs and safety features is to be maintained, however.
- **Viewshed Management.**¹⁸ The maintenance of the views of adjacent areas from the Hatcher Pass Road is to be considered in an authorization issued by DNR¹⁹. Structures or activities that significantly degrade the viewshed visible from this road are considered generally inappropriate, although they may be made compatible through the use of stipulations that significantly reduce their visual impact.²⁰ Exceptions to this policy are intended to be few and only appropriate when DNR determines that there is no other alternative location for a proposed structure and if mitigation measures are imposed to reduce the visual presence of the use²¹. In these instances the plan recognizes that a use may produce an impact but may still be appropriate; the management objective in these situations is to focus on the minimization of impact to visual resources, which may require the use of stipulations to achieve this objective. The siting standards for structures and utilities given for subsurface uses should be used as stipulations, although other requirements may also be considered in the authorization. This policy applies to all allowed and conditionally allowed uses.
 - **Facilities.** Provide those facilities that are identified for specific management units in Chapter 3. These include trail development and rerouting, trail upgrading, the development or expansion of sanitary and parking facilities, road pull-outs, and picnic/day use areas. No additional campgrounds are recommended. A listing of proposed facilities, by management unit and along the Hatcher Pass Road, is contained in Table 4-4, 'Facility Recommendations on State Land'.
 - **Recreational Motorized Corridors.** Additional recreational motorized corridors are not recommended on the east side of the planning area during summer months. Winter recreational use corridors may only be authorized on state owned land that is not closed through regulation and in locations that will not significantly interfere with other forms of recreation. (See 11 AAC 96.014.) Recreational motorized corridors on land owned by the Mat-Su Borough require the permission of the borough. No recreational motorized corridors are permitted in the Government Peak Unit per 2010 regulation and through the recommendations of Mat-Su Borough Assembly Resolution 10-036.

¹⁸ This standard does not apply to current existing facilities or to historic uses of an area that are being renovated or improved at the same site or area that they currently occupy.

¹⁹ Viewshed management requirements for mining operations follow the standards for 'Scenic Resources'.

²⁰ Material sites are conditional use on the West Side and may be approved if the authorization determines that visual impacts have been minimized to the extent practicable, the use is consistent with the management intent of the unit it occurs within, and the placement of the facility is in the overall best interest of the state.

²¹ The plan recognizes that this objective may not be practical to achieve where existing or historic structures are involved. In these instances, the minimization of impact to visual resources is to be used as the management objective.

Funding for a winter recreational motorized corridor within the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit was provided to the Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation in 2010 to facilitate transportation to the Good Hope Creek Valley.

The existing east-west winter recreational motorized corridor should be improved and enlarged to accommodate increased public use. Additional parking facilities along the Hatcher Pass Road will serve to accommodate recreational user needs and provide multiple access points to the existing east-west motorized corridor and facilitate transportation of motorized users across the planning area. Existing parking areas should be expanded to accommodate increased visitation and public need. A listing of those proposed facilities is contained in Table 4-4, 'Facility Recommendations on State Land'.

If the needs of motorized recreational users for additional access to the east-west corridor are not be met through the development and expansion of parking facilities, DMLW may consider authorizing a winter motorized corridor along the Fishhook Creek on state owned land within the Government Peak management unit.

- **Public Use Cabins.** Public use cabins (PUC) may be developed within the planning area to provide the public with recreational opportunities in the Hatcher Pass area. All such cabins are to be treated as conditional uses and are subject to authorization by SCRO, DMLW. Cabins should be constructed by state or non-profit agencies only, consistent with current SCRO, DMLW permitting process, and are to be insured for liability. PUCs should be located away from the road system, screened by trees or contour features, and located in visually unobtrusive areas. PUCs should not be located in moose concentration areas, within 200' of streams, in avalanche areas, or in intensive use areas. The exact location of the PUCs is to be determined following a more detailed site analysis.

PUBLIC ACCESS, TRANSPORTATION, AND UTILITIES

Background

The primary access to and within the Hatcher Pass planning area is provided by the Hatcher Pass Road, which is a combined east-west route that includes Palmer-Fishhook and Willow-Fishhook Roads. This road has recently been upgraded in the East Side by ADOT/PF and a variety of related improvements, such as parking areas, have also been made to support recreational use and the parking requirements of recreational users. The road west of the Independence Mine complex is in poor condition and needs improvements to bring it to an adequate level of service. The Hatcher Pass Road is currently impassible to large vehicles between MP 19 – 21.

Off-road transportation occurs throughout the planning area and mostly involves ATV use in the summer and snow-machine use during the winter. For a more complete description of use levels and patterns, see the background part of the Recreation section of this Chapter.

Goals

- Develop a safe and scenic Hatcher Pass Road that can accommodate vehicles in common use by the tourism industry and includes facilities supportive of scenic viewing, public safety, and recreation access.
- Provide new or improved trail access to accommodate recreation use at the more intensely used locations.
- Ensure public access to the Hatcher Pass planning area, consistent with the constitutional intent of providing the broadest possible access to and use of the state's natural resources.
- Provide adequate public access to areas of motorized and non-motorized use.

Management Intent

- Hatcher Pass Road: Develop Hatcher Pass Road to accommodate vehicles in common use on state roads as well as vehicles in common use by the tourist industry. Develop this road to be supportive of recreational activities, including scenic viewing, public safety, and recreational access.
- Off Road Access: Manage off-road vehicle use consistent with the general intent of providing maximum access to state resources consistent with the need to ensure public safety and avoid or minimize natural resource degradation.

Management Guidelines

Hatcher Pass Road

- The Hatcher Pass Road should be upgraded according to AASHTO²² standards for recreation and resource development roads. Provision is to be made for scenic viewing, recreation access, and public safety.
- Road signage should be consistent throughout the planning area with an emphasis on recreation. Entrance and Exit signs should be replaced due to extensive damage from vandalism to the existing structures.

Off Road Vehicle Use (General)

- DMLW and DPOR management of off-road vehicle use is to be consistent with the stipulations of AS 38.04.200 (Traditional Means of Access), 11 AAC 96.020 (Generally Allowed Uses of state land), and 11 AAC 96.014. The use of 11 AAC 12 (General Park authority) is to be limited to those areas managed by the DPOR under the management agreement with DMLW and should only be applied to manage for recreation, public safety, and natural resource degradation. These authorities are not to be used to close state land to motorized uses except with the permission of DMLW. DPOR, in its management of the Hatcher Pass area (East Side) is to be consistent with the requirements of the 2010 Plan.
- DMLW and DPOR management of recreational vehicles is to be consistent with the requirements of this plan.

Off Road Vehicle Use (Summer)

- ORV use during the *summer* is not permitted except as may be authorized by DNR for uses specified in 11 AAC 96.014.
- ORV use during the summer can occur throughout the West Side except for the areas which are closed to motorized use during the summer. Those areas include the Summit Lake Recreation Site, the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area within the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit, and the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Unit within the Willow Mountain management unit, except for on designated routes.
- ORV use closures within areas of the West Side may/can occur in addition to those identified in the proposed regulations (see above) for the following purposes, which are to guide decisions on closure: 1) minimize the harassment of wildlife or disruptions to wildlife habitats, based on ADF&G recommendations; 2) minimize damage to soils, vegetation, or other natural, cultural, or historic resources; or 3) minimize conflicts between ORV use and other users for purposes of public safety.

²² American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

Off Road Vehicle Use (Winter)

- ORV use (snowmachine) can occur throughout the West Side during the winter, subject to adequate snow cover to protect the underlying vegetation.
- ORV use (snowmachine) on the East Side is open to such use during the *winter* except for those areas closed to such use by regulation, subject to adequate snow cover to protect the underlying vegetation. Areas to be closed to snowmachine use under the revised regulations of this plan are depicted in Map 2-3. There are currently 18,683 acres of land with year-round recreational motorized use restrictions. The recommendation for land with year-round recreational motorized use restrictions in this plan is 18,115 acres, or a decrease of 568 acres compared to current restrictions. This amount is less than 1% of the overall acreage in the planning area.
- Snowmachine closures within areas of the East Side management units, including the High Glacier Peaks unit, may/can occur in addition to those identified in the proposed regulations (see above) for the following purposes, which are to guide decisions on closure: 1) minimize the harassment of wildlife or disruptions to wildlife habitats, based on ADF&G recommendations; 2) minimize damage to soils, vegetation, or other natural, cultural, or historic resources; or 3) minimize conflicts between ORV use and other users for purposes of public safety.

Utility Lines, Communication, and Related Facilities

- Power transmission lines should be situated to minimize or preclude visual impacts, especially as viewed from the Hatcher Pass Road. Power transmission lines (>115KV) shall be situated and designed to minimize or reduce the visual disturbance produced by such facilities. This is particularly important for transmission facilities that may be viewed from the Hatcher Pass Road. If it is determined in the DNR authorization that such facilities cannot be located to minimize or reduce visual impacts in a significant way and must be located in view of this road, screening of the more visible locations may be required and the types of poles and structures should be selected to minimize visual disturbance. Utilities may only be located within view of this road if a DMLW written determination finds that no feasible alternative exists and that it is in the best interest of the state to locate such lines adjacent to or within the view of this road.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible. Access routes to these sites are prohibited. Repeaters and other forms of communication sites should not be located in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area. Consult with the borough prior to issuing authorizations for communication sites.

- Wind generation facilities are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must meet the same requirements as described above. Wind generation facilities should not be located in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area.
- Hydroelectric generation facilities are conditionally allowed and require authorization from SCRO, DMLW. Such structures shall be consistent with all applicable state and federal standards and shall be sited so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed to blend in with the natural environment and terrain so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from this road.

Trails

Trail Development and Maintenance

- Trails shall be developed consistent with DPOR standards for sustainable trails on state land and to the standards of the Borough Recreational Trail Plan on borough land.
- A Trail Development Plan is recommended. DPOR should be the lead agency on the development of such a plan.
- Signs are to be located at trailheads noticing the trail and providing essential information.
- Parking lots shall be provided for major trailheads where significant public use has occurred or is likely to occur.
- Areas adjacent to trails shall remain undisturbed on 100' each side of a trail unless the area of disturbance is related to trail development or enhancement.
- Specific trail development, summer and winter, is appropriate in order to accommodate current existing uses, enable access to more remote areas or attractive features, and to divert movement to more desirable locations, or for purposes of public safety. Specific trail recommendations, summer and winter, are described in the specific management units that they occur.

Winter Trails

- Nordic Ski Trails have historically been developed by and maintained by volunteer groups and should continue to be developed by them.
- Nordic Ski Trails may be developed and managed by DPOR through trail grant programs similar to state grant funding that is allocated for snowmachine trail and corridor development.
- Nordic ski trails should only be developed in non-motorized areas to avoid conflict with snowmachine use.

- Snowmachine corridor and trail development has been funded through a combination of snowmachine registration fees state funding mechanisms that are managed by DPOR. These funding mechanisms include the SnowTRAC Grooming Pool (Snowmobile Trail Grant Program Grooming Pool) and ORTAB (Outdoor Recreation Trail Advisory Board). These funding mechanisms should still be used for future trail development.
- Snowmachine corridors on the East Side of the planning area that were developed by DPOR should continue to be managed by DPOR.

General Public Access

- Before leasing or otherwise disposing of state land, DNR will reserve public use easements pursuant to the requirements of 11 AAC 51.015.²³
- Access to state lands may be curtailed at any time to protect public safety, provide for the remediation of public use areas, allow special uses, or prevent harm to fish and wildlife habitat.
- Temporary roads will be routed to avoid wetlands, streams, and shall minimize disturbance to natural drainage patterns, and long-term effects on water quantity and quality.
- RS 2477 routes are to be retained by the state and managed to allow for use by a broad range of vehicles, although certain size restrictions exist. Vehicle size restrictions can be found under the regulation for ‘Generally Allowed Uses’, 11 AAC 96.020. Motorized use highway vehicles up to 10,000 pounds and all-terrain vehicles up to 1,500 pounds.

²³ Although the plan stipulates that state land is to be retained as a general intent, there may be instances where state land may need to be used for purposes of access, mandating an public access easement.

HERITAGE RESOURCES

Background

Historical resources in the Hatcher Pass area relate to placer and lode gold mining activities between 1897 and the 1940s in the Willow Creek Mining District, which extended from Archangel Valley on the east to Grubstake Gulch on the west. It is estimated that mines in the district produced over 400,000 ounces of gold; and over 10,000 ounces of the gold was from placer mining. Although few formal mining operations are active today, recreational gold-panning in the area is popular.

The early placer miners worked in Grubstake Gulch before heading north and east seeking the source of the gold, which proved to be at the headwaters of Willow Creek and the Little Susitna River. In 1906, quartz lode deposits were discovered, and placer mining decreased in the area. There was renewed placer mining for a brief period in the 1930s, and in the 1960s William Mrak started placer mining and did so successfully for about 25 years.

The lode gold discovery is credited to Robert Hatcher in 1906. His discovery was in the area now known as Hatcher Pass, on the high ridges between Craigie, Upper Willow, and Fishhook creeks. Other lode discoveries were made between 1907 and 1918. By 1914 three mines operated. After the Alaska Railroad was completed shortly after World War I, the Willow Creek Road was built, which allowed heavier mining equipment to be brought into the area. Gold production peaked in the 1930s. During World War II the federal government ordered nonessential mines to close. Operations never fully recovered. Independence Mine closed in 1951. The Gold Cord mine operated on a limited basis until the 1960s. In the 1970s, Dan Renshaw and Starkey Wilson acquired mineral rights to many claims in the Upper Willow, Craigie, and Fishhook Creek areas, joined with Enserch to explore for additional reserves, constructed a new mill, and started mining in 1983 in the Independence Valley.

The Independence Mine State Historical Park preserves the most evidence of mining in the area. Since its creation in 1986, it has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in South-central Alaska. The historic buildings, trails, tunnel openings, and cable lines have great public appeal. Interpretive signs, maps, and guides help tell the story of the Independence Mine and history of mining in the Hatcher Pass area. The Independence Mine was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. In the late 1970s, 271 acres of land were donated to the State of Alaska for the historical park by Starkey Wilson. The 1986 Hatcher Pass Management Plan recommended 530 acres be added to it. The area is designated a special use area under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3). No formal management plan for the park has been adopted. This plan recommends one be written.

Other historic mines in the area, such as the Lucky Shot and Thorpe, have not been restored. There are remnants of Kellyville, the boomtown where area miners once lived. Many of the wooden structures associated with these places have collapsed.

Multiple historic roads exist throughout the Hatcher Pass planning area. Four are identified as RS 2477 historic mining roads recognized by the Alaska Legislature: RST 1721 (Kashwitna River Trail), RST 1620 (Willow to Talkeetna River Trail), RST 1715 (Bartolf Creek Trail), and RST 1710 (Wet Gulch Trail). They are in the Kashwitna River Drainage, Willow Mountain, High Glacier Peaks, and Bald Mountain / Hillside management units respectively.

There is substantial interest in the Carle Wagon Road that connected the Knik-Goosebay settlement and Independence Mine. The Alaska Road Commission built the Knik-Willow Road in 1911 incorporating sections of the Carle Wagon Road. Over the next several decades the Alaska Road Commission built other roads, including the Archangel Road Extension, Fishhook Extension, Wasilla-Fishhook Creek, and Willow-Fishhook Creek roads.

Goals

- Develop a formal management plan for the Independence Mine State Historical Park.
- Maintain the historic mining character of the area.
- Protect historic structures and areas associated with past lode mining activity.

Management Intent

Although limited commercial development (as well as other forms of development) is recommended in this plan, some may occur. Such development is to avoid cultural sites. If avoidance is impractical, precautions need to be taken to mitigate potential adverse effects on cultural sites.

Management Guidelines

Broadly, this plan assumes that the extensive requirements under 11 AAC 96, 11 AAC 16, and 11 AAC 17, will be sufficient to manage aspects related to cultural and historical resources in the planning area.

Detailed stipulations, pertaining to the protection of cultural resources have been outlined in the Subsurface Resources section of this chapter. These stipulations are also intended to apply to all types of development or use that may adversely impact cultural and historical sites. The Independence Mine State Historical Park is afforded with added protection by the federal government under the National Historic Preservation Act, as it is recognized in the National Register of Historic Places.

WATER RESERVATIONS

Goal

Water reservations. Maintain water quantity and quality sufficient to protect the overall ecosystem integrity as well as the human, fish, and wildlife resources and uses of the region.

Background

There are two water reservations within the planning area; one affects the Little Susitna River and the other, Willow Creek. While water reservations are a tool to be used in protecting water quantity, they do not by themselves ensure that the overall quantity and quality of water within the planning area will be protected. This plan attempts to ensure water quantity and water quality within this area by land use designation and guidelines.

As indicated in the section, ‘Uses Requiring Authorization’, there are very few uses that are to be permitted within the planning area. Outside of the Government Peak unit, in which intensive development is anticipated for a portion of the unit, the only uses that are to be permitted are related to utilities, materials extraction, and some public facilities associated with recreation. These types of uses typically do not require large quantities of water nor generate large effluent flows. The areas that are important to water supply are associated with the Bald Mountain / Hillside and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna units. Within these units, there are to be no disposals of land and permitted uses are related to recreation and habitat protection.

Management Guidelines

A. Stream Uses to Consider for Reservations of Water. Streams, lakes, and other water bodies may be considered for reservations of water under AS 46.15.145. Such reservations are intended to maintain a specified water flow or level of water at a specified point on a stream or body of water, or a specified part of a stream, throughout the year for specified times. The purposes of the reservation, defined in statute, include: 1) protection of fish and wildlife habitat, migration, and propagation; 2) recreation and park purposes; 3) sanitary and water quality purposes; and 4) navigation and transportation purposes.

B. Priorities. A limited number of rivers have reservations of water applications filed on a portion of their systems; mainly in the vicinity of a stream gage (see http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/mapguide/wr_intro.htm). Both the Little Susitna and Willow Creek have instream flow reservations. Proposals for new developments requiring substantial water use or uses of water or that have the potential to negatively impact water

flows needed to produce fish, sustain water quality, provide for navigation, and/or recreation, may include an evaluation of the need for a reservation of water or other forms of instream flow protection.

C. Process for Determining Reservations. Applications for water reservations are submitted to the Department for adjudication following the procedures identified in 11 AAC 93.141-147. In general, these procedures estimate the quantity of water seasonally available and review the amount of water already appropriated in consideration of the requested water reservation or levels of water for the purposes to be protected.

D. Other Guidelines Affecting Water Reservations. Several other guidelines may affect water reservations. See other sections of this chapter.

Chapter 3:

Areawide and Management Unit Requirements

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Chapter 3:

Areawide and Management Unit Requirements

Scope of Chapter 3

This chapter is divided into two parts: the first describes aspects of the 2010 Management Plan relating to generally allowed uses, authorized uses, and aspects of the plan related to its function as an area plan. The second part, and the more detailed of the two, contains specific recommendations for each of the ten management regions within the planning area. Also included is a description of those areas that are controlled by specific administrative and legislative requirements.

This chapter primarily focuses on the overall management intent for specific management units and those management guidelines and recommendations necessary to fulfill this intent. The policies and requirements that follow focus on those principal natural resources and uses (or activities) that require specific management direction within a management unit. Uses that could occur within a management unit but are not considered appropriate are identified at the beginning of each management unit and in Table 2-1.

Map 3-1 depicts the management units and the external boundary of the Management Plan. Detailed maps are also provided for each Management unit, and should be consulted for DNR adjudicatory actions. Satellite imagery is also available on-line at Alaska Mapper¹ and should be consulted.

The boundaries of the units as well as the external boundary of the planning area are substantially different than those used in the 1986 Management Plan and the 1989 Plan Amendment. The external boundaries have been changed to reflect changes in land ownership and a shift in patterns of recreational use. Management region boundaries were changed to better reflect the types of uses that are likely to occur within a given management unit and to facilitate DPOR and DMLW management decisions on an operational level.

Central Management Orientation: Public Recreation Focus

Over the past 30 years recreational use of the Hatcher Pass area has increased significantly and most people perceive this area as an important recreational site within South-central Alaska. During the public meetings that preceded plan development, essentially all of the

¹ <http://dnr.alaska.gov/Mapper>

public that participated in these meetings wanted this area to continue to be managed for this purpose. This recreation focus, evident in the 1986 Management Plan, is continued in this revision.

The central management orientation of this plan is to manage the Hatcher Pass area for recreation and for those uses compatible with this activity or otherwise allowed by law, including mining.

This focus in land management is central to an understanding of the recommendations that follow in this chapter and, in fact, to the entirety of the 2010 Management Plan. This management focus is reflected in the planning objectives described in the remainder of this chapter and in the land and resource management strategies for individual management units in Chapter 3.

It is intended that this management orientation be reflected in the types of uses considered appropriate or inappropriate within specific management units and in the management intent and management guidelines that are stipulated for each use. DNR recognizes that certain areas may best be managed for particular uses that are compatible with each other, and incompatible activities prohibited as long as the prohibited types of uses are allowed elsewhere on adjacent state land. To this end, certain uses within the planning area on state land are prohibited in the 2010 Management Plan: grazing, agriculture, material extraction for non-public purposes, settlement (including remote settlement), and commercial timber harvest. Except for settlement within the Government Peak management unit, these uses are also prohibited on borough land. This chapter, accordingly, does not deal with these uses or land use patterns.

Uses Requiring Authorization and GAUs

Uses Requiring Authorization

Table 2-1 indicates those uses that are appropriate, inappropriate, or potentially appropriate on an areawide basis that require authorization by DNR. *This table applies to each management unit* unless otherwise indicated in the use table for the specific unit. Additional restrictions specific to the management unit may also apply; if this occurs, it is noted in the section termed ‘Authorized Uses’ in the management unit description.

Generally Allowed Uses

The requirements for uses that are described in this plan *do not affect the uses that are considered ‘generally allowed uses’* on state land under 11 AAC 96.020 *unless specifically specified in regulation*. With the exception of motorized (winter, summer, or winter and summer) uses in certain management units, all generally allowed uses authorized under

11 AAC 96 are allowed *throughout* the management area. If motorized uses are prohibited or their operations limited in some fashion in particular management units, this is noted in the listing of allowed uses for the affected management unit.

Note: The closures recommended in this plan are generally similar to those under the 1986 Plan (and subsequent regulations) in that year round closure restrictions continue in the Independence unit and portions of the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit and summer closures continue in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area and the Summit Lake State Recreation Site. The 2010 Plan, however, provides additional year round closures in portions of the Archangel and the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit and provides for summer closures throughout the Archangel and High Glacier Peak units. It also differs in that the Reed Creek valley, generally between Government Creek and the Gold Mint parking lot, is open to winter motorized use. This area continues to remain closed during the summer period. Approximately 18,115 acres of land contain year-round recreational motorized use restrictions as a result of the 2010 plan. This is a decrease of approximately 568 acres from the 1986 plan.

Table 3-1: Listing of Areas with Motorized Use RESTRICTIONS by Management Unit²

All Other Generally Allowed Uses Are Not Affected (See 11 AAC 96.020 <http://www.legis.state.ak.us>)

Management Unit	Restricted Area	Authority	Time of Restriction	Restricted Vehicle	Stipulations
Kashwitna River Drainage Unit	None	None	None	None	None
Willow Mountain Unit <i>See Map 3-3</i>	Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area <i>Remainder of Unit is Open</i>	AS 16.20.620	Summer ³ April 1 st – November 1 st	ORVs ⁴	ORV use is allowed on ADF&G Designated Trails within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area during summer months. See AS 16.20.620.
High Glacier Peaks Unit <i>See Map 3-4</i>	<i>Unit is Closed During Summer</i>	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) AS 38.04.200	Summer May 1 st – October 1 st	ORVs	ORV use is not allowed within this unit during summer months. Motorized use allowed by permit for access to mining claims.
Craigie Creek Unit <i>See Map 3-5</i>	Summit Lake Recreation Site <i>Remainder of Unit is Open</i>	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) 11 AAC 12 ADL 223584 ADL 223585	Summer May 1 st – October 1 st	ORVs	Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585.
Bald Mountain / Hillside Unit <i>See Map 3-6</i>	Summit Lake Recreation Site Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area <i>Remainder of Unit is Open</i>	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) 11 AAC 12 ADL 223584 ADL 223585 11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) ADL 223585	Summer May 1 st – October 1 st Summer May 1 st – August 1 st	ORVs ORVs	Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585.

² As recommended in the 2010 Hatcher Pass Public Review Draft. Note: this table only identifies restrictions to motorized use; unless specified, motorized use is allowed if it is consistent with 11 AAC 96.020.

³ Months of all summer motorized use restrictions may be extended if there is insufficient snow cover to accommodate snowmachine use.

⁴ ORV: Any motor vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain.

Management Unit	Restricted Area	Authority	Time of Restriction	Restricted Vehicle	Stipulations
Independence Unit <i>See Map 3-7</i>	Independence Mine State Historic Park <i>Remainder of Unit is Closed</i>	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) 11 AAC 12 ADL 223585 11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) 11 AAC 12 ADL 223585	Year-Round	ORVs	Motorized recreation is not permitted within the Independence Mine State Historic Park at any time of year. Snow machines are permitted to travel along the Hatcher Pass Road Corridor during winter months. Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585.
Archangel Management Unit <i>See Map 3-8</i>	Marmot Mountain <i>Unit is Closed During Summer</i>	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) AS 38.04.200 ADL 223585 11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) 11 AAC 12 ADL 223585	Year-Round Summer May 1 st – October 1 st	ORVs ORVs	Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585. Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585.
Reed Lakes / Little Susitna Unit <i>See Map 3-9</i>	Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Delia Creek Palmer-Fishhook Road / Little Susitna River Corridor <i>Remainder of Unit is Open</i>	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) ADL 223585 11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) AS 38.04.200 11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) AS 38.04.200	Year-Round Year-Round Year-Round	ORVs ORVs ORVs	Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585. Motorized use allowed by permit for access to mining claims. Motorized use allowed by permit for access to mining claims.
Mile 16 Management Unit <i>See Map 3-10</i>	Unit is Closed	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) AS 38.04.200 ADL 223585	Year-Round	ORVs	Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585.
Government Peak Management Unit <i>See Map 3-11</i>	Unit is Closed	11 AAC 96.014(3)(b) AS 38.04.200 ADL 225965	Year-Round	ORVs	Motorized use may be allowable by permit if consistent with uses identified in the Special Use Designation ADL 223585. Other restrictions may be imposed if or when a borough “Special Land Use Designation” is enacted for the Government Peak Unit.

Hatcher Pass
Management Plan
Map 3-1
Land Status and
Facility Recommendations

- Plan Boundary
- Plan Management Units
- Legislative Designation Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- State Land
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- East / West Boundary
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Areas - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

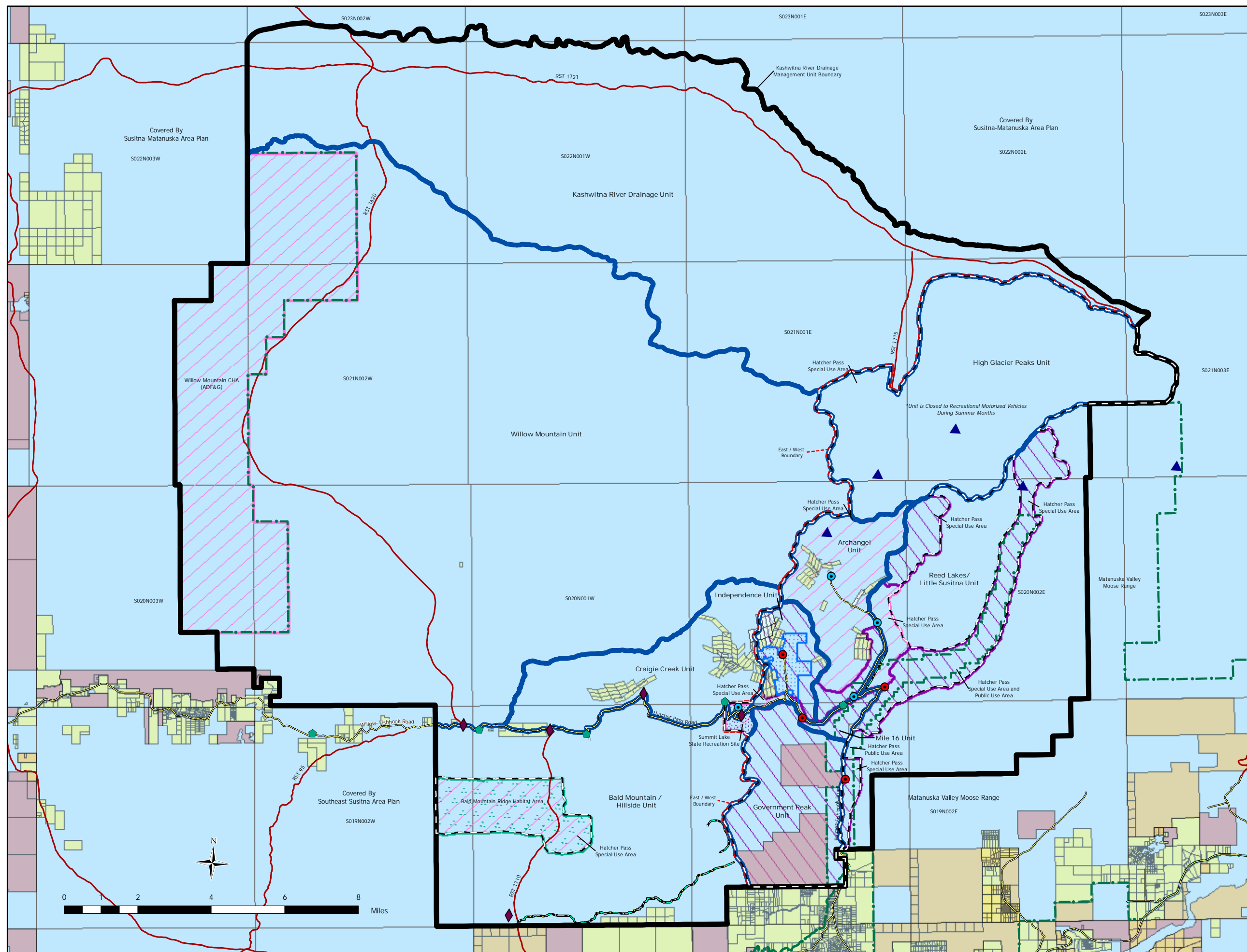
* General State Land Is Clear Topography
* All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
* Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
* Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb.11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
* Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only
* Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 41.23.130



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N



Area Plan Considerations and Plan Duration

The Hatcher Pass Management Plan will function as the area plan for the management area. Since it is to function in this capacity and is adopted under AS 38.04.065(b), certain aspects of area plan format and requirements apply.

Plan Designations. This plan uses plan designations, which are converted to land classifications in the Land Classification Order in Appendix B, to indicate the primary use or resource for which the land within a management unit is to be managed. DNR will manage activities in the unit to encourage, develop, or protect the uses or resources that are designated within a management unit. These designations only apply to surface uses and to state land. On borough property other land use classifications may apply. Because of the central management focus only a limited number of plan designations are used:

Ha – Habitat. This designation applies to areas of varied size for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life-history stage where alteration of the habitat or human disturbance could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species. This land will remain in state ownership and will be maintained in an undisturbed, natural state except for improvements related to public health, safety, habitat restoration or rehabilitation, and public recreation. Authorizations within areas designated Habitat are not to be considered appropriate unless consistent with the previous objectives. Utilities and roads may be appropriate with appropriate design if habitat functions can be maintained. This designation converts to a land classification of Wildlife Habitat Land.

Ma – Materials. Sites suitable for extraction of materials, which include common varieties of sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, pumicite, cinders, clay, and sod. This land will remain in state ownership and may continue for the purpose of materials extraction until the site is exhausted of useable material or until the requirements of the authorization are fulfilled. Sites may be used for other purposes (habitat rehabilitation or parking) when either of these conditions exist. This designation converts to the land classification of Materials Land.

Mn – Minerals. This designation is applied where state land is known mineral resources exist and where development is occurring or is reasonably likely to occur. This designation converts to a land use classification of Mineral Land.

Pr – Public Facilities-Retain. These sites are reserved for a specific infrastructure to serve state interests. These units are classified Reserved Use and areas designated “Public Facilities-Retain” will be retained in state ownership. This designation converts to the classification of Reserved Use Land.

Rd – Public Recreation-Dispersed. This designation applies to those areas that offer or have a high potential for dispersed recreation or tourism and where desirable recreation conditions are scattered or widespread rather than localized. Developed facilities are generally not necessary other than trails, trail signs, primitive campsites, and other minor improvements. This land will be retained in public ownership in an undisturbed, natural state except for

improvements related to public health, safety, or recreation. Authorizations within areas designated Public Recreation-Dispersed are not to be considered appropriate unless necessary for public health, safety or recreation. Utilities and roads may be appropriate with appropriate design if recreation functions can be maintained. This designation converts to the land use classification of Public Recreation Land.

Rp – Public Recreation-Developed. Areas used by higher concentrations of users relative to the rest of the planning area or areas with a high potential to attract higher concentrations of people. These areas offer localized attractions or ease of access, and in many instances developed facilities. Examples include cabins, scenic overlooks, and road-accessible uplands that are used for picnicking, sports, fishing, etc. In addition, as applied to this management plan, it includes the ski facilities and related uses described in the Government Peak management unit. The recreation and tourism uses for which these units are designated may be either public or commercial. Land owned by the state will remain in state ownership unless otherwise noted in the management intent for the unit. The primary management intent for these sites is to protect the opportunity of the public to use these sites for recreation. Many of these sites require additional management attention because of the use they are receiving. This designation converts to the land use classification of Public Recreation Land.

Plan designations do not, however, provide sufficient guidance for effective state land management in most instances. When the plan assigns a designation to a unit, the designation is accompanied by management intent specific to that unit, as well as specific management guidelines and, sometimes, management recommendations. All four components must be taken into consideration when making an authorization decision. If there is an apparent discrepancy between management intent and plan designation for a management unit, the former is to control. Management intent statements provide a more detailed description of management strategy than is available through the use of a plan designation and therefore provide a better basis for an adjudicatory decision.

Primary Designated, Co-designated, Prohibited, and Conditionally Allowed Uses

The management plan uses a variety of use types and plan designations to manage state land. These include allowed, prohibited, and conditionally allowed use types. Allowed use types indicate that the use is considered to be compatible with the plan designation and management intent of a particular management unit. Prohibited and conditionally allowed use types indicate those uses that are inconsistent or potentially inconsistent with the management intent of a given unit. Conditional uses require a written determination that establishes the basis and justification for such uses within a given management unit. Prohibited uses, in addition to written justification, will also require a plan amendment to be authorized. The uses that are listed in Table 3-1 are to be interpreted in terms of the criteria given below. This plan also uses plan designations and co-designations. These indicate the primary use or resource for which a given unit is to be managed. They indicate a general

direction for agency management and must be applied to be consistent with the management intent statement for a given unit. The uses that are listed (allowed, prohibited, and conditionally allowed) are a reflection of the management intent for a specific unit. Where applicable, seasonal restrictions on recreational use are also specified.

Primary and Co-designated Uses. This plan assigns four plan designations to specific management units. The designation of Public Recreation-Dispersed applies throughout all of the management units, reflecting the central orientation of the 2010 Management Plan. The only exceptions to this are the few times that a commercial activity (Government Peak) or material extraction sites may occur (Craigie and Bald Mountain / Hillside). In these instances the plan designations of Public Recreation-Developed or Materials may apply, and borough or state land is to be managed to accommodate these uses. There are also several instances where a co-designation applies; this occurs if a unit, or portions of a unit, have complementary uses of equal value. The co-designation of Habitat and Public Recreation-Dispersed is used when both uses are of equal value and the intention is to accommodate dispersed public recreation while protecting important wildlife and habitat resources. The co-designation of Minerals and Public Recreation-Dispersed is used in those areas where mining activity has occurred in the past, which coincides with the Independence and Craigie Creek and portions of the Bald Mountain / Hillside management units. Only those co-designations that are complementary to each other or compatible with each other are included in this plan. Co-designated uses should be viewed, therefore, as compatible unless specific conditions existing at the time that DNR is adjudicating indicate otherwise.

Prohibited Uses and Conditionally Allowed Uses. The plan identifies prohibited uses⁵. These are uses that would have significant conflict with other uses or activities. They are not to be permitted except by a plan amendment. Conditionally allowed uses are those uses that may be appropriate within a specific management unit at particular locations, and with the use of stipulations that make the use compatible with the primary designated use. Conditional uses must be authorized in a written finding and they must always be consistent with the management intent of the management unit in which they occur. Stipulations or siting requirements in an authorization are to ensure that this management intent is met.

Retained State Land

Area plans serve to indicate which areas of state land are to be disposed of out of state ownership and those areas that are to be retained for some significant public purpose. In this plan, it has been determined that the best use of state land within the planning area is for the protection of scenic resources, the use of state land for public recreation, and for the protection of wildlife and important habitats. *All land within the planning area is to be retained by the state unless a valid, preexisting disposal decision exists*⁶.

⁵ Referred to as 'not allowed' in Table 2-1.

⁶ None are known to exist.

The Hatcher Pass planning area lies east of the Southeast Susitna Area Plan and west of the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan. The planning process for this plan and the two pertinent area plans determined that the more active development of state land should occur within the Southeast Susitna Area Plan or the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan. Large amounts of state land are designated for agricultural, commercial/settlement, or forest management purposes in these plans and relatively little land for the purpose of public recreation specifically. The Hatcher Pass Management Plan provides an extensive area of state land devoted to public recreation.

Mineral Designations

Those parts of the planning area where mining for locatable minerals has occurred historically (or can be expected to occur in the future) are co-designated Minerals and Public Recreation-Dispersed. In those instances where a Minerals designation is not used or the area is not closed to mineral entry, DNR will treat mining as if it were a co-designated use, or a use that is compatible with the principle surface use. This is important to note because DNR area plans usually do not apply mineral resource designations to large areas. The problems in locating and measuring subsurface resources make it difficult and potentially misleading for this plan to apply designations to mineral resources in the same way that they are applied to surface resources. All areas are open to mineral entry except for the Government Peak management unit, small portions of the Independence and Archangel management units, and the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area.

Management Intent, Guidelines, and Recommendations

State land is to be administered through a combination of plan designation, management intent, and management guidelines. The following definitions of management intent, management guidelines, and management recommendations apply in this plan and are to be used in adjudicatory decision making.

- **Management intent (statements):** These describe the general management approach that the state will pursue in managing state land and resources within specific management units. They define the DNR's near and long-term land management objectives and, sometimes, the methods to achieve those objectives. They are similar to goals in being of long-term duration and of general scope, but differ in that they are applied to the management of specific uses or resources within a management unit.
- **Management Guidelines:** These are the intended courses of action. They are usually stated in the affirmative, are specific to a resource or management unit, and identify the action or approach that is to be used in managing a resource or area. Guidelines are intended to guide DNR decision making on all aspects of land management within

a management unit. They are intended to be consistent with the management intent for a unit and in the event of an apparent discrepancy between a management intent statement and a management guideline, the former applies.

- Management recommendations: These are specific recommendations for improvements, operations, administrative, or fiscal actions.

Plan Duration

This plan guides land and resource management decisions in the planning area for the *next 20 years or until revised*.

KASHWITNA RIVER DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Kashwitna River Drainage management unit (Map 3-2) consists of the Kashwitna River and its adjacent uplands as well as a large mountainous area located immediately south of it. This unit includes the Bartholf Creek drainage, which borders the High Glacier Peaks management unit. The latter was chosen to separate the mountainous area of the High Glacier Peaks management unit from the lowlands associated with the Kashwitna River and its tributaries. All of this area is either owned by the state or will likely be conveyed to the state. The western area has been selected for conveyance to the state under the statehood act, and it is expected that this area will be conveyed within the next ten years. Including the area of selection, there are 65,164 acres of land within the management unit.

There are three RS 2477 Routes that are located across this unit. The Kashwitna River Trail is a significant west-east RS 2477 route (RST 1721) occupies the Kashwitna River drainage. The Talkeetna River Trail is a north-south RS 2477 route (RST 1620) occurs in the western part of the unit. This trail begins along the Hatcher Pass Road in the south and extends northward through the Willow Mountain unit, and exists through the northern boundary of the planning area. The third RS 2477 trail is the Bartholf Creek Trail (RST 1715), which follows the Bartholf Creek drainage.

The terrain of this unit consists of three fairly distinct types of topography: a lowland area adjacent to Bartholf Creek and the Kashwitna River, the moderately sloped foothills to the west, and the remainder of the unit is part of the Talkeetna Mountains and consists of very mountainous terrain. Vegetation patterns generally follow this topography. The Kashwitna River drainage consists mostly of bottomland spruce-poplar forest, while the foothills consist mostly of shrub. The mountainous areas are similar to vegetation pattern of the High Glacier Peak management unit, consisting of alpine tundra, ice or snow, or barren rock. This unit also provides important habitat for moose, caribou, and Dall sheep. Caribou are present throughout the central and eastern parts of the unit, while the far eastern and western areas are important moose calving and rutting areas. Brown and black bears are found along the Kashwitna River riparian areas.

Access to this unit is limited and is provided by snowmachine and by ATV use in the summer. Use patterns tend to occur within the Kashwitna River valley along the RS 2477 routes.

Similar to the High Glacier Peaks management unit, this unit has experienced relatively low levels of recreation use, with most of this related to snow-machine use during the winter. The Kashwitna River is a winter travel corridor with some movement also extending southward along the Talkeetna River Trail and Bartholf Creek, providing access to a number of snowmachine routes within the Willow Mountain and High Glacier Peaks management

units, respectively. There is no known summer motorized use in this unit, except for use that occurs along the RS 2477 route in the western foothills. Although the amount of use is low compared to the other, more accessible units, it is significant and is increasing in amount. The Kashwitna River drainage was included within the planning area because of the increasing levels of use and the relation of that use to the Hatcher Pass area proper. The Kashwitna River meets the criteria to be considered navigable by the state.

There are not many historic sites in this management unit. However, there are gravel bars that may have been used as airstrips by miners located in the area.

Planning Issues

There are few planning issues associated with this management unit at this time. The use of the river drainage by snowmachines is currently limited and does not present management issues. Summer ORV use is also limited, with this occurring in the far western part of the unit along the Talkeetna River Trail RS 2477 route. Few problems now exist with summer ORV use. No closure to winter snowmachine use or summer ORV use is recommended.

Plan Designations and Land Classifications

This area is co-designated Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat, which converts to land use classifications of Public Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land.

Management Intent

This area is to be managed to maintain its current natural, essentially unspoiled character. More specifically, the unit is to be managed to maintain its wildlife populations as well as provide opportunities for hunting and other dispersed recreation activities to meet current and future demand.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted; there are no seasonal motorized use restrictions.

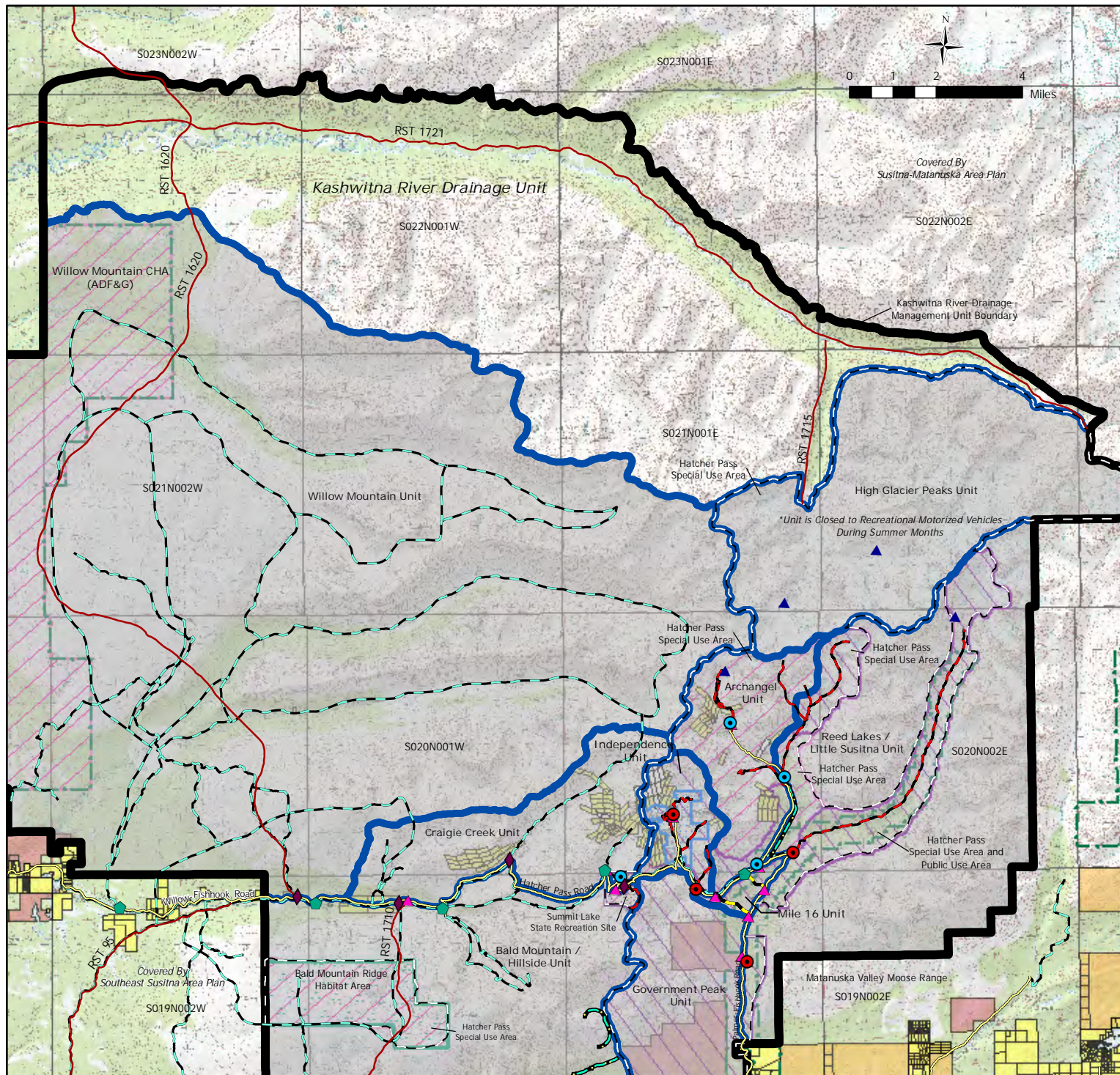
Management Guidelines

Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Management Recommendations (Facilities)

None are recommended, although hardening and/or rerouting of the north-south RS 2477 route for summer ORV use may be required in the future.

Hatcher Pass Management Plan
Map 3-2
Kashwitna River Drainage Unit
Land Status, Recreation, and
Facility Recommendations



- Plan Boundary
- Kashwitna River Drainage Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
 * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
 * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
 * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only
 * Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 16.20.620



Alaska
 Department of Natural Resources
 Division of Mining, Land & Water
 Resource Assessment & Development Section
 Boundaries and Information
 Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
 and is intended to be used only as a guide.
 Coordinate System: NAD83_UTM_Zone_6N

WILLOW MOUNTAIN MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Willow Mountain management unit (Map 3-2) is located at the southern base of the Talkeetna Mountains. The topography of this area varies greatly from east to west. The eastern section of this unit is characterized by the rugged peaks of the Talkeetna Mountains. The land slopes in elevation into a large plateau to the west, then into the alpine tundra. This is the largest management unit in the planning area, containing 124,940 acres of land. It is predominantly state owned land (124,812 acres). It is located south of the Kashwitna River Drainage management unit and immediately north of the Craigie Creek and Bald Mountain / Hillside management units, and west of all other management units. The southeast boundary is along the Hatcher Pass Road. The low lands of this unit are marshy and sensitive to environmental degradation caused by foot travel and motorized use during the summer months. There are three prominent creeks in this unit: the Peters, Purches, and Little Willow creeks.

Access into this management unit is provided by a number of trails that extend from the Hatcher Pass Road, including the RS 2477 Trail known as the Talkeetna River Trail (RST 1620). This trail begins at the Hatcher Pass Road and extends north, through the Kashwitna River Drainage management unit. Other trails include the Willow Mountain Trail, Blacks Ridge Trail, Purches Creek Trail, and Peters Creek Trail, which experience the heaviest use in the winter by snowmachines.

Vegetation patterns generally follow the topography of the management unit. The valley and drainage areas consist mostly of bottomland spruce-poplar forests, while the foothills of the Talkeetna Mountains consist mostly of shrubs. The unit is characterized by alpine tundra at higher elevations and by wetlands in the lower elevations in relatively flat terrain. Beaver ponds are common in the lowlands of this management unit.

The Willow Mountain management unit provides an important habitat area for many animals. Species present include: moose, brown and black bears, caribou, Dall sheep, and beavers. Migratory tundra birds also nest in the upland plateaus and ridges. The Little Willow Creek is an important salmon spawning and juvenile rearing waterbody. This area is used for hunting moose, caribou, and bears. The Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area is located along the western border of this unit. It is managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This area experiences a high level of recreational use. In the summer, it is popular for hiking, ATVs, and off-road vehicle use. The heaviest ATV use is in the fall during hunting season.

In the winter, this is a very popular area for snowmachine recreation. There are numerous snowmachine trails, which are depicted on Map 3-3. There are currently no improved routes for ATV or off-roading in this management unit. As a result, the marshy land and wetlands near the trails and creek drainages have been degraded due to unsuitable soils, trail braiding, and the weight of over-sized vehicles.

Placer mining claims have been worked along the Peters and Purches Creeks in this unit, however there were no large-scale mining operations. The Talkeetna River Trail (RST 1620) crosses the western area of this unit and was historically used to provide access to mining operations along the creeks and Kashwitna River.

Planning Issues

There are several important planning issues in this management unit. This is a very popular area for winter motorized recreational use and there are no restrictions on motorized use, other than summer restrictions in the Willow Mountain CHA. Currently, there is no on-the-ground field management of this unit. The summer use of ATVs and ORVs is causing degradation to the wetlands and alpine tundra. Since there are no improved routes, recreationists are creating their own; many of which are not sustainable. Access to the unit is difficult, as there are few motorized corridors for the public to use to reach the area and the western side of the Hatcher Pass Road is not maintained by ADOT/PF in the winter. There are no parking lots or restroom facilities in this unit. Many recreationists often have to park their vehicles outside of the western boundary of the planning area before entering to recreate.

Plan Designations and Land Classifications

This area is co-designated for Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat, which converts to land use classifications of Public Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land.

Management Intent

This area is to be managed primarily for recreation, with an emphasis on motorized recreation. It is also to be managed to maintain and protect wildlife populations and areas of sensitive environmental character, as well as provide opportunities for hunting and other dispersed recreation activities.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1. Material sales are a prohibited use in the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for off-road motorized recreation within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area (CHA), which is 22,540 acres in size, during summer months. Off-road use is only permitted on designated routes within the CHA.

Management Guidelines

The management guidelines that follow are based on the uses that are allowed, conditionally allowed, or prohibited. Based on these guidelines, few uses other than those authorized as a matter of state law, are intended within this unit. Accordingly, the guidelines only deal with those uses that could occur within this unit. All state land is to be retained.

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.
- Authorizations issued within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area shall be consistent with the 1986 Management Plan⁷ until ADF&G develops and adopts a management plan for the CHA. When this occurs uses affected by the CHA management plan are to be managed consistent with the requirements of the ADF&G plan. Uses that are not controlled by the CHA management plan are to be authorized by DNR and shall be consistent with the 2010 Management Plan.

⁷ Current statutory authority requires that the Willow Mountain CHA be managed to be consistent with the 1989 Management Plan until a CHA management plan is prepared by ADF&G. This plan revision (2010) cannot alter this statutory requirement. However, both the 1986 Plan and the 2010 Plan manage this region in a similar, if not identical manner.

Utilities

- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road wherever practical. They are to be placed so they blend with ridges rather than stand out as a skyline feature.
- Utility lines shall be placed underground. If this is not practical the standards for Utilities in the Recreation section of Chapter 2 are to be followed.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are a conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together where possible. Creation of access routes to these sites is prohibited.

Management Recommendations

Wildlife

- Maintain the seasonal restriction on vehicular use under current (2010) regulations in the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area, to continue the avoidance of adverse impacts on moose habitat areas.
- Actions to enhance moose browse are considered appropriate but are to be limited to those sites where disturbance to the viewshed from the Hatcher Pass Road can be avoided or minimized. Enhancement actions shall be coordinated with and approved by ADF&G and the Regional Manager, SCRO.

Trailheads, Parking, Scenic Pull-outs, and Public Use Cabins

- Subject to funding availability:
 - Develop a paved pull out and trailhead for the Peters-Purchases Creek Trail at Mile Post 29.5.
 - Permit the establishment of public use cabins in this management unit. The establishment of such facilities is subject to agency review and they are to be managed by DPOR or not-for-profit entities.

Transportation and Public Access

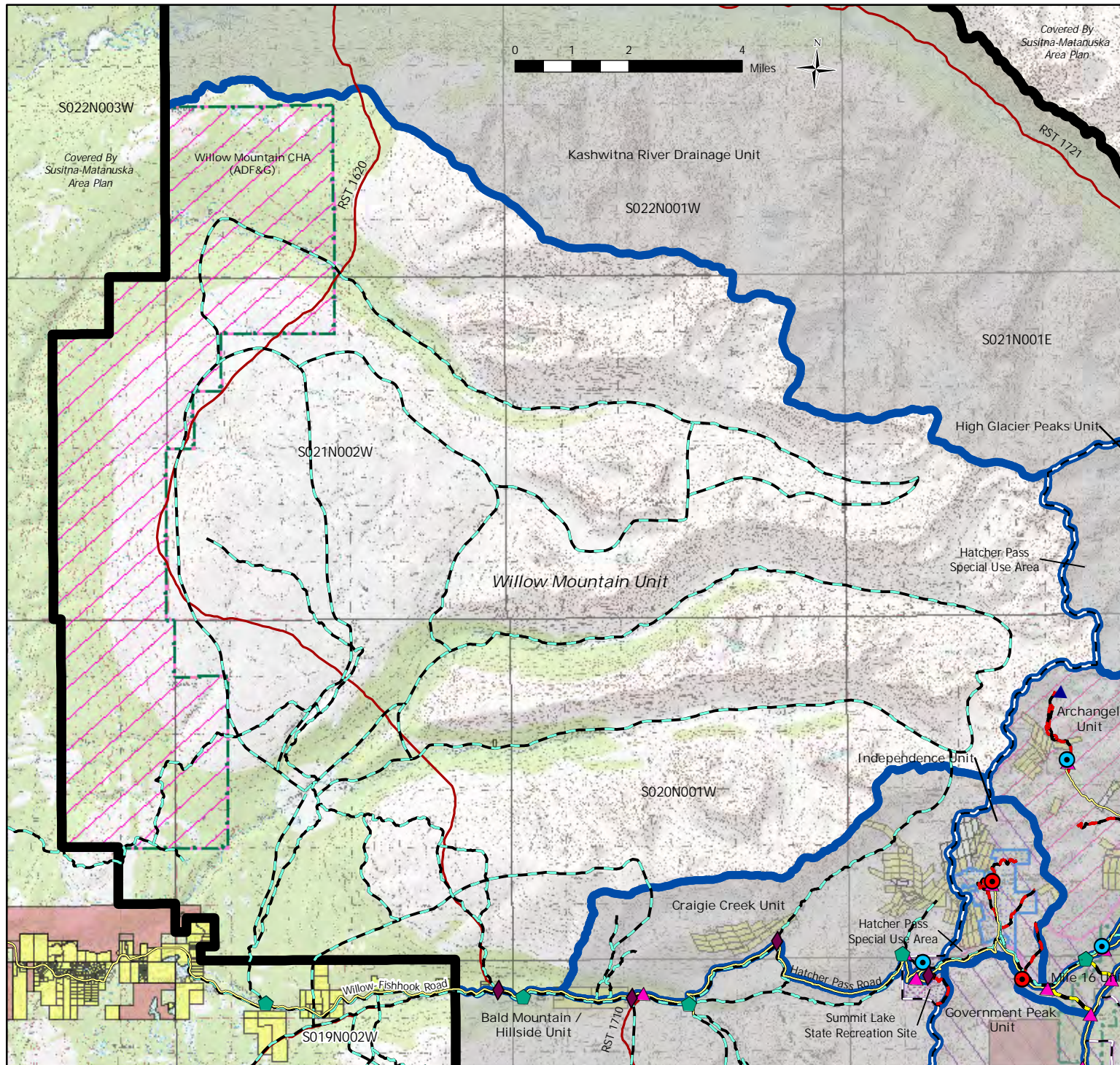
- ATV routes are considered appropriate within portions of this unit and are to be designed to sustainable trail standards. See Map 3-3. (Note: these routes should be considered as preliminary at this stage of review. Other routes may be identified as a result of further public review and comment, or may be the result of a comprehensive trail plan developed by DNR.)
- The development of hiking trails is recommended; these are to be designed to sustained trail standards. Hiking trails have not been officially designated in this area. The public hikes on trails that generally follow existing roads, RS 2477 Trails, and snowmachine trails. See Map 3-3. (Note: the routes identified in the plan map should be considered as preliminary at this stage of review. Other routes may be identified as a result of further public review and comment, or may be the result of a comprehensive trail plan developed by DNR at a subsequent time depending on funding and staff availability.)

Hatcher Pass Management Plan

Map 3-3

Willow Mountain Unit

Land Status, Recreation, and
Facility Recommendations



- Plan Boundary
- Willow Mountain Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Matsu Borough Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only
- * Willow Mountain CHA Estb. AS 16.20.620



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

HIGH GLACIER PEAKS MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The High Glacier Peaks management unit (Map 3-4) occupies a mountainous area consisting of glaciers and mountains in the area immediately north of the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit and south of the Kashwitna River drainage. There are approximately 22,875 acres within this unit. All of the land is owned by the state and is managed by DMLW. This unit excludes Bartholf Creek, which is part of the Kashwitna River Drainage management unit. It was segregated out in order to maintain the uniformly mountainous character of this unit and to keep lowland areas within a separate management unit. Vegetation consists of alpine tundra and low growing shrubs, but many areas are un-vegetated and are covered by perpetual snow and ice or are barren rock. Dall sheep and caribou are present in the northern parts of this unit, with this area being important for both winter habitat and calving (caribou). An RS 2477 route, The Bartholf Creek Trail, (RST 1721) terminates in the western part of the unit.

This area experiences limited types of recreational use, given its remote and generally inaccessible location. The main uses of the area are rock climbing and mountaineering and associated summer trekking along the mountaineering hut system in the north western section of the planning area. There are two mountaineering huts in this unit that support these activities, the Bomber and Snowbird huts. They were built in the 1980's by non-profit organizations on land they have leased from the state for members of the mountaineering community. These groups still hold leases on this land and maintain these cabins today.

Some winter use, including snow machining and back country skiing also occur in the area. Although the amount of use is low compared to other, more accessible units, it is significant and is increasing in amount. Most access occurs by foot from the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit or by snowmachine, using the same access points, although some snowmachiners access the area by following the Kashwitna River drainage. This area was included within the planning area of this management plan because of the increasing levels of use and the relation of that use to the Hatcher Pass area proper. Map 3-1 depicts this unit in relation to the other units.

The High Glacier Peaks Area does not have many historic mining sites. There is a RS 2477 historic mining route (RST 1715) from the Kashwitna River, along Bartholf Creek into the unit, which provides access toward the Snowbird Glacier area and northern mining claims. The crash site of a bomber is in this management unit.

Planning Issues

The principal planning issues within this unit focus on the use of the mountaineering huts, whether it is appropriate to limit motorized use adjacent to these structures, and whether the entire management unit should be closed to motorized use during the summer. Although there is no known (summer) motorized use of this unit currently, it is possible that this could occur. Since no popular pattern of recreational use has been established, it is suggested that this area be closed to motorized uses seasonally (summer) to maintain the current use patterns. No closure of winter snowmachine use is recommended.

Plan Designation and Land Classification

This area is designated Public Recreation-Dispersed, which converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land.

Management Intent

This area is to be managed to maintain its current natural, essentially well-preserved character. More specifically, the unit is to be managed to maintain its wildlife populations as well as provide opportunities for hunting and other dispersed recreation activities to meet current and future demand. The area is meant to be managed for non-motorized recreation during the summer months.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1

Generally Allowed Uses

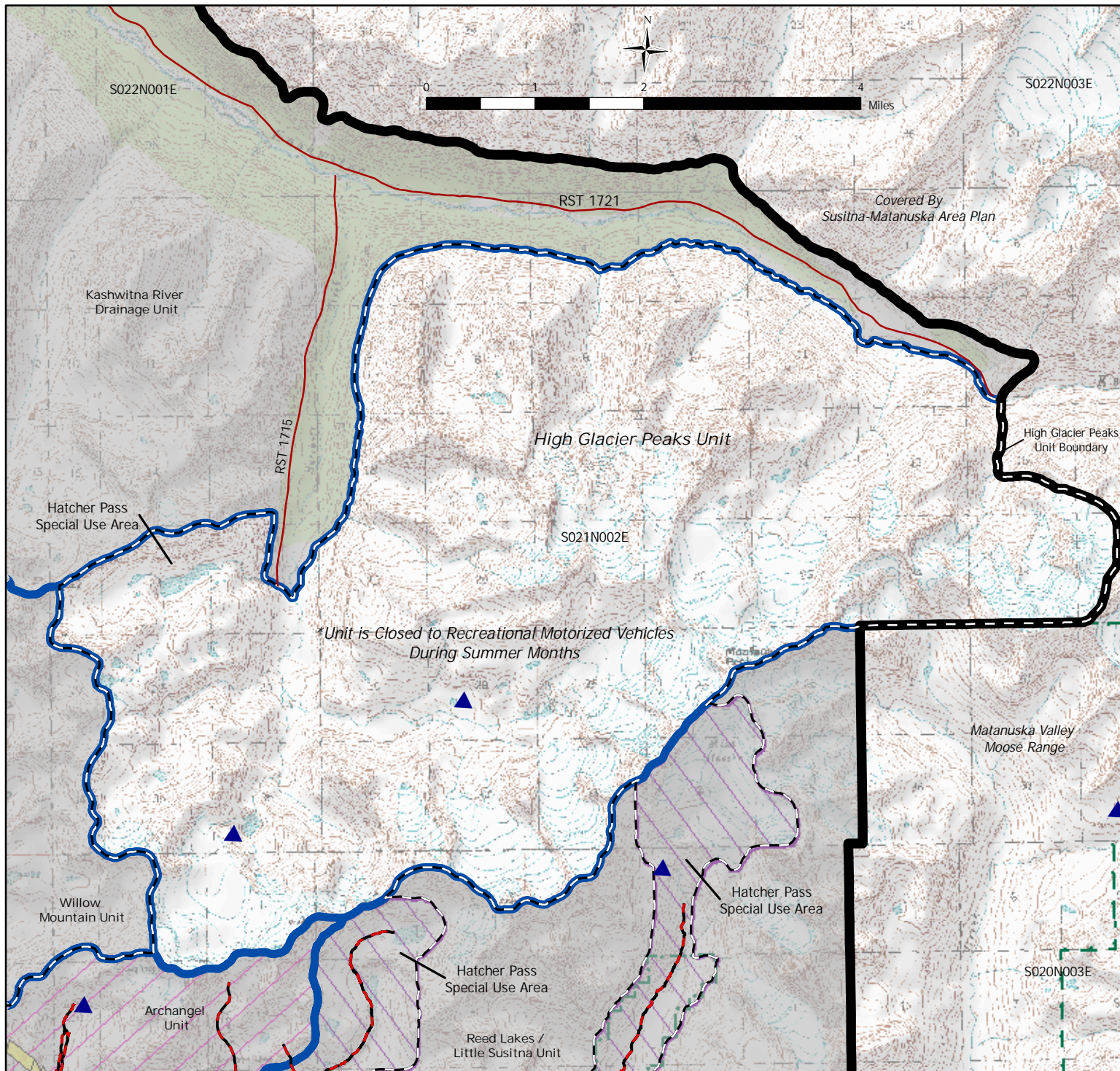
All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for Off Road Recreational Vehicle use during the summer (May 1 – October 1).

Management Guidelines

Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Management Recommendations

- This management unit is recommended for inclusion into the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area. Revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted on Map 3-4.
- This management unit will be closed to summer recreational motorized use.
- No additional facilities are recommended, although the appropriateness of the current mountaineering huts is recognized. Additional structures of this type, or public use cabins, that are constructed and maintained to support dispersed recreation activities in this unit are considered appropriate if maintained and operated by DPOR or not-for-profit entities, consistent with current DMLW requirements.

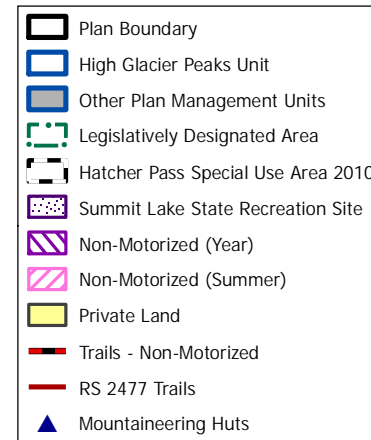


Hatcher Pass Management Plan

Map 3-4

High Glacier Peaks Unit

Land Status, Recreation, and Facility Recommendations



- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska

Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAD83_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

CRAIGIE CREEK MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Craigie Creek management unit (Map 3-5) is situated within the Craigie Creek valley. It consists of nearly 10,061 acres of land. Although there are numerous mining claims and private parcels, the majority of the unit is state owned land (8,717 acres). The unit is directly south of the Willow Mountain management unit, west of the Independence management unit, and shares the Hatcher Pass Road as its southern boundary with the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit. The Craigie Creek and surrounding valley are the dominant landscape features in this management unit. The valley is surrounded by alpine tundra, rock glaciers, and unstable slopes at the higher elevations. The Bullion Mountain Ridge encases the valley along the southeast boundary of the management unit. The northern section of the Summit Lake State Recreation Site is located within the southeast section of this management unit.

The vegetation in this area is consistent with alpine tundra. This management unit provides habitat for moose, bear, beaver, and small game. Beaver ponds can be viewed throughout the lowland areas. Hunting activities occur here in the fall and ptarmigan are hunted in the winter.

Mineral potential is considered to be high throughout this management unit, particularly in the eastern areas. The Craigie Creek management unit is part of the Willow Creek Mining District. There have been three producing lode mines in this management area, the Lucky Shot, War Baby, and Gold Bullion Mines. More gold has been produced from mines in this management unit than all other locations in the Hatcher Pass area.⁸ The first gold produced from the Hatcher Pass area was in this unit, from a placer mine at Grubstake Gulch in 1898⁹. The remnants of Kellyville are in this management unit, which was a mining town that supported the historic mines.

This unit is blanketed with mining claims that are still in operation today. Most mining claims are located along the Craigie Creek Road and are concentrated along the eastern boundary of the unit, abutting mining claims located in the Independence management unit. There are also mineral closures (see Alaska Mapper). Since 2000, there has been extensive exploration focusing on the Lucky Shot Prospect, between the old Lucky Shot Mine and Coleman Adit high on the valley wall. Exploration in this area continues and given the extensive mining history, remaining mineral values, and extensive recent exploration, it is likely that mining will reoccur in the valley during the period of this plan.

⁸ Hunting for Gold in the Alaska's Talkeetna Mountains 18997-1951. William M. Stoll. 1997. Table p. 270.

⁹ Ibid. p.24

The Craigie Creek Road begins at the milepost 23.5 on the north side of the Hatcher Pass Road and stretches across the management unit, in a northeasterly direction, and ends before reaching Dogsled Pass. It is the main access route into the management unit and is used as a hiking trail and ATV and ORV route in the summer. It turns into a very popular snowmachine trail in the winter which crosses Dogsled Pass into the Purches Creek Valley.

The Craigie Creek management unit is popular for all types of recreation. The southern half of the Summit Lake Recreation Site is a prominent point of interest for non-motorized recreation in the summer. Non-motorized uses include hiking, paragliding, and back-country skiing in the winter. Motorized recreation includes snowmachining in the winter. Popular snowmachine trails are depicted on Map 3-5. The Summit Lake Recreation Site is closed to motorized use unless there is sufficient snow cover to protect the underlying soils and vegetation. This closure is typically May 1 – October 1, but it may vary depending on the amount of snowfall in the area. ATV/ORV use in the summer is popular in the Craigie Creek unit outside of this recreation site.

This unit encompasses the former Lucky Shot, War Baby, and Gold Bullion mines. Remnants of Kellyville, the mining boomtown that housed area miners, are visible today.

Planning Issues

This management unit is very popular for motorized recreational users. There are several important planning issues in this management unit. ATV and ORV use is occurring in the summer months, which is causing degradation to the wetlands and alpine tundra. Since there are no designated or improved routes, recreationalists are creating their own, many of which are not sustainable. This area is also very popular for snowmachines in the winter. However, it is difficult to access the western side of the planning area because there are few motorized corridors from the east side for the public to reach the area and the Hatcher Pass Road is gated at MP 20.5 and not maintained during that season by ADOT/PF. Many recreationalists who access this unit from the east side, must park their vehicles in the Fishhook Parking Lot or park in available pullouts, and ride along the Hatcher Pass Road to reach snowmachine trails on the west side. They also park their vehicles on available side streets and private parking lots outside of the planning area on the west side.

Plan Designations and Land Classifications

This area is co-designated Public Recreation-Dispersed and Minerals, which converts to land use classifications of Public Recreation Land and Mineral Land.

Management Intent

This management unit will be managed primarily for its mineral resources and for recreation, with emphasis on motorized recreation. Continued mineral entry and development are authorized in this unit. State review of a plan of operations for mineral development will be reviewed consistent with the guidelines in this unit so that the development minimizes affects on scenic resources and recreation. Designated routes and facilities to support recreation are recommended. Existing snowmachine trails should be used as designated routes where feasible. The approximate locations of the snowmachine trails are depicted on Map 3-3. Mining exploration and development are recognized as appropriate uses in this unit.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses on general domain land requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1. Uses in the Summit Lake SRS are controlled under 11 AAC 96.014 and 11 AAC 12.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for summer motorized restrictions (May 1 – August 1) to protect the Summit Lake Recreation Site. The Summit Lake Recreation Site is 390 acres, 128 acres of which are located within this management unit. It is closed to motorized use unless there is sufficient snow cover to protect the underlying soils and vegetation. This closure is generally May 1 – October 1, but it may vary depending on the amount of snowfall in the area. The area affected by this restriction is depicted on Map 3-5.

Management Guidelines

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Viewshed Protection

- Material extraction sites are to be screened from view from the Hatcher Pass Road in order to maintain the scenic qualities of those areas viewed from the Hatcher Pass Road.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with the standards for viewshed management described in the Recreation section of Chapter 2.

Mining

- The number and kind of structures authorized in a mining Plan of Operations shall be the minimum necessary for the operation of permitted subsurface mining operations.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with the management guidelines for subsurface facilities in Chapter 2. Utility lines internal to mineral development, that are solely used by a mineral project, are also to comply with these guidelines.
- Plan of operations for mineral development on state land should be authorized to minimize negative impacts on recreation, taking into account the environmental and economic requirements of the mineral development. To do so, authorizations for mineral development should consider methods to minimize visual impact including use of topography and vegetation, if practical, for screening facilities from view; and should consider grouping or locating facilities to minimize visual impact or to avoid blocking access to public land.
- The realignment or relocation of the Craigie Creek Road should be investigated in the Plan of Operations review for mining authorizations if those operations will substantially increase the use of that road in an effort to mitigate adverse impact to current public recreational use of the Craigie Creek Road.

Utilities

- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road and so they blend with the ridge rather than stand out as a skyline feature.
- Utilities are to meet the requirements for such facilities described in the Recreation and Public Access sections of Chapter 2.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are an allowed use along the top of Bald Mountain but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible and the access routes to these sites should be the minimal necessary for that purpose and they should not be sited to create a prominent skyline feature.

Material Sites

- The number of material extraction sites should be limited. A single site having sufficient material for expected public road construction is preferred. If this is not feasible, material sites are to be screened from the Hatcher Pass Road. Note: A material site at MP 19.5 is not considered appropriate, given its proximity to the Summit Lake State Recreation Site.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with state permitting and regulatory requirements, SCRO development and rehabilitation standards, and with the standards for this type of facility described in the Material Sites section of Chapter 2.

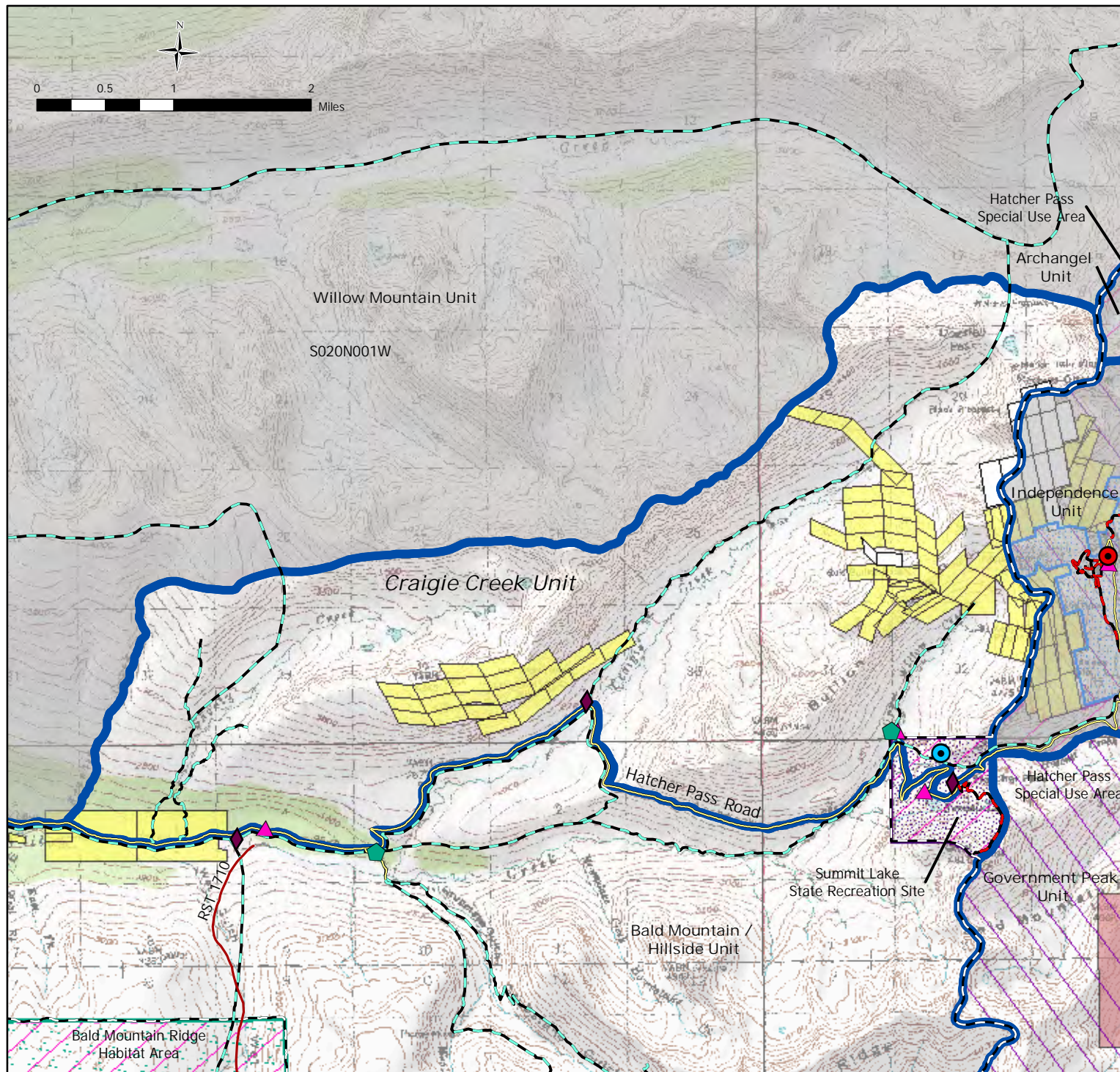
Management Recommendations

Trailheads, Parking, Scenic Pull-outs, and Trails

- Subject to funding availability:
 - Construct parking lot, with sanitation facilities, near the Summit Lake State Recreation Site, near MP 19.5.
 - Construct trailhead parking near MP 23.5 for a hiking trailhead at the Craigie Creek Road and an upgraded turnout.
 - Designate the Craigie Creek Road as a multi-use activity trail in the summer for hiking and ATV use.

Transportation and Public Access

- ATV routes are considered appropriate within portions of this unit and are to be designed to sustainable trail standards. See Map 3-5. (Note: these routes should be considered as preliminary at this stage of review. Other routes may be identified as a result of further public review and comment, or may be the result of a comprehensive trail plan developed by DNR.)
- The development of hiking trails is recommended; these are to be designed to sustained trail standards. Hiking trails have not been officially recorded in this area, however they generally follow existing roads, and snowmachine trails. See Map 3-5. (Note: The routes identified in the plan map should be considered as preliminary at this stage of review. Other routes may be identified as a result of further public review and comment, or may be the result of a comprehensive trail plan developed by DNR at a subsequent time depending on funding and staff availability.)
- Retain the Summit Lake State Recreation Site within the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area and revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted on Map 3-5.



Hatcher Pass Management Plan
Map 3-5
Craigie Creek Unit
Land Status, Recreation, and
Facility Recommendations

- Plan Boundary
- Craigie Creek Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- RS 2477 Trails
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

*This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N*

BALD MOUNTAIN / HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit (Map 3-6) occupies mountainous and hilly terrain in the southwestern part of the planning area. It is bordered on the north by the Hatcher Pass Road, on the west by the boundary with the Southeast Susitna Area Plan, and on the east by the Government Peak management unit. There are of 29,220 acres of land in this unit, with state land (28,633 acres) constituting the dominant land owner. Private land occurs at scattered locations along the western part of Hatcher Pass Road and along the Wet Gulch and Grubstake Creek drainages which are affected by mining and mining claims. The Hatcher Pass Road is included within this unit, and a small portion of the northeastern part is occupied by the Summit Lake State Recreation Site¹⁰.

Although the terrain is characteristically mountainous, there is a gradation from slight hills in the western foothills to mountainous terrain in the central and eastern parts of the unit. Vegetation reflects the terrain and changes in elevation. The westernmost areas are occupied by evergreen forest intermixed with a variety of wetlands. Shrub-type vegetation is characteristic at the lower elevations and alpine tundra and dwarf shrub vegetation is found at the higher elevations. The forested parts of this unit have significant potential for creating productive, replacement moose habitat for summer and winter range lost to development on private lands situated to the south. There is a significant moose population in this unit and there has been an increased shift in their use patterns over the last 25 years. Both moose calving and rutting occur in this unit and the area is used during the winter months as a concentration area. The majority of the moose population in the planning area occurs within the Willow Mountain management unit, specifically, within the Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area. Bear, small game, and furbearers are all present within the unit.

The portion of Willow Creek within this unit has been designated as one of the few priority anadromous streams in South-central Alaska by ADF&G. Although no anadromous fish are present, downstream fish resources are of major importance. Water quality within the upper reaches of Willow Creek is important to maintaining downstream spawning and rearing habitats for fisheries. Streams on the south side of Bald Mountain Ridge are lateral tributaries to the Little Susitna River. Recent sampling has verified the presence of juvenile coho salmon. The streams in this area are important for the same reason that the upper reaches of Willow Creek are important.

¹⁰ See ADL 231234 and Appendix G-1 for the amended Land Classification Order (SC-09-003A01) for further information about the land affected by the exchange. All referenced boundary changes in this unit were made to accommodate the current uses in this area, which include motorized uses. All acreages in this plan have been revised to correspond with the land classifications reflected on LCO (SC-09-003A01).

Several sites on Bald Mountain Ridge have high habitat value for nesting tundra birds and a restriction exists on summer motorized use during the breeding season from May 1 to August 1. This use restriction has been in effect since 1986, but has not been particularly effective in precluding summer ORV use.

Recreation use within the management unit is significant and is increasing given the proximity of this area to private land with residential development, and it is likely that the level of use will continue to increase. Motorized recreation is popular in this unit. Snowmachine use occurs throughout the winter and there are a number of commonly used routes. Summer and fall activities include ORV use and hunting. Some of this ORV use is associated with an RS 2477 trail, the Wet Gulch Trail (RST 1720), that traverse this unit from south to north. A small amount of recreational hiking, paragliding also occurs within this unit.

The southern half of the Summit Lake Recreation Site is a prominent point of interest for non-motorized recreation in the summer. Non-motorized uses include hiking, paragliding, and back-country skiing in the winter. Motorized recreation includes snowmachining in the winter. Popular snowmachine trails are depicted on Map 3-5. The Summit Lake Recreation Site is closed to motorized use unless there is sufficient snow cover to protect the underlying soils and vegetation. This closure is typically May 1 – October 1, but it may vary depending on the amount of snowfall in the area. The April Bowl to Summit Lake Trail was recently upgraded to a class 3 standard hiking trail. ATV/ORV use in the summer is popular in the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit outside of this recreation site.

The Hatcher Pass Road forms the northern boundary of the unit. The road provides access to the East Side and the general Willow area to the west in the summer. During the winter, the road is gated at MP 20.5. Scenic views are spectacular along the central and eastern parts of the road. The presence of this road presents a challenge to land management because structural and utility development could adversely impact the scenic views along this roadway.

Robert Hatcher discovered quartz gold in 1906 in the northwest section of this management unit, near Summit Lake. Gold was discovered in the north central area of the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit at Grubstake Gulch in 1897. Placer and lode gold mining claims and operations spread north, west, and east from the gulch area. A RS 2477 route (RST 1710) provided access into the area from the south, and is still used today.

Planning Issues

The number and type of planning issues are less pronounced in this management unit than others on the East Side. It is one of the more heavily used areas for motorized recreation and hunting access on the West Side. The main planning issues are associated with summer ORV use, impacts to ground nesting birds in the area closed to summer motorized use, and preserving the scenic corridor along the Hatcher Pass Road.

Summer ORV use is fairly extensive throughout the unit and has resulted in trail degradation at a number of locations. This use is occurring in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area, which conflicts with the bird breeding season and habitat. The area is closed to motorized use during summer months. However, since an RS 2477 Trail transverse the habitat area, motorized access through the habitat area is permitted, however, recreationists stray from this trail.

The preservation of the scenic quality along the Hatcher Pass Road is also a concern. The amount of use in the planning area is expected to increase over the next 15-20 years. This increase is a reflection of the attraction to the area and its proximity to a significant, growing residential population in the Mat-Su Valley. The increase of use in the unit will likely be summer ORV use due to the relative ease of getting into the southern parts of the unit, primarily from Schrock Road and the Wet Gulch Trail. Should large scale commercial development occur along this roadway, it would adversely impact the scenic quality along the Hatcher Pass Road.

Plan Designations and Land Classifications

This unit has several designations. Most of this area is co-designated Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat, which converts to land use classifications of Public Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land. Two areas within with the unit are co-designated Minerals and Public Recreation-Dispersed. These areas include areas of historic mining activities and to valid, existing mining claims, which are located along the Hatcher Pass Road and Wet Gulch Creek (See Map 3-6).

Management Intent

This area is to be managed to maintain its current natural, character, while recognizing the importance and appropriateness of mining in areas of historic mining use and where valid mining rights exist. The unit is to be managed to maintain its wildlife populations as well as provide opportunities for hunting and dispersed recreation activities, and maintain scenic views from the Hatcher Pass Road. Uses within this area are not to be allowed except for those noted in Table 2-1 and to those facilities that are recommended in this section under Management Recommendations. Generally, development, except related to recreation, road, and public safety projects, is not intended within this unit, although utility, mining, and gravel extraction operations may be appropriate, depending on adherence to the siting and design criteria identified under Management Guidelines and Management Recommendations of this section. The entire unit is open to mineral entry and development.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1. Uses in the Summit Lake SRS are controlled under 11 AAC 96.014 and 11 AAC 12. Material sales are a prohibited use in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for summer motorized restrictions to protect a nesting bird concentration in the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area and the Summit Lake State Recreation Site. The Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area is 3,932 acres and is closed to motorized recreation from May 1 – August 1. The Summit Lake Recreation Site is 390 acres, 262 acres of which are located within this management unit. It is closed to motorized use unless there is sufficient snow cover to protect the underlying soils and vegetation. This closure is generally May 1 – October 1, but it may vary depending on the amount of snowfall in the area. The areas affected by this restriction are depicted on Map 3-6.

Management Guidelines

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with the management guidelines for subsurface facilities in Chapter 2. Utility lines internal to mineral development, that are solely used by a mineral project, are also to comply with these guidelines.

Viewshed Protection

- Parking and material extraction sites are to be screened from view from the Hatcher Pass Road in order to maintain the scenic qualities of those areas viewed from the Hatcher Pass Road.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with the general standards for viewshed management described in the Recreation section of this Chapter and if a mining operation, with the specific standards under the ‘Scenic Resources’ management guidelines of the Subsurface section.

Mining

- Plan of operations for mineral development on state land should be authorized to minimize negative impacts on recreation, taking into account the environmental and economic requirements of the mineral development. To do so, authorizations for mineral development should consider methods to minimize visual impact including use of topography and vegetation, if practical, for screening facilities from view; and should consider grouping or locating facilities to minimize visual impact or to avoid blocking access to public land.

Utilities

- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road and so they blend with the ridge rather than stand out as a skyline feature.
- Utilities are to meet the requirements for such facilities described in the Recreation and Public Access sections of Chapter 2. Repeater and other forms of communication sites are an allowed use along the top of Bald Mountain but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible and the access routes to these sites should be the minimal necessary for that purpose and they should not be sited to create a prominent skyline feature.

Material Sites

- The number of material extraction sites should be limited. A single site having sufficient material for expected public road construction is preferred. If this is not feasible, material sites are to be screened from the Hatcher Pass Road. Note: A material site at MP 19.5 is not considered appropriate, given its proximity to the Summit Lake State Recreation Site.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with state permitting and regulatory requirements, SCRO development and rehabilitation standards, and with the standards for this facilities described in the Material Sites section of Chapter 2.

Management Recommendations

Wildlife

- Maintain the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area affected by a seasonal restriction on vehicular use under current (2009) regulations that are intended to avoid impacts during the breeding period of nesting birds.

- Retain the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area within the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area and revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted on Map 3-6.
- Actions to enhance moose browse are considered appropriate but are to be limited to those sites where disturbance to the viewshed from the Hatcher Pass Road can be avoided or minimized. All such enhancement actions shall be coordinated with and approved by ADF&G and the Regional Manager, SCRO.

Trailheads, Parking, Scenic Pull-outs, and Campgrounds

- Subject to funding availability:
 - Construct trailhead parking near the Willow Creek Bridge (MP 34.36) for year-round motorized access and at MP 34.5 for a proposed dog mushing trail.¹¹
 - Upgrade turnout at MP 23.5.
 - Develop a paved pullout and trailhead at MP 26.
 - Construct a day-use site by Willow Creek at MP 29.
 - Improve the Wet Gulch Trail (RST 1710), to accommodate ATVs and ORVs to be utilized as a motorized access corridor from the southern boundary of the Hatcher Pass planning area, beginning at the terminus of Schrock Road.
 - Construct parking lot, with sanitation facilities, near the northern terminus of Schrock Road on state or borough land. This facility is to be designed to support both motorized and non-motorized uses in the southern part of the planning area. Use of this route and parking area should relieve some amount of pressure on facilities located on Hatcher Pass Road. It will also provide a southern access route into the western side of the Hatcher Pass planning area for motorized recreationists.
 - Should summer recreation use greatly increase within the West Side, consider the development of a small campground near MP 29 along Willow Creek.
 - Develop an ATV trail/hiking trail along Grubstake Gulch drainage and a hiking trail along Wet Gulch.

Transportation and Public Access

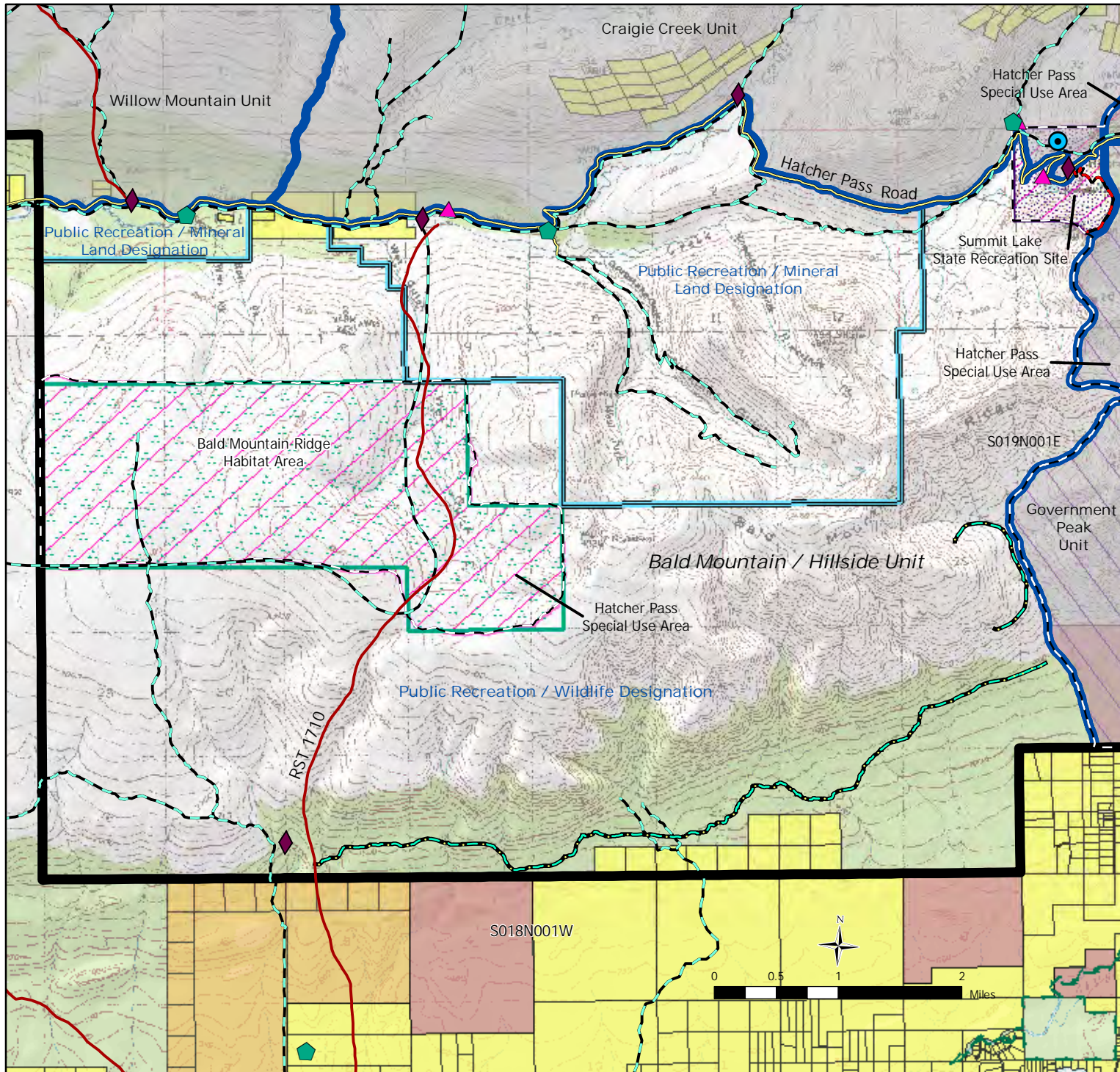
- Upgrade of the Hatcher Pass Road to resolve safety and drainage problems is required. Development at a higher standard to support tour buses and other forms of large commercial vehicles is contingent upon further DNR and ADOT/PF review at the time of project conceptual design.

¹¹ Trailhead facilities situated at milepost 30.3 or greater are located outside the planning area. They are included here because their development is linked to uses within the planning area.

- ATV routes are considered appropriate within portions of this unit but must be designed to sustainable trail standards. See Map 3-6. (Note: Snowmachine routes are used by ATVs in the summer. The depicted locations of these trails should be considered as preliminary at this stage of review. Other routes may be identified as a result of further public review and comment, or may be the result of a comprehensive trail plan developed by DNR.)
- The development of hiking trails is recommended. Trails are to be designed to sustained trail standards. Hiking trails have not been officially recorded in this area, however they generally follow existing roads, and snowmachine trails. See Map 3-5. (Note: The routes identified in the plan map should be considered as preliminary at this stage of review. Other routes may be identified as a result of further public review and comment, or may be the result of a comprehensive trail plan developed by DNR at a subsequent time depending on funding and staff availability.)
- A winter motorized corridor on *state* land between the proposed Schrock Rock trailhead and borough land in the Government Peak management unit is recommended, generally following a southerly alignment as indicated in Map 3-6, is recommended, contingent on the borough determining that a comparable east-west route on borough land is appropriate.
- A winter motorized corridor on *state* land at the western end of borough land in the Government Peak unit is recommended, contingent upon the borough determining that a comparable access route on borough land is appropriate. Note: a suggested boundary change to the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit boundary at Government Creek will make the area west of Government Creek part of a motorized area¹². If this occurs, this recommendation should be reevaluated to determine if such a corridor is still necessary.

¹² The Matanuska Susitna Borough Assembly, in Resolution 11-089, recommended that the western boundary of the Government Peak management unit be revised, which would delete this area from this unit and add it to the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit.

Hatcher Pass Management Plan
 Map 3-6
Bald Mountain / Hillside Unit
 Land Status, Recreation, and
 Facility Recommendations



- Plan Boundary
- Bald Mountain / Hillside Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Public Recreation/Mineral Designation
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Roads
- RS 2477 Trails
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
 * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
 * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
 * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Bald Mountain Ridge HA Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska
 Department of Natural Resources
 Division of Mining, Land & Water
 Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
 Current to March 2012

*This map is for graphic representation only
 and is intended to be used only as a guide.
 Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 6N*

INDEPENDENCE MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Independence management unit (Map 3-7) is part of the historic Willow Creek Mining District. The Independence Bowl is a prime scenic viewshed with a U-shaped valley that overlooks the Fishhook Creek, Little Susitna River, and the Matanuska Valley below. There are numerous mining claims located within this management unit, primarily on the west side. The Independence Mine State Historical Park is also located within this unit. There are 2,811 acres in this unit and most of it is general state land (2,159 acres). The remaining land consists of private parcels and federal mining claims. This unit is located in the center of the planning area. It is located east of the Craigie Creek management unit, west of the Archangel management unit, and north of the Government Peak management unit, where it shares the Hatcher Pass Road as its boundary.

Access into the management unit is provided by the Hatcher Pass Road and the road leading directly to the Independence Mine State Historical Park and Hatcher Pass Lodge. Parking is available at the southeastern section of this management unit at the Fishhook trailhead, lodge, Independence Bowl, and at the Independence Mine State Historical Park.

Small mammals (arctic ground squirrels, marmots, and pikas) are common in this unit, especially in the high valleys and along the roads, and Dall sheep are known to be present in the mountainous areas. Ptarmigan are also present and often hunted. However, no hunting is permitted within the boundaries of the historical park.

Mineral potential is considered to be high throughout this unit. There are many current claims, mining, sites and historic sites located in this unit. Mineral order closures do occur at various locations in this unit, particularly in areas near the park and southern Marmot Mountain area, see Map Appendix C-2.

This unit is characterized by all-season recreational use, both summer and winter, and tourism, and visitation to the Independence Mine State Historical Park. During the summer, hiking, berry picking, backpacking, mountain biking, wildlife viewing, and paragliding are popular. Tours are held at the Independence Mine State Historical Park in the summer. There is no authorized motorized use in this unit in the summer. During the winter, snowmachines travel through the southern sections of this unit to reach open areas in the western side of the planning area. They also high mark in the Marmot Mountain Range. Non-motorized use includes all types of skiing, snowshoeing, snowboarding, and sled riding. Avalanche and search and rescue training courses are offered.

Because of the 3,500 elevation of Independence Bowl area, it often has some of the earliest and latest (shoulder seasons) road-accessible snow in South-central Alaska. For this reason, the area is very popular with winter recreation enthusiasts of all interests. The East-West Snowmobile Corridor traverses along the southern edge of this unit from the Fishhook Trailhead to Hatcher Pass. This designated area of this unit typically opens to snowmobile use (sufficient snow) before other public land openings. Nordic and backcountry skiing is very popular especially during the shoulder seasons, with groomed cross-country ski trails typically set the earliest in Alaska through the Independence Mine complex. Prime snow conditions also make this area very attractive for several organizations to conduct training in backcountry survival, avalanche safety, and search and rescue exercises. In the past, the U.S. Olympic Ski Team has practiced in this area. Facilities at Independence Mine are often used to support training programs, and commercial lodging is available within the unit.

This unit has two of the longest operating mines, the Independence and Gold Bullion mines. The Independence Mine State Historical Park is the only site officially recognized in the National Register for Historic Places in the Hatcher Pass area. The remaining buildings from that mining operation are now a tourist destination and educational center.

Planning Issues

Planning issues focus on the ability of current facilities to support additional recreational use and conflicts between motorized and non-motorized uses during the winter. This unit is experiencing some of the most rapid growth in visitation of any DNR-Parks managed recreation lands in the region. The parking areas and facilities are not large enough to accommodate for the amount of visitors to the area. Parking lots at both Fishhook and Independence Bowl often exceed capacity during shoulder season periods. Compounding the problem are the larger trailers being used by snowmobilers taking up more space in limited parking lots. No parking is allowed along Hatcher Pass Road in the winter due to heavy snows, high snow berms and the need for snow removal crews to have obstacle-free plowing.

Conflict between recreational users occurs primarily in the winter along the southern flanks of the Marmot Mountain ridge complex, near the Fishhook Trailhead. In the 1986 Management Plan, this area was closed to motorized recreational use. However, it was reopened administratively by DPOR due to insufficient staffing resources to maintain the closure. This area may be closed again in accordance with the original plan pending public approval.

Because of the heavy visitation and public demand for improved infrastructure, there is a strong need to develop a management plan for the Independence Mine State Historical Park. Current facilities cannot support large commercial tours. A development plan is needed to identify priorities for historic preservation projects to preserve the historical structures and to identify other needed infrastructure and use improvements.

Improve opportunities for summer mountain biking through the area. Because of the elevation gain/loss of the road, there is a demand for car-up, bike-down opportunities and there are currently no trails to accommodate this need.

Plan Designations and Land Classifications

This unit is co-designated Public Recreation-Public Use Site (Developed), Public Recreation-Dispersed, and Mineral, which converts to the co-classifications of Public Recreation Land and Mineral Land.

Management Intent

The management intent of this unit is to maintain the area for public recreation in such a manner that protects the scenic quality and wildlife and to both protect and enhance the Independence Mine State Historical Park. Continued mineral entry use and development are authorized. The area is intended to be managed primarily for non-motorized use and is closed to recreational motorized use during the summer months. The southwest section of this unit is open to winter motorized recreation as depicted on Map 3-7. The remainder of the unit is to be managed to ensure the continued use of the area for non-motorized forms of travel.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for motorized uses in designated 'non-motorized' areas. The areas affected by this restriction are depicted on Map 3-7.

Management Guidelines

The management guidelines that follow are based on the uses that are allowed, conditionally allowed, or prohibited. Based on these guidelines, few uses other than those authorized as a matter of state law, are intended within this unit. Accordingly, the guidelines only deal with those uses that could occur within this unit. All state land is to be retained.

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Mining

- The number and kind of structures authorized in a Plan of Operations shall be the minimum necessary for the operation of permitted subsurface mining operations.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the requirements for the siting, type, and number of mining identified in the Subsurface Resource section of Chapter 2.
- Initiate a mineral order (closing) to close the west one-half of section 28 within S020N001E.

Utilities

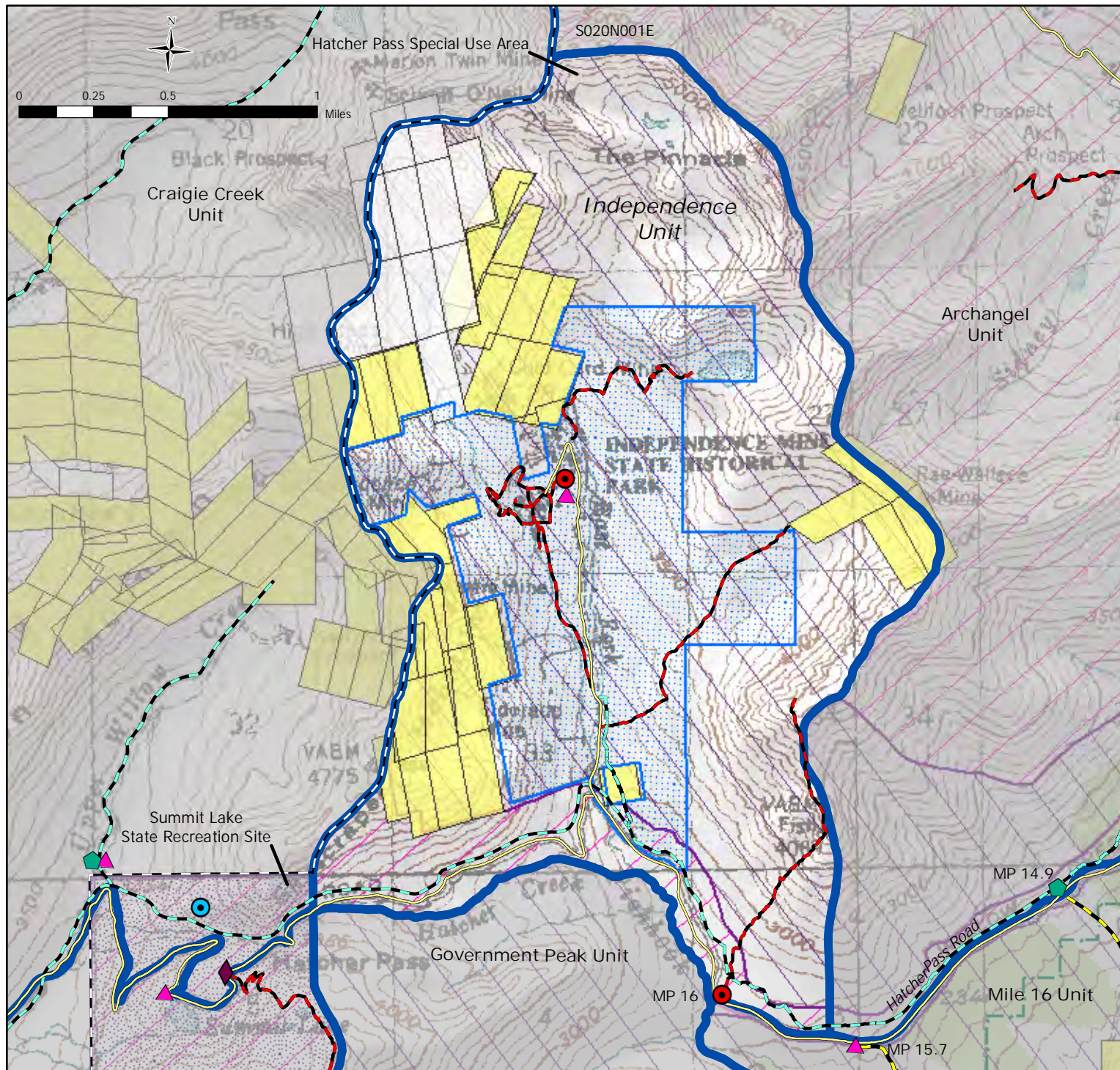
- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road and so they blend with ridges rather than stand out as a skyline feature.
- Utility lines shall be placed underground. If this is not practical the standards for Utilities in the Recreation section of Chapter 2 are to be followed.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible. The creation of access routes to these sites is prohibited.

Management Recommendations

- The management unit is recommended for inclusion into the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area. Revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted on Map 3-7. Management unit boundaries have been realigned to coincide with visible ground features and resolve discrepancies in multi-agency mapping. This change will make boundary interpretations easier for on-the-ground management.

- The southeast area of this unit accompanied with the Marmot Mountain ridge complex should be managed according to the original 1986 Management Plan and closed to winter motorized recreation for public safety purposes. The area is steep and commonly used by skiers and sled riders due to its close proximity to the Fishhook Trailhead. There is potential for snowmachine and skier accidents due to the extreme high-marking by snowmachines through an area frequently used by families and novice recreationists.
- State land within this unit should remain closed to recreational off-road vehicle use in this unit year-round, except in areas identified as being 'open' to such use, consistent with the 1986 Management Plan. The amount of land closed to year round (including winter) off-road motorized use in this management unit totals 1,932 acres. This is a decrease of 373 acres.
 - *Note: The 1986 plan and associated regulations resulted in the closure of approximately 18,683 acres of land. The overall year-round recreational motorized closure in this plan is approximately 18,115 acres, or a decrease of 568 acres.*
- Develop a management plan for the Independence Mine Historical Park. (Note: Although this plan provides recommendations for facilities and improvements at the IMSHP, it is out of the scope of this plan to provide specific management guidance for the park. It should also be recognized that the management plan may develop somewhat different recommendations than those contained herein and should this occur, the management plan for the Independence Mine Historical Park shall prevail.)
- Close an area of approximately 50 acres to mineral entry to protect facility and recreational area development. (Note: Mineral entry closure does not mean motorized recreation closure. See Map C-2.)
- Subject to funding availability:
 - Expand existing parking areas and public restroom facilities to accommodate year-round public needs.
 - Develop electrical grid connections to the Independence Bowl and Mine area, underground or alternative.
 - The further development of hiking trails is considered appropriate; these are to be designed to sustained trail standards. Existing trails are depicted as "Non-Motorized Trails" on Map 3-7.
 - Develop a summer off-road bike trail system from Independence Mine to MP 12 Parking Lot.
 - Develop and implement Historic Preservation and Interpretive Plans.
 - Upgrade water tunnels to promote underground tours of the Independence Mine.
 - Provide funding for historic building renovation and adaptive re-use (priority emphasis will be on Bunkhouses #1 and 2, Managers Office, Mill Building, Trestle, and Mess Hall).

- Develop facility upgrades to accommodate large group tours.
- Expand facility use to year-round operations, including full funding for staff.
- Develop partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and possible concessionaires to appropriately use IMSHP infrastructure.



Hatcher Pass Management Plan
 Map 3-7
Independence Unit
 Land Status, Recreation, and
 Facility Recommendations

- Plan Boundary
- Independence Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Roads
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
 * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
 * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
 * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska
 Department of Natural Resources
 Division of Mining, Land & Water
 Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
 Current to March 2012

*This map is for graphic representation only
 and is intended to be used only as a guide.
 Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N*

ARCHANGEL MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Archangel management unit (Map 3-8) is part of the historic lode district and is located in a rugged, glacially carved valley with many rock glaciers and large, granitic boulder areas. There are 6,943 acres in this management unit, of which 6,321 acres are state owned. Although there are still existing mining claims located within this unit, the majority of the land is state land, which is managed by DPOR. The unit is centrally located; bordered by the Willow Mountain, Craigie Creek, and Independence management units to the west, Mile 16 management unit to the south, the High Glacier Peaks management unit to the north, and the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit to the east, where it shares the Archangel Road as its boundary.

Access into this unit is provided by the Archangel Road, which is currently maintained by the ADOT/PF in the summer. The road is in poor condition. It has a narrow bridge, and heads north, ending at the Fern Mine, where the public has established an unofficial parking area along the roadway. Snowbird Glacier is a popular year round recreation destination and is accessed via foot travel from this management unit. There are no RS 2477s present in this unit.

Small mammals, including arctic ground squirrels, marmots, and pikas, are common in this unit, especially in the high valleys and Dall sheep are known to be present in the mountainous areas. Ptarmigan are also present and often hunted. The Archangel Creek is a Chinook and coho salmon spawning area and a coho salmon rearing area.

Vegetation reflects elevation and is characterized by shrub types in the river bottoms and dwarf shrub at lower elevations.

Mineral potential is considered to be high in the northern area of the unit, although there are few current and active mining sites. Several historic mining sites scattered across the northern area of the unit.

This unit is characterized by extensive recreational use, both summer and winter. During the summer, hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, mountain-biking, and paragliding are popular. The most popular, non-motorized recreation in the northern area of this unit is rock climbing and mountaineering. The most popular climbing area is called "The Wall," which is depicted on DPOR maps. Berry picking is very popular in the late summer and early fall. People often travel to the Snowbird Glacier through the Archangel management unit, via the Lane Hut. There is very limited summer motorized use in the Archangel area.

During the winter, the Archangel management unit becomes an intensely used multi-use area. The access into the unit is provided by the Archangel Road and the Hatcher Pass Road. Since the Archangel Road is closed, many people park along the road in pull-outs where possible after the existing parking areas are filled. Non-motorized recreation includes cross-country skiing in the valley bottoms, back country skiing in the high country, and snowboarding, and telemarking in the Marmot Mountain Range. Motorized recreational use is snowmachining. Motorized users usually stay on trails and motorized corridors and head to the west side of the planning area, but have been known to recreate on steep slopes and high mark on the southern Marmot Mountain Ridge, amidst skiers and sled riders.

This unit has many historic mining claims, including the Fern Mine, which is located at the terminus of the Archangel Road in the northwest area of the unit.

Planning Issues

Planning issues focus on the ability of current facilities to support additional recreational use and the conflict between motorized and non-motorized uses during the winter. Conflict between uses occurs in the southern Marmot Mountain area, along the road, and west of Archangel Road. Another issue of concern is whether certain areas of this unit, that are now open, should be closed to snowmachine use. Discussion has focused on the conflicts between winter recreation user groups in the Marmot Mountain area and there have been several proposals during plan development that this area should be closed to snowmachine use and designated as a non-motorized recreation use area, due to safety concerns that occur when high-marking and skiing are occurring in the same area. This area is readily accessible and close to the road, which is one of the reasons it is so popular for non-motorized recreation. Since snowmachiners are able to travel further distances in a shorter period of time, they can ride north and west to open areas rather quickly. It was also suggested that the area north and east of the Marmot Mountain, on the eastern side of Archangel Road, within the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit be open to motorized recreational use in the winter.

Plan Designations and Land Classifications

This unit is co-designated as Public Recreation-Dispersed, and Mining, which converts to the co-classification of Public Recreation Land and Mineral Land.

Management Intent

The management intent of this unit is to maintain the area for dispersed public recreation in such a manner that protects the scenic quality and wildlife. This unit is to be managed for both motorized and non-motorized recreation in the winter and for non-motorized recreation in the summer. The non-motorized areas designated on Map 3-8 are to be managed to ensure the continued use of these areas for non-motorized forms of travel.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for motorized uses in areas designated ‘non-motorized’ areas in the winter, which is located in the south and southeast sections within this unit and encompasses the Marmot Mountain Ridge. The management unit is closed to off road motorized recreation in the summer. The areas affected by this restriction are depicted on Map 3-8.

Management Guidelines

The management guidelines that follow are based on the uses that are allowed, conditionally allowed, or prohibited. Based on these guidelines, few uses other than those authorized as a matter of state law, are intended within this unit. Accordingly, the guidelines only deal with those uses that could occur within this unit. All state land is to be retained.

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Mining

- The number and kind of structures authorized in a Plan of Operations shall be the minimum necessary for the operation of permitted subsurface mining operations.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the requirements for the siting, type, and number of mining identified in the Subsurface Resource section of Chapter 2.

Utilities

- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road and so they blend with ridges rather than stand out as a skyline feature.

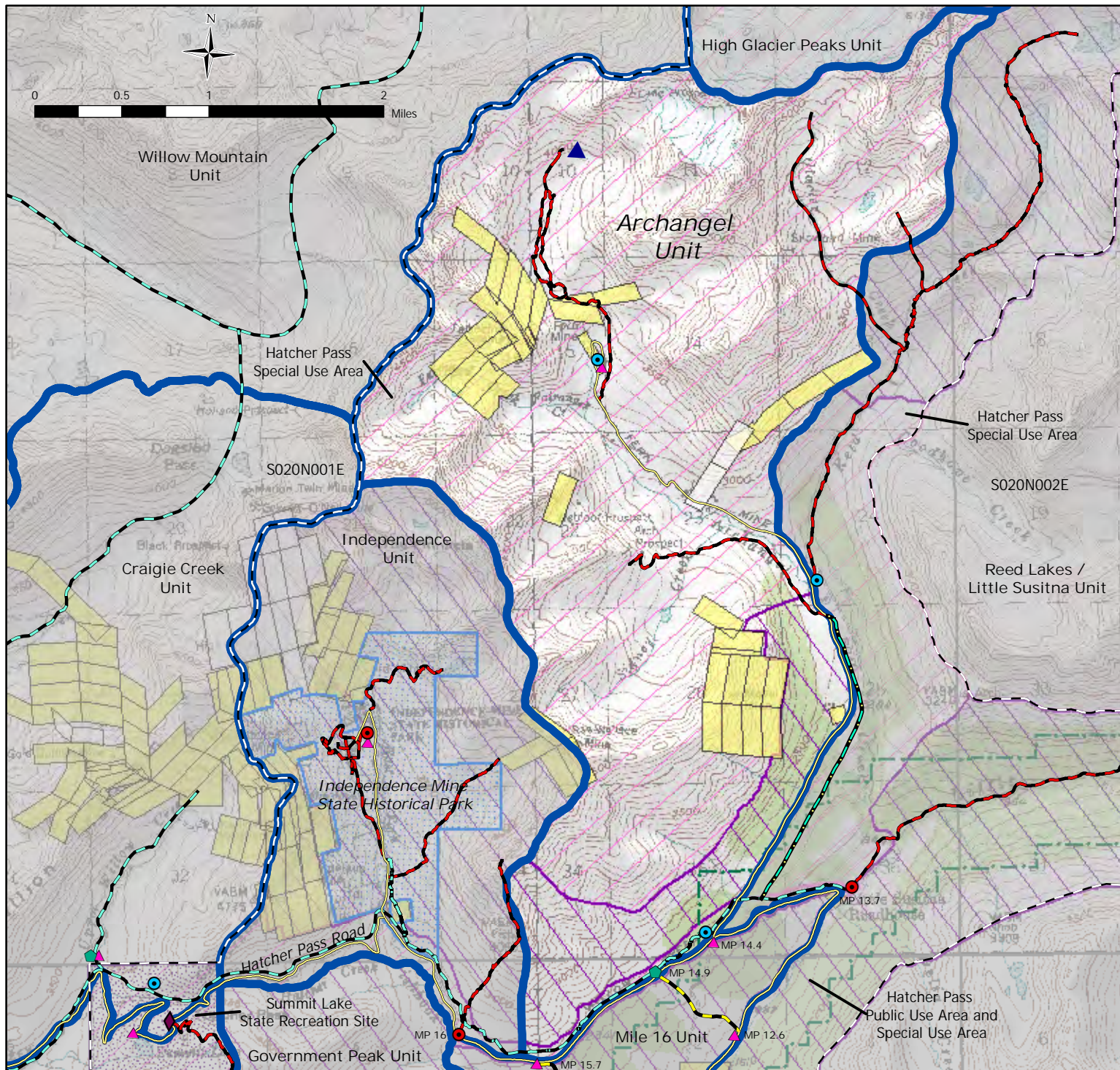
- Utility lines shall be placed underground. If this is not practical the standards for Utilities in the Recreation section of Chapter 2 are to be followed.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible. Access routes to these sites are prohibited.

Management Recommendations

- This management unit is recommended for inclusion into the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area. Revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted on Map 3-8. Management unit boundaries have been realigned to coincide with visible ground features. This change will make boundary interpretations easier for on-the-ground management.
- Restrict off-road recreational motorized use in the Marmot Mountain area during the winter for public safety and reduction in user conflict. This area of closure is approximately 762 acres in size and borders the Hatcher Pass Road to the south and the Archangel Road on the east, as depicted on Map 3-8. (This closure is a result of the review of the ‘Winter Use Option’ in the PRD)¹³
- Restrict off-road recreational motorized use on 2.5 miles of the Archangel Road, beginning at the Hatcher Pass Road and ending at the Fern Mine Road as depicted on Map 3-8. It is intended that this section of the road be used for Nordic Ski Trails.
 - Note: The Archangel Road was formerly a multi-use trail. As part of the adopted plan, the Reed Creek area was open to recreational motorized winter use to allow for motorized recreation alongside the Archangel Road. Additionally, DPOR received funding for a snowmachine corridor that will parallel this section of the Archangel Road, however it will be located within the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit.
- The Fern Mine Road will remain a winter multi-use trail in the winter.

¹³ The PRD contained a ‘Plan Recommendation’ and a ‘Winter Use Option’. The ‘Plan Recommendation’ represented the (then) recommendation of the department and generally consisted of the current (1986) regulation non-motorized boundaries realigned to topographic features plus the closure of the Mile 16 management unit and a portion of the Independence management unit. The ‘Winter Use Option’ substantially changed the non-motorized boundaries by adding as closed areas, in addition to Mile 16 management unit, portions of the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit at Delia Creek and Marmot Mountain in the Archangel unit. In addition, it *opened* the area of the Reed Creek drainage between Government Creek in the north and the Gold Mint parking lot in the south, to winter motorized use, while retaining the summer closure in the same area. Consult the PRD for more detail on the Winter Use Option.

- All state land within the Archangel unit will be closed to off-road recreational motorized use during the summer months as depicted on Map 3-8.
- Develop new parking lots and restroom facilities and improve existing facilities along the Archangel and Hatcher Pass Road to support parking needs of recreational users. Providing additional parking areas should ease parking congestion during the winter. These new and expanded parking facilities are also intended to provide motorized recreationists with additional parking along the east-west snowmachine corridor to facilitate their transportation to the west side of the planning area. (See Chapter 4, Table 4-4 for specific recommendations.)
- Close an area of approximately 130 acres to mineral entry to protect facility and recreational area development. (Note: Mineral entry closure does not mean motorized recreation closure. See Map C-1.)
- Subject to funding availability:
 - Widen and provide year round maintenance to the Archangel Road.
 - Replace existing bridge on Archangel Road since it is substandard and an increase in volume of visitation and traffic is anticipated.
 - Develop a large parking area with restroom facilities to accommodate year-round public needs at the terminus of the road near Fern Mine.
 - Develop a large parking area with restroom facilities to accommodate year-round public needs at the intersection of Archangel Road and Hatcher Pass Road at Mile Post 14.5.



Hatcher Pass Management Plan
Map 3-8
Archangel Unit
Land Status, Recreation, and
Facility Recommendations

- Plan Boundary
- Archangel Management Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Roads
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska
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Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
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Coordinate System: NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

REED LAKES / LITTLE SUSITNA MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit (Map 3-9) contains portions of Reed Creek and the two Reed Lakes and the upper reaches of the Little Susitna River. There are 30,523 acres of land within this management unit, 30,508 acres of which are state land that is mountainous except for the two well developed river valleys. It is bounded on the north by the High Glacier Peaks management unit and on the west by the Archangel and Government Peak management units. The area east of Hatcher Pass Road is included within this unit. In the area of principal use, the western boundary is formed by the Archangel Road, a dominant landscape feature. (The road itself is situated within the Archangel management unit). The unit also abuts the Matanuska Valley Moose Range on the east. A portion of the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area occupies the Little Susitna River drainage and the two river corridors (Reed Creek and Little Susitna River) are closed to motorized recreation on a year-round basis by state regulation 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)¹⁴.

Access to this unit is provided from the Gold Mint parking lot on the Hatcher Pass Road. From this location, winter recreationists access the mountainous areas to the south and, through the Archangel Road corridor, the Archangel management unit. The Little Susitna Drainage is accessed from this location for cross-country skiing and other non-motorized sports. There are no RS 2477s present in the unit.

Although the terrain of the management unit is mountainous, two broad river valleys occupy the lowlands of this unit. Vegetation reflects elevation and is characteristically shrub types in the river bottoms and dwarf shrub at lower elevations. Alpine tundra, ice, or barren rock is characteristic of higher elevations.

Small mammals (arctic ground squirrels, marmots, and pikas) are common in this unit, especially in the high valleys and Dall sheep are known to be present in the mountainous areas. Moose are present in the two river valleys. Trapping and hunting activities are common during the fall. The Little Susitna River is an anadromous stream until it reaches Lone Tree Creek, within the management unit. This stream still has significant value for downstream fisheries, because it functions as its headwaters. It is a Chinook and coho salmon spawning area and coho rearing area.

¹⁴ This area is closed to motorized use except that the department may issue a permit for motorized use for mineral, grazing, trail construction or maintenance, or trapping, if the department determines that the use would not substantially interfere with the recreational uses of the area.

Mineral potential is considered to be high in that portion of the unit near Reed Lakes. There are no current active mining sites although there are several historic sites, the principal one being the Snowbird Mine. The Hatcher Pass Public Use Area is closed to mineral entry as are Reed Creek valley and the two lakes (MCO 496)¹⁵. There are few current mining claims and neither of these occurs in the Reed Lakes area.

This unit is characterized by extensive recreational use, both summer and winter. During the summer, hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, and mountain-biking are common. Some berry picking occurs during the fall and the high peaks are used for both mountain and rock climbing. During the winter there is a mixture of cross-country skiing in the valley bottoms and back country skiing in the high country. Within this unit, there are two principal trails: one provides access to the backcountry adjacent to the Little Susitna and the Reed Lakes Trail provides access to the two Reed Lakes and the Snowbird Mine. While both are extensively used, the Reed Lakes Trail is considered one of the most scenic trails in South-central Alaska. The head of the valley occupied by the lakes is a portal for multi-day trip backcountry trips to the peaks near the Mine, Bomber, and Snowbird Glaciers. A hut built by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska is located near Mint Glacier.

This was an important placer mining area until the late 1930s. The Snow Bird Mine is within this unit. The road leading to it is now a popular hiking and cross-country skiing trail.

Planning Issues

Planning issues focus on the ability of current facilities to support additional recreational use and the conflict between motorized and non-motorized uses during the winter. Conflict between these uses occurs in the mountainous terrain south of the Little Susitna River and along the valley bottom immediately east of Archangel Road. Another issue concerns whether certain of the areas of this unit, although now closed, should be opened to snowmachine use and, conversely, whether areas now open to motorized use should be closed. Discussion has focused on the conflicts between the two forms of winter recreation in the valley bottom of Reed Creek and there have been several proposals during plan development that this area be used a snowmachine 'play area' for beginner and intermediate level snowmachiners. Few areas of this type are available within the East Side area. Conversely, areas south of the Little Susitna River have been proposed for designation as non-motorized areas on the grounds that there are on-going conflicts between uses and because this area is readily accessible.

Plan Designation and Land Classification

This unit is designated Public Recreation-Dispersed, which converts to the classification of Public Recreation Land.

¹⁵ The effect of these closures is to preclude mining in the more scenic areas of the unit.

Management Intent

The management intent of this unit is to maintain the area for dispersed public recreation in such a manner that protects the scenic quality and wildlife. The non-motorized areas designated on Map 3-9 are to be managed to ensure the continued use of these areas for non-motorized forms of travel.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for motorized uses in areas designated 'non-motorized' areas. The areas affected by this restriction are depicted on Map 3-9. Within this management unit there are areas that are closed on a year-round basis, on a summer only basis, and are not closed to such use at all.

Management Guidelines

The management guidelines that follow are based on the uses that are allowed, conditionally allowed, or prohibited. Based on these guidelines, few uses other than those authorized as a matter of state law, are intended within this unit. Accordingly, the guidelines only deal with those uses that could occur within this unit. All state land is to be retained.

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Mining

- The number and kind of structures authorized in a Plan of Operations shall be the minimum necessary for the operation of permitted subsurface mining operations.
- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with the requirements identified in the Subsurface Resource section of Chapter 2.

Utilities

- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road and so they blend with ridges rather than stand out as a skyline feature.
- Utility lines shall be placed underground. If this is not practical the standards for Utilities in the Recreation section of Chapter 2 are to be followed.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible. Access routes to these sites are prohibited.

Management Recommendations

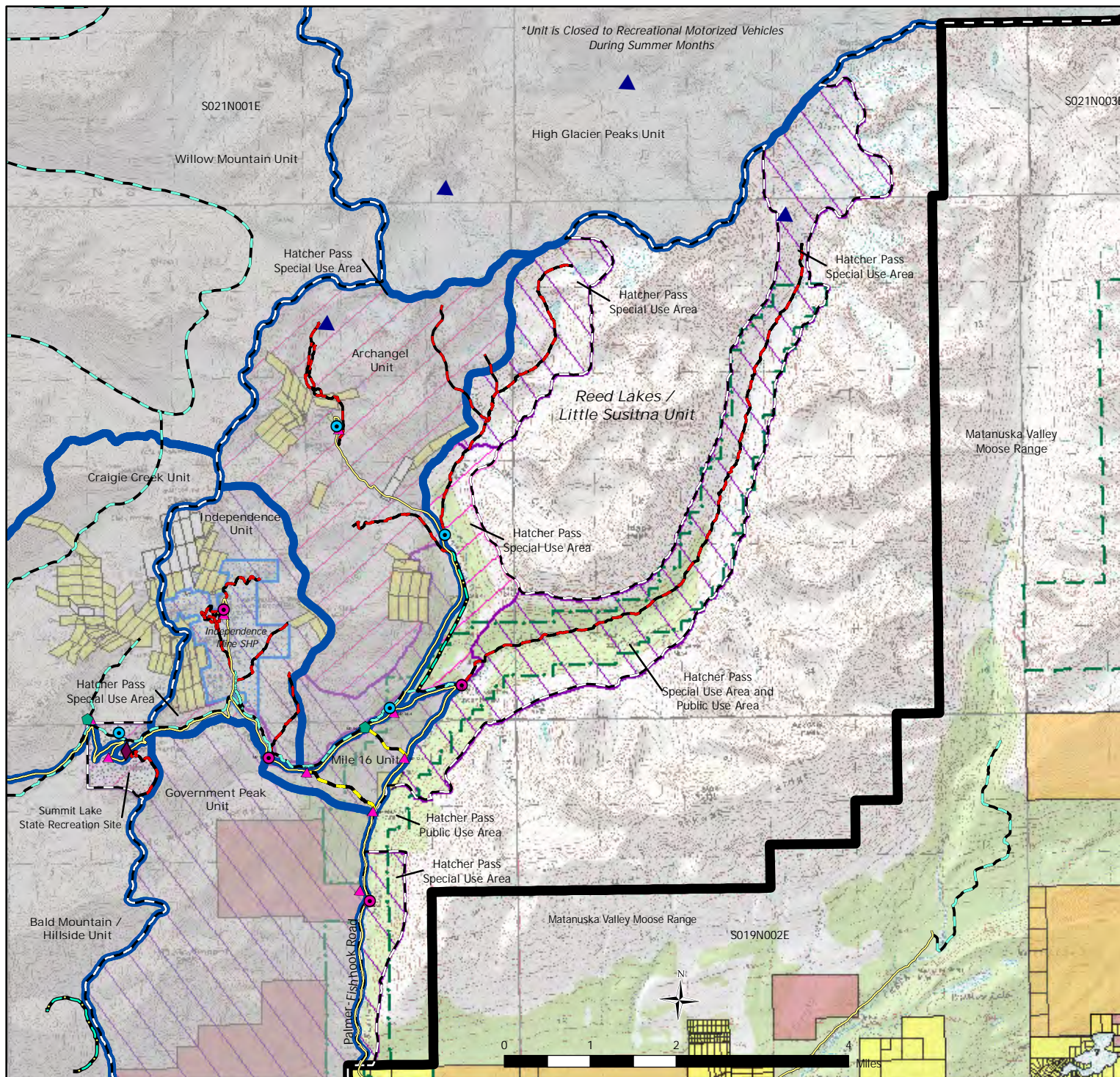
- Reed Lakes and the valley bottom associated with Reed Creek are recommended for inclusion in the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area. This is an area of outstanding scenery and warrants inclusion within the PUA.
- Revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted in plan Map 3-9. Boundaries have been realigned so that they coincide with visible ground features in order to make on the ground boundary interpretations easier.
- In addition, an area along the Little Susitna River Corridor that parallels the Palmer-Fishhook Road and the general area of the Mat-Su Borough Alpine and Nordic Ski facility development is recommended for year round motorized use closure. This change was made at the request of the borough in an effort to preclude noise, potential traffic impact, and uses that may be incompatible with the development of their ski facilities.
- As a result of the review of the 'Alternative Winter Option' in the PRD¹⁶ and eventual adoption of this approach by the DNR Commissioner, two other significant changes to motorized boundaries within this management unit are recommended. These include the opening of the Reed Creek valley to winter motorized use and the closure

¹⁶ The PRD contained a 'Plan Recommendation' and a 'Winter Use Option'. The 'Plan Recommendation' represented the (then) recommendation of the department and generally consisted of the current (1986) regulation non-motorized boundaries realigned to topographic features plus the closure of the Mile 16 management unit and a portion of the Independence management unit. The 'Winter Use Option' substantially changed the non-motorized boundaries by adding as closed areas, in addition to Mile 16 management unit, portions of the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit at Delia Creek and Marmot Mountain in the Archangel unit. In addition, it *opened* the area of the Reed Creek drainage between Government Creek in the north and the Gold Mint parking lot in the south, to winter motorized use, while retaining the summer closure in the same area. Consult the PRD for more detail on the Winter Use Option.

of the Delia Creek area south of the Gold Mint parking lot to year-round motorized use. The area of the Reed Creek drainage remains closed to motorized use during the summer, however, continuing the current regulatory closure. These changes in boundaries will result in 6,742 acres being closed to year round motorized use in this management unit, an increase 1,869 acres from the current area of closure. A substantial revision in the manner of use of Archangel Road is associated with these changes. Changes to the allowable uses on this road in the winter are described under the Archangel management unit.

- Subject to funding availability:
 - Improve Reed Lakes Trail and develop the Reed Creek trail.
 - Develop a motorized winter trail adjacent to and immediately east of Archangel Road. This trail would start at the Gold Mint parking lot and continue northward just east of Archangel Road to (approximately) the unimproved parking lot at the Reed Lakes trailhead.

Hatcher Pass Management Plan
 Map 3-9
 Reed Lakes / Little Susitna Unit
 Land Status, Recreation, and
 Facility Recommendations



- Plan Boundary
- Reed Lakes / Little Susitna Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Roads
- Mountaineering Huts
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
 * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
 * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
 * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska
 Department of Natural Resources
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Boundaries and Information
 Current to March 2012

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 and is intended to be used only as a guide.
 Coordinate System: NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

MILE 16 MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Mile 16 management unit (Map 3-10) is located at the first switchback on the Hatcher Pass Road. It consists of 718 acres land and includes 689 acres state and 29 acres of private land that are primarily associated with the Motherlode Lodge. With the exception of the Motherlode Lodge, this unit encompasses the land enclosed by the road corridor as depicted on Map 3-10. It is bordered by the Hatcher Pass Road on the west and east sides and by the southern ravine crest of the Fishhook Creek on the south. It is southeast of the Archangel management unit, west of the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit, and north of the Government Peak management unit. This area was included in the Government Peak management unit in the 1986 Management Plan. With the exception of the Motherlode Lodge, this land is state owned and currently managed by DPOR under a management agreement between DMLW and DPOR. Much of this management unit is included in the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area. Most of the land is steep terrain and includes the popular Mile 16 and 'Paradise Ski Runs'. Access to this unit is provided from the Gold Mint parking lot, pullouts on along the Hatcher Pass Road, and from the Motherlode Lodge, at Mile Posts 12, 13, and 16.

Vegetation reflects elevation and topography. It is characteristically shrub types and a few stands of cottonwood trees at the lower elevations and sub-alpine meadows, alpine tundra, dense alder thickets with grassy meadows characteristic of higher elevations.

Small mammals (arctic ground squirrels, snowshoe hares, and marmots) are common and some small game hunting does occur in this area. The lower sections of Fishhook Creek are salmon rearing areas. Game birds include ptarmigan, spruce grouse, and ruffed grouse. Bald eagles have been known to roost and nest in the cottonwood trees in lower elevations.

Mineral potential is not considered to be high in this management unit although some placer mining potential exists there, mainly along the Fishhook Creek. There are historic mine sites located in the eastern side of the planning area as well.

This unit is characterized by year-round recreational use. During the summer, photography, hiking, berry picking, recreational gold panning, and some small game hunting, are common activities. During the winter, the area is very popular for skiing the 'Mile 16' and 'Paradise Ski Runs', telemarking, downhill skiing, snowboarding, and sled riding. The area is not popular for motorized users, although they do use the far eastern area near the Motherlode Lodge to access the east-west snowmachine corridor to the west side of the planning area.

Planning Issues

The Mile 16 management unit is a new management unit which was created because of the concentrated non-motorized recreation that occurs in the area. In the original plan and amendment it was a section of the Government Peak management unit. In the 1986 Management Plan, the area was noted as a snowmachine area. Since that time, it has become a popular area for non-motorized recreation instead. Planning issues focus on the ability of current facilities to support intense recreational use, potential conflict between motorized and non-motorized uses during the winter and safety concerns of recreational users. Portions of the Hatcher Pass Road along the north-west side of this unit are subject to avalanches. The plowing of pullouts along avalanche-prone areas of the road is not performed for safety reasons. This problem is exasperated by a narrower road in the winter with high snow berms. With safety in mind, the careful development of pull-outs, parking or turnarounds associated with recreational use and ski runs within this unit are recommended to mitigate public safety concerns and congested road traffic.

In the winter, the area is extremely popular as a self-serviced ski and sled area due to the ease of highway access at the top and bottom of the runs. Highway vehicles are commonly used to shuttle recreationalists to the top of the ski runs, allowing numerous runs in a fairly short time period. When snow conditions are good, weekend use of this area often exceeds parking and turnaround capacity, and creates traffic congestion on the highway. This is especially pronounced at the Paradise Run where there is no parking or pullout area at the drop-off zone. This creates a situation where vehicles are making 3-point and U-Turns in a narrow roadway, on a hill, with limited visibility and often icy road conditions. Additional problems arise at the bottom of Paradise with insufficient run-out between the base of the hill and the highway, causing many recreationalists to ski out into the roadway. Conflict is primarily due to road congestion, parking, and occasional snowmachines riding in areas where people are actively skiing or sled riding.

In the summer, recreational use is not as concentrated in the area, however the Mile 16 parking area is also one of the most popular scenic overlooks in the planning area, and frequently used as a photographic backdrop and small ceremonies such as weddings. The lower section of Fishhook Creek is a popular recreational gold panning area. The area has great potential for all-terrain bicycling, using similar runs as winter skiing. Concerns were raised about the need for a designated ATV route for summer use across the center of the unit to connect with Archangel Road. A motorized corridor along the Fishhook Creek was also proposed. There was little opposition to closing or restricting motorized use in the winter.

Plan Designation and Land Classification

This unit is designated Public Recreation-Concentrated, which converts to the classification of Public Recreation Land.

Management Intent

The management intent of this unit is to maintain the area for safe public recreation in such a manner that protects the scenic quality and wildlife. The non-motorized areas designated on Map 2-3 are to be managed to ensure the continued use of these areas for non-motorized forms of travel and recreation. Summer motorized recreation is only permitted on designated motorized routes developed to sustainable trail standards. A proposed route is depicted on Map 3-10.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in Table 2-1.

Generally Allowed Uses

All Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are permitted except for motorized uses in areas designated 'non-motorized areas or routes'. The areas affected by this restriction are depicted on Map 3-10.

Management Guidelines

The management guidelines that follow are based on the uses that are allowed, conditionally allowed, or prohibited. Based on these guidelines, few uses other than those authorized as a matter of state law, are intended within this unit. Accordingly, the guidelines only deal with those uses that could occur within this unit. All state land is to be retained.

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 2-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state.

Utilities

- Utility lines are to be situated so that they are not visible from the Hatcher Pass Road and so they blend with ridges rather than stand out as a skyline feature.
- Utility lines shall be placed underground. If this is not practical the standards for Utilities in the Recreation section of Chapter 2 are to be followed.

- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible. The creation of access routes to these sites is prohibited.

Management Recommendations

- The management unit is recommended for inclusion into the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area. Revise the boundaries affected by the regulations under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) to coincide with those depicted on Map 3-10.
- This area of concentrated recreational non-motorized use should be closed to year round motorized use. This closure will affect 633 acres of state land.
- The Mile 16 area should be considered for inclusion into the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area.
- Consider seasonal highway safety zones (speed reductions, warning signage) during peak winter recreation periods.
- Regulatory Change Recommendation: Formally designate the major ski runs through the area as closed to hunting. Small game hunters (winter) currently utilize the Mile 12 as a staging area for hunting, often discharging weapons along trails being used by skiers and boarders. Because of the high density recreation occurring, firearm discharge should be disallowed for public safety reasons. If implemented, this recommendation will require changes to the current regulations under 11 AAC 12.
- Subject to funding availability:
 - Enlarge the Gold Mint Trailhead to accommodate for heavy recreational use in that area.
 - Expand the Mile 12 pullout and the pullout at the end of Paradise Run. Heavy weekend use of these areas results in congestion and that often obstructs traffic along the Hatcher Pass Road.
 - Develop more pullouts in the area of mile 12 and 13 (Hatcher Pass Road). Many recreationists beginning their run at the top of Paradise end up in dispersed locations along the road. Although most end up at the popular Paradise pick-up area, there is a growing number of skiers and boarders attracted to off-trail and exploratory runs which result in these users ending up at random points along the roadway. This ultimately results in vehicles stopping and obstructing traffic.

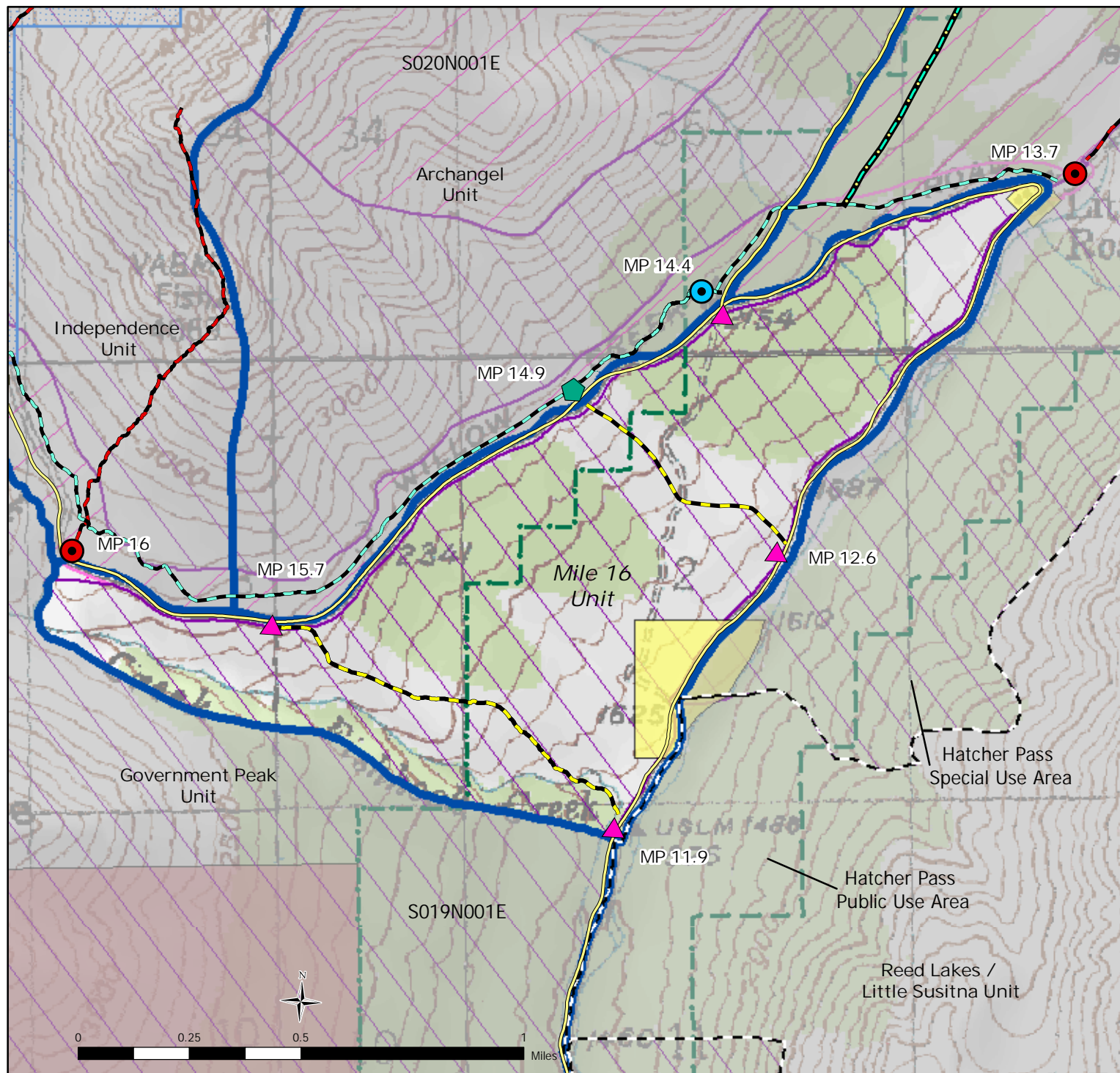
- Develop ski/sled runs that could be utilized as summer hiking and biking corridors throughout the unit. This would involve enhancement of existing routes, development of additional routes, and to improve safety especially where these routes meet the roadway along Mile 12 and 13.
- Develop restroom facilities at designated parking areas as use increases.
- Develop a bicycle trail plan for the area. The trail plan should consider whether technical features such as jumps, ramps, rails, etc are appropriate, and if so how they will be maintained. (Currently, the public creates their own.)
- Designate a motorized (summer) trail on the section of dirt road that transects the center of this management unit. This trail is to be developed according to sustainable trail standards. Note: This recommendation is tentative at this time and is subject to public comment.

Hatcher Pass Management Plan

Map 3-10

Mile 16 Unit

Land Status, Recreation, and
Facility Recommendations



- Plan Boundary
- Mile 16 Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Matsu Borough Land
- Private Land
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Roads
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New

* General State Land Is Clear Topography

* All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner

* Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130

* Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)

* Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska

Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

GOVERNMENT PEAK MANAGEMENT UNIT

Background

The Government Peak management unit (Map 3-11) includes areas suitable for a variety of recreational uses, primarily for Alpine (Northern Area) and Nordic (Southern Area) ski facilities, and possible commercial and residential development. There has been great interest on the part of both the state and the borough over the last two decades to see these facilities developed.

The unit¹⁷ is bordered on the north by the Mile 16 and Independence management units, to the west by the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit, on the east by the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna management unit, and on the south by private land. The northern boundary does not include the Hatcher Pass Road while the eastern boundary does.

The Government Peak unit is easily accessed by Hatcher Pass Road and contains approximately 8,045 acres. In contrast to other units in the planning area where the state is the dominant land owner, ownership in this unit is split between the state (4,773 acres) and the borough (3,272 acres). The ownership pattern is depicted on Map 3-11. The area owned by the borough includes the more developable and accessible land within the management unit. The more mountainous areas within this unit are owned by the state. It is important to recognize this dual ownership since it greatly impacts how the unit is managed.

This area is located adjacent to the Hatcher Pass Road on hilly terrain, although some benches occur and are fairly level. Deciduous forest occurs adjacent to portions of the Hatcher Pass Road while other areas are covered by shrub at lower elevations and by shrub

¹⁷ The boundary of the Government Peak management unit is different in the 2010 Management Plan than in the 1986 Plan and the 1989 Plan Amendment. The three areas of principle difference occur within the eastern, northeastern, and southwestern boundaries. The eastern boundary is shifted to coincide with the Hatcher Pass Road, an obvious management feature. The area that is known as 'Mile 16' is dropped from the northeastern part of the Government Peak management unit and made a separate management unit. The intensity of use and level of conflict warranted the creation of this new management unit. The northern management unit boundary is Fishhook Creek, not the Hatcher Pass Road. This portion of the Hatcher Pass Road is now managed under the Mile 16 management unit. Also, much of the southwestern part of the unit has been modified, and generally coincides with Government Creek.

The size of the Government Peak unit was further reduced by approximately 300 acres in March 2012 as a result of a land exchange between the state and borough, which realigned the southwestern boundary of the Government Peak unit and southeastern boundary of the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit along Government Creek. See ADL 231234 and Appendix G-1 for the amended Land Classification Order (SC-09-003A01) for further information about the land affected by the exchange. All referenced boundary changes in this unit were made to accommodate the current uses in this area, which include motorized uses. All acreages in this plan have been revised to correspond with the land classifications reflected on LCO (SC-09-003A01).

and dwarf shrub at middle elevations and alpine vegetation in the higher elevations. Most of the unit consists of uplands (99%) with the remainder either wetlands or streams. The majority of the wetlands and streams are in the Southern area.

There are 5 tributaries of the Little Susitna River with coho salmon and Dolly Varden spawning and rearing in each of them. Moose are present in the unit below an elevation of 3,000 feet on the eastern and southern sides of Government Peak. Black bear are also seen in the unit on occasion. Beaver are present and numerous beaver dams and lodges are present throughout the northeastern side of the unit.

Because of favorable terrain and ready access, this unit is very popular for winter sports, including skiing, snowmobiling, sledding, and snow shoeing. The northeastern slopes of Government Peak and Bald Mountain Ridge contain suitable terrain for alpine skiing. There is potential for commercially operated alpine skiing, with skiers coming from the Valley and surrounding communities. An access road and parking facility has been partially developed off of Hatcher Pass Road (Mile 11.2) by the borough to access this area. There has also been a demand by the public to develop Nordic ski facilities and the southern part of this unit contains topography suitable for this purpose. During the summer and fall the entire unit is popular for a variety of activities including hiking, mountain biking, mountain running, hunting, berry picking, whitewater kayaking, and mountaineering education. ORV use also occurs in the southern part, which is primarily associated with hunting in the fall.

A variety of existing administrative and statutory provisions control land use in the unit and will continue to do so under this management plan:

- Lands closed to mineral entry. The unit is closed to mineral entry under administrative mineral closing orders (MCO 549, 541) and pursuant to the authority of the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area, which closes the land within the PUA to mineral entry (AS 41.23.110(f))¹⁸.
- Hatcher Pass Public Use Area. The PUA, which is also depicted on Map 3-11, requires that the land owned by the state be managed consistent with the purposes of the PUA, which focus on the provision of recreation and the protection of wildlife and fishery resources as well as the scenic resources of the area. Portions of the PUA exist within the Government Peak management unit, generally to the west of the Hatcher Pass Road and the Little Susitna River. Although settlement is precluded within the PUA, the types of developed recreational uses permitted in this plan, on both borough as well as state land, are consistent with PUA statutory provisions and legislative intent.
- Development Lease. Ownership and management of the Development Lease, originally issued by the state, has been transferred to the borough, reflecting the interest of the borough to develop the ski areas. When the lease was originally issued

¹⁸ Note: Valid mining claims that existed on September 1, 1986 remained valid. These claims have since been abandoned or extinguished.

to Mistui Ltd. in 1989, the state was the only land owner in the Government Peak management unit. Since that time, the Borough became the principal land owner where the ski area facilities would be built and the state has transferred its management to the borough as it relates to ski area and related development. The state retains decision making authority on the use and management on other aspects of state land only.

- **Tri-Party Management Agreement.** A management agreement between the MSB, DPOR and DMLW has existed since 2002. This agreement provides that DPOR and DMLW will be the lead agencies in the natural resource permitting and recreation management of state land. DMLW is responsible for land use decisions on state land. The borough is responsible for all land use activities on land owned by the borough. In the case of the Alpine area where the land is owned by both the state and borough the agreement calls for a mutual decision making process. It is the intent that DPOR shall function as the lead for enforcement of general recreation and related activities (traffic, parking, vandalism, recreation, etc.) on both borough and state lands, but works in coordination with the borough.

Planning Issues

A variety of significant issues affect this management unit. Perhaps the most significant are land use decisions affecting the development of Alpine and Nordic ski area facilities in the northern and southern portions of the unit. If constructed, the majority of the improved facilities will be located on borough owned land. Because federal funds will be used to develop certain transportation related elements that access the Alpine and Nordic ski areas, the borough has completed an Environmental Impact Statement. The areas of the proposed Alpine and Nordic skiing facilities are depicted on Map 3-11. Besides the EIS process, other planning processes are now underway (see below) that may affect development of both areas. The state supports the efforts of the borough in its development of both the Nordic and Alpine ski facilities and the recommendations that follow implement this concept. The Borough Assembly has adopted “Hatcher Pass – A New Beginning” which is a conceptual phased development plan for the ski area facilities.

Consistent with a litigation related settlement agreement, (Cascadia Wildlands Project v. State of Alaska, DNR, and DMLW), the land owned by the borough must be managed consistent with the Hatcher Pass Management Plan. As a result of this settlement, the Borough must adopt this management plan along with the DNR.

Another significant issue affecting this management unit is the need for additional parking and trail facilities on the south side of this management unit. These facilities are almost certainly necessary, even with the proposed development of similar facilities in the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit.

Applicability of Plan Requirements within the Government Peak Management Unit

The following requirements affect both the borough and DNR. It is intended that these requirements and the 2010 HPMP generally, function as the basis for the management of state and borough land within the Government Peak management unit. As such, the HPMP will function as the land use plan for the state and as the comprehensive plan for the borough as it relates to this unit. The borough intends to adopt the HPMP as the basis for its land use management and planning on borough owned land. The 2010 Plan supersedes the 1986 Plan and the 1989 Plan Amendment. The provisions of either do not apply once the 2010 Plan is adopted.

Plan Designations, Land Classifications, and Allowed Uses

Two plan designations affect this management unit. The areas depicted in Map 3-11 as 'Northern Development Area' and 'Southern Development Area' correspond to the plan designation of 'Public Recreation-Developed', while the plan designation of 'Public Recreation-Dispersed' affects all remaining areas. The state land in the unit is designated Public Recreation-Dispersed, except for a relatively small area associated with the Alpine ski facility development. The Public Recreation-Developed designation affects borough owned land and the small area of state land associated with the Alpine ski facility.

Borough land in the unit has been separated into two areas; Northern Area and Southern Area. The northern area may be developed as an Alpine ski facility, which would include parking, roads, and other structures intended to support this facility. Most structures would be concentrated on borough land, while the state land is intended to accommodate ski lifts and related ski facilities. The Southern Area may be developed as a Nordic ski facility, with ski trails, parking, roads and other facilities designed to support a Nordic ski area¹⁹.

Both designations convert to the land use classification of Public Recreation Land on both state and borough land. The borough owned land is currently unclassified but, when the HPMP is adopted by the Borough, the borough land will be classified Public Recreation Land.

Uses that are currently authorized on state and borough land remain authorized. Other uses, including settlement and commercial, may also be appropriate within this area, but under certain conditions. Commercial and settlement uses associated with public recreation or public recreation facilities are permitted within areas designated Public Recreation-Concentrated if authorized through borough planning and legislative processes. A plan

¹⁹ Within lands owned by the borough, the borough may create subunits with more specific management rules and guidelines as long as they are consistent with the management intent and plan designations in the 2010 Plan. When these subunits are approved by the Borough Assembly, they also become part of the 2010 Plan. A plan amendment is not required for such changes.

amendment is not required under this procedure. Settlement or commercial uses that are not directly related to public recreation including improved public recreation facilities are only to be allowed through an amendment of the 2010 HPMP.

Management Intent

Areas designated “Public Recreation-Dispersed” on state land are to be managed to accommodate current non-motorized uses. Motorized uses that may be authorized include those motorized uses that are necessary to the support and operation of the Alpine and Nordic ski facilities. The description of uses under Plan Designations, Land Classifications, and Allowed Uses is included by reference.

Generally, development, except related to recreation, recreation related infrastructure, and public safety projects, is not intended in these areas. Some of these uses may be appropriate based on agency and public reviews, and adherence to the siting and design criteria identified under Management Guidelines and Management Recommendations of this section. DMLW shall not issue authorizations within this area that are incompatible with the proposed borough developments in the Northern and Southern areas. DNR shall coordinate with the borough on the authorization of all applications in the unit and shall not issue authorizations if the borough finds the proposed use(s) are inconsistent with the proposed borough developments in the Northern and Southern Areas. Uses are to be limited to those shown on the table below titled, “Listing of Uses Within the Government Peak Unit” and to those facilities that are recommended in the section under Management Recommendations.

Areas designated “Public Recreation-Developed” are to be managed to accommodate Alpine and Nordic ski facilities. Except for the small amount of state land, the land affected by this designation is borough owned. Borough land is to be managed to accommodate the development of Alpine and Nordic ski facilities, and those current uses consistent with these forms of development and land use. State land within the Northern Area will be managed to allow continued non-motorized uses and to accommodate structures related to the Alpine ski facility, such as ski lifts, and mid-mountain structures related to use of the ski areas.

Commercial and settlement uses within areas designated Public Recreation-Developed on borough land are appropriate if related to public recreation or public recreation facilities and if authorized through borough planning and legislative processes. Commercial or settlement use(s) that are directly related to the functions of the recreational facility (i.e. ski shop, caretaker housing, etc.) or those uses where revenue is derived from the sale of land or improvements that will be used for developing and operating the recreational facilities are considered appropriate, if authorized as indicated above. Commercial or settlement uses that are not directly related to the public recreation shall only be allowed within areas designated Public Recreation-Developed or Public Recreation-Dispersed through a plan amendment. Motorized uses necessary to the operation of the Alpine ski facility and for maintenance, public health and safety, and security are recognized as appropriate on both state and borough land.

Generally Allowed Uses (State and Borough)

Requirements related to Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020 only affect state land. These same uses are also allowed on borough land. This management unit is closed to recreational motorized recreation and the use of motorized corridors on a year-round basis.²⁰

Areas affected by the “Public Recreation-Dispersed” designation: All generally allowed uses are permitted except for year-round motorized use restrictions and those uses allowed by permit under the Special Land Use Designation (ADL 223585). Lawful trapping, hunting, and fishing, among other uses, are allowed on state land (11 AAC 96.020) and borough land. Motorized uses in support of both the Nordic or Alpine ski facilities and their operations are exempt from this restriction. The areas affected by this restriction are depicted on Map 3-11.

Areas affected by the “Public Recreation-Developed” designation: All generally allowed uses are permitted except for year-round motorized use restrictions as depicted on Map 3-11, except those authorized by permit under the same Special Use Designation (ADL 223585). Motorized uses in direct support of the Nordic or Alpine ski facilities and their operations are exempt from this prohibition. The area affected by this restriction is depicted on Map 3-11.

Uses Requiring Authorization

Uses requiring authorization by DNR and the Borough are to be consistent with state or borough code, as appropriate, and are to be allowed, prohibited, or conditionally allowed according to the listing provided in the table below (also shown for the entire HPMP area in Table 2-1) and consistent with Management Intent for this unit. In the event of discrepancies between the two tables, Table 3-1 controls.

²⁰ The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly passed two resolutions in 2010 requesting that the Government Peak management unit be closed to motorized recreational use on a year-round basis and that there be no motorized corridors within the management unit. See Resolution No. 10-036, which was passed on May 04, 2010 and Resolution No. 10-103, which was passed on December 14, 2010.

Table 3-2: Listing of Uses Within the Government Peak Unit²¹

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Stipulations	Comment
Agriculture	Not allowed.		
Commercial Recreation (not including Alpine and Nordic ski area development)	Allowed on state land.	Commercial recreation facilities may be authorized if in complementary or direct support of the commercial recreation activity and consistent with the stipulations that may be imposed in a borough adopted development plan or included in a Special Land Use Plan. The appropriateness of these uses is to be determined during the adjudication and public involvement process.	This use includes the various types of commercial recreation services that may occur within the management area. Examples include services like guided fishing, hunting or mountain climbing, or commercial tours.
General Commercial, including lodging	Conditionally allowed.	Commercial use is allowable if it is consistent with the management intent and management guidelines and, on borough land, will be subject to the stipulations that may be imposed in borough adopted development plan or included in a Special Land Use Plan.	On borough land commercial use is an allowed use if related to public recreation facilities and if authorized by the borough. See also the discussion under 'Plan Designations and Land Classifications.'
Grazing Leases	Not allowed.		
Industrial, including uses similar to industrial in character	Not allowed.		This definition does not include alternative energy or hydroelectric power facilities, or facilities that would support ski development.
Material Extraction	Not allowed except for cut and fill situations as related to public safety and public transportation (road, trails, and the like), and development of commercial Alpine, Nordic or other recreational facilities.	Subject to all typical DNR or borough stipulations as appropriate for material extraction plus the restrictions noted for this use in Chapter 2.	Special care must be taken in the siting of material extraction adjacent to principal roads. Borough code related to mining and material extraction shall apply to both borough and state land.
Mining (including placer mining)	Not allowed.		

²¹ The borough intends to prepare and implement a special land use designation (SLUDs) for portions of the Government Peak management unit, and this may include state land as well as borough. SLUDs identified allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses. A SPUD adopted by the borough may affect uses in this listing when its standards are more restrictive. SPUD requirements, however, may not allow a greater scope or intensity of use that those authorized in the listing. A plan amendment to this plan is required if other uses are to be restricted and/or if an expanded scope or intensity of use for listed uses is intended.

*Chapter 3: Government Peak
Management Unit*

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Stipulations	Comment
Personal use firewood harvest and general forest management activities	Personal use firewood gathering is allowed if a collection area is identified by DOF and DMLW on state land, or by the borough on borough land.		DOF or the Borough may conduct timber removal operations for such administrative purposes as timber salvage, habitat manipulation, insect control, fire fuel reduction, or other forest management purposes determined by DOF or the Borough on their respective lands as necessary for forest health or where improvements will be located including roads, trails, utilities, etc.
Public Facilities	Public facilities related to public safety are allowed. Other types of public facilities are also allowed if identified in the management intent, management guidelines, or management recommendations in the Government Peak management unit.		Structures or facilities other than those noted in the second column are to be treated as conditionally allowed and must be authorized through a written decision.
Public Use, Recreational Use, Trapper and Remote Cabins	Public, administrative, or commercial recreation cabins are conditionally allowed. Personal use and trapper cabins are not allowed.	These types of structures may be allowed if consistent with management intent and management guidelines. All such uses are to go through borough or state adjudication and public review processes.	
Settlement	Not allowed, except that settlement may occur within the Government Peak Unit on borough land. See also 'Stipulations'.	Settlement is subject to the stipulations that may be imposed in the borough's development plan and/or Special Land Use District.	Settlement is an allowed use if related to public recreation facilities and if authorized by the borough. See also the discussion under 'Plan Designations and Land Classifications.'
Ski Facilities (including recreational facilities)	Allowed, subject to approval of a development plan.		The term 'ski facilities' means those uses and structures related to Alpine and Nordic ski complexes.
State Land Disposals for purposes of settlement or agriculture	Not allowed.		
Timber Harvest (Commercial)	Not allowed on state or borough land except for salvage and management for forest health and fire safety. May also be permitted where improvements will be located, including roads, trails, utilities, etc.	All such activities are to be coordinated with DOF, SCRO and the borough, and, if permitted, are to be consistent with the management intent for the unit.	Personal use harvest and general forest management is permitted. See below.

Potential Use	Allowed, Prohibited, or Conditionally Allowed	Stipulations	Comment
Trail Development and Management	Allowed.	Trails on state land are to be developed accordingly to DPOR Sustained Trail Standards.	The management of trails shall be consistent with the 2010 Plan and with any step-wise plan approved by the Assembly. The tri-party management agreement should be consulted prior to trail development or management actions.
Other Uses Not Otherwise Identified	Conditionally allowed.	Only uses consistent with the management intent and management guidelines for the Government Peak unit may be allowed.	Since not all uses that might occur in this area can be anticipated, such uses may be allowed but must go through DNR and/or borough adjudication and public review process(es).

Management Guidelines: State

The management guidelines that follow are based on the uses that are allowed, conditionally allowed, or prohibited in Table 3-1. Consistent with the management intent for this unit, except for public recreation and some utilities, few uses are intended.

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by DNR are to be consistent with requirements of Table 3-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit and is in the overall best interest of the state and borough.
- Infrastructure, utilities and similar types of uses, including hydroelectric power generation facilities, are to be treated as a conditional use. Approval of facilities and structures of this type must be in the overall best interest of the state and borough and must be consistent with the requirements of this plan, particularly the management intent for this management unit and with the requirements for ‘utility lines’ in the Recreation section of Chapter 2.
- DNR shall not issue authorizations for uses or structures on state land that would be incompatible with the development and long-term operation of either the Alpine or Nordic ski facilities.
- Repeater and other forms of communication sites are conditionally allowed use on the higher peaks but must be situated to avoid being seen from the Hatcher Pass Road. If the latter is not feasible and some amount of visibility cannot be avoided, they should

be sited and designed so that they do not stand out as a prominent skyline feature as viewed from the road and so that they blend with the ridge. Sites are to be grouped together to the extent possible. Access routes to these sites are prohibited.

Management Guidelines: Borough

Authorizations

- Authorizations issued by the Borough are to be consistent with requirements of Table 3-1. Prohibited uses can only be authorized by a plan amendment. Conditional uses may be authorized but the written finding must conclude that the use is consistent with the management intent for the management unit, borough land use requirements and is in the overall best interest of the Borough.
- Commercial, infrastructure, utility, and other uses related to the development and operation of an Alpine ski facility, as well as the ski facility itself, are recognized as appropriate within the Northern Area. Commercial and/or residential development not directly related to public recreation or public recreation facilities shall require an amendment to this plan.
- The development of a Nordic ski facility as well as commercial, infrastructure, utility and other uses that may be related to the development and operation of such uses are recognized as appropriate within the Southern Area. Commercial or residential development not directly related to public recreation or public recreation facilities shall require an amendment to this plan.
- Public recreation uses may continue on lands owned by the borough unless, in an approved development plan or amendment to this plan, use restrictions are established.

Management Recommendations: State

- This management unit has been recommended for inclusion into the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area. Implement changes to the Generally Allowed Uses of 11 AAC 96.014 that reflect the changes to recreational motorized use depicted in Map 3-11. This management unit remains closed to year round motorized use except for those uses permitted under Special Land Use Designation (ADL 223585). Appendix D contains the proposed changes in regulation.
- Revise the Development Lease between the borough and DMLW to bring it up to date. Revision should occur prior to or concurrent with the approval of a development plan for the ski facilities. See Chapter 4 for details. The state is to coordinate with the borough on this revision.

- Although the borough has recommended (2010) that a north-south winter motorized corridor not be established within the Government Peak management unit, in the event that the borough changes its position in regards to this facility, the 2010 Plan recognizes such a facility and, when/if approved by the Borough Assembly, the plan is amended by this action to automatically include it, although the state reserves the ability to alter corridor alignment in order to create a continuous facility on state and borough land. A winter motorized corridor on state land to connect with the corridor on borough land is similarly authorized in the 2010 Plan. Similarly, these connections are to be automatically included in the 2010 Plan, with the alignment following that identified in then current engineering studies (or a similar analytic process). Neither of these actions will require a plan amendment.
- The 2010 Plan also recognizes the potential for an east-west winter motorized corridor on state land within the area immediately south of Fishhook Creek²². The development of this facility should be considered after the improvements to the existing parking lots on Hatcher Pass Road, the establishment of a new parking lot at the intersection of Archangel Road and the Hatcher Pass Road, and the upgrading of the current snowmachine access corridor that adjoins this road on its north side²³ and a determination is made by DNR that these improvements are insufficient to handle current or expected requirements for snowmachine access from the East Side to the West Side, or a determination is made that improvements are required for reasons of public safety. Conceptually, this new winter motorized corridor would begin just south of the intersection of Fishhook Creek and the Hatcher Pass road, continue westward following (and within 500') of Fishhook Creek, and then cross that creek to eventually tie into the Fishhook parking lot. The actual alignment of this facility is to be determined in more detailed site analyses. An additional parking facility may be required on Hatcher Pass Road in conjunction with the east-west corridor.

An east-west corridor can be developed independently of a north-south corridor on borough land or it can be integrated with a borough facility. To provide for the potential development of this facility, a corridor of 500' (south) from Fishhook Creek is to be retained for this purpose. Other uses may occur within this area on an interim basis, but only to the extent that they do not preclude the potential development of this winter motorized corridor. Assuming that the written determination finds that the development of a winter motorized corridor is required, amendment of the 2010 Plan is not required.

- Consider the development of a summer hiking trail connecting Government Peak to Hatch Peak. The evaluation of this route is to be coordinated with the borough.

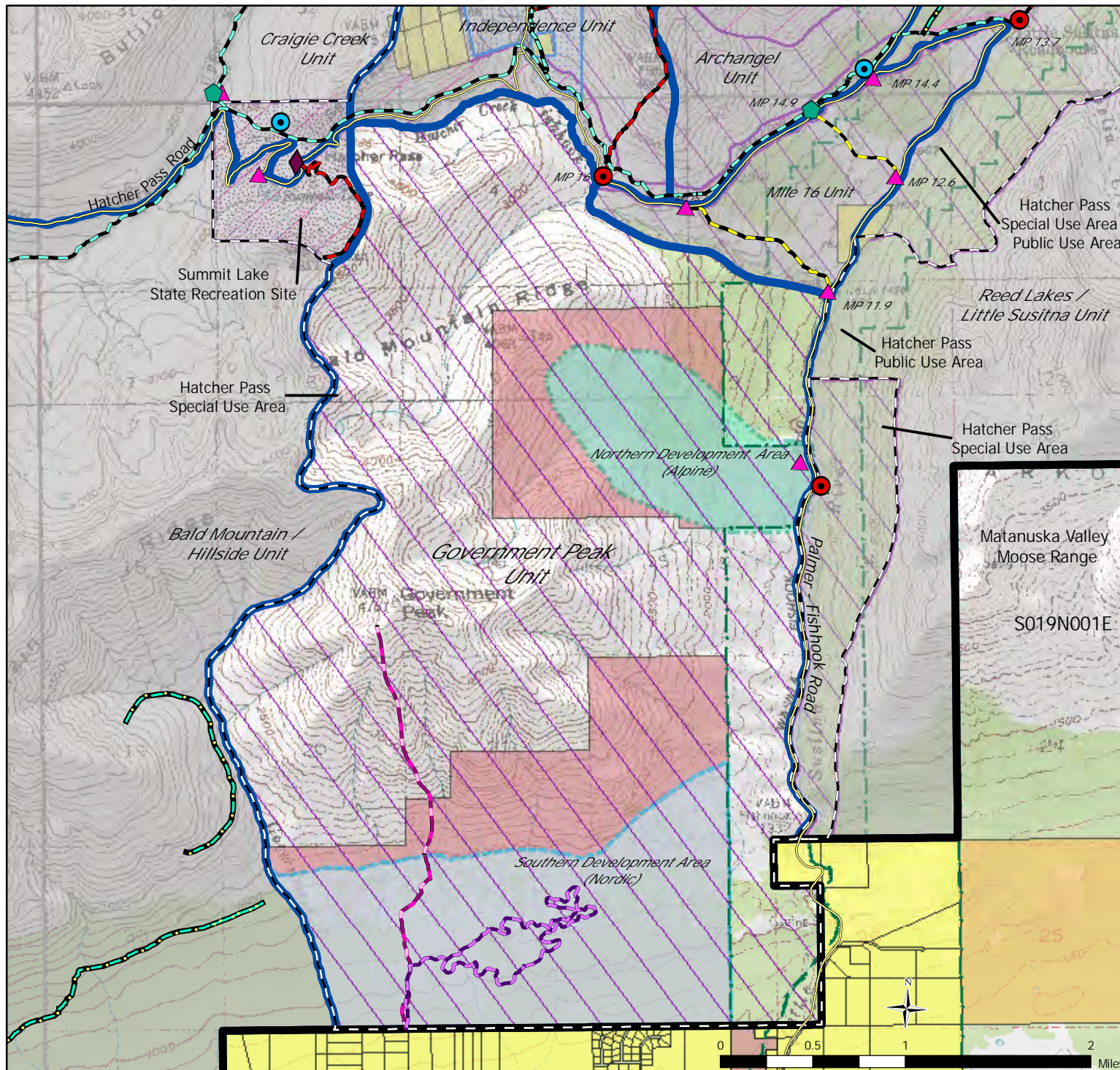
²² The 2010 Plan recognizes the strong desire by the public to get from the East Side over to the West Side (which has extensive areas available for snowmachine use) and acknowledges this as a legitimate need that the state must attempt to meet through the development of new and/or improved facilities.

²³ These facilities are described in the Archangel management unit.

- Improve signage at entrance to the Hatcher Pass Management Plan area (Class A sign).
- Improve signage on all designated trails and parking areas.

Management Recommendations: Borough

- Consider the development of an all season motorized route aligned in an east-west direction within the Southern Area built to sustainable trail standards. If such a corridor is determined appropriate it is intended that a connection on state land be provided that connects the segment in the borough with and through state land in the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit. If this route is developed by the borough, it should be connected with the proposed motorized corridor beginning on Schrock Road and the Wet Gulch Trail in the Bald Mountain / Hillside management unit. If established, management of the corridor within borough land is to be the responsibility of the borough. Sections of the corridor that are located on state land will be the responsibility of DMLW or DPOR.
- Improve signage on all designated trails and parking areas.



Hatcher Pass Management Plan

Map 3-11

Government Peak Unit

Land Status, Recreation, and
Facility Recommendations

- Plan Boundary
- Government Peak Unit
- Other Plan Management Units
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Non-Motorized (Year)
- Non-Motorized (Summer)
- Southern Development Area
- Northern Development Area
- Matsu Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Trails - Snow Machine
- Motorized Winter Corridor - New
- Trails - Non-Motorized
- Ski Runs
- Government Peak Trail
- Government Peak Nordic Trails
- Roads
- Parking Area - Existing
- Parking and Restrooms - Existing
- Parking Area - New
- Parking and Restrooms - New
- Parking and Trail Head - New

* General State Land Is Clear Topography
 * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
 * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
 * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
 * Special Use Area Applies To State and Borough Land Only



Alaska

Department of Natural Resources
 Division of Mining, Land & Water
 Resource Assessment & Development Section
 Boundaries and Information
 Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
 and is intended to be used only as a guide.
 Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N

ADMINISTRATIVELY AND LEGISLATIVELY DESIGNATED AREAS

Background

The vast majority of state land within the planning area is what is termed general domain land, which can be thought of as typical state land. It is that state land administered under AS 38 (Natural Resources) for multiple uses (purposes) and includes the Generally Allowed Uses under 11 AAC 96.020. The other form of land within the planning area is that which is either administratively or legislatively withdrawn from general domain land for a special purpose'.²⁴ Special purpose land is state land that is intended for a particular purpose, usually as a state park, state game refuge, public use area, state recreation area, or state recreation site. As such, these areas must be administered differently than other state land within the planning area. These special purpose sites can be grouped into those legislatively designated and those that have been administratively designated. In all cases these areas *must be administered differently than general domain land and are to be managed for the purposes that are given either in statute or an administrative decision*, and as further described below:

Legislatively Designated

- Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (PUA). This PUA is controlled by AS 41.23.130 and is to be administered consistent with the purposes of that legislation, which broadly focus on recreation and habitat protection. The general requirement is that the PUA be managed to be consistent “with their primary function as public use land.” DNR interprets this broadly in the sense that a variety of uses may be allowed within the PUA if they do not interfere with public recreation or degrade habitat resources. (PUAs are also subject to the other requirements of AS 38.) AS 41.23.110 also provides for the development of a management plan by DNR. The 2010 Management Plan is adopted as this management plan. Thus, uses appropriate within the PUA area are those that are specified in this plan.
- Willow Mountain Critical Habitat Area (CHA). The Willow Mountain CHA is controlled by AS 16.20.500-530, which is the general authority for CHAs, and more specifically, by 5 AAC 95.420, which lists the activities that require a permit. The latter precludes certain activities from occurring within a CHA unless a permit is issued by ADF&G Division of Habitat. ADF&G has routinely issued a special area permit to the general public, which authorizes certain types of off road use in the CHA. ADF&G is to manage the CHA consistent with the management intent for the

²⁴ Both general domain land and special purpose land are described at length in Chapter 1 in the section ‘Land Ownership and Land Status’ (pp. 2-3).

Willow Mountain management unit in the October 1986 Management Plan unless a management plan prepared by ADF&G is prepared and adopted. ADF&G intends to develop such a plan and, once adopted, this plan will control those uses that are listed in 5 AAC 95.400. The requirement to be consistent with the 1986 Management Plan is then voided.

Administratively Designated

- The Summit Lake State Recreation Site is administered by DPOR under an ILMA (ADL 223584) with DMLW. Uses allowed in the SRS are those allowed under AS 38 except that summer motorized use is prohibited under 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3). DPOR exercises its general authorities (11 AAC 12) in this area.
- The Independence Mine State Historical Park is administered under an ILMA (ADL 223571) with DMLW. Uses allowed in this area are strictly controlled, with DPOR exercising its authorities under 11 AAC 12. This area is closed to off-road motorized use on a year-round basis under 11 AAC 96.014(B).²⁵

²⁵ Note: The citation reference may change with the adoption on revised regulations.

Chapter 4: Implementation

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Chapter 4: Implementation

Background

This chapter outlines the actions necessary to implement the land use policies and planned actions described by this plan. These actions include changes to administrative procedures, land use classifications and a land classification order, and the designation of certain areas for inclusion in the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area. A number of facility improvements related to campgrounds, trail heads, road improvements (pull outs and parking), and sanitation facilities have been proposed. Also included are recommendations on the leasing of state land, the issuance of state authorizations in areas affected by the plan, mineral orders, and the types of plan changes that are to be used in the modification of the 2010 Management Plan. Whenever possible, the responsibility for plan implementation is identified.

The life of the management plan is 20 years, and it is not expected that all of these recommendations will be carried out immediately or even within the next five years. Those that are related to land use classifications and mineral orders, the leasing of state land, the issuance of authorizations, and changes to administrative procedures are likely to occur fairly quickly and will be implemented either through the adoption of this plan (since they accompany this document), or carried out as a matter of practice by the Department in the course of issuing authorizations and leases. Others, however, will take a considerable amount of time to implement and some, because of funding constraints or the absence of enacting legislation, may never be implemented. In particular, the legislative designation (to add the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna and Mile 16 management units to the Hatcher Pass PUA) will only occur with that body's action to include this area within the legal description of the PUA. Moreover, the structure and facility recommendations are wholly dependent on funding.

And yet, even though some of the recommendations may not be implemented, it is important to identify the full range of improvements and actions that will be necessary to fully develop and managed the Hatcher Pass management area in order for it to function as one of the prime recreation areas for South-central Alaska. Without a plan, or guide, for implementation it is unlikely that the management of this unique area will take place in the systematic manner that needs to occur.

Administrative/Regulatory

Several administrative and regulatory changes are needed to implement portions of the plan:

- Revise the Management Agreement between the state and the borough for the Government Peak unit. This agreement sets out the responsibilities of DMLW and DPOR within DNR and that of the borough. Generally, it assigns responsibility for the management of recreation activity to DPOR, the management of actions on borough land to the borough, and to DMLW for all land use authorizations not including recreation. The Management Agreement should be revised to reflect the management recommendations of this plan, reference the revised management units, and describe the division of responsibilities for the management of all state and borough land that is intended for recreation use on the East Side.
- Revise DMLW - DPOR Management Agreement. DMLW and DPOR should review and revise the management agreement that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the two divisions within the planning area. Changes will need to be made, at the minimum, to conform to the recommendations of the 2010 Management Plan and reference the revised management units.
- Revise the Development Lease between the borough and DMLW. This agreement is a development lease that, in essence, transfers the powers of the leaser (the state) to the borough (leasee). It was written at the time that the state owned the land on which the borough's Alpine ski facility is to be developed. Since that time, over 3,000 acres of land has been conveyed to the borough within the Government Peak management unit and the state is no longer the responsible entity for resort development. The Development Lease should be revised subsequent to the adoption of the 2010 HPMP *and* the approval by the borough of a special land use designation and/or development plan for the Northern Area within the Government Peak management unit.
- Revise 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3). This section of administrative code assigns non-motorized areas within the Hatcher Pass management area. The current regulations, found in this portion of the Administrative Code, must be revised to reflect the spatial pattern of the non-motorized recommendations that are to be implemented through this plan, and that are depicted on Map 2-5. Portions of the current regulatory text would also have to be amended, to include restrictions on weapons discharge and camping; these restrictions are now included in 11 AAC 20.770-765 (Park regulations) but are more appropriately included under 11 AAC 96 (Generally Allowed Uses on state land.) Appendix D represents those changes that would have to be made to implement plan recommendations.¹

¹ Appendix D represents draft regulations which reflect the final recommendations included in the 2010 plan, which differ from the PRD. Regulations must go through a separate adoption process and the final regulations may be different than those included in Appendix D. The regulation adoption process for the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area began in October, 2011. Consult the PRD to review the initial recommendations.

- Special Land Use Designation (ADL 223585). This special use designation provides the basis for the regulations adopted in 2002 in 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3). It also provides establishes a permit system to authorize certain motorized uses that would otherwise be prohibited in non-motorized areas, and it establishes specific stipulations designed to manage winter commercial activities. Finally, it establishes the basis for the closure of the many parts of the East Side to summer motorized use. Since the development of this SUD, however, regulations have been developed to control generally allowed uses, and these are the types of uses that are identified in the SUD. Regulations to control winter and summer motorized uses on the East Side have been adopted and are codified as 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3).

From a strict technical standpoint there is no need to revise the SUD. Although aspects of the SUD are difficult to understand and use, the policies and requirements in it are fairly straightforward and clear and do not need to be changed. The changes that are recommended to the spatial non-motorized areas in this plan affect generally allowed uses and these are now controlled under administrative regulation rather than through the SUD, which was previously the case. DNR adjudicators should be aware of the spatial boundary changes to non-motorized areas that are recommended in the plan and that, when adopted, the proposed regulations will control over the requirements of the SUD as related to generally allowed uses. Other parts of the SUD remain valid and are to be applied in adjudicatory decisions.

Leasing of State Land

The leasing of state land may be appropriate but must conform to the use requirements of Tables 2-1 and 3-1. Leases are not to be issued for those activities identified in that table as not allowed unless a plan amendment authorizes the use. Leases may be issued for uses that are identified in that table as allowed or conditionally allowed if the requirements for such uses are met, most especially that the use not conflict with permitted uses and that it be consistent with the management intent for the individual management unit in which it is located. Leases should not be issued for periods greater than 20 years.

Additions to Hatcher Pass Public Use Area

The Reed Lakes complex and the Mile 16 management unit is recommended as an addition to the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area. The Reed Lakes complex is extremely scenic, but fragile and requires the protection of inclusion in the PUA. This area was recommended for inclusion in a proposed legislatively designated area (which ultimately ended up as the

Hatcher Pass PUA) and the reasons for its inclusion remain valid. The inclusion of the Mile 16 management unit is also recommended given the high level of recreational use that occurs in this unit and the scenic resources it provides.²

Authorizations Issued by the Borough and DNR

Authorizations issued by the borough or DNR are to conform to the requirements of this plan and, specifically, the requirements of Table 2-1, which apply on an areawide basis, and Table 3-1, which pertains to the Government Peak unit. Both contain a listing of allowed, conditionally allowed, and not allowed uses. Authorizations shall also be consistent with any additional requirements identified in the individual management unit descriptions and with the requirements of the land control system that may be ultimately implemented by the borough within the Government Peak unit, assuming the latter is implemented.

Area Plan

The Hatcher Pass Management Plan has been developed to function as the area plan for the planning area encompassed by this plan. The 2010 Management Plan is adopted as an area plan under the authority of AS 38.04.065(b). (See Adoption Letter at beginning of plan.) This plan supersedes both the 1986 Management Plan and the 1989 Plan Amendment. The planning objectives described in AS 38.04.065(b) have been considered in this revision and are considered to have been met.

Additionally, the 2010 Management Plan, which is intended to be adopted by the borough as an element of their comprehensive plan, is to serve as the basis for land management within borough owned land in the Government Peak unit.

Plan Designations, Land Classifications and Land Classification Order

The designations used in this plan must be converted to state land use classifications under AS 38.05.300. The equivalency of designations to land use classifications is indicated below in Tables 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3:

² During the public review process, concern was expressed over the effect of this action on mineral development. There should be no such impact. The areas proposed for inclusion are now closed to mineral entry: MCO 496 closes the Reed Lakes area and MCO 499 closes the small part of the Mile 16 unit that is not included in the Public Use Area.

Table 4-1: Plan Designation and Land Use Classification Conversion

Plan Designation	Land Use Classification
Habitat	Wildlife Habitat Land
Mineral	Mineral Land
Public Recreation, Developed	Public Recreation Land
Public Recreation, Dispersed	Public Recreation Land

Table 4-2: Acreage Associated with Land Classification

Land Use Classifications	Acres
Public Recreation Land	59,523
Public Recreation/Mineral Land	23,649
Public Recreation/Wildlife Habitat Land	211,747
TOTAL ACREAGE	294,919

Table 4-3: Management Unit Land Designations and Classification Conversion

Management Unit	Plan Acreage (Approximate)	State Acreage (Approximate)	Designation
Kashwitna River Drainage	65,164	65,164	Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat Land
Willow Mountain	124,940	State: 124,812 Borough: 98	Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat Land
High Glacier Peaks	22,875	22,875	Public Recreation-Dispersed <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation Land
Craigie Creek	10,061	8,717	Public Recreation – Dispersed and Minerals <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Mineral Land
Bald Mountain / Hillside	29,220	22,088	Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat Land
		6,545	Public Recreation-Dispersed and Minerals <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Mineral Land
Independence	2,811	2,159	Public Recreation – Dispersed and Minerals <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Mineral Land
Archangel	6,943	6,321	Public Recreation – Dispersed and Minerals <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation and Mineral Land

Management Unit	Plan Acreage (Approximate)	State Acreage (Approximate)	Designation
Reed Lakes / Little Susitna	30,529	30,508	Public Recreation – Dispersed <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation Land
Mile 16	718	689	Public Recreation – Concentrated <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation Land
Government Peak	8,045	State: 4,773 Borough: 3,272	Public Recreation – Dispersed and Developed <i>Converts to:</i> Public Recreation Land
Total: (Approximate)	301,301	294,652	

**Note: Refer to plan text and maps for clarification for each management unit land designation.
This table reflects approximate numbers only.*

Land Classification Order

State land is classified under the authority of AS 38.04.005, AS 38.05.300 and 11 AAC 55.010-.280, with the plan designations assigned to individual management units forming the basis for the land classifications. Generally, state land is classified consistent with the management intent for the specific unit. In this plan, the classification of Public Recreation Land dominates, reflecting the recreation orientation of this plan. Typically, only one classification is used to reflect the predominant land management orientation, although co-classifications are sometimes used when the management intent for a management unit focuses equally on two types of uses. The co-classification of Public Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land is used in both the Willow Mountain and Bald Mountain / Hillside management units, reflecting the concentration of moose during certain times of the year. A co-classification of Public Recreation Land and Minerals Land is used for the Independence and Craigie Creek management units and a portion of the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit, to reflect the public recreation orientation and the historical mining that has taken place in these units.

Land Classification Order SC-09-003 classifies all state land within the plan management area. See Appendix B. This classification order supersedes and replaces all previous classifications and classification orders affecting the planning area. It does not affect current special use designations, however.

See also the section ‘Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps’, following. This section describes how lands inadvertently omitted in the management plan or acquired by the state subsequent to this revision are to be treated in terms of plan designation, plan classification, and retention.

The acreages classified in this classification order are specified by classification categories in the previous table.

Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps

This section deals with those lands that are not designated in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan (HPMP) or classified in the Land Classification Order. Such lands include those state lands inadvertently omitted in the HPMP and those lands that may be acquired by the state in the future but not designated or classified in the management plan. The state has acquired and will continue to acquire isolated parcels of land through foreclosure, escheat, and other methods. The purpose of this section is to give direction to the designation of these lands by the Department when future issues of parcel classification and management arise. Parcels of state land that are affected by this section are to be considered as classified under Land Classification Order SC-09-003.

The following guidelines of plan designation/classification and potential disposal out of state ownership are to apply:

- **Parcels near other State Land.** If the parcel adjoins or is surrounded by other state land, the designation of that area(s) applies and are classified consistent with the designation given to that area by the management plan. This land is to be managed according to the management intent and guidelines applicable to the adjacent lands.
- **Newly Acquired State Lands.** Lands that were acquired proactively through exchange, purchase, or other methods will be managed and classified consistent with the purposes for which they were acquired and are classified consistent with the plan designation for the management unit.
- **Other Lands.** If the designation/classification of a parcel of acquired or omitted state land cannot be adequately determined, the parcel is to be Public Recreation Land.

Survivor Designations and Classifications

This revision of the HPMP replaces and supersedes all previous plan designation and land classifications (termed ‘survivor’) that affect the planning area.

Mineral Orders

Large portions of the mineral estate are now closed to mineral entry under AS 38.05.185. This includes all of the land within the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area, the area of the Independence Mine, and the area of the current (2009) Development Lease, which occupies large parts of the Government Peak management unit. This section of statute requires the Commissioner of DNR to determine that mineral entry and location is incompatible with significant surface uses in order to close state-owned lands to mineral entry.

This plan retains all existing mineral closing orders, and does not recommend additional mineral closing orders or leasehold location orders affecting large areas, such as occurred in the past. Few conflicts should exist between mining and sensitive surface uses given the location of the mineral deposits and other resources and the basis for mineral closure does not apply (AS 38.05.300). A single closure order (MO 1107) is recommended which affects two small areas totaling 585 acres in the Independence and Archangel units. See Appendix C.

Adoption of HPMP as Management Plan for Hatcher Pass Public Use Area

AS 41.23.110 requires the DNR Commissioner to adopt a management plan for the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area in consultation with local governments and affected state agencies. The management plan that is adopted under this authority is to be consistent with the purposes of the PUA identified in AS 41.23.100.

The 2010 Management Plan is to function as the management plan intended to be prepared specifically for the Public Use Area and is intended to meet the requirements of AS 41.23.120 (Incompatible Uses) specifically. The issues that this plan dealt with in the plan revision process would be similar to those addressed in a plan of smaller scope and the solutions that have been developed for the larger area covered in this plan are appropriate for implementation as part of a smaller management plan for the PUA. Arguably, a suitable management direction for the Hatcher Pass PUA Management Plan could not be developed except through a more comprehensive and inclusive planning process such as conducted in this revision. Uses identified in Tables 2-1 and 3-1 as ‘not allowed’ and as prohibited in 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3) are determined to be incompatible uses under the meaning of AS 41.23.120. The time period consideration under AS 41.23.120 (f)(3) coincides with the planning period of the 2010 Plan.

Facility Recommendations

The types of facility recommendations that are recommended by this plan reflect the need to correct current deficiencies and a need to anticipate and provide for additional recreation use. Increased recreation use is expected in both the winter and summer and is expected to be particularly great within the East Side since that area has more direct access to the major areas of population in the Valley and the Municipality of Anchorage. At the same time, increased use is expected in the West Side as well. Increased pressure is expected from the nearby population in the Wasilla area, particularly at the Shrock Road access, and throughout the West Side as a result of spill-over of activities from the East Side and increasing population growth along the Parks Highway.

Broadly speaking, there are three general types of facility improvements: those associated with the Hatcher Pass Road proper west of the Independence Mine, facilities co-located with the improvement of that road (especially on the West Side), and facilities more remotely located that are intended to serve a particular recreation activity. Only facilities and structures on state land are recommended³.

Table 4-4 indicates these improvements according to this categorization. They reflect the facility recommendations identified for specific management units. All such facilities are subject to funding availability and, in the case of the Hatcher Pass road improvements, to the final design of that road approved by ADOT/PF and the federal Department of Transportation. *It is not expected that all of these facility recommendations will be implemented because of funding constraints; they are recommended in this management plan as improvements that are appropriate with this area since they contribute to improved use and user satisfaction.*

The projects that are identified in Table 4-4 are also depicted in the ten management unit maps.

Agency Responsibilities for Implementation

Department of Natural Resources:

Division of Mining, Land, and Water

- **Adjudication of Land Use Applications.** DMLW will adjudicate the pending and future applications for communication sites, material sales, and recreational development, as well as all other uses requiring authorization by DNR, based on this plan's management intent for specific district subunits, areawide policies, and management guidelines and consistent with the uses identified in Tables 2-1 and 3-1 and with any specific use recommendations in particular management units.
- **Alpine and Nordic Ski Areas in Government Peak Management Unit.** DMLW will support the Borough in its development of Alpine and Nordic ski complexes in the Government Peak management unit, assuming that these uses are authorized by the borough. This may include special implementation measures that carry out recommendations derived from Borough land use and environmental analyses.
- **Coordination with DPOR.** DMLW will coordinate with DPOR in the implementation of this plan, particularly as it relates to areas affected by the Management Agreement between the Borough, DPOR, and DMLW. See also the recommendation on revision to the Management Agreement, described below.

³ Or to be financed by the state.

- Coordination with ADF&G. DMLW will coordinate with ADF&G in assessing recreational development impacts to fish and wildlife and in minimizing and mitigating these impacts, and will coordinate with ADF&G on grazing and moose browse enhancement projects prior to initiation. Land for wildlife habitat enhancement sites may be assigned if recommended by ADF&G and if consistent with the management intent for the subunit.
- Revise DNR-Borough Development Lease. The Borough, in conjunction with DMLW and DPOR, should revise the attachments to the Development Lease (ADL 225965) that govern the area affected by the lease and the development requirements for a ski resort. The timing of this revision should coincide with the approval of a master development plan or special land use designation by the Borough Assembly.
- Revise DNR-Borough Management Agreement. DMLW, with DPOR and the Borough, will revise the management agreement that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the various parties as it pertains to the management of the planning area subsequent to the adoption of a revised management plan. The responsibilities of DMLW as they relate to the permitting of state activities and development authorizations will need, at a minimum, to be changed in order to conform to the 2010 Management Plan.
- Revise Regulations Affecting Generally Allowed Uses. The recommendations of this plan pertaining to changes to generally allowed uses in the Hatcher Pass management area (11 AAC 96.014) are to be revised and, if determined appropriate in further public review, implemented. These changes reallocate winter motorized and non-motorized areas for the East Side, consistent with the patterns depicted in Map 2-3 and as described in Appendix D.

Division of Forestry

- Timber sales. DOF will ensure that all future timber harvests, including access roads, are consistent with the requirements for forest harvest and forest management practices identified in the HPMP areawide policies. Timber sales for the purpose of providing recreational access, timber salvage, and forest health are considered appropriate within the planning area. A systematic commercial sale program is not appropriate.
- Coordination with ADF&G. DOF will consult with ADF&G prior to any forestry projects to ensure habitat is not being lost or degraded.

Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

- Review of Proposed ADF&G and DOF Actions. Review ADF&G habitat enhancement proposals and proposed DOF timber harvests to identify effects on scenic values and recreational use. Recommend mitigation measures, if necessary.

- Review Mining Plans of Operations and APMA. Review mining plans of operation and Annual Placer Mining Applications for the location of public access, relocation of trails (if necessary), and maintenance of scenic values.
- Review Trail Design and Development. Coordinate with DMLW, Borough, and the private sector (Government Peak management unit) in the design and development of trails (winter and summer).
- Monitoring of Conditions. Monitor public use, preferences, and conflicts to provide a basis for future adjustments to the recreational and public facilities within the Management Plan.
- Public Safety. Coordinate with the Borough, State Troopers, DMLW, and the private sector in the improvement of search and rescue capability and other public safety considerations.

Office of History and Archaeology

- The Alaska Historic Preservation Act requires that OHA is to review all state agency funded or state permitted projects that have potential to disturb or otherwise adversely affect historic, prehistoric, or archaeological resources in the state. (AS 41.35.070 and AS 41.35.080).
- Special consideration should be given to those projects that are extractive in nature or will result in ground destruction such as gravel pits, road development, establishment of parking facilities, buildings, utility installation, industrial and commercial development, and large scale mining operations.
- OHA is to be consulted on all projects, construction, and proposed improvements related to the Independence Mine State Historical Park.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game:

- Project Reviews. Provide review functions, to include the review of mining plans of operation, Annual Placer Mining Applications, access applications for mining and forestry access and recreational trails, gravel extraction, and plans for recreational development.
- Moose Browse Enhancement. Assess the forest types and moose productivity to determine areas where enhancement is appropriate. If requested by DNR, prepare an enhancement plan in cooperation with DNR.
- Nesting Tundra Birds. Identify extent and importance of nesting concentrations of tundra birds on Bald Mountain Ridge and other areas. Identify mitigation measures, especially those related to recreational activity.

Matanuska-Susitna Borough:

- Government Peak Management Unit Development. The borough is to be responsible for Nordic facility development and, if authorized, for alpine ski development. The borough is also to be responsible for the management of those activities that are directly related to these use types. Because any significant recreational development in this management unit will entail the use of state land, the Borough and state will need to closely coordinate land use and resource authorizations.

Plan Modification

The Hatcher Pass Management Plan is adopted under AS 38.04.065(b) as a management plan under the meaning of a ‘land use plan’ as it is described in this section of statute.

Modifications to plans, to reflect changing conditions or new information, can be expected at various times during the planning period and the kinds of changes allowed in 11 AAC 55.030 are:

“A revision to a land use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a ‘revision’ is an amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:

Plan Amendment. An ‘amendment’ permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying the basic management intent for one or more of the plan’s subunits or by changing its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. For example, an amendment might close to new mineral entry an area that the plan designated to be open, allow a land use in an area where the plan prohibited it, or allow land to be opened to homestead entry in an area that the plan designated for retention in public ownership.

Special Exception. A ‘special exception’ does not permanently change the provisions of a land use plan and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan’s provisions, without changing the plan’s general management intent or guidelines. For example, a special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan would be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the exception.

Minor Change. A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A ‘minor change’ is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections.”

Table 4-4: Facility Recommendations on State Land

Recommendation	Comment	Agency Responsibility
Hatcher Pass Road (HPR)		
Pave and Recondition HPR between Miles 18-25.	Repavement and reconditioning of this road should be to rural road standards, with special emphasis on scenic pullouts.	ADOT/PF
Related Hatcher Pass Road Projects		
M 11.6: Develop new parking lot.	Needed to relieve pressure on other parking lots. Should be phased after the Archangel parking lot improvement.	DPOR
M 12: Improve and expand existing parking area (west side).	Needed to accommodate skiers using Mile 16 management unit. Note: This facility should only be developed if the Alpine ski complex is not developed. Continued use of this area should not occur if there is a viable alternative.	ADOT/PF
M 14: Develop parking lot and trailhead at Archangel Road.	Needed to accommodate increasing demand. Intended for multi-users.	DPOR
M 14.9: Develop drop zone for paradise ski run.	Needed to facilitate skier drop offs and vehicle turn around areas to alleviate congestion.	DPOR
M 15.7: Expand existing Mile 16 parking lot.	Needed to accommodate increasing demand. Intended for multi-users.	DPOR
M 16.4: Expand existing Fishhook parking lot.	Needed to accommodate increasing demand. Intended for multi-users.	DPOR
M 16: Expand existing Fishhook parking lot.	Needed to accommodate increasing demand. Intended for multi-users.	DPOR
M 17.5: Provide an additional parking area below the M 17.5 gate.	Further expansion of current parking lot may be constrained by available space. This location would provide some additional space.	DPOR
M 17.6: Develop paved pullouts.	Pull-outs to be developed with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
M 18.2: Develop paved pullouts.	Pull-outs to be developed with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
M 18.9: Upgrade scenic lookout parking area.	Scenic lookout to be developed with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
M 19.1: Upgrade scenic lookout parking area.	Scenic lookouts to be developed with road upgrade. April bowl Trailhead should be upgraded.	ADOT/PF
M 19.5: Upgrade scenic lookout parking area.	Scenic lookouts to be developed with road upgrade. Summit Lake SRS area should be upgraded.	ADOT/PF
M 19.7: Develop paved pullout.	Pullout to be developed with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
M 20.5: Upgrade existing pullout.	To be upgraded with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
M 20.9: Upgrade existing pullout.	To be upgraded with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
M 21.7: Develop paved pullouts and waste material areas.	To be upgraded with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF

Recommendation	Comment	Agency Responsibility
M 23.5: Develop pullout and trailhead.	Facilities are associated with trail development on Craigie Creek Road.	ADOT/PF
M 24.7: Develop pullout and trailhead.	Facilities are associated with trail development to lakes at terminus of Shorty Creek.	Pullout: ADOT/PF Trailhead: DPOR
M 26: Develop paved pullout and trailhead.	Facilities are associated with trail development at Grubstake Gulch.	Pullout: ADOT/PF Trailhead: DPOR
M 29: Develop small campground.	Develop small campground (10-15 spaces) adjacent to Willow Creek.	DPOR
M 29.5: Develop paved pullout and trailhead.	Facilities are to support the Peters-Purchase Creek Trail.	DPOR
M 34.4: Develop large parking lot to accommodate winter recreation use.	This facility is intended to provide the principal parking facility to/for the West Side. Note: Not part of planning area.	DPOR
Projects Related to Recreation		
Develop a Trail Plan.	A recreational trail plan should be developed.	DPOR/DNR
Projects Related to Management Units		
Archangel		
Replace Archangel Creek Bridge.	This bridge is in poor condition and needs to be upgraded to safely accommodate motorized vehicles.	ADOT/DPOR
Upgrade Reed Lakes parking lot.	Facility is currently extensively used and needs upgrade. Need to provide sanitation and upgrade signage.	DPOR
Develop parking lot at Archangel and Hatcher Pass Road Intersection.	To be developed with road upgrade.	ADOT/PF
Improve existing road to Fern Mine.	Sections of this road need to be improved. Develop to accommodate ORVs.	DPOR
Develop parking area with sanitation facilities at Archangel Road terminus and Fern Mine.	This area is being used for parking by the general public now.	DPOR
See also road improvements.		
Reed Lakes / Little Susitna		
Improve Reed Lakes trail.	Sections of this trail need to be upgraded, including that section that accesses mine.	DPOR
Develop Reed Creek trail.	Construct new trail from the Gold Mint TH to the Reed Lakes parking lot, accessing into the Reed Lakes trail. Generally to follow the east side of the creek.	DPOR

Recommendation	Comment	Agency Responsibility
Upgrade backcountry trail through the High Glacier Peaks area to tie into Reed Lakes trail.	Upgrade existing route.	DPOR or NGO
Develop walk-in camp sites at Gold Mint Trail Head.	Improve “Honeymoon Meadows” campsite and surrounding area.	DPOR
Develop a snowmachine corridor east of the Archangel Road.	This corridor would be used by motorized recreationists in the winter. The corridor would extend from the Gold Mint Parking Lot to the intersection of the Archangel and Fern Mine Road. It is intended to provide snowmachine access into the Good Hope Valley.	DPOR
Government Peak		
Establish Nordic ski complex.	Project is intended to provide readily accessible Nordic ski facilities. May replace Archangel Road tracks that are used during first part of winter.	Borough
Establish an Alpine ski facility.	Project is intended to provide readily accessible Alpine ski facilities to the Valley and Eagle River/Chugiak in Anchorage. Requires authorization from borough.	Borough
If determined to be appropriate in a borough planning process, establish an east-west multi-use corridor south of Nordic ski complex.	Corridor is intended to provide access from trailhead within/near the Nordic ski facility to areas of state land to the west of this management unit.	Borough
Develop summer hiking trail connecting Government Peak to Hatch Peak, if determined to be feasible/necessary.	Feasibility and need for this trail need to be ascertained prior to commitment to construction.	DPOR
Signage at Gateway Bridge.	Install a Management Area Class A sign at Gateway Bridge.	DPOR
Mile 16		
Develop a non-motorized winter trail connecting the Mile 16 pull-out to the top of the Paradise Ski Run.	The trail would parallel the roadway on its south side and would provide numerous run options across the unit and effectively disperse use across a larger area. The primary goal of this would be to mitigate the current safety hazards of vehicles stopping in avalanche zones and obstructing traffic, but would also create more recreational opportunities throughout the area.	DPOR
Develop Bicycle Trail Plan.	This trail plan would develop mountain biking trails to sustainable standards with potential jumps, ramps, rails, etc. Currently, these trails and unauthorized structures are being developed and constructed by the public and are not built safely.	DPOR

Recommendation	Comment	Agency Responsibility
Regulatory Change Recommendation.	Formally designate the major ski runs through the area as closed to hunting. Small game hunters (winter) currently utilize the Mile 12 as a staging area for hunting, often discharging weapons along trails being used by skiers and boarders. Because of the high density recreation occurring, firearm discharge should be disallowed for public safety reasons.	DPOR
Bald Mountain / Hillside		
Construct parking lot near Schrock Road.	Intended to function as a major gateway into the southern and southeastern part of the management area. Intended to support winter snowmachine use.	DNR
Improve Wet Gulch Trail (RST 1710) to sustainable standards for motorized recreational use by ATVs and ORVs.	Trail should be used to provide a motorized access corridor into the southern boundary of the Hatcher Pass planning area. Access should begin at the terminus of Schrock Road. This route will also serve as a southern access point for motorized recreationists into the planning area.	DNR / DPOR
Develop summer hiking/ATV trail along Grubstake Gulch drainage, generally to follow existing trail system.	ATV trail would use existing routes, but need to be upgraded to minimize natural degradation. Hiking route would access area to east, to Summit Lake.	DNR
Develop summer hiking trail along Wet Gulch.	Hiking route utilizes existing routes but would need to be upgraded.	DNR
Develop a winter motorized corridor in the southern part of the management unit.	If the borough determines that an east-west winter motorized corridor through borough land in the Government Peak unit is appropriate, the state should develop a winter motorized corridor, generally following the alignment shown on the plan map for the Bald Mountain / Hillside unit, on state land that connects with a similar facility on borough land.	DNR/Borough
See also recommendations for Hatcher Pass Road.	Parking lots and facilities recommended for this unit are included in the Hatcher Pass Road section of this table.	
Craigie Creek		
Establish hiking trail to access high peaks at end of current road.	Upgrades current trail to lakes.	DNR
Establish Craigie Creek Road as ATV route.	Requires designation as ATV route, signage at trailhead.	DNR
See also recommendations for Hatcher Pass Road.	Parking lots and facilities recommended for this unit are included in the Hatcher Pass Road section of this table.	

Recommendation	Comment	Agency Responsibility
Willow Mountain		
Develop summer hiking/ATV trails along existing snow machine routes where feasible.	Develop sustainable trails to provide better access for the public to utilize in the summer in an effort to decrease the amount of damage that is accruing on the alpine tundra due to foot travel and ATV/ORV use in the summer. Popular trails include: Blacks Ridge, Willow Mountain, Peters Creek, and Purchase Creek.	DNR
Public Use Cabins.	This unit is very popular for motorized recreational use, especially in the winter. Snowmachine trails extend far north. Public Use Cabins should be established for emergency shelter.	DNR
See also recommendations for Hatcher Pass Road.	Parking lots and facilities recommended for this unit are included in the Hatcher Pass Road section of this table.	
Independence		
Develop a separate management and historic preservation plan for the Independence Mine State Historical Park.	A detailed management plan is necessary to guide the use and further development of the IMSHP. This management plan does not/cannot provide sufficient detail for this purpose.	DPOR
Repair and upgrade Mill Trail and rehabilitate social trails on tundra.		DPOR
Establish new trail from Rae-Wallace Bowl to Sydney Creek and Reed Lakes.	New trail is intended to provide overall trail connectivity.	DPOR
Provide pedestrian access from Independence Bowl parking lot to the Summit Road gate area.	Trail would provide access to the Summit Road (a well used area during the summer) and to Fishhook Creek.	DPOR
Provide a small group use/special event area for summer use near the Fishhook parking lot.	There is a need for a small group/special event area that is near to the Independence Bowl but is separate from the existing parking lot.	DPOR
Expand the existing facilities at the Independence Bowl parking lot, including sanitation facilities.	The current facility is not considered sufficiently large to accommodate expected use in the future.	DPOR
Connect IMSHP to electrical energy source, grid or hydro if available.	The IMSHP should be connected to an electrical grid system or alternative energy source, such as hydro-electric for sustained electricity power. Connection to an electrical grid or system will allow for the expansion of the facilities and the park for year-round use.	DPOR
Open IMSHP for year round use.	Additional staff and utilities will be needed to operate the IMSHP on a year-round basis.	DPOR
Upgrade water tunnels for safety and promote underground tours.		DPOR

Chapter 4: Implementation

Recommendation	Comment	Agency Responsibility
Develop interpretive signs throughout the IMSHP.	Develop signage to be used throughout the IMSHP, including water and underground tunnels.	DPOR
Establish summer bicycle trail system from IMSHP to Mile 12.	Create bicycle trail system through terrain connecting Independence and Mile 16 Units.	DPOR
See also recommendations for Hatcher Pass Road.		

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Appendix A

Glossary

AAC. Alaska Administrative Code

Access. A way or means of approach. Includes transportation, trail, easements, rights of way, and public use sites.

ACMP. Alaska Coastal Management Plan

ADF&G. Alaska Department of Fish and Game

ADOT/PF. Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Anadromous waters. A river, lake or stream from its mouth to its uppermost reach including all sloughs and backwaters adjoining the listed water, and that portion of the streambed or lakebed covered by ordinary high water used by salmon to spawn. Anadromous waters are shown in “The Atlas to the Catalog of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes” (referred to as the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC)) compiled by ADF&G and DNR.

Area Plan. A plan approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources under the authority of AS 38.04.065 that establishes the land and resource management policies for state land within a planning area. Such plans also assign land use designations to individual parcels of state land, which are subsequently converted to land use classifications in a Land Classification Order. When used in this plan, the term ‘Area Plan’ refers to the Southeast Susitna Area Plan.

Authorization. As applied in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan, authorization refers to those decisions made by DNR that involve the disposal of state land or an interest in state land. This also includes the issuance of rights-of-way authorizations that are functionally irrevocable. It does not include land use permits or authorizations related to mining, where authorization occurs through different processes.

AS. Alaska Statutes

Authorized Use. A use allowed by DNR by permit or lease.

Borough. Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Buffer. An area of land between two activities or resources managed and used to reduce the effect of one activity upon another.

Classification. Land classification identifies the purposes for which state land will be managed. All classification categories are for multiple use, although a particular use may be considered primary. Land may be given a total of three classifications in combination.

Classification Order. *See Land Classification Order.*

Closed to mineral entry. Areas where the staking of new mineral claims is prohibited because mining has been determined to be in conflict with significant surface uses in the area. Existing mineral claims that are valid at the time of plan adoption are not affected by mineral closures.

Commissioner. The Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

Conditionally Allowed. Conditionally Allowed means that a use may be allowed in a DNR adjudicatory decision if the use is consistent with the management intent of the unit in which it occurs and is otherwise consistent with state and DNR requirements for such uses.

Co-Designated Use. *See 'Designated Use'.* Co-designated uses are uses of equal value within a specific management unit. Most of the management units in the 2010 Plan utilize co-designations, recognizing that there are several uses of generally equal value in a given geographic area, each of which must be protected and maintained in department management actions.

DEC. Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Department. Alaska Department of Natural Resources or DNR

Designated use. An allowed use of major importance in a particular management unit. Activities in the unit will be managed to encourage, develop, or protect this use. Where a unit has two or more designated uses, the management intent statement and guidelines for the unit; the Chapter 2 guidelines; and existing statutes, regulations, and procedures, will direct how resources are managed to avoid or minimize conflicts between designated uses.

Designation. *See Land Use Designation.*

Developed Facility. A 'developed facility' include a campground, picnic area, visitor information center, trailhead, parking area, and developed ski area (whether Nordic or Alpine), and similar facilities, as generally defined in 11 AAC 21.990(6).

Developed Trail. A linear route managed for human-powered, stock, or Off-Road Vehicles forms of transportation or for historic or heritage values. Characteristically, such routes are used frequently, are situated within designated areas, and have been developed and/or maintained by a governmental or not-for-profit entity. A ‘developed trail’ is neither a primitive or social trail.

Director. The division director of the state division responsible for managing state land. Most often, director refers to the Director of the Division of Mining, Land and Water; for lands administered by DPOR, director refers to the Director of DPOR.

Dispersed recreation. Recreational pursuits that are not site specific in nature, such as hunting, fishing, recreational boating or wildlife viewing.

DMLW. Division of Mining, Land and Water, a division of DNR.

DNR. Alaska Department of Natural Resources

DOF. Division of Forestry, a division of DNR.

DPOR. Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, a division of DNR.

Easement. An interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use.

Feasible. Capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, technical, and safety factors.

Fish and wildlife. Any species of aquatic fish, invertebrates and amphibians, in any stage of their life cycle, and all species of birds and mammals, found in or which may be introduced into Alaska, except domestic birds and mammals. The term “area(s)” in association with the term “fish and wildlife” refers to both harvest and habitat areas.

Forestry. Land that is or has been forested and is suited for long-term forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions. Also refers to the plan designation of Forestry or the land classification of Forest Land.

Generally allowed use. An activity conducted on state land managed by the Division of Mining, Land and Water that is not in a special category or status. For the most part these uses are allowed for 14 days or less, and a permit is not required. See 11 AAC 96.020.

Goal. A statement of basic intent or general condition desired in the long term. Goals usually are not quantifiable and do not have specified dates for achievement.

Guideline. A course of action to be followed by DNR resource managers or required of land users when the manager permits, leases, or otherwise authorizes the use of state land or resources. Guidelines also range in their level of specificity from giving general guidance for decision making or identifying factors that need to be considered, to setting detailed standards for on-the-ground decisions. Some guidelines state the intent that must be followed and allow flexibility in achieving it.

Habitat. Areas that serve as a concentrated use area for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life history stage where alteration of the habitat and/or human disturbance could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of the species. This designation, when used, applies to localized areas having particularly valuable or sensitive habitat within the planning boundary. The “Ha” designation does not preclude human uses that are compatible with the following categories. Also refers to the plan designation of Habitat or the land classification of Wildlife Habitat Land.

Hatcher Pass Road. Refers to the entirety of this road within the planning area.

ILMA or ILMT. See Interagency Land Management Agreement/Transfer.

Improvements. Buildings, wharves, piers, dry docks, and other similar types of structures permanently fixed to the uplands, tidelands, or submerged lands that were constructed and/or maintained by the applicant for business, commercial, recreation, residential, or other beneficial uses or purposes. In no event shall fill be considered a permanent improvement when placed on the tidelands solely for the purposes of disposing of waste or spoils. However, fill material actually utilized for beneficial purposes by the applicant shall be considered a permanent improvement. [11 AAC 62.840]

Interagency Land Management Agreement/Transfer (ILMA/ILMT). An agreement between DNR and other state agencies that transfers some land management responsibility to these other agencies.

Land Classification Order. An order approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources that classifies state land into specific land use categories (AS 38.04.065). The Land Classification Order in this management plan classifies all state lands within the planning area according to the land use designations assigned to specific management units.

Land disposal. Same as Land offering, defined below; except that land disposal areas referenced in Chapter 3 may include lots reserved for lease or sale for public, commercial, or industrial facilities.

Land use designation. A category of land allocation determined by a land use plan. Designations identify the primary use of state land. Chapter 4 sets out how the land use designations of this plan will be classified according to 11 AAC 55.

Lease. A Department of Natural Resources authorization for the use of state land according to terms set forth in AS 38.05.070-105.

LDA or Legislatively Designated Area. An area set aside by the state legislature for special management actions and retained in public ownership. Examples are State Game Refuges and State Recreation Areas.

Locatable minerals. Locatable minerals include both metallic (gold, silver, lead, etc.) and non-metallic (feldspar, asbestos, mica, etc.) minerals.

Management intent statement. The statements that define the department's near and long-term management objectives and the methods to achieve those objectives.

Management Unit. In this management plan, refers to spatial areas of generally similar use or geographic characteristics. There are 10 of these within the management plan boundary.

Materials. "Materials" include but are not limited to common varieties of sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, pumicite, cinders, clay and sod. Materials may also refer to the designation of Materials or the land classification of Materials Land.

MCO. See Mineral Closing Order.

Mineral Closing Order (MCO). Mineral closing orders close state lands (mineral estate) to mineral entry. All state lands are open for the prospecting and production of locatable minerals unless the lands are specifically closed to mineral entry. The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources may close land to mineral entry if a finding has been made that mining would be incompatible with **significant surface use** on state land [AS 38.05.205]. A significant surface use of the land has been interpreted by DNR to include not only residential and commercial structures, but also fish and wildlife habitat, recreational, and scenic values.

Mineral entry. Acquiring exploration and mining rights under AS 38.05.185-38.05.275.

Mineral Opening Order. An order approved by the Commissioner that opens state land to mineral entry.

Mineral Order. An order approved by the Commissioner that either closes or opens land to mineral entry. The use of this term is fairly recent. Previously the Department issues mineral opening orders or mineral closing orders. Reference in this plan is to 'mineral closing order' since this is the instrument that was used by the Department to close areas within the planning area and since state status plats make reference to 'Mineral Closing Orders'.

Mining. Any structure or activity for commercial exploration and recovery of minerals, including, but not limited to resource transfer facilities, camps, and other support facilities associated with mineral development. The term “mining” does not refer to offshore prospecting.

Mining claim. Rights to deposits of minerals, subject to AS 38.05.185-38.05.275, in or on state land that is open to claim staking may be acquired by discovery, location and recording as prescribed in AS 38.05.185-38.05.275. The locator has the exclusive right of possession and extraction of the minerals lying within the boundaries of the claim, subject to AS 38.05.185 -38.05.275.

Minor Change. A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A minor change is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections. [11 AAC 55.030]

Multiple use. Means the management of state land and its various resource values so that it is used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; it includes:

- a) the use of some land for less than all of the resources, and
- b) a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the short-term and long-term needs of present and future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values.
[AS 38.04.910]

Ordinary high water mark. The mark along the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the nontidal water are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to leave a natural line impressed on the bank or shore and indicated by erosion, shelving, changes in soil characteristics, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other distinctive physical characteristics [from 11 AAC 53.900(23)].

Permanent use. A use that includes a structure or facility that is not readily removable.

Permit. A Department of Natural Resources authorization for use of state land according to terms set forth in 11 AAC 96.

Planning period. Refers to the length of time that the plan covers, which is 20 years. However, the management plan remains valid until it is revised.

Policy. An intended course of action or a principle for guiding actions; in this plan, DNR policies for land and resource management include goals, management intent statements, management guidelines, land use designations, implementation plans and procedures, and various other statements of DNR's intentions.

Primary use. See Designated use.

Prohibited use. A use not allowed in a management unit because of conflicts with the management intent, designated primary or secondary uses, or management guideline. Uses not specifically prohibited nor designated as primary or secondary uses in a management unit are allowed if compatible with the primary and secondary uses, the management intent statements for the unit, and the plan's guidelines. Changing a prohibited use to an allowable use requires a plan amendment.

Public use. Any human use of state land, including commercial and non-commercial uses.

Recreation. Any activity or structure for recreational purposes, including but not limited to hiking, camping, boating, anchorage, access points to hunting and fishing areas, and sightseeing. "Recreation" does not refer to subsistence hunting and fishing.

RS 2477. RS 2477 stands from Revised Statute 2477 from the Mining Act of 1866, which states that "The public right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public use, is hereby granted. Information on RS 2477s can be accessed at the DNR website: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/trails/index.cfm>

Retained land. Uplands, shorelands, tidelands, submerged lands, and water that are to remain in state ownership.

Right-of-way. The legal right to cross the land of another.

Secondary use. A use of lesser importance than the primary use in a particular management unit. Secondary uses are not used in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan, although a management unit may have two or more co-designations, which means that both designated uses are of equal value within a management unit. Management actions must be consistent with the maintenance of both uses.

SCRO. Southcentral Regional Office of the Division of Mining, Land and Water, Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

Settlement. The sale, leasing, or permitting of state lands to allow private recreational, residential, commercial, industrial, or community use. May also refer the designation of Settlement or the land classification of Settlement Land.

Shall. Same as "will."

Should. States intent for a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. Guidelines modified by the word “should” state the plan’s intent and allow the manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent or whether particular circumstances justify deviations from the intended action or set of conditions. A guideline may include criteria for deciding if such a deviation is justified. (See Types of Plan Changes, Chapter 4.)

State land. A generic term meaning all state land, including all state-owned and state-selected uplands, all shorelands, tidelands and submerged lands. Refer to Figure 1-1 in Chapter 1 of the Southeast Susitna Area Plan for a graphical depiction of these areas. As used in this plan, it refers to state-owned and state-selected uplands and shorelands. ‘State Land’ excludes lands owned by the University of Alaska, the Mental Health Trust Authority, or by state agencies that have been acquired through deed.

State-owned land. Land that is patented or will be patented to the state, including uplands, tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands. As used in this plan, it refers to state-owned and state-selected uplands and shorelands. ‘State Land’ excludes lands owned by the University of Alaska, the Mental Health Trust Authority, or by state agencies that have been acquired through deed.

State-selected land. Federally owned land that is selected by the State of Alaska, but not yet patented nor TAed (Tentative Approval) by the Bureau of Land Management.

Step-Wise Plan. A trail development and management plan that is drafted and implemented for the Hatcher Pass Management planning area in addition to this management plan. In the context of this plan, this term generally refers to any future trail plans developed or accepted by the Mat-Su Borough.

Suitable. Land that is physically capable of supporting a particular type of resource development.

Temporary use. A use that is one year or less in duration requiring a state permit. Any structure associated with the use must be readily removable.

Unsuitable. Land that is physically incapable of supporting a particular type of resource development (usually because that resource doesn’t exist in that location).

Uplands. Lands above mean high water (See Figure 1-1, Chapter 1 in Southeast Susitna Area Plan.)

Viewshed. Viewsheds are surfaces visible from a viewpoint on a road corridor or from marine waters.

Wetlands. Includes both freshwater and saltwater wetlands. “Freshwater wetlands” means those environments characterized by rooted vegetation which is partially submerged either continuously or periodically by surface freshwater with less than .5 parts per thousand salt content and not exceeding three meters in depth. “Saltwater wetlands” means those coastal areas along sheltered shorelines characterized by salt tolerant, marshy plants and large algae extending from extreme low tide which is influenced by sea spray or tidally induced water table changes.

Will. Requires a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. A guideline modified by the word “will” must be followed by land managers and users. Deviation from plan designations, management intent, or management guidelines requires a plan amendment. (See Chapter 4 – Plan Modification).

Appendix B

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER

Land Classification Order No. SC-09-003

- I. Name: **Hatcher Pass Management Plan (2010)**
- II. The classifications in Part III are based on written justification contained in one of the following plans:


Area Plan:
Adopted () Revised () Dated _____

Management Plan: **Hatcher Pass Management Plan**
Adopted () Revised (x) Dated _____

Site Specific Plan:
Adopted () Revised () Dated _____

III. Legal Description	Acreage	Acquisition Authority	Existing Classification	Classification by this action
See plan text, maps HPMP 2010	294,919	GS	HPMP 1986	See plan text, maps HPMP 2010 See Appendix B-1

- IV. This order is issued under the authority granted by AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300 to the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. The above described lands are hereby designated and classified as indicated. Nothing shall prevent the reclassification of these lands if warranted in the public interest.
- V. This classification supersedes and replaces all previous classification orders within the planning area of the Hatcher Pass Management Plan.

Classified: 
Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

Date: 11/17/10

Effective Date: 1/10/2011

Appendix C

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF MINING, LAND, AND WATER

Mineral Order No. 1107

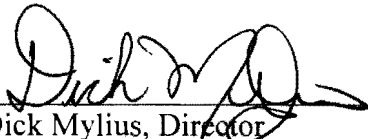
 x Closing Lands to Mineral Entry Opening Lands to Mineral Entry

- I. Name: Archangel and Independence units: Hatcher Pass Management Plan
- II. Reason for Mineral Order: This mineral order is based on the attached Commissioner's Administrative Finding and applicable statutes.


III. Authority: AS 38.05.185 and AS 38.05.300(b).

III. Location and Legal Description: Lands to be closed under this order include two areas within the Independence, Archangel, and Reed Lakes/Little Susitna management units in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan and as depicted on the attached maps.

IV. Mineral Closing: This mineral order is subject to valid existing rights and is issued under the authority granted by AS 38.05.185 – AS 38.05.275 to the Department of Natural Resources. In accordance with AS 38.05.185(a), I find that the best interests of the State of Alaska and its residents are served by closure of the land described in this mineral closing order to entry under the mineral location and mining laws of the State of Alaska. The above-described lands are hereby closed to entry under the locatable mineral and mining laws of the State of Alaska.

Concur: 
Dick Mylius, Director
Division of Mining, Land & Water

11/17/2010
Date

Approved: 
Tom Irwin, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

11/17/10
Date

1/10/2011
Effective Date

**PROPOSED DRAFT FINDING OF THE COMMISSIONER
MINERAL ORDER 1107 (CLOSING)
INDEPENDENCE, ARCHANGEL and REED LAKES/LITTLE SUSITNA
MANAGEMENT UNITS
HATCHER PASS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposes to close to new mineral entry approximately 180 acres of state land located in the Archangel and Independence management units of the Hatcher Pass Management Plan (2009).

Recent changes to the Hatcher Pass Management Plan have recommended the development of recreation facilities within this portion of the Archangel and Reed Lakes/Little Susitna management units of the Hatcher Pass Management Plan. These facilities are intended to support both winter and summer recreation activity. Mineral entry and development are inconsistent with this use and therefore the standards for mineral closure under AS 38.05.300 are met. The closure of land in this area totals 130 acres.

A small area within the Independence Mine State Historic Site is now open to mineral entry; areas surrounding this small area are closed to entry. This area needs to be closed in order to protect the historical and cultural values associated with the Independence Mine State Historic Site. Mineral entry and development are inconsistent with this use and therefore the standards for mineral closure under AS 38.05.300 are met. The closure of land in this area totals 50 acres.

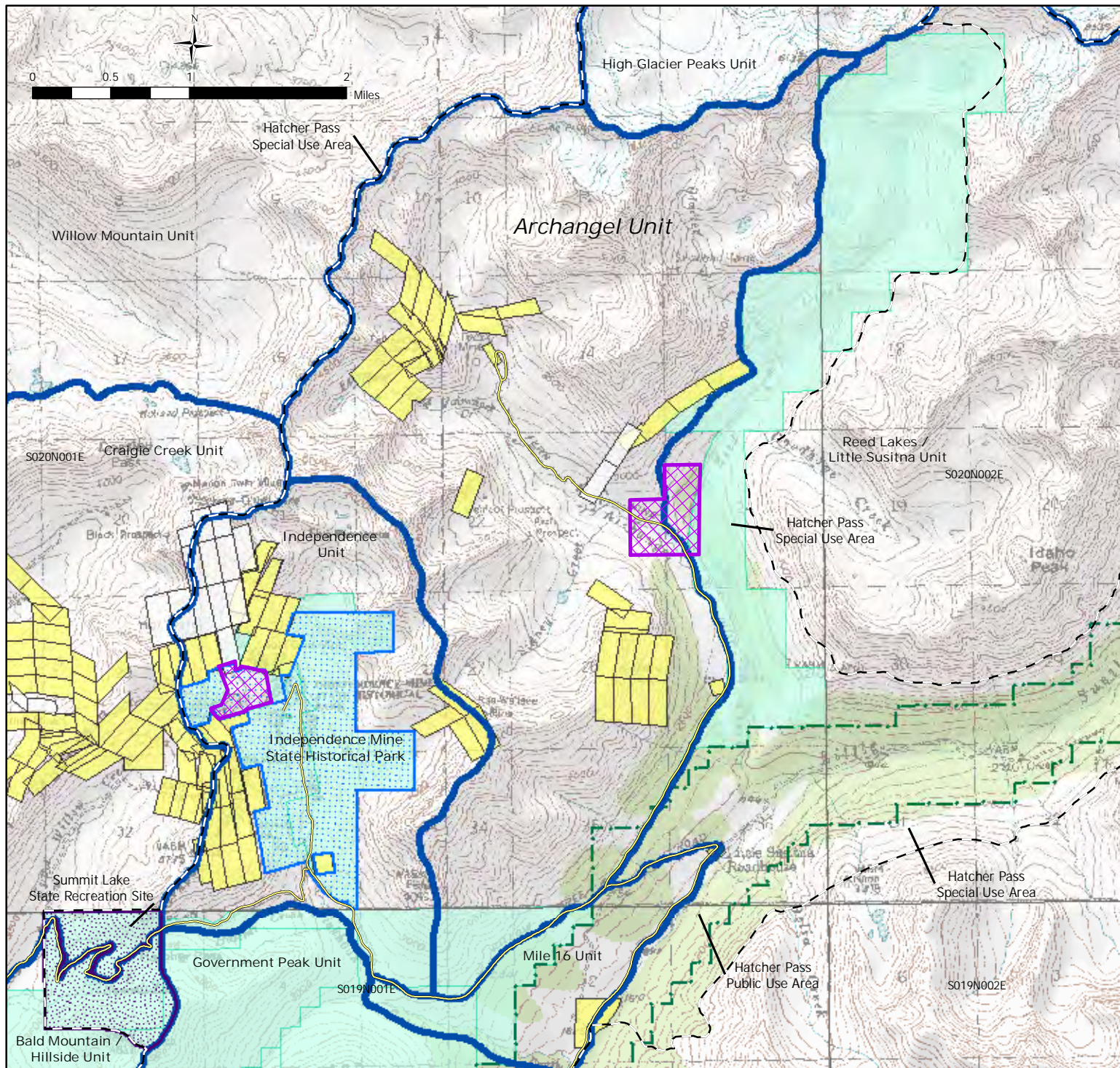
For this reason, the Commissioner finds that closing state lands to future mineral entry, to expedite the development and continued use of recreation facilities, is appropriate. The amount of land closed under this mineral order is approximately 180 acres.



Tom Irwin, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

11/17/10
Date

1/10/2011
Effective Date



Hatcher Pass Management Plan

Map C-1

Archangel and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna Management Units

Mineral Closure Order
No. 1107

Seward Meridian
T 20 N R 1 E S. 23

- Plan Management Units
- Mineral Closure Order (New)
- Mineral Closing Order (Existing)
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Roads

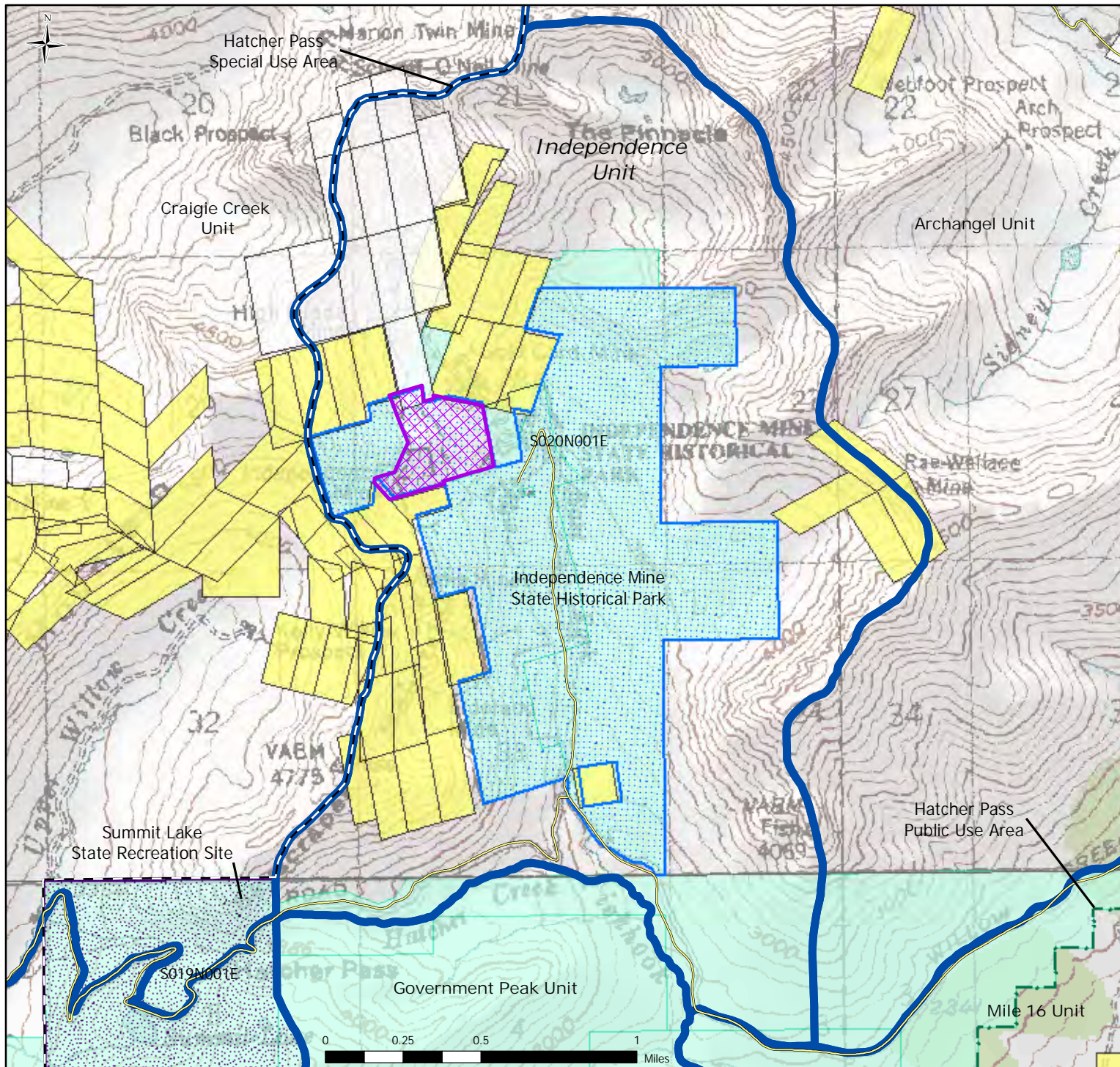
- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section

Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAAD_1983_UTM_Zone_6N



Hatcher Pass Management Plan

Map C-2

Independence
Management Unit

Mineral Closure Order
No. 1107

Seward Meridian
T 20 N R 1 E S. 28

- Plan Management Units
- Mineral Closure Order (New)
- Mineral Closing Order (Existing)
- Legislatively Designated Area
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area 2010
- Summit Lake State Recreation Site
- Independence Mine Historical Park
- Private Land
- Federal Mining Claims
- Roads

- * General State Land Is Clear Topography
- * All land is managed according to the authority of the relevant management agency or property owner
- * Hatcher Pass Public Use Area Estb. AS 41.23.130
- * Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)
- * Summit Lake Recreation Site Estb. 11 AAC 96.014(b)(3)



Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Resource Assessment & Development Section
Boundaries and Information
Current to March 2012

This map is for graphic representation only
and is intended to be used only as a guide.
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 6N

Appendix D¹ Revision to Regulations

11 AAC 96.014(B)(3)

HATCHER PASS MANAGEMENT PLAN AREA

Special use land

(a) This section lists sites and areas of state land that the department has designated, after public notice under [AS 38.05.945](#), as special use land. The department has determined that these sites and areas of land have special scenic, historic, archeological, scientific, biological, recreational, or other special resource values warranting additional protections or other special requirements. Unless otherwise provided in (b) of this section, special requirements applicable to special use land are in addition to requirements applicable to state land under [AS 38](#) and this title.

(b) For the following sites and areas that have been designated as special use land, corresponding special requirements apply as follows:

.....

(3) for the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area, ADL number 223585, generally described as those lands designated by [AS 41.23.130](#) and certain lands described in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan, as shown on the maps entitled *Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Maps 1 and 2*,², dated September 30, 2011, and adopted by reference.

¹ Note: Appendix D represents proposed draft regulations that are to be submitted and adjudicated through the APA. The final regulations will probably be similar to Appendix D, but may differ in details. Note also that Appendix D reflects the recommendations of the plan adopted by the DNR Commissioner and differ from those draft regulations contained in the Public Review Draft (PRD). Copies of the PRD are available at RADS, DMLW.

² This map is not included since regulations go through a separate review and approval process. However, the eventual map will, depending on the results of public review, be the same as or similar to Map 2-3 'Land Status, Topography', and Recommended Motorized Closures' and as more fully depicted in the management unit maps of each of the affected units: (Map 3-7, Independence Unit; Map 3-8, Archangel; Map 3-9, Reed Lakes / Little Susitna; Map 3-10, Mile 16; and Map 3-11, Government Peak).

- (A) in the Mile 16, Government Peak, and Independence units and in portions of the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna and Archangel units [IN THE UPPER LITTLE SUSITNA VALLEY AND THE REED VALLEYS AND LAKES], as depicted on the *Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Map 1* as 'Non-Motorized (Year)', except for designated roads and parking areas, motorized vehicle use, including landing aircraft, is prohibited, except that the department may issue a permit for motorized vehicle use for mineral development, commercial recreation, trail construction or maintenance, and other uses preformed by the department related to the management of the Hatcher Pass area if the department determines that the use would not substantially interfere with recreational use of the area or with the management intent of a unit as described in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan;
- (B) Within the Bald Mountain Ridge Habitat Area, as depicted on the *Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Map 1* as 'Non-Motorized (Summer)', motorized vehicle use, including landing aircraft, is prohibited between May 1 and August 1; during that period, the department may issue a permit for motorized vehicle use for mineral development, trail construction or maintenance, or another special use, including uses performed by the department in its management of the Hatcher Pass area, if the department determines that the use would not negatively affect tundra bird nesting;
- (C) in the Summit Lake State Recreation Site, the High Glacier Peaks, portions of the Independence, Archangel and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna units, as depicted on the *Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Map 1* as 'Non-Motorized (Summer)', except for designated roads and parking areas, motorized vehicle use is prohibited between May 1 and October 1 of each year, except that the department may issue a permit for motorized vehicle use for mineral development, road or trail construction or maintenance, and other uses preformed by the department related to the management of the Hatcher Pass area, if the department determines that the use would not substantially interfere with recreational use of the area or with the management intent of a unit as described in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan; and
- (D) In the Summit Lake State Recreation Site, the High Glacier Peaks, the Government Peak, the Independence, and portions of the Archangel and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna units, as depicted on the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Map 1, motorized vehicle use is prohibited between October 2 and April 30 each year; except that
 - (i) snowmobile use is allowed once snow depth is sufficient to protect underlying vegetation as determined by the department; in this sub-paragraph snowmobile has the same definition as in S 28.29.250(10) and
 - (ii) the Department may issue a permit for motorized vehicle use for mineral development, road or trail construction or maintenance, commercial recreation, and other uses performed by the Department of Natural Resources related to the management of the Hatcher Pass area, if the Department determines that the use would not adversely affect fragile tundra and soils and is consistent with the management intent of a unit as described in the Hatcher Pass Management Plan;
- (E) in the High Glacier Peaks, the Government Peak, Independence, Mile 16, portions of the Archangel and the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna units, as shown on the *Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Map 2*, dated September 30, 2011 and adopted by reference, the use and discharge of a firearm is prohibited except for the purpose of lawful

- hunting; within the Independence State Mine Historical Park, Summit Lake State Recreation Site, the Northern and Southern Development areas in the Government Peak unit, within one quarter mile of a road, or the area between Archangel Road and the Motorized Winter Corridor situated within the Reed Lakes / Little Susitna unit, ending at mile 2.5 of Archangel Road, the discharge of a firearm for any purpose is prohibited.
- (F) In the Summit Lake State Recreation Site, the High Glacier Peaks, the Government Peak, the Independence, the Mile 16, the Archangel and Reed Lakes / Little Susitna units, as depicted on the Hatcher Pass Special Use Area Map 2, camping is not allowed except within
- (i) Officially designated or marked areas, or
 - (ii) An area adjacent to and along any trail or road right of way to a distance of one quarter mile.

Appendix E

Public Participation Process Overview

An extensive Public Participation Process was conducted over a two year period in order to identify issues important to the public and to obtain their comments and recommendations on the plan revision. Over 20 meetings were held with the public and over 2,000 comments were received during the planning process. Nearly all of the comments received focused on recreational use. The involvement of the public helped shape the recommendations made in this plan. Although outlined in Chapter 1 of this plan, the following provides a more detailed overview of the planning process that DMLW.

Review Existing Plan

The 1986 Management Plan was reviewed to determine what needed to be revised and what aspects were still working and could be retained. This review indicated that the plan needed to be almost completely revised, particularly to make it clear how a management unit was to be managed, the allowed and prohibited uses in each unit, and to restructure the Government Peak unit to fit with the current thinking about Alpine ski development, which differs greatly from what was assumed in the 1989 Plan Amendment, which focused on the development of a ski resort within that unit. The spatial boundaries of this planning area were also reviewed and resulted in the expansion of the plan boundary to incorporate the Kashwitna river drainage and High Glacier Peaks area.

Gathering Information about the Planning Area

The effected state and borough agencies were contacted to inform them about the planning process and to invite their participation. DMLW, DPOR and the Mat-Su Borough were the entities primarily engaged in the planning process. Land ownership records were reviewed and resource data was analyzed to determine what the current use recreational use patterns or where resources were located, such as recreation, mining, habitat, and forestry. It was determined that the planning area was mainly used for recreation and historically for mining in certain areas.

Identification of Public Issues

Public involvement was extensive throughout the process. The public was initially notified in February 2009 about the plan revision and invited to participate in the planning process and were noticed for all subsequent meetings and open houses. A webpage providing background on the plan development was created and continually updated throughout the

Appendix E: Public Participation Process Overview

planning process. Numerous public and focus group meetings were held and public was encouraged to submit comments throughout the plan revision. Public comments focused on recreational issues, specifically motorized and non-motorized recreation, particularly on the ‘east side’ of the planning area.

Preparation of an Agency Review Draft (ARD) of the plan

A draft of the plan was developed for agency review that was based on the results of the land research, information provided by various agencies, and the public input that was provided through written comments and public meetings. Multiple agencies were involved in the review of the Hatcher Pass Management Plan, including: the DNR Southcentral Region Office, DPOR, ADF&G, and the Mat-Su Borough. After comments and recommendations were received from those agencies, changes to that document were made, where appropriate, and it was revised into a draft for public review.

Preparation of Public Review Draft (PRD) and Comment Period

The Public Review Draft was released on March 1, 2009 to the public and a 60 day public comment period was provided. During that time, multiple public and focus group meetings were held and over 1,400 public comments were received. Nearly all of those comments pertained to recreational use, generally motorized and non-motorized users, with a few comments on mining.

The Issue Response Summary and Final Plan

An Issue Response Summary was developed and released to the public on November 24, 2010. This document addressed the concerns and recommendations the public provided in their written comments and to the statements they made during public meetings. It also identified revisions to the plan where appropriate. Those revisions were extracted into a simplified document or “List of Approved Revisions”, which identified specific changes to the plan. The Issue Response Summary and PRD together constituted the final plan.

Adoption by DNR Commissioner and Request for Reconsideration

The PRD and Issue Response Summary, specifically the List of Approved Revisions, constitute the final plan, which was adopted by the Commissioner on November 17, 2010.

After the plan adoption, a 20 day period in which the public could request the reconsideration of the plan was provided. This gave the public an additional opportunity to provide recommendations and to identify issues that they felt were not adequately addressed during the planning process. After review of those requests the Commissioner ultimately chose to uphold the adoption of the plan, with minor changes, which included adding a winter motorized corridor within the southeast of the Bald Mountain / Hillside Unit.

Public Meetings and Comments

Public involvement and comments were encouraged throughout the planning process, and there were two official public comment phases. The first phase is referred to as the Public Scoping Phase. It occurred early in the planning process and helped to identify the issues

that were important to the public prior to drafting of the plan. The second phase was the Public Review Draft Phase, which occurred after a draft of the plan had been released to the public for review and comment. Written comments that were submitted and public statements provided at public meetings during this phase can and did result in modifications to the final plan. Specifically, public comments resulted in the modified approach to winter recreational motorized closures on the 'east side' of the planning area that differed from the recommendations that were included in the Public Review Draft.

Public Scoping Phase

The Public Scoping Phase for this plan began on March 1, 2009 and ended on February 28, 2010. Below are two tables that provide the number and types of meetings and public comments that were received during that time:

Public Scoping Meetings:

Type of Public Scoping Meeting	No. Meetings	No. Signed In
Community Council / Advisory Board	3	67
Focus Group	13	234
Public Meeting	2	143
Total Meetings and Participants:	18	444

Public Scoping Meeting Statements:

Members of the public and group representatives were given the opportunity to provide statements during the Public Meetings. They provided statements of their own or on behalf of recreational user groups. There were 42 Public Statements made at the public meetings.

Public Scoping Comments:

Method of Comment Submission	Amt. Received
Focus Group Meeting Questionnaires	85
Public Meeting Questionnaires	30
Comments by Mail	31
Comments by Email	88
Online-Entry Comments	326
Total:	560

Public Review Draft Phase

The Public Review Draft Phase of this plan began on March 1, 2010 and ended on May 5, 2010. Below are two tables that provide the number and types of meetings and public comments that were received during that time:

Public Review Draft Meetings:

Type of Public Scoping Meeting	No. Meetings	No. Signed In
Community Council / Advisory Board	1	112
Public Meeting	3	153
Total Meetings and Participants:	4	265

Public Review Draft Meeting Statements:

Members of the public and group representatives were given the opportunity to provide statements during the Public Meetings. They provided statements of their own or on behalf of recreational user groups. There were 67 Public Statements made at the public meetings.

Public Review Draft Comments:

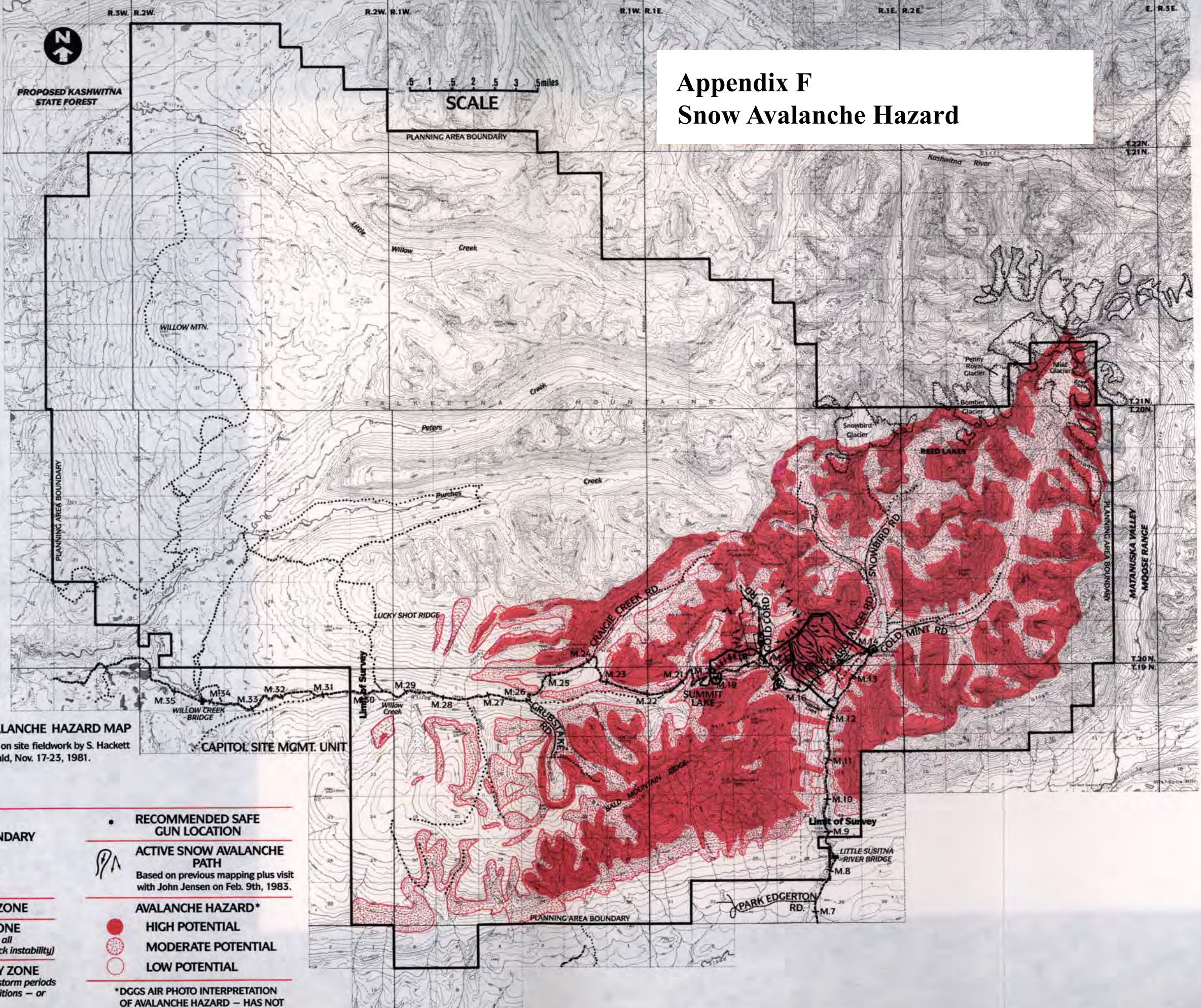
Method of Comment Submission	Amt. Received
Public Meeting Submissions	6
Comments by Mail	27
On-Line Entry Comments	402
Form Letter Comments	1022
Total:	1457

Requests for Reconsideration

There were also 40 comments and requests for reconsideration after the adoption of the plan which resulted in an additional recommendation in the final plan for a second motorized corridor in the Bald Mountain / Hillside Unit.



HATCHER PASS MANAGEMENT PLAN



DOT/PF PROVISIONAL SNOW AVALANCHE HAZARD MAP

Based on aerial photo interpretation and on site fieldwork by S. Hackett with assistance of Liam Fitzgerald, Nov. 17-23, 1981.

- TRAILS
- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- M.17 MILEPOSTS
- LOCAL ACCESS ROADS
- HATCHER PASS ROAD
- AVALANCHE HAZARD ZONE
- AVALANCHE SAFETY ZONE
(areas for safe parking during all degrees of hazard or snowpack instability)
- INTERMITTENT SAFETY ZONE
(overflow parking during non-storm periods and/or stable snowpack conditions — or for control work)

- RECOMMENDED SAFE GUN LOCATION
- ACTIVE SNOW AVALANCHE PATH
Based on previous mapping plus visit with John Jensen on Feb. 9th, 1983.
- AVALANCHE HAZARD*
 - HIGH POTENTIAL
 - MODERATE POTENTIAL
 - LOW POTENTIAL

*DGGS AIR PHOTO INTERPRETATION OF AVALANCHE HAZARD — HAS NOT BEEN GROUND TRUTHED.

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER

Land Classification Order No. SC-09-003A01

I. Name: **Classification Change to Accompany Plan Amendment to Government Peak Unit, Hatcher Pass Management Plan.**

II. The classifications in Part III are based on written justification contained in one of the following plans and as explained in the Plan Amendment affecting the area of Government Creek in the Government Peak management unit.

Area Plan:

Adopted () Revised () Dated _____

Management Plan: **Hatcher Pass Management Plan**

Adopted () Revised (x) Dated 11/17/2010

Site Specific Plan:

Adopted () Revised () Dated _____

III.	Legal Description	Acreage	Acquisition Authority	Existing Classification	Classification by this action
	Sec 29: all w. OHW Government Creek	273	GS	Pub Rec HPMP 2010	Pub Rec/Habitat
	Sec 20: w. OHW Government Creek	20	GS	Pub Rec HPMP 2010	Pub Rec/Habitat

IV. This order is issued under the authority granted by AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300 to the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. The above described lands are hereby designated and classified as indicated. Nothing shall prevent the reclassification of these lands if warranted in the public interest.

V. This classification supersedes and replaces LCO SC-09-003 as it relates to this area.

Classified: 

Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

Date: 3/12/12

The date of issuance of this decision is five working days from the date of approval.