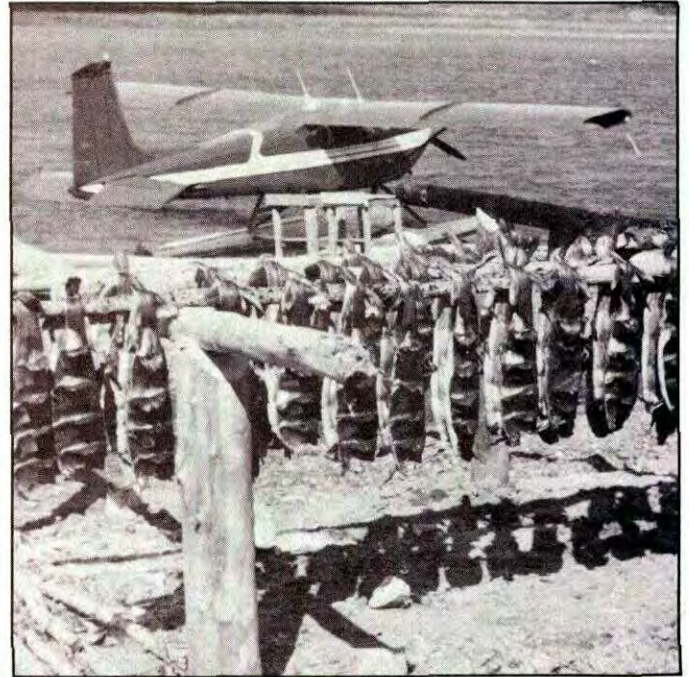
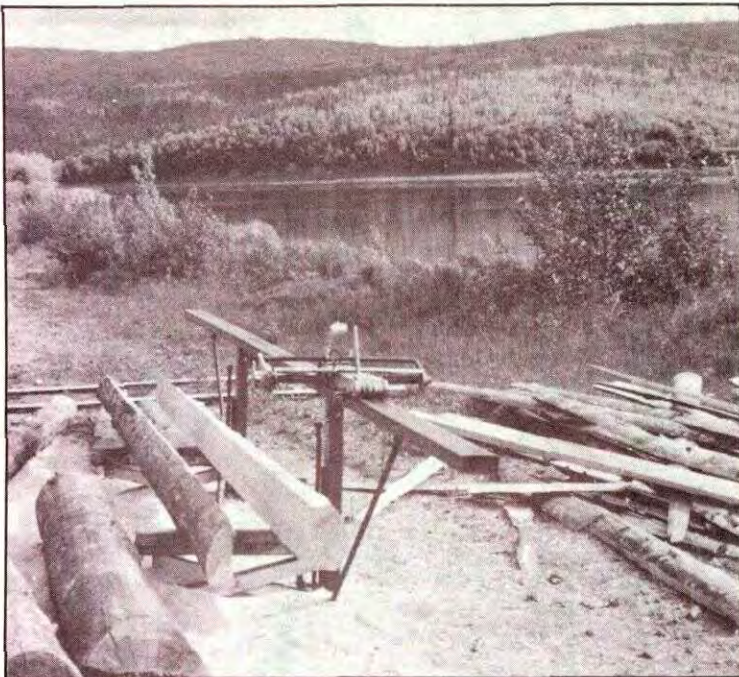


Chapter 3 Land Management Policies for each Management Unit



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Chapter 3

LAND MANAGEMENT POLICIES FOR EACH MANAGEMENT UNIT

Introduction

In this chapter, land management policies are presented for specific sites within the planning area. The area is divided into 18 management units by watersheds. The management units are further subdivided into subunits that are generally homogeneous with respect to resources, topography, and land ownership. The land management information presented for each management unit is:

Statement of Management Intent - The statement of management intent defines near-term and long-term management objectives for the management unit and the methods to achieve these objectives. There is a general statement of management intent for the entire management unit, and specific intent for each subunit.

Management Guidelines - Management guidelines that apply to specific subunits are listed and the areawide management guidelines in Chapter 2 that are most likely to apply to the management unit are identified.

Land Use Designation Summary - Charts are included that list primary and secondary land use designations for each subunit, prohibited use, subsurface resource management policy, and land ownership. These charts provide a quick picture of planned uses within a unit, but they must be used with the statement of management intent and the management guidelines to get the complete description of management policy.

Resource Information Summary - Charts are provided that summarize the resource values in each unit.

Map of Land Ownership and Management Unit and Subunit Boundaries - A map of each management unit and the subunits within it is included for each watershed. The maps show land status, subunit boundaries, and major trails in the unit.

Surface and Subsurface Land Use Designations

The plan presents separate land use designations for surface and subsurface resources. For surface activities, it designates the **primary and secondary land uses** for which each subunit is to be managed. A primary surface use is one that is of major importance in a management unit or subunit. The unit will be managed to encourage this use and its conservation or development. A secondary surface use is permitted within a subunit when its occurrence will not adversely affect achieving the objectives for the primary uses. A secondary use may be the main use for a limited area of the subunit. For example, within a management unit where the primary uses are fish and wildlife habitat and public recreation, a small area may be identified for forest management.

The plan also identifies **prohibited surface uses** within each subunit. These are activities that will not be permitted within the subunit without a plan amendment. In an area identified as critical habitat, for example, the subunit or portions of the subunit may be closed to grazing or to construction of remote cabins. Uses that are not specifically prohibited may be permitted on an individual basis if DNR

determines that the proposed activities are consistent with the statement of management intent for the management unit and subunit, and with the applicable management guidelines.

Resource designations for "Minerals", "Materials", "Coal", and "Oil and Gas" generally are not applied as primary or secondary surface land use designations. The problems in locating and measuring subsurface resources make it difficult and misleading to apply these categories in the same way they are used for surface resources like timber. However, a primary surface designation for minerals is used where intensive mineral exploration or development is currently taking place or is highly likely in the near term (5 - 10 years). The Department's policy for mineral development is shown by the **subsurface designations** which state whether the subunit is open or closed to new mineral entry. All state lands are available for subsurface leasing. Where a management unit is open to new mineral location and has a primary surface designation such as wildlife habitat or public recreation, the surface designation will not be construed to prevent mineral development.

General Use Lands

In remote areas, lands with little access and low surface and subsurface resource values are designated for "General Use" rather than more specific uses such as settlement or forestry. These lands will be retained in public ownership unless the plan is amended and they are proposed for land offering. These lands will be available for public use and open to mineral entry. They will be classified "Resource Management".

Resource Management Lands

Several areas are given "Resource Management" as the primary use designation and classification. These areas have high value for both settlement and other surface uses. Because of potential conflicts between current uses and sale of land for private ownership,

these areas will not be included in the list of lands available for disposal nor designated with Settlement a primary use. However, they have some of the highest potential for settlement of any state land in the planning area. They will be kept in public ownership in the near term; when the plan is updated -- approximately every five years -- they will be reevaluated to determine whether they should continue to be retained in the public ownership or offered for sale. A plan amendment is required if the primary use designation is changed.

Management Guidelines

Almost all state land addressed by this plan will be managed for multiple use. Exceptions are lands that will be offered for private ownership and public recreation sites that are less than 640 acres. For this reason, the plan establishes management guidelines that will allow various uses to occur without serious conflicts. Management guidelines can direct the timing, amount, or specific location of different activities to make the permitted uses compatible. For example, land disposals will be designed to protect public trails.

Flexibility of the Plan

The land use designations shown on the maps and charts in this chapter are intended to be flexible. Uses not shown may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if DNR determines they are consistent with the statement of management intent for the management unit and subunit and the applicable management guidelines. Boundaries of land use designations shown on the maps in this chapter may be modified through on-the-ground implementation activities -- for example, site planning for disposals -- if the modifications adhere to the management intent for the subunits affected. Similarly, in the implementation of the plan, uses not originally designated may be permitted if they are consistent with the management intent for a particular management unit. This plan should not be construed to preclude site-specific decisions

that comply with the management intent and guidelines. Because it covers such a large area, the plan will not provide individual answers for all the site-specific issues encountered by state land managers. The plan does, however, clarify the general management objectives for state lands in the Kuskokwim Area and thereby provides the basis for more informed decisions.

Definitions

Definitions of terms frequently used in this chapter are given in Appendix A.