

## **Region 14: Ugashik Bay Area**

### **Summary of Resources and Uses in the Region**

#### **Region Boundary**

Region 14 comprises areas of tidelands within Ugashik Bay and adjacent uplands, most of which are situated to the east and south (Map 3-14). The Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area (CHA) occupies the westernmost part of the Region. The Region is bordered on the west by Bristol Bay, on the north by Region 12, on the east by Region 13, and on the south by Region 15. Uplands are typically low and flat with extensive areas of wetlands, ponds, and lakes. Ugashik Bay consists largely of extensive sheltered tidal flats that extend inland along the Ugashik River to the community of Ugashik. The bay is a biologically productive habitat and much of it is used by waterfowl and as haulout areas for harbor seals. The small communities of Ugashik (pop. 12) and Pilot Point (pop. 70) are situated within the Region. There are relatively small amounts of state-owned uplands within this Region and no areas of state-selected uplands. There are no areas of municipal-selected land.

#### **State Lands: Ownership and Acreage**

Land ownership within this Region is primarily private or Native corporation, supplemented by holdings of state land in its northeastern and eastern parts of the Region adjacent to the Ugashik River. The plan applies to 52,648 acres of state-owned uplands and 56,300 acres of state-owned tidelands in this Region.

#### **Physical Geography**

Extensive areas of low, flat terrain consisting either of wetlands or low and dwarf shrub characterize this Region. There are relatively few areas of dry uplands; these occur near the community of Pilot Point and along the coast north of Smokey Point. The hydrology of the Region reflects the topographic differences. Numerous lakes, ponds, and extensive areas of wetlands, particularly south of Ugashik Bay and east along the Ugashik River, characterize lowland areas. Rivers are characteristically low gradient and meandering, and the principal drainages are associated with the Ugashik, Dog Salmon, and King Salmon Rivers.

Extensive areas of sheltered tidal flats characterize tideland areas. The central, western parts of these tidelands are situated within the Pilot Point CHA; some uplands are also situated within this CHA. Both the CHA and other tidelands are described in more detail in the 'Tidelands and Shorelands' section that follows.

## Climate

Region 14 has a maritime climate characterized by cool, humid, and windy weather. Average summer temperatures range from 41° to 60°; average winter temperatures range from 20° to 37°. Low cloud cover and fog are common. Precipitation averages 19 inches per year, with 38 inches of snowfall. The Region is generally free of permafrost.

## Access

This region is accessible by air and water. A state-owned gravel airstrip is available at Pilot Point and a gravel airstrip owned by BLM is available at Ugashik Bay. Air taxi service is provided on a regular basis. Barge service to Pilot Point is provided from Seattle in the spring and fall. Modes of local transport include ATVs, snowmachines, skiffs, and trucks. There are no roads except for those in and adjacent to the community of Pilot Point.

## Resources and Uses

Most of the Region is used for subsistence and commercial fishing. There is limited subsistence and recreational hunting of moose and caribou, and some trapping for red fox, beaver, lynx, mink, and marten. There are few people within the region; most of these cluster around or near the community of Pilot Point since most use is associated with commercial fishing in offshore waters; see the use description in the section on ‘Tidelands and Shorelands’ that follows.

**Cultural and Historic.** These mixed Aleut and Eskimo communities of Pilot Point and Ugashik developed around a fish salting plant and canneries established in the 1880’s. Many different nationalities came to work in the canneries, such as Italians, Chinese and northern Europeans. Reindeer herding experiments at Ugashik helped to repopulate the area after the devastating 1918 flu epidemic, although the herding eventually failed. The deterioration of the harbor forced the cannery at Pilot Point to close in 1958. Numerous cultural resource sites exist within the region, reflecting the long history of human occupancy. There are four historic, 22 prehistoric, and four mixed historic/prehistoric sites. Most of these are concentrated at or near the communities of Ugashik or Pilot Point or along parts of the Ugashik River.

**Economic.** The residents of Pilot Point and Ugashik depend upon commercial fishing for the majority of their cash income. Many residents hold commercial fishing permits. Up to 700 commercial boats fish in the district. Subsistence is an important part of the community lifestyle and trapping is a source of income during the off-season. Salmon, caribou, moose, geese and porcupine are harvested.

**Recreation.** Recreation is primarily related to outdoor activities, especially fishing and hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, and the like.

**Minerals and Coal.** There are no known mineral resources within the Region. Coal-bearing units are projected to occur in the subsurface.

**Oil and Gas.** The oil and gas potential of Region 14 is believed to be moderate to high based on wells drilled in adjoining Regions and the continuity of geology in the subsurface. State and Native landowners are currently pursuing a new hydrocarbon exploration licensing and leasing program. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Lake and Peninsula, Bristol Bay, and Aleutians East Boroughs have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in support of oil and gas lease sales and licensing of state land in the Bristol Bay and Alaska Peninsula region (March 17, 2004). Similar MOUs are in effect between the DNR and The Aleut Regional Native Corporation (December 18, 2003) and the DNR and Bristol Bay Native Corporation (July 10, 2003).

**Fish and Wildlife.** The resources of this region are primarily those associated with fisheries and wildlife. Chum, coho and sockeye salmon exist in the three major streams that empty into Ugashik Bay – the Dog Salmon, King Salmon, and Ugashik Rivers. Moose are present and a portion of a moose calving area occurs east of the Ugashik River near the boundary with Region 13. Caribou are also present, but there are no known caribou rutting or calving areas. There are few raptors that frequent the uplands, and most shorebirds and waterfowl are associated with near-shore areas, particularly within and near Ugashik Bay. Marine resources are particularly significant and the section on ‘Tidelands and Shorelands’ should be consulted for a description of the type and distribution of these resources.

### **Management Considerations: Local, State, and Federal Plans**

There are no local plans that affect this area except for the Lake and Peninsula Borough CZMP. This plan contains extensive enforceable policies and should be consulted by DNR prior to granting an authorization. See the web site <http://www.alaskacoast.state.ak.us/><sup>30</sup> for more information on the enforceable policies of the Coastal District Plan.

The single state resource management plan that affects this Region is the DNR Bristol Bay Area Plan (1984). It affects all state lands in the planning area, which includes uplands, shorelands, tidelands, submerged lands, and navigable waters, and has been in force since its adoption. This revision supersedes and replaces the original (1984) Plan.

A regional transportation plan has recently been developed by ADOT/PF that identifies a number of transportation corridors. The Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan (November 2002) identifies an Alaska Peninsula Transportation Corridor, which in general extends from South Naknek to the Chignik connecting with the communities of Egegik, Pilot Point, Ugashik, and Port Heiden. This route coincides with areas of state land, including state land within Region 14.

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<sup>30</sup> The Alaska Coastal Management Program was terminated on July 1, 2011, pursuant to AS 44.66.030.

## **Municipal Selections**

There are no areas of municipal selections within the Region.

## **Management Summary: Uplands**

Region 14 is to be managed for a variety of multiple uses, including the maintenance of sensitive habitats, the protection of sensitive wildlife and fisheries, and for the purpose of dispersed public recreation and harvest. Because of the absence of discernible economic patterns, generally unsuitable building topography, and the potential to accommodate a variety of uses, such as oil and gas exploration and development and others, through siting and other types of development stipulations, nearly all state land within this Region is designated General Use, except for the area of the Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area, which is designated Habitat in its upland areas. A few upland management units are designated for settlement or public use.

## **Plan Designations and Management**

The plan designations that are used within this Region have the following management intent. The policies and management intent guidelines described in Chapter 2 affect all DNR authorizations. Refer especially to those guidelines relating to Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Harvest Areas, and Settlement. See the section on 'Tidelands and Shorelands' that follows for designations and management intent for these areas, which are quite extensive.

- General Use (R14-02) (Gu). Extensive areas throughout the Region are designated General Use. Areas designated General Use are typically remote, inaccessible, and, within this Region, are generally not considered suitable for development except in the case of site-specific uses, as may occur with oil and gas exploration and development. Within areas designated General Use, a variety of uses may occur. Nonetheless, because of the absence of demand and unfavorable building conditions, little development is likely to occur during the planning period and, as a matter of policy, it is not intended that intensive forms of development occur within this Region. Land with this designation is to be retained during the planning period.
- Settlement (R14-01) (Se). An area of fairly flat land along the coast north of Smokey Point, consisting of 1,545 acres, is considered suitable for development and is designated Settlement. The type of residential development (community or remote settlement) is to be determined at the time of disposal by DNR.
- Habitat (R14T-01) (Ha). Generally, this designation applies to areas of varied size that are important for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life-history stage where alteration of the habitat or human disturbance could result in the permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species. This designation is applied to the upland

areas encompassed by the Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area and to streams and shorelands cataloged by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as anadromous (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/SARR/AWC/index.cfm?adfg=maps.interactive>).

Consult the Resource Allocation Table for Region 14 for more information on upland management units, which includes a number of small units intended for public use or potential settlement.

### **Specific Management Considerations**

- **Generally Allowed Uses.** The Generally Allowed Uses in 11 AAC 96.020 can occur throughout the Region; there are no areas affected by 11 AAC 96.010 requiring a permit before being authorized except for the Pilot Point CHA.
- **Proposed Transportation Corridor.** The area identified on the Region Map as a “Potential Transportation Corridor” should be retained by the state during the planning period. Authorizations granted by DNR within this corridor should not preclude the future development of transportation access. Authorizations or disposals within and adjacent to this corridor should only be allowed after consultation with ADOT/PF.
- **Mineral Closing Orders and Leasehold Location Orders.** Except for areas closed to mineral entry under existing Mineral Closing Orders, all lands within the Region are open to mineral entry. (MCO 791 closes the Region to shallow oil and gas exploration and development.) No additional MCOs are recommended; the only exception applies to areas that may be disposed of by DNR for the purposes of settlement, should such areas be selected for this purpose in the future. In these instances, closure of the settlement area prior to sale is required. The MCOs in areas not selected for staking within three years of the land sale shall revert to ‘open to mineral entry’. No leasehold location orders are recommended. See also the Mineral Resources section in Chapter 2 for more details on subsurface management requirements.
- **Retained Lands.** There are no state lands that are designated to be retained by the state, except for those that serve a public purpose, are included within the Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area, are designated General Use, or are identified as a Proposed Transportation Corridor.
- **Navigable Waters.** Shorelands (rivers and lakes) that are believed to be navigable are listed in Table 3.1 in the Navigability section of this Chapter. Authorizations in these waters must ensure the continued use of the waterway by the public for purposes of trade, travel, and commerce. Note: These waterbodies are assigned a plan designation of Habitat, Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed, a co-designation of Habitat and Public Recreation and Tourism-Dispersed, and, sometimes, General Use. Authorizations issued by DNR are to maintain the habitat and public recreation values of these waterbodies.

## Management Summary: Tidelands and Submerged Lands

The tidelands within this Region essentially encompass the area of Ugashik Bay. The bay consists largely of extensive tidal flats that extend inland up the Ugashik River to the community of Ugashik. Portions of the state tidelands and uplands are included within the Pilot Point CHA, although much of the central portion of the bay is not. Nonetheless, essentially the entirety of the Bay is a productive habitat, and is used in much of the western and central parts as a harbor seal haulout. Waterfowl use the entire Bay during the spring and fall; it is also a waterfowl molting concentration area. The Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve affects Ugashik Bay. Sockeye, chinook, chum and pink salmon are harvested in Ugashik Bay (purse seine and drift net). Set net leases dot the coastline of the bay both north and south of Pilot Point and at the mouth of the Ugashik River, some within the Pilot Point CHA. Pilot Point residents depend heavily on commercial salmon fishing for their livelihood. Commercial harvest is processed at Ugashik. Subsistence harvest consists almost entirely of salmon and occasionally, waterfowl or geese.

## Plan Designations and Management

**Coastal Tidelands.** These tidelands<sup>31</sup> are designated General Use. Development authorizations are considered appropriate subject to the protection of sensitive resources and areas.

**Ugashik Bay (R14T-01, R14T-02).** Ugashik Bay is separated into two tideland management units; the area of the Pilot Point CHA (R14T-01), and that part of the Bay that is not included within the CHA (R14T-02). The tidelands in each management unit are designated Habitat, and the management intent is to protect the harbor seal haulouts and waterfowl concentration areas. Development authorizations are prohibited within the CHA unless the requirements of AS 16.20.520 and AS 16.20.530 are fulfilled. Development authorizations within tideland management unit R14T-02 may be considered appropriate if sensitive resources and areas are protected.

**Pilot Point Community (R14T-03).** Water dependent commercial or industrial activity to support the community of Pilot Point is considered appropriate, but authorizations issued by DNR shall ensure that the significant resource values of this area are protected.

See the Resource Allocation Table for more details on tideland management units.

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<sup>31</sup> Tidelands along the coast not included in R14T-01 or R14T-02.

## Resource Allocation Table for Upland Management Units - Region 14

Unit # / Name	Acres / Designation(s)	MTRS	Management Intent	Resources, Uses, Additional Info
R14-01 Smokey Point	1,545 Se - Settlement	Map 3-14 S029S052W, S003S052W	The unit is considered appropriate for settlement and is designated Settlement. Development is to conform to the requirements of Remote Settlement and those for the Caribou Wintering Area, described in the Settlement, and Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Harvest Areas sections of Chapter 2. Disposal of this unit during the planning period is considered appropriate.	Unit occupies an area of generally low, flat terrain that appears to be reasonably well drained. It is situated adjacent to the coast and northwest of the community of Pilot Point. A cabin may occupy portions of Section 3 in S030S052W. Caribou are known to winter in this unit.
R14-02 Ugashik Bay Uplands	24,973 Gu - General Use	Map 3-14	The unit is to be managed for a variety of resources, including dispersed recreation and the protection of fish and wildlife, including their associated habitat. Development authorizations, such as oil and gas exploration and development, may be appropriate subject to the protection of these resources and the requirements of Chapter 2. Intensive development is not expected within this unit during the planning period except occasionally and at specific locations, and it is intended that this unit be retained in state ownership. Most development is anticipated either within the areas designated Settlement in the region or in areas already conveyed to private individuals or Native corporations. The Alaska Peninsula transportation corridor traverses the unit; the actual position of the road alignment has yet to be determined. No authorizations or disposals should be considered that are within or near the corridor until the road alignment is known or without consultation with ADOT/PF.	This unit consists of upland areas that are characterized by low, flat terrain consisting either of wetlands or low and shrub. There are numerous lake, ponds, and wetland areas. (The prevalence of wetlands in this unit is somewhat less than that present in the adjacent unit, R14-02A.) Little human use of these occurs, with the exception of subsistence hunting and fishing. This unit does contain waterfowl molting concentrations, and is used as moose calving and caribou wintering habitat. The Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) reports several heritage sites in or near this unit, most notably in the vicinity of the Ugashik River.  This unit was affected by the 2013 Plan Amendment process.
R14-02A Ugashik Bay Wetlands	23,351 Ha - Habitat Wr - Water Resources	Map 3-14 S031S051W S032S051W S032S052W	Manage unit for its habitat and wetland values. Retain in state ownership. Dispersed recreation is considered an appropriate use in this unit.  Other than utilities, communication, roads/bridges, and similar facilities providing a public service, development is not appropriate within this unit. Any authorizations that may be issued will need to avoid impacts or mitigate impacts to wetlands, riverine areas, and sensitive moose habitat.	This unit consists of uplands adjoining and immediately south of the Ugashik River, and generally occupying an area between oxbows of this River and its tributaries. Terrain is flat and vegetation consists of grassland and wetlands. There are numerous lakes and remnant riverine features. A small portion of the southeastern part of the unit is occupied by a moose rutting and wintering area.  This unit was created by the 2013 Plan Amendment process.
R14-03 Pilot Point North	298 Pr - Public Facilities- Retain	Map 3-14 S003S051W Sec. 20,21	The unit is to be managed by the ADOT/PF consistent with FAA and ADOT/PF guidelines for airports and ancillary facilities. The land is to be retained in state ownership.	The unit consists of OSL 1214 and LSH 452. It is the site of the new Pilot Point airport (the runway is 3,280 feet).
R14-04 Pilot Point Central	21.30 Gu - General Use	Map 3-14 S029S051W Sec. 29	The unit, if considered for disposal, should be carefully evaluated prior to making any decisions. Additional land title research is recommended in order to establish the degree and kind of ownership that is vested with the state. A similar caution exists for the granting of authorizations other than those of a temporary type not involving the construction of permanent facilities.	Unit consists of a 21.4 acre area of generally flat land in the community of Pilot Point adjacent to Ugashik Bay. The unit is situated to the northwest of the Pilot Point airstrip, R14-05. The land was acquired through foreclosure. The degree and kind of state ownership of this unit is somewhat uncertain.
R14-05 Pilot Point Airstrip	127 Pr - Public Facilities- Retain	Map 3-14 S003S051W Sec. 28,29	Retain the unit in state ownership and management consistent with the management right.	This unit consists of LSH 306 and OSL 917. A management right (ADL 221520) was issued to the ADOT/PF. It is the former location of the Pilot Point airport which is now located one mile to the north.

<b>Unit # / Name</b>	<b>Acres / Designation(s)</b>	<b>MTRS</b>	<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Resources, Uses, Additional Info</b>
R14-06 Ugashik Airport	72 Pr - Public Facilities- Retain	Map 3-14 S031S005W Sec. 3,4	Retain the unit in state ownership and manage consistent with the requirements of the Management Agreement.	Unit is affected by a Management Right (ADL 221537) to ADOT/PF for the purpose of an airport lease for the community of Ugashik. Unit contains a state-owned 3,000' long gravel runway.



## Resource Allocation Table for Tideland Management Units - Region 14

Unit # / Name	Acres / Designation(s)	MTRS	Management Intent	Resources, Uses, Additional Info
R14T-01 Pilot Point CHA	38,052 Ha - Habitat	Map 3-14 S030S051W, S030S052W	Unit is designated Habitat. Management Intent: Unit is to be managed to protect the sensitive upland and tideland resources associated with this Critical Habitat Area. Only development authorizations that meet the requirements of AS 16.20.520 and AS 16.20.530 are appropriate. Applications must be submitted to ADF&G for review and approval. Ensure that authorizations are consistent with the requirements of the Bristol Bay Fisheries Preserve.	This tideland unit consists of the Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area (CHA), a Legislatively Designated Area (AS 16.20.565), established to protect sensitive habitat. Unit consists of both upland and tideland areas, the upland areas generally coinciding with a spit at the head of the bay called 'South Spit' as well as areas northwest and south of the community of Ugashik. The tidelands portion generally consists of the western portion of Ugashik Bay, especially the area near Smoky Point. The resources of the CHA are principally associated with areas of sheltered tidelands and seasonal waterfowl concentrations. The latter occur in the spring and fall. The bay is also important as a waterfowl molting concentration area. The Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve affects the CHA. See also unit R14T-02 which adjoins this unit and also contains sensitive resources.
R14T-02 Ugashik Bay	16,430 Ha - Habitat Hv - Harvest	Map 3-14 S030S052W	Unit is designated Habitat. Unit is to be managed to protect sensitive resources and habitat areas. Development authorizations may be appropriate within this unit if these resources are protected. Most development authorizations should occur within or near the area of the Pilot Point community, however. ADF&G must be consulted if a tideland development application abuts the Critical Habitat Area. Ensure that development authorizations are consistent with the requirements of the Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve.	This tideland unit is situated within Ugashik Bay, generally north and east of the Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area. Sensitive resources within the unit include eel grass, a waterfowl molting concentration area, and an extensive area at the mouth of Egegik Bay which is used as a harbor seal haulout concentration area. Waterfowl concentrations during the spring and fall are also present.  Harvest: Sockeye, chinook, chum and pink salmon are harvested in Ugashik Bay (drift net). Set net leases also occur in the coastal tidelands both north and south of Pilot Point and at the mouth of the Ugashik River. There are a few set net leases within the CHA. Several hundred fishing boats operate in, and in the vicinity of, Ugashik Bay. Pilot Point residents depend heavily on commercial salmon fishing for their livelihood. Commercial salmon harvest is transported upriver to the cannery at Ugashik for processing. Subsistence harvest consists almost entirely of salmon and occasionally geese.
R14T-03 Pilot Point Community	16 Wd - Waterfront Development	Map 3-14 S030S051W Sec. 20	Manage unit to be consistent with the requirements of the Management Agreement with ADOT/PF. Consult with Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT/PF) prior to issuing a tideland application.	This tideland unit is located immediately west of the Pilot Point airstrip. It is affected by a Management Agreement with ADOT/PF (ADL 227429).
R14T-04 Tide and Submerged Lands, Bristol Bay	56,300 Gu - General Use	Map 3-14	Manage for a variety of uses and resources. Minimize impacts to shorebird and waterfowl concentrations. Maintain opportunities for commercial and subsistence harvest. This unit is included within the Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve.	This unit consists of a small area of tide and submerged lands north of the Pilot Point Critical Habitat Area and Ugashik Bay. The primary concentration of tideland resources occurs in Ugashik Bay; see units R14T-01 and R14T-02 for the description of resources present in these units. The majority of the tidelands within Region 14 occur within these two units.  Tidal flats border the southern part of the unit, although the northern nearshore areas may have mixed sand and gravel beaches. Shorebirds, waterfowl, and some marine mammals are present.  Commercial and subsistence harvest occurs in R14T-01 and R14T-02, although there may be a limited amount of such activity in the southern part of the unit that borders R14T-02. See R14T-02 for a description of harvest activities.