

# MANAGEMENT UNIT 16: HOLOKUK - OSKAWALIK

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## Background

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**Location and Land Ownership.** Management unit 16 encompasses the drainages of the Holokuk and Oskawalik rivers, and of the smaller tributaries to the Kuskokwim between Napaimiut and Red Devil: Victoria, Aghaluk, Veahna, Downey, Eightmile, and Fuller creeks. The southern two-thirds of the unit are state owned or state selected. The lands fronting on the Kuskokwim River are Native owned. The remaining lands south of the river between Crooked Creek and Red Devil are in federal ownership. In addition to the Native corporation lands, there are at least 35 parcels of private lands in the subunit. These are primarily Native allotments on the Kuskokwim River.

**Resources and Land Use.** The unit is dominated by the Kuskokwim Mountains, including the Kiokluk Mountains and part of the Buckstock and Chuilnuk ranges. Elevations rise to 4000 feet above sea level. Most of the land is covered by black spruce woodlands in the valleys, and shrubs and alpine tundra on the mountain slopes. White spruce and hardwood forest cover is limited to small pockets along the major river and on south-facing slopes just west of Red Devil.

Red Devil is the only community within the unit, but the villages of Aniak, Crooked Creek, and Sleetmute and the seasonal community of Napaimiut are adjacent to the unit boundaries. Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Crooked Creek, and Tuluksak residents use state lands and waters in this unit for fishing; hunting for moose, bear, and caribou; trapping; and berry picking. One registered guide operates in this area. The area is generally unsuited for either forestry or settlement, although pockets with settlement suitability exist along major waterways. Mining potential is moderate to very high in the Kuskokwim Mountains, and there are numerous mining claims in the headwaters of the Holokuk, Chineekluk, and Oskawalik rivers. In past years, a mine at Red Devil was one of the nation's largest suppliers

of mercury. These same rivers also are important salmon spawning streams.

**Access.** The Kuskokwim River is the major transportation corridor through the unit. The lower portions of the Holokuk and Oskawalik rivers also are navigable. Natural landing areas in the Kuskokwim Mountains provide small plane access into portions of the unit, and there is a public airstrip at Red Devil. A number of trails also cross the unit, and provide access along the major rivers and into the Kuskokwim Mountains.

## Management Intent

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State lands in this unit will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use, including hunting, trapping, and mining. Most of the unit will remain open to mineral entry. However, to protect important salmon populations, the beds of salmon spawning and rearing areas in known mineralized areas will be closed. Uplands adjacent to salmon spawning and king salmon rearing areas in known mineralized areas will be subject to leasehold location requirements. Closures include portions of the main stem and tributaries of the Oskawalik, west fork of the Oskawalik, Holokuk, and Chineekluk, and south fork of the Chineekluk rivers; Egozuk Creek and a lake in the Kiokluk Mountains.

In order to provide opportunities for private land ownership near the community of Red Devil, one area is proposed for state selection. If it is conveyed to the state, it will be offered for sale.

Virtually all the lands along the Kuskokwim, and the lower reaches of the Oskawalik and Holokuk are in Native or federal ownership. However, the bed of the Kuskokwim and other navigable waters in the unit are state owned and are subject to the guidelines in this plan.

## **Subunit 16a - Kiokluk Mountains**

This large subunit has high habitat values and mineral potential. The large lake at the head of the Oskawalik River in the Kiokluk Mountains is a sockeye salmon spawning site, and the Holokuk, Oskawalik, and Chineekluk rivers are important king salmon spawning rivers. There are numerous mining claims in the unit, but there has been no mining in recent years. This subunit will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use, including hunting and trapping.

Most of the subunit will remain open to new mineral entry. However, because of their importance for salmon spawning and rearing, beds of portions of the Holokuk River, Oskawalik River, Chineekluk Creek, Egozuk Creek, a lake in the Kiokluk Mountains, the west fork of the Oskawalik River, and a number of their tributaries will be closed. Adjacent uplands to some of these stream segments will be subject to leasehold location requirements.

## **Subunit 16b - Victoria and Veahna Creeks**

Seven upland parcels with low resource values are included in this subunit. These parcels have little access and receive little use. They will be retained in state ownership, and managed for general use. Lands in this subunit will remain open to new mineral entry. However, the bed of a portion of Veahna Creek will be subject to leasehold location requirements to ensure compatibility between mining and salmon rearing areas.

## **Subunit 16c - Fuller Creek**

This subunit is federal land southwest of Red Devil. Land along Fuller and McCally creeks has potential for settlement and is accessible from Red Devil. Mineral potential in this subunit also is high and there are a number of existing mining claims. Because there is little land available for private ownership near Red Devil, this subunit is recommended for state selection. If conveyed to the state, it will be managed for settlement and minerals. Approximately 600 acres would be offered for

private ownership. The sale will be designed to avoid conflicts with mining activities.

## **Management Guidelines**

The complete set of areawide management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2. Any of the guidelines could apply to uses within this management unit. Those most likely to apply are listed below:

- Cultural resources
- Lakeshore management
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Subsurface resources

Guidelines specific to this management unit are listed by subunit in the following sections.

### **Subunit 16a - Kiokluk Mountains**

**Leases and Permits.** Leases or permits for development activities on the large lake at the headwaters of the Oskawalik River in T14N R49W S.M. sections 26, 27, 34, and 35 will be allowed only if consistent with protection of the sockeye salmon spawning in the lake, and king salmon spawning in the outlet to the lake.

### **Subunit 16a and 16c - Kiokluk Mountains and Fuller Creek.**

**Access Needs.** If land along the Holokuk River is conveyed to the Native corporation, additional legal access to the Holokuk drainage may need to be established. If land along Fuller Creek and McCally creeks are conveyed to the state and offered for sale, and if adjacent Native-selected lands in T19N R44W S.M. are conveyed to the Native corporation, an easement will be needed on the existing trail through Native-selected land. See page 4-14 for a more detailed description of access options.

### **Subunits 16a and 16b - Kiokluk Mountains and Victoria-Veahna Creeks**

**Agricultural Potential.** Portions of these subunits are identified on the USDA Exploratory Soil Survey as having moderate potential for

agriculture, but detailed soil and climatic information is not available. The Division of Agriculture should be consulted prior to issuing permits or leases for any activities that would significantly diminish the agricultural potential of these subunits.

#### **Subunits 16a - Kiokluk Mountains**

**Mineral Closure and Leasehold Location Areas.** Beds of portions of the main stem and tributaries of the Oskawalik, west fork of the Oskawalik, Holokuk, Chineekluk, and south fork of the Chineekluk rivers; Egozuk Creek; and a lake in the Kiokluk Mountains shown on Map 2.4 will be closed to new mineral entry to protect important salmon spawning and salmon rearing areas. Lands within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark of the segments of these streams and lake used for salmon spawning and king salmon rearing will be subject to leasehold location requirements. Streams closed or subject to leasehold location are listed in Appendix H. Lease stipulations for leasehold location areas are listed in the Mining section of Chapter 2.

#### **Subunit 16c - Fuller Creek**

**Mineral Lands in Land Offering Area.** The Division of Mining (DOM) will be consulted when a disposal is designed in the Fuller Creek subunit. DOM will determine high mineral value areas that should be deleted from the disposal offering.

#### **Navigable Waters**

**Peregrine Falcon Eyries.** There are four known peregrine falcon eyries in along the Kuskokwim River in this management unit. The Habitat Division of the Department of Fish and Game should be consulted prior to issuing permits or leases on the state-owned beds of navigable waters near the eyries in the following locations:

T21N R47W S.M. sec. 19-36

T20N R46W S.M. sec. 1-18

T20N R49W S.M. sec. 1-3, 10-15, 22-27 & 34-36

T17N R51W S.M. sec. 4-9, 16-21 & 28-33.

# RESOURCE INFORMATION SUMMARY

## Management Unit 16 - Holokuk-Oskawalik

Resource	16a	Subunit 16b	16c
Agriculture	Part moderate, rest unsuited	Two northeastern blocks moderate, rest unsuited	Low to unsuited
Energy	Very low potential	Very low potential	Very low potential
Fish	Holokuk, Oskawalik, Chineekluk: salmon and resident fish	Salmon in headwaters of Holokuk, Oskawalik, & Chineekluk	None identified
Forestry	Most unsuited, scattered sites with low potential along rivers	Unsuited	Most unsuited; some high on south slopes of Barometer Mt.
Grazing	High potential	High potential	High potential
Historic/cultural	High potential along Kuskokwim R.	Unknown	High potential next to Red Devil
Materials	High potential along Kuskokwim R.	Unsuited	Unsuited
Minerals	Moderate to very high potential, many claims	Very low to moderate potential, few claims	High potential; several existing claims
Oil & gas	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Public access	Boat on Holokuk & Oskawalik; small plane to tundra landings	None developed	Trails from Red Devil
Recreation	Low potential along in Kiokluk Mts. & along Holokuk & Oskawalik; rest unknown	Unknown	Local use near Red Devil
Settlement suitability	Most unsuited, scattered sites with low potential along rivers	Unsuited	Low potential on south-facing slopes
Wildlife	Mostly B-1, some A-2 & B-2; moose, some caribou	B-2; furbearers; some caribou, moose, & bear	Most B-2; A-2 in NE corner; caribou, moose bear
Important trails	Chuilnuk Mts. trail		Local trail

See glossary for definition of ratings.

# LAND-USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

## MANAGEMENT UNIT 16 - HOLOKUK-OSKAWALIK

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				COMMENTS
		Primary Surface Uses	Secondary Surface Uses	Prohibited Surface Uses <sup>a</sup>	Subsurface <sup>b</sup>	
16a Kiokluk Mountains	Most state, some state selected, some state select/ Native selected	Wildlife habitat	Public recreation	Land disposals Remote cabins	Open except along some streams	
16b Victoria Veahna Creeks	Most state selected, some state select/ Native selected	General use: low resource		Land disposals Remote cabins	Open	
16c Fuller Creek	Federal	Settlement	Forestry Public recreation Wildlife habitat	Remote cabins Trapping cabins after sale is scheduled	Open	Proposed for state selection; Net sale area = 600 acres

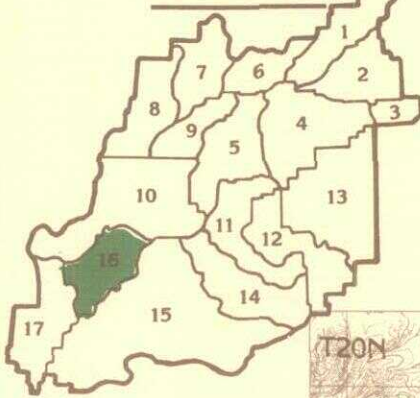
<sup>a</sup>Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management-intent statement, the management guidelines of this unit, and the relevant management guidelines listed in Chapter 2. Grazing may be allowed in portions of closed units when consistent with the guideline in Chapter 2 (Grazing on Important Habitat Lands).

<sup>b</sup>All areas are available for leasing for leasable minerals. Statements of whether or not the unit is open to mineral entry refer only to locatable minerals.

# Kuskokwim Area Plan

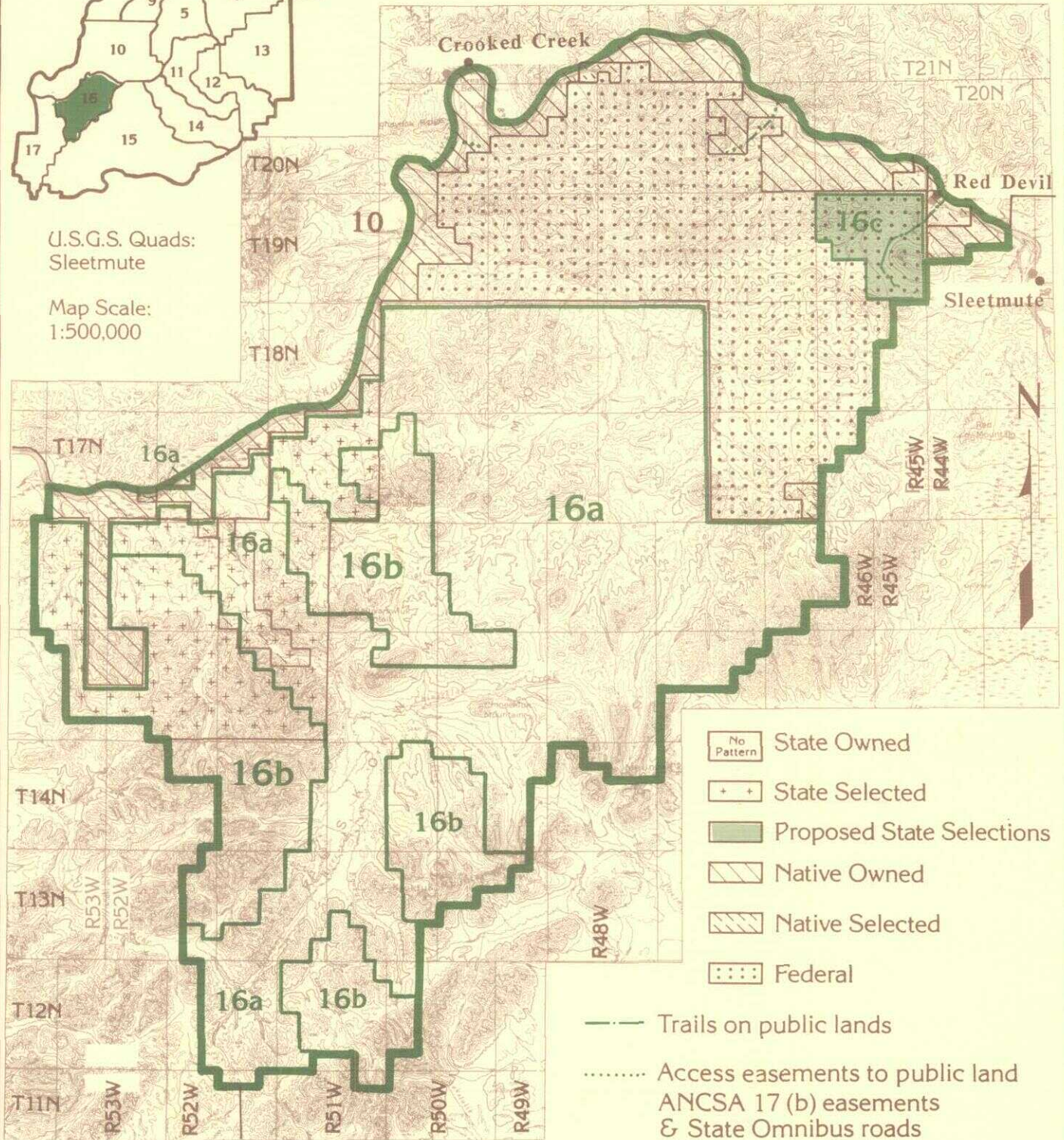
## 16: Holokuk - Oskawalik

**Location Map**



U.S.G.S. Quads:  
Sleetmute

Map Scale:  
1:500,000



- State Owned
- State Selected
- Proposed State Selections
- Native Owned
- Native Selected
- Federal

- Trails on public lands
- Access easements to public land  
ANCSA 17 (b) easements  
& State Omnibus roads

- Management Unit Boundary
- Subunit Boundary

Map shows approximate location of easements to state land and trails across state land. Portions of trails may cross private lands.