

MANAGEMENT UNIT 3 – WHISKERS CREEK

MANAGEMENT INTENT

This unit of public land, located north of Talkeetna between the Susitna and Chulitna rivers, contains large blocks suitable for agriculture, forestry or settlement. The largest contiguous area is the approximately 14,000 acres of borough land located between the Chulitna and Susitna rivers just north of Talkeetna. Access to the area between the rivers is difficult — the Parks Highway is west of the Chulitna River and the Alaska Railroad is east of the Susitna River. The most logical route would be south from the Parks Highway after it crosses the Chulitna River in Denali State Park. All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing. Public lands in this unit also will remain open to mineral location except for the proposed disposal area (subunit 3c) and will be available for coal leasing except in the agricultural area in subunit 3b.

This management unit is divided into three subunits: state land surrounding Blair Lake (3a), the borough land between the Chulitna and Susitna rivers (3b), and the state land adjacent to the Susitna River (3c). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses in each subunit.

Subunit 3a is a small pocket of state land surrounding Blair Lake. It will be retained in public ownership and managed to protect fish and wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities.

Subunit 3b is borough land with potential for settlement, forestry and agriculture. It is designated land bank. Under the existing borough agricultural policy, it eventually may be developed for agriculture. In the interim it is likely to be managed for forestry.

Subunit 3c is a small state owned parcel between the borough land and the Susitna River. An estimated 30% of the total area is suitable for settlement and recommended for this use. However, the sale of this land is contingent upon access to and plan for development of the agricultural area.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The complete set of areawide management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2 of this plan. All of the guidelines potentially apply to uses within the management unit; however, those that are most likely to be applicable in this unit are indicated with asterisks in the list below.

*Agriculture

Instream Flow
*Fish & Wildlife Habitat
*Lakeshore Management
*Forestry
*Public Access
*Recreation
Remote Cabin Permits
*Settlement
*Stream Corridors
Subsurface
*Trail Management
*Transportation
*Wetlands Management
Resource Management

Management guidelines that apply to this management unit only are presented below by subunit.

Subunit 3b (Whiskers Creek Agricultural Land)

Agriculture

To the extent feasible, the borough should use Class II and III soils for agricultural use rather than settlement. Where parcel configuration or topography render large farms infeasible, small farm agricultural development should be encouraged.

Trails and Public Access

Existing trails through the subunit should be retained in public ownership with a width of at least 50 feet either side of the centerline. Existing access to and along the Chulitna and Susitna rivers should be maintained and improved during agricultural development.

Settlement

Land of marginal agricultural capability due to soils, parcel size or configuration, topography, etc. should be used for settlement. In addition, land should be provided for any commercial development necessary to support the possible future agriculture project or commercial recreation needs associated with the river systems.

Stream Corridors

The management intent for land adjacent to the streams referenced below is to permit fishing, camping and other active uses and to protect water quality and riparian habitat should land in this subunit be conveyed to private ownership. Corridor widths will be set on a case-by-case basis using policies in Chapter 2. The standard minimum buffer width (200' on each side of the river) should be used on most of the un-

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION South Parks Highway

MANAGEMENT UNIT 3 – Whiskers Creek

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
3a Blair Lake	State	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	Forestry	Open	Available for leasing	Trapper Cabins Remote Cabins Land Disposals	
3b Whiskers Creek Ag. Land	Borough	Borough Land Bank Values: Agriculture, Forestry, Public Recreation, Settlement, Wildlife Habitat		Open	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	—	
3c Whiskers Creek Planned Sale Area	State	Settlement	Forestry Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed prior to disposal	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Remote Cabins Trapper Cabins	Estimated net disposal area =470 acres

*Other uses such as material sales, land leases, remote cabin permits, etc., that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement and management guidelines of this unit, and with the relevant management guidelines in chapter 2.

South Parks Highway 3

named tributaries to the Susitna and Chulitna Rivers and Whiskers Creek shown on the 1:63,360 scale USGS topographic maps for the area. The corridor on Whiskers Creek and the Susitna and Chulitna Rivers should be at least 300' on both sides of the streams.