
2. MANAGEMENT INTENT AND GUIDELINES BY MANAGEMENT UNIT

MANAGEMENT UNIT 1 – DENALI HIGHWAY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

This management unit encompasses most of the northern half of the subregion. The southern boundary of the unit generally follows the Susitna River; the northern and eastern boundaries are the edge of the planning area. The majority of the land in the management unit is federally owned. The remainder (approximately 15%) is roughly divided between state land and land either Native owned or selected.

Public land in this unit should be retained in public ownership and managed to continue to provide opportunities for a variety of public recreational activities, to protect fish and wildlife habitat and to allow mining. Of particular concern is protection of the habitat of the Nelchina caribou herd which ranges into this unit from the south. Recreation activities include hunting, fishing, boating, wilderness hiking, berry picking and driving for pleasure along the Denali Highway. Most of the activity in the management unit is focused along this highway corridor and to a lesser extent along the Susitna and Maclaren rivers. Protecting and improving public access from the Denali Highway into adjacent backcountry hunting areas and protection of scenic quality along the highway are two major objectives for this area.

Settlement, where necessary to support resource development, is allowed in the management unit; however, disposals to provide land for recreational/seasonal settlement are not permitted. All public lands within this management unit will remain open to mineral location except for specified sheep mineral licks. These areas are open under leasehold location. More on this subject is presented in the subregion overview at the beginning of this subregion section. All public lands will be available for coal and oil and gas leasing.

It is recommended that the state not select any of the federal lands in this area. The plan's recommended management policy for federal land in this area can be well carried out under the management of the BLM.

While this plan gives a general overview of intended uses on federal lands, any specific land use authorization for federal lands will require federal approval. Such approvals may follow different procedures than those for the same activity on state land.

This management unit is divided into three subunits: lands patented to, interimly conveyed to, or selected by native corporations (1a); a strip of land along the Denali Highway where it parallels the Susitna River (1b); and the remainder of the unit (1c). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of this area and the chart on the following page for a summary of land uses.

Subunit 1a is comprised of the Native owned and selected lands within the area. Because of the nature of these selections, it is anticipated that most of these lands will not be conveyed to Native ownership. It is recommended that these lands be managed in generally the same way as adjacent public lands, including protecting fish and wildlife habitat and allowing these lands to be used by the general public for hunting, hiking, etc. An area of particular concern is the Prairie Creek area near Stephan Lake. Large numbers of salmon spawn in this creek and this results in very large and biologically significant seasonal concentration of black and brown bears.

Subunit 1b, which is located on either side of the Denali Highway and south of the Clearwater Mountains, is an area with some settlement potential. The area contains relatively dense stands of trees with potential to screen development from views from the highway and add to the attractiveness of the area for recreational/seasonal use. The plan does not recommend settlement in this area. Instead, the area should be used for hunting and other public uses, with some land being made available through leasing or where appropriate sale for commercial recreation development.

Development of public use cabins, picnicing and parking areas, and campgrounds are encouraged in subunit 1b and in other areas along the highway. These areas receive a tremendous amount of public use, particularly in hunting season, and existing facilities are often overcrowded.

Subunit 1c, the federal and state lands that constitute the remainder of the area, should be managed for multiple use including habitat protection, mining and public recreation.

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Talkeetna Mountains

MANAGEMENT UNIT 1 -- Denali Highway

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
1a Native Lands	Native (patented, interim conveyed and selected)	Primarily Private Land-- Recommended Uses: Wildlife Habitat, Public Recreation, Limited Settlement		---	---	---	---
1b Denali Highway East	Federal/Private	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	Forestry (personal use)	Open	Available for leasing	Remote Cabins Grazing	---
1c Upper Susitna	Federal/State/State Selected	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	Forestry (personal use)	Open	Available for leasing	Remote Cabins Grazing	---

*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.

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
- 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 just this management unit are limited to the land management recommendations put forth in the publication *Denali to Wrangell-St. Elias — Assessment and Management of Scenic Resources along the Highways between Denali and Wrangell-St. Elias National Parks*. This document is available from the Division of Land and Water Management and the Bureau of Land Management. It should be consulted for additional information on scenic resources during planning for activities likely to affect visual quality along these routes.