

## MANAGEMENT UNIT 2: KICHATNA/NAKOCHNA

---

### MANAGEMENT INTENT

This unit comprises the drainages of Johnson Creek and the Kichatna and Nakochna Rivers, and land surrounding large recreational lakes such as Shell, Onestone, Hewitt and Whiskey Lakes. The Nakochna and Kichatna Rivers, Johnson and Red Creeks are all anadromous fish streams with high value as moose winter range. Hewitt and Shell Creeks are also anadromous fish streams, and Shell Creek is an important recreational stream as well. The Iditarod Trail runs along the southern edge of the management unit. Approximately two-thirds of the lands in the unit are within the boundaries of past state disposal offerings. There are concentrations of private land holdings in the Shell Lake-Onestone Lake and Hewitt Lake-Whiskey Lake areas. Mobil Oil Company has coal leases at a site with commercial potential north of the Skwentna River near Johnson Creek. Lands adjacent to the lease also have high to moderate potential for coal development. Concentrations of placer claims exist along the Nakochna and Kichatna Rivers above their confluence. A mix of public and private uses will be accommodated on lands within this management unit. Management Unit 2 will remain open to mineral location and available for coal leasing with the exception of the existing and proposed disposal areas (subunits 2b and 2c). All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing.

The six subunits within this management unit are: the Kichatna River, Nakochna River and Johnson Creek corridors and the adjoining uplands in the western reaches of the unit (2a); lands between the rivers within the boundaries of past land disposals that are available for additional settlement (2b); existing subdivisions (2c); Shell Creek corridor (2d); Shell Hill (2e); and four parcels of land adjacent to past sales in the Shell Lake-Skwentna River vicinity (2f). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas, and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses for each subunit.

**Subunit 2a**, the western reaches of the management unit and the corridors of the Nakochna River, Kichatna River and Johnson Creek will be retained in public ownership for habitat, public recreation, timber management, mining, and coal development. Remote cabin permits are an allowed use on state lands within this area.

**Subunit 2b** is made up primarily of land within the past Kichatna, Johnson Creek, Hewitt-Whiskey Lake and Shell Hills remote parcel offerings. Most of the area included in past land disposal areas will remain

available for additional settlement. Subunit 2b also includes one new settlement area west of the existing disposals between the Kichatna River and Johnson Creek. Consistent with the general subsurface policy in Chapter 2, the unstaked portions of the past Johnson Creek, Kichatna, and Nakochna remote parcel areas in this subunit will be reopened to mineral location and mineral leasing. The portions of subunit 2b outside the past disposal areas will continue to be open to location and mineral leasing.

**Subunit 2c** is composed of the existing Shell Hills, Onestone Lake, Shell Lake North and Hewitt-Whiskey subdivisions. There are 400 to 500 surveyed lots within these subdivisions that are as yet unsold and will remain available for sale over-the-counter.

**Subunit 2d** (Shell Creek corridor) will be retained in public ownership for public recreation and fish and wildlife habitat. This creek is an important recreational route connecting Shell Lake to the Yentna River.

**Subunit 2e** (Shell Hill) is a highland area, largely above treeline, that provides moose winter range and grizzly habitat. These state lands will be retained in public ownership and designated for public recreation and wildlife habitat.

**Subunit 2f** consists of four parcels of state land in the Shell Lake-Skwentna River vicinity. These lands, like the surrounding areas that have been offered for sale previously, have good capability to support settlement. However, because much of the surrounding area is within past and future sales these parcels also are valuable for public use and open space. This subunit is designated resource management-high value, and this area will be reevaluated in the future to determine its best long term use, and to decide whether it will be offered for sale or retained in public ownership.

### 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 this management unit; however, those that are most likely to be applicable are indicated with asterisks in the following list.

- Agriculture
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat
- \*Forestry
- \*Recreation

# LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Susitna LowlandsMANAGEMENT UNIT 2 – Kichatna-Nakochna

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
2a Western region	State	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	Forestry Remote Cabins	Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals Portions closed to grazing (see mgmt. guidelines)	
2b Kichatna, Johnson Cr., Hewitt Lake & Shell Hills remote parcel areas	State/ Private	Settlement (partly past remote parcel offerings)	Forestry (personal use) Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Portions closed to grazing (see mgmt. guidelines)	Estimated net disposal area = 16,580 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.

# LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Susitna Lowlands

MANAGEMENT UNIT 2 - Kichatna-Nakochna

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
2c Shell Hills, Shell Lake North, Hewitt-Whiskey, & Onestone Lake Subdivisions	State/ Borough/ Private	Settlement (existing subdivisions)	Forestry (personal use) Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Remote Cabins Trapper Cabins Portions closed to grazing (see mgmt. guidelines)	Approximately 450 unsold surveyed lots remain available over-the-counter
2d Shell Creek corridor	State	Public Recreation Water Resources Wildlife Habitat	Forestry	Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals Remote Cabins Trapper Cabins	—
2e Shell Hill	State	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	—	Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals Remote Cabins	—
2f Shell Lake perimeter	State	Resource Management (high) Values: Forestry, Settlement, Wildlife Habitat		Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals	—

\*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.

- \*Settlement
- Subsurface
- Transportation
- Instream Flow
- \*Lakeshore Management
- \*Public Access
- \*Remote Cabin Permits
- \*Stream Corridors
- \*Trail Management
- \*Wetlands Management
- Resource Management

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

### **Subunit 2a (Western Region)**

#### **Grazing**

Grazing is prohibited within those portions of subunit 2a in T23N R12W S.M. and T23N R13W S.M.

### **Subunit 2b (Kichatna, Johnson Creek, Hewitt-Whiskey Lake and Shell Hills Past Remote Parcel Areas)**

#### **Stream Corridors**

The management intent for land adjacent to the streams referenced below is to permit uses such as fishing, camping and other active uses, and to protect water quality and riparian habitat. Consequently, this land should be retained in public 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 Red Creek downstream from the unnamed tributary in T23N R14W S.M. section 25, on the unnamed stream crossing T22N R12W S.M. section 4, on the two major branches of this stream that join in Section 4, and on the main tributary to the Kichatna River that crosses T23N R13W S.M. section 9. A 100' buffer will be retained on Red Creek upstream from the unnamed tributary in T23N R14W S.M. section 25, and on the stream crossing T22N R12W S.M. sections 15 & 16.

A 50' access easement and 50' building setback will be applied to all other streams in the existing disposal areas. In the portion of this subunit that has not been offered for sale previously (i.e., that portion of 2b in T22N and 23N R15W, T23N R14W Sections 31 & 32, and T22N R14W Sections 5, 6 & 8), the standard minimum buffer width (200' on each side of the river) should be used on the unnamed streams that appear on the 1:63,360 scale USGS topographic maps.

#### **Grazing**

Grazing is prohibited in those portions of subunit 2b within the following areas because of their importance as moose winter range:

- T23N R14W Sections 1, 2, 12 and 13, S.M.
- T22N R13W Sections 1 — 3, and 11, S.M.
- T22N R12W, S.M.
- T21N R12W, S.M.

#### **Woodlots**

Additional woodlots must be identified and retained in public ownership near settlement areas south of Johnson Creek prior to more disposal offerings in these areas.

### **Subunit 2c (Shell Hills, Shell L. North, Hewitt-Whiskey and Onestone Subdivisions)**

#### **Grazing**

Grazing is prohibited in all of subunit 2c except for the portion within T22N R12W and 13W. The closure is intended to protect the important moose winter range in this area.

### **Subunit 2d (Shell Creek Corridor)**

#### **Trail Management**

A trail corridor connecting Shell Lake with the Shell Creek corridor will be identified and retained in public ownership subject to the trail management policies in Chapter 2.

### **Subunit 2f (Shell Lake Perimeter)**

#### **Stream Corridors**

The management intent for land adjacent to the unnamed streams that appear on the 1:63,360 scale USGS topographic maps is to permit uses such as fishing, camping and other active uses and to protect water quality and riparian habitat. Consequently, this land should be retained in public 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.

#### **Grazing**

Grazing is prohibited within the portions of subunit 2f in T24N R13W S.M. sections 1, 2 and 11 and T21N R12W S.M. This closure is intended to protect important moose winter range.