Unit 1 CAPE SUCKLING

Background

The Cape Suckling unit lies between the Bering Glacier terminus and the Gulf of Alaska. The unit was defined primarily by land status and remoteness. Until the December 1994 settlement agreement, the university held one-time timber rights to much of the unit.

Physical features

Several areas of terrain and vegetation are unique within the planning area. The Cape has rocky shoals and islets, with westward views of Kayak Island. The remainder of the 13-mile shoreline is probably the most remote in the planning area because overland access is blocked by the Seal River. The shoreline includes a broad sand beach, backed by rolling dunes, with trees or shrubs beginning one-half to one-mile inland. The Suckling Hills rise to about 1,500 feet and have treeless rounded crests. There is an uninterrupted expanse of dense mature spruce between the Kiklukh and Tashalich rivers. Between the Tashalich and Seal rivers, the vegetation cover is primarily alder, willow, and young cottonwood.

Bering Glacier, Vitus Lake, and Seal River are the locus of dynamic glacial activity. Seal Beach (at the mouth of Seal River) is eroding rapidly, and the U.S. Geological Survey predicts that tidewater influx at the Bering Glacier will cause the glacier to retreat rapidly within the next 10 years.[1] In 50 to 100 years, as the Bering Glacier continues to retreat, a new fiord system will be created. The glacier's retreat may be interrupted by periodic surges, as occurred in 1994 and 1995.

Access

Small aircraft provide the only access to and from this unit. Aircraft use the beach or unauthorized airstrips at the Kiklukh and Seal rivers. There are no roads within the unit, and future connection to outside roads is complicated by the intervening distances, wetlands, and river crossings. There are no anchorages: however, the mouth of the Seal River may be accessible to small boats. Icebergs up to 60 feet long currently float out the Seal River into the Gulf of Alaska. If the barrier beach is breached, icebergs up to 1,500 feet long may enter the gulf, posing a hazard to navigation.

Land status

Through the December 1994 settlement agreement, the University of Alaska agreed to relinquish all timber harvest rights within Unit 1 in return for timber rights east of Duktoth River.[2] If any party to the settlement subsequently withdraws from the agreement, the university could reclaim timber rights within Unit 1. Appendix C contains a map and an explanation of the terms and history of the December 1994 settlement agreement.

Adjoining lands

State-selected lands border to the north. The Yakataga State Game Refuge borders to the east. State-owned tidelands and submerged lands in the Gulf of Alaska form the south boundary of this unit. Chugach National Forest lies to the west.

1 Predictions of Bering Glacier's future activity were presented in 14 scientific papers at the American Geophysical Conference in December 1994.

2 In accordance with the December 1994 settlement agreement, when the litigation over ADL 223456 was formally dismissed by the superior court and the university received timber cutting rights to the substitute tract east of Duktoth River, the university relinquished its one-time timber cutting rights at Cape Suckling subject to the university's right to return to the status quo ante pursuant to subparagraph 4(i) and paragraph 16 of that agreement.

Resources and uses

Recreation and fish and wildlife and harvest are the primary existing uses in Unit 1. Guided sport fishing, kayaking, and camping take place on the main rivers and lakes. Beachcombing and hiking occur along the beach. Guided hunting in the Suckling Hills has been curtailed by a decline in the goat population (from 32 in 1980 to 7 in 1990). DFG biologists report that this goat population experiences heavy predation from wolves because escape terrain is limited. The isolation of the Suckling Hills from other mountainous areas limits the chance for goats from other populations to restock the area.

The coastal meadows and dunes attract concentrations of brown bears and black bears from mid-July to mid-August.

The shore and nearshore at Cape Suckling attract the largest concentrations of waterfowl along the coast for migratory staging. The reefs are also a sea otter concentration area.

The U.S. Geological Survey and Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Services have on-going scientific studies of glacial dynamics and influences in the eastern part of the unit. Bering Glacier is likely to be a highly significant data collection area for glacial research and successional events into the next century.

Approximately 12,440 acres, or one-third of the unit, have operable commercial timber. There is presently no road system or Log Transfer Facility (LTF) in the Cape Suckling area. Timber harvest in this area would most likely require a road westward through Chugach National Forest to an LTF at Okalee Spit or Controller Bay. Construction of a road through Chugach National Forest would require approval from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The road, and any other facilities on National Forest land, would be subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and may require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. The NEPA process would address impacts to fish, wildlife, commercial fishing, and anchorages.

An LTF on state tidelands in Controller Bay or adjacent to Okalee Spit would require an authorization from DNR. These tidelands are in the Prince William Sound Area Plan (PWSAP), not the Yakataga Area Plan.[3]

Management considerations

Near the Bering Glacier terminus, Management Units 1a-9 through 1a-12 are undergoing rapid transformation as the glacier alternately surges and recedes. The entire area provides the scientific community with many unique opportunities for research: the rapid retreat of the glacier; the progressive expansion and salinization of Vitus Lake, the uncovering of glacier landforms; the erosion of Seal Beach; and creation of a world-class fiord system. The glacial retreat will also provide the opportunity to study: the glacial history of the area through interstadial forests and peat bogs; interstadial climates; ancient sand dunes and shorelines; prehistoric earthquakes; isostatic rebound; glacial and pro-glacial hydrology; revegetation of deglaciated lands; establishment of salmon runs within Vitus Lake; establishment of new wildlife habitat and bird rookeries; introduction and establishment of benthic species in Vitus Lake; and rates of glacial sedimentation. For more information on scientific values and research opportunities, see Management Unit 2.

Upland resource development in Unit 1 is hampered by lack of tidewater facilities for resource transfer. The nearest protected anchorage is 15 miles west at Okalee Spit in Chugach National Forest, outside the planning area.

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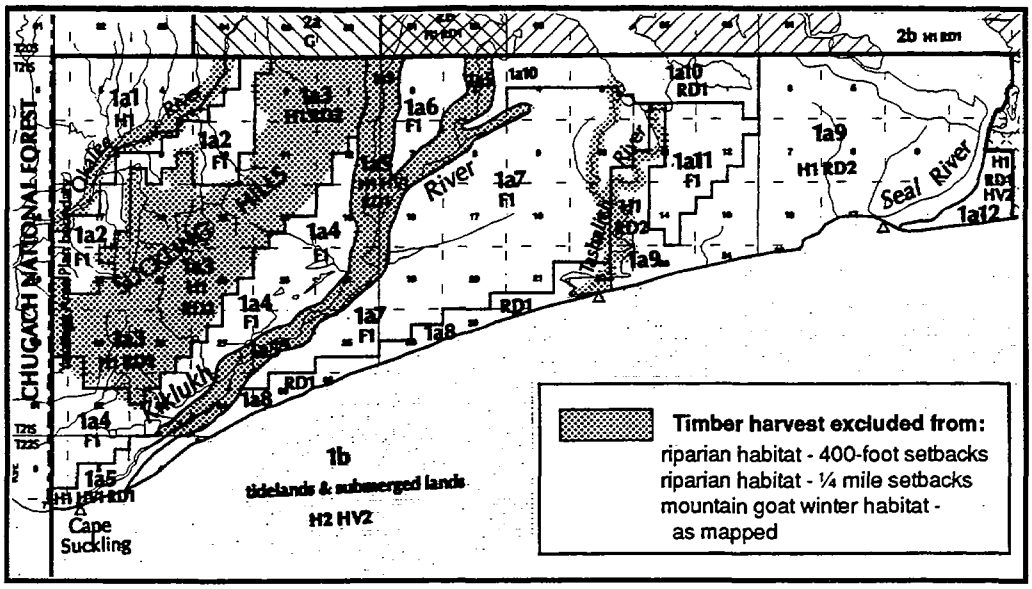
3 DNR recognized the potential need for an LTF when the PWSAP was developed but the suitability of possible sites was not determined. See the management intent for Subunit 29b of PWSAP, page 3-249.



Map 3.2

Relinquished University timber rights under ADL 223456

The university's previously-held timber rights influenced DNR's development of management intent for this unit. Subunit boundaries, designations, and guidelines in the Cape Suckling area correspond to previous university timber boundaries set by ADL 223456, shown on Map 3-2, above. When DNR updates this area plan,[4] DNR will reconsider the management boundaries, designations, and guidelines.

In accordance with the December 1994 settlement agreement, DNR will manage the Cape Suckling tract as general state land.[5] The tract is available for addition to the Yakataga State Game Refuge, subject to future legislative action.

DNR will not make state timber available for sale or harvest within this management unit until at least December 2014, except for harvest incidental to development of a cabin and trail system.[6] In addition, before future state timber offerings, DNR must revise the Yakataga Area Plan, including a re-examination of land classifications and land use designations. The annual allowable cut for state land must also be recalculated after the area plan is revised.

The Yakataga area is very seismically active. Historic seismicity suggests a 67 percent probability of a great earthquake (exceeding 8.2 on the Richter scale) before 2000. Manmade structures on or near active surface faults may be subject to extreme ground accelerations, catastrophic ground failure, or direct displacement.

Tsunami hazards are high, both from earthquakes and submarine slides. There are near-surface faults and potential submarine slide areas just offshore from Unit 1. The most effective means of mitigating against possible damage to offshore structures due to seafloor instability or active faulting is by careful mapping and avoidance of these features.

There is potential for outburst flooding along Seal River if a narrow barrier beach containing Vitus Lake erodes further or is breached by a tsunami or storm waves. Large icebergs, currently trapped in Vitus Lake by the barrier beach, could float into the Gulf via the breached outlet, posing hazards to manmade structures or shipping in the Gulf.

4 The Yakataga Area Plan will be updated in 20 years as provided in the December 1994 settlement agreement. DNR must update the plan before it may hold state commercial timber sales outside the University's timber rights tracts east of Duktoth River. The plan update must reconsider land use decisions.

5 If any party withdraws from the settlement agreement, pursuant to Section 16 of the agreement, the University would re-acquire timber rights to Cape Suckling *status quo ante*, as if the agreement had not been entered into, except that the volume of timber harvested from the substitute tract would be subtracted from the Suckling timber rights.

6 See Appendix C for the history and terms of the December 1994 settlement agreement.

Unit 1 - Cape Suckling resource allocation summary

Forestry

Access. If timber harvest is to occur, the plan identifies the need for future development of a road corridor across Unit 1 to a log transfer facility. DNR would determine the location and design of that road corridor when a timber harvest was proposed.

Availability. Under the settlement agreement regarding the university timber litigation, there will be no state timber sales or harvests, except incidental to a cabin and trail system, until at least December 2014.

The plan applies a forestry designation to nearly all the commercial timber in Unit 1 that is subject to the university settlement [ADL 223456]. ADL 223456 excluded university timber harvest in several river corridors and goat habitat areas.

Several areas subject to the university settlement appear to have no commercial timber, based on vegetation maps and operating constraints. The plan designated these non-commercial or non-timber areas for other uses than forestry. The plan does not prohibit timber harvest in these areas.

Fish and wildlife harvest

Access. The plan acknowledges the use of the beach and several other unimproved areas for intermittent wheel-plane access. There is currently no road system in Unit 1. The plan directs DNR to close inactive or unmaintained roads to prevent environmental and safety hazards.

Fish and wildlife harvest is a designated use along Kiklukh River and the mouth of Seal River. Several areas used for guided hunting and community harvest areas are designated for forestry. If the university reclaims timber harvest rights in the Unit 1 Cape Suckling area, the value of guided hunting and community harvest may drop in forestry areas because of aesthetic changes to the landscape, changes to habitat, and the likelihood of increased hunting competition.

Fish and wildlife habitat

Riparian habitat. Riparian habitat along the four largest streams in this unit is protected from timber harvest by no-logging buffers established under ADL 223456 and this plan. These riparian corridors preserve habitat for anadromous fish as well as eagle wintering, swan nesting and brood rearing, and bear feeding concentration areas.

Goat habitat. If the university reclaims timber harvest rights in the Unit 1 Cape Suckling area, the area plan exempts the university from plan guidelines for goat and moose winter habitat. These types of habitat were largely excluded from university timber harvest under terms of ADL 223456. DNR and DFG will advocate appropriate measures for goat and moose habitat through the ACMP review of the university's timber plans.

Coastal habitat. A 500-foot wide buffer along the coastal edge of timber will preserve important habitat for species that feed and travel along the coast, such as brown and black bears, river otters, mink, wolves, and bald eagles. The plan's areawide guidelines limit forestry activities and new surface uses in this 500-foot-wide buffer.

Minerals development

DNR has adopted a mineral leasehold location policy for the Kiklukh and Tashalich Rivers.

Unit 1 - Cape Suckling resource allocation summary, continued

Recreation and tourism

River recreation. Recreation and tourism are designated uses along three of the four major rivers in Unit 1. These areas are excluded from the university timber harvest. Along the Tashalich and Kiklukh Rivers, DNR will identify and protect recreation sites to be managed for access and public use, including camping and boat launches. The plan states that road crossings may not impede float access to or along the rivers.

Bering Glacier tourism and scientific interest. The area plan acknowledges the national and international scientific values of the Bering Glacier forelands. During plan updates, DNR will re-evaluate parts of Unit 1 bordering Bering Glacier to see whether more intensive recreation management, or creation of a park, is warranted. When DNR authorizes activities, it will consider how the terms and duration of authorization affect the potential for creation of a state park.

Coastal fringe. Recreation designations extend the length of the coast from Cape Suckling to the Refuge, incorporating non-forested dunes and, near the Seal River, inland areas of immature or scrub forest. In addition, the plan maintains recreation values within a 500-foot-wide buffer of mature timber along the coast, within which logging and new surface uses will be limited. This coastal edge of timber will provide scenic qualities, shelter for recreation uses, and wildlife watching opportunities.

Settlement

The area plan did not designate settlement lands in Unit 1. There is a public interest in retaining these lands in state ownership as directed by AS 38.04.015, based on their forestry, habitat, recreation, scientific, and cultural values. Furthermore, settlement might compel the state to provide essential services which could create an economic burden because of the area's remoteness.

Transportation

The area plan acknowledges the potential need for road construction in several parts of Unit 1 if timber harvest is to occur. Road location will be determined when timber harvests are planned.

The area plan acknowledges the potential need for an airstrip near the Seal River (Bering Glacier outlet).

Waterfront development

There are no likely waterfront development sites along this exposed outer coast. The primary values of the waterfront in Unit 1 are recreation, natural scenery, and habitat. If timber harvest is to occur, the plan acknowledges the need for an overland transportation link to possible waterfront development sites in Chugach National Forest west of the planning area.

Other resources

The scientific and cultural resources of the Bering Glacier forelands are documented in this plan and protected by a site specific guideline in several subunits within Unit 1. Forestry is a co-designation on one part of the forelands: however, commercial forestry may be precluded or delayed by the university settlement and by sparseness and immaturity of commercial timber.

Subunit 1a-1 - Okalee River

■ Designation

Habitat (H1)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance fish and wildlife habitat, particularly for moose wintering, waterfowl and shorebird migrations, and swan and eagle nesting. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to these habitat values.

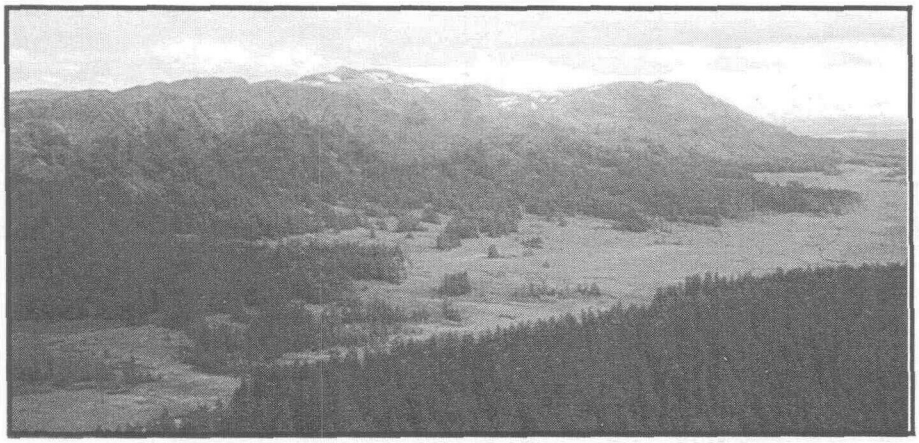
Access through this unit may be needed to develop resources on adjoining state lands.

■ Guidelines:

No timber harvest A corridor 400-feet-wide on either side of the Okalee River, as mapped in ADL 223456, will be managed as a no-timber harvest area for habitat and recreation. (See university settlement map in Appendix C.)

■ General information

This unit is vegetated by willow, alder, and young cottonwood. There is no commercial timber.



Suckling Hills

Subunit 1a-2 - north face of Suckling Hills

■ Designation

Forestry (F1)

■ Management intent

Promote forest management for sustained yield of timber. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to timber resources and production.

Provisions for maintaining mountain goat habitat in this unit will be addressed through interagency review at the time DNR receives project applications. Forestry Guidelines F and H (from Chapter 2) may serve as a reference for mitigating non-forestry development within goat habitat.

■ Guidelines:

No timber harvest A corridor 400-feet-wide on either side of the Okalee River, as mapped in ADL 223456, will be managed as a no-timber harvest area for habitat and recreation. (See university settlement map in Appendix C.)

■ General information

See the table at the end of this unit.

Subunit 1a-3 - Suckling Hills

■ Designation

Habitat and dispersed recreation (H1, RD2)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance fish and wildlife habitat, particularly for mountain goat winter habitat and bear feeding areas on south facing slopes, and eagle winter concentration areas. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to these habitat resources.

Maintain conditions for dispersed recreation consistent with the habitat resources listed above. All activities will minimize significant adverse impacts to dispersed recreation.

Provisions for maintaining mountain goat habitat in this unit will be addressed through interagency review at the time DNR receives project applications. Forestry Guidelines F and H (from Chapter 2) may serve as a reference for mitigating non-forestry development within goat habitat.

■ Guidelines: None. There are no guidelines specific to this unit.

■ General information

The mountain goat population in the Suckling Hills has dwindled to less than 10 in the past few decades, partly because there is limited steep terrain where goats can escape predators. The isolation of the Suckling Hills from other mountains limits the likelihood that goats will immigrate and replenish the population.

Subunit 1a-4 - south face of Suckling Hills

■ Designation

Forestry (F1)

■ Management intent

Promote forest management for sustained yield of timber. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to timber resources and production.

Provisions for maintaining mountain goat habitat in this unit will be addressed through interagency review at the time DNR receives project applications. Forestry Guidelines F and H (from Chapter 2) may serve as a reference for mitigating non-forestry development within goat habitat.

■ Guidelines:

Mineral leasehold location — In portions of the beds of the Kiklukh River and its tributaries that support anadromous fish, new mineral entry will be allowed only under leasehold location in order to protect high quality anadromous fish habitat and to avoid impacts to water quality that is essential for sustaining the productivity of the Yakataga area's commercial, sport, and community harvest fisheries. See Appendix B for a map showing where leasehold location applies.

■ General information

This unit contains mature spruce, as well as immature spruce interspersed with willow, alder, and young cottonwood.

Subunit 1a-5 - Kiklukh River corridor

■ Desigation

Habitat, harvest, and dispersed recreation (H1, HV1, RD1)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance fish and wildlife habitat, particularly for anadromous fish habitat, swan and eagle nesting, and bear feeding. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse activities to these habitat resources.

Protect or enhance conditions for fish and wildlife harvest, particularly commercial set net fishing, guided sport fishing, and community harvest of moose and fish. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to the harvest activities listed above.

Protect or enhance conditions for dispersed recreation along the Kiklukh River, particularly for boating and camping. Maintain public access to and along the Kiklukh River for recreation, hunting, and fishing. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to the recreation uses listed above.

■ Guidelines:

Maximum width of special management zone along Kiklukh River

If DNR applies additional management measures for the Kiklukh River under Forestry Guideline J, these measures will not extend outside the no-harvest zone mapped in ADL 223456.

Recreation access sites

A site on the lower Kiklukh River (T21S R9E) will be managed for access and public use including camping, boat takeouts, and aircraft landing. A suitable replacement site may be identified and reserved during the Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) process.

Before issuing leases for commercial uses in the Kiklukh River corridor, DNR will assess the recreation values along a one- to two-mile stretch from the proposed lease, and select and reserve a public recreation site(s). The reserved site(s) will be noted on DNR's status plats. A plan amendment is not required for DNR to designate these sites. Eventually, these public sites will be spaced at intervals of approximately 2 to 4 miles along the Kiklukh River and the coast from Cape Suckling to ensure resting and camping opportunities for recreationists along the river and coast. Sites will be selected and managed to maintain firewood and fresh water sources for camping, shelter from prevailing winds, scenic qualities, natural vegetation, and opportunities for seclusion and privacy. These sites will be retained in public ownership and DNR will reserve access to and along the river banks and to the coast from these sites.

No timber harvest in habitat and recreation corridor

A corridor averaging one-half mile wide along the Kiklukh River, as mapped in ADL 223456, will be managed as a no-timber harvest area in order to protect habitat and dispersed recreation (see university settlement map at the end of Unit 1). The no-harvest corridor will extend at least 400 feet from mean high water from both banks of the Kiklukh River.

Commercial recreation leasing under 38.05.073.

DNR may consider commercial recreation leasing by competitive bid under AS 38.05.073.

Road crossing A road crossing of the Kiklukh River may be allowed. The crossing will not impede float access to or along the river.

Roads Timber harvest roads are allowed within this subunit where there is no feasible and prudent alternative for access.

Mineral leasehold location In portions of the beds of the Kiklukh River and its tributaries that support anadromous fish, new mineral entry will be allowed only by leasehold location in order to protect high quality anadromous fish habitat and to avoid impacts to water quality that is essential for sustaining the productivity of the Yakataga area's commercial, sport, and community harvest fisheries. See Appendix B for a map showing where leasehold location applies.

■ General information

There is a commercial set net camp and a sport fish camp on the Kiklukh River.

The timber in this subunit is excluded from the university settlement.

The dunes along the coast [T22S] are subject to destabilization if the vegetation is disturbed.

Subunit 1a-6 - above Kiklukh River confluence

■ Designation

Forestry (F1)

■ Management intent

Promote forest management for sustained yield of timber. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to timber resources and production.

■ Guidelines: None. There are no guidelines specific to this subunit.

■ General information

See the table at the end of this unit.

Subunit 1a-7 - lowlands between Kiklukh and Tashalich rivers

■ Designation

Forestry (F1)

■ Management intent

Promote forest management for sustained yield of timber. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to timber resources and production.

Retain public access to and along the Kiklukh River, Tashalich River, and the coast for recreation, hunting, and fishing.

■ Guidelines:

Recreation access sites Two recreation access sites near the mouth of the Tashalich River (T21S R10E, sections 21 and 22) will be managed for access and public use (camping, boat takeouts, and aircraft landing).

Before issuing leases for commercial uses along the coast, DNR will select and reserve public recreation sites at intervals of approximately two to four miles near the coast between Cape Suckling and Seal River to ensure resting and camping opportunities for recreationists along the shore. The reserved sites will be noted on DNR's status plats. A plan amendment is not required for DNR to designate these sites. Eventually, these public sites will be spaced at intervals of approximately 2 to 4 miles along the Kiklukh River and the coast from Cape Suckling to ensure resting and camping opportunities for recreationists along the river and coast. Sites will be selected and managed to maintain firewood and fresh water sources for camping, with shelter from prevailing winds, scenic qualities, natural vegetation, and opportunities for seclusion and privacy. These sites will be retained in public ownership and DNR will reserve access to and along the shore.

Habitat and recreation corridor A corridor 400-feet-wide on either side of the Tashalich River, as mapped in ADL 223456, will be managed as a no-timber harvest area for habitat and recreation (See university settlement map in Appendix C.)

Road crossing A road crossing of the Tashalich River may be allowed. The crossing will not impede float access to or along the river.

Mineral leasehold location In portions of the beds of the Tashalich River and its tributaries that support anadromous fish, new mineral entry will be allowed only by leasehold location in order to protect high quality anadromous fish habitat and to avoid impacts to water quality that is essential for sustaining the productivity of the Yakataga area's commercial, sport, and community harvest fisheries. See Appendix B for a map showing where leasehold location applies.

■ General information

Unit 1a-7 generally contains the coastal edge of timber, which provides shelter and scenic values for recreation along the coast. The coastal edge of timber provides shelter and a travel corridor for bears feeding in the dunes and other species using the adjoining dunes and grasslands.

Subunit 1a-8 - Suckling shoreline

■ Designation

Dispersed recreation (RD1)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance conditions for dispersed recreation, particularly for wildlife viewing, beach hiking, beach combing, and photography. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to the recreation uses listed above.

■ Guidelines:

Habitat and recreation corridor Corridors 400 feet wide on either side of the Tashalich River, and approximately one-half-mile wide along the Kiklukh River, as mapped in ADL 223456, will be managed as no-timber harvest areas for habitat and recreation.

Recreation access sites

Before issuing leases for commercial uses along the Suckling shoreline, DNR will assess the recreation values along a one- to two-mile stretch from the proposed lease, and select and reserve public recreation sites. The reserved sites will be noted on DNR's status plats. A plan amendment is not required for DNR to designate these sites.

Eventually, these public sites will be spaced at intervals of approximately two to four miles along the coast between Cape Suckling and Seal River to ensure resting and camping opportunities for recreationists along the shore. Sites will be selected and managed to maintain firewood and fresh water sources for camping, shelter from prevailing winds, scenic qualities, natural vegetation, and opportunities for seclusion and privacy. These sites will be retained in public ownership and DNR will reserve access to and along the shore.

Mineral leasehold location

In portions of the beds of Tashalich River and its tributaries that support anadromous fish, mineral entry will be allowed only under leasehold location in order to protect high quality anadromous fish habitat and to avoid impacts to water quality that is essential for sustaining the productivity of the Yakataga area's commercial, sport, and community harvest fisheries. See Appendix B for a map showing where leasehold location applies.

■ General information

Recreation and adventure tourism along the coast is growing. The highest economic values for adventure tourism depend on maintaining the wild character, scenic values, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The inland boundary of Unit 1a-8 generally lies at the coastal edge of timber. The unit is characterized by rolling dunes and grasslands with no timber. The dunes are subject to destabilization if the vegetation is disturbed. The southern end of the unit, in T22S, is outside the university timber settlement area [ADL 223456].

Subunit 1a-9 - Bering Glacier forelands and middle Tashalich River

■ Designation

Habitat and dispersed recreation (H1, RD2)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance fish and wildlife habitat, particularly for bears, moose, waterfowl and seals. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to these habitat resources.

Maintain conditions for dispersed recreation, consistent with the habitat resources listed above. All activities will minimize significant adverse impacts to recreation values and uses.

DNR will re-evaluate the resource values of this subunit as the movement of Bering Glacier continues, and will consider the potential for creation of a state park, based on the current status of the university timber rights, other land ownership changes, and the recreation and scientific values of this subunit.

Mouth of Tashalich River

■ Guidelines:

Land authorizations

Terms and duration of land authorizations should preserve scientific and other values and research opportunities related to Bering Glacier (see details in Unit 2). Any DNR authorizations should be tailored to maintain the potential for creation of a state park at Bering Glacier.

Leases

Leases should be no longer than ten years in order to maintain flexibility for creation of a state park.

Habitat and recreation corridor

Corridors 400-feet wide on either side of Tashalich River and Seal River, as mapped in ADL 223456, will be managed as no-timber harvest areas for habitat and recreation.

Recreation access sites

Before issuing leases for commercial uses along the ocean shoreline, DNR will assess the recreation values along a one- to two-mile stretch from the proposed lease, and select and reserve a public recreation site(s). The reserved site will be noted on DNR's status plats. A plan amendment is not required for DNR to designate these sites.

Eventually, these public sites will be spaced at intervals of approximately two to four miles along the coast between Cape Suckling and Seal River to ensure resting and camping opportunities for recreationists along the shore. Sites will be selected and managed to maintain sources of firewood and fresh water for camping, shelter from prevailing winds, scenic qualities, natural vegetation, and opportunities for seclusion and privacy. These sites will be retained in public ownership and DNR will reserve access to the shore.

Commercial recreation leasing under 38.05.073

DNR may consider commercial recreation leasing by competitive bid under AS 38.05.073.

Airstrip

An airstrip may be authorized in this subunit.

Outburst flooding DNR should advise applicants for land uses along Seal River of the potential for outburst flooding from Vitus Lake. Avoid construction or storage in potential flood areas, where practical.

Mineral leasehold location In portions of the beds of the Tashalich River and its tributaries that support anadromous fish, new mineral entry will be allowed only under leasehold location in order to protect high quality anadromous fish habitat and to avoid impacts to water quality that is essential for sustaining the productivity of the Yakataga area's commercial, sport, and community harvest fisheries. See Appendix B for a map showing where leasehold location applies.

■ General information

Over half of this unit is low dunes covered by riparian and lowland willow. The dunes are subject to de-stabilization if the vegetation is disturbed. Immature cottonwood and spruce are scattered across the central part of the unit, one-half to one mile inland from the coast, Seal River and Vitus Lake. These stands are low density (generally 10 to 20 percent canopy coverage).

This unit has high scientific and tourism values deriving from the neighboring Bering Glacier (see explanation in Management Unit 2). The Gulf of Alaska is eventually expected to breach the 1.8 mile expanse of dunes and grassland currently separating the ocean from Vitus Lake. High tides exceeding two meters in the Gulf of Alaska currently enter Vitus Lake through Seal River.

Icebergs up to 20 meters long currently float down Seal River into the Gulf. Larger icebergs (as long as 500 meters) are currently floating in Vitus Lake and are expected to wash into the Gulf of Alaska after the beach is breached.

Subunit 1a-10 - Tashalich headwaters lakes

■ Designation

Dispersed recreation (RD1)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance conditions for dispersed recreation, particularly future potential as a state park. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to the recreation uses listed above.

DNR will re-evaluate the resource values of this subunit during plan updates and consider the potential for recreation management or creation of a state park, based on the current status of the university timber rights, other land ownership changes, and the recreation and scientific values of this subunit.

■ Guidelines:

Land authorizations Terms and duration of land authorizations should preserve scientific and other values and research opportunities related to Bering Glacier (see details in Unit 2). Any DNR authorizations should be tailored to maintain the potential for creation of a state park at Bering Glacier.

Leases Leases should be no longer than ten years in order to maintain flexibility for creation of a state park.

■ General information

This unit may have high scientific and tourism values deriving from the neighboring Bering Glacier (see explanation in Management Unit 2).

Subunit 1a-11 - lowlands east of Tashalich River

■ Designation

Forestry (F1)

■ Management intent

Promote forest management for sustained yield of timber. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to timber resources and production.

DNR will re-evaluate the resource values of this subunit during plan updates and consider the potential for recreation management or creation of a state park, based on the current status of the university timber rights, other land ownership changes, and the recreation and scientific values of this subunit.

■ Guidelines: None. There are no guidelines specific to this subunit.

■ General information

This unit may have high scientific and tourism values deriving from the neighboring Bering Glacier (see explanation in Management Unit 2).

Subunit 1a-12 - mouth of Seal River

■ Designation

Habitat, dispersed recreation, and harvest (H1, RD1, HV2)

■ Management intent

Protect or enhance fish and wildlife habitat, particularly for anadromous fish, seal concentrations, and eagle feeding and wintering. Protect or enhance conditions for dispersed recreation, particularly for wildlife viewing for seals, waterfowl, and shorebirds. All activities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, avoid significant adverse impacts to the habitat resources and recreation uses listed above.

Maintain conditions for fish and wildlife harvest consistent with the habitat and recreation activities listed above. All activities will minimize adverse impacts to harvest activities.

DNR will re-evaluate the resource values of this subunit during plan updates and consider the potential for recreation management or creation of a state park, based on the current status of the university timber rights, other land ownership changes, and the recreation and scientific values of this subunit.

■ Guidelines:

Airstrip	An airstrip may be authorized in this subunit.
Land authorizations	Terms and duration of land authorizations should preserve scientific and other values and research opportunities related to Bering Glacier (see details in Unit 2). Any DNR authorizations should be tailored to maintain the potential for creation of a state park at Bering Glacier.
Leases	Leases should be no longer than ten years in order to maintain flexibility for creation of a state park.
Outburst flooding	DNR should advise applicants for land uses along Seal River of the potential for outburst flooding from Vitus Lake. Avoid construction or storage in potential flood areas where practical.

■ General information

This unit is mostly dunes and grassland. The dunes are subject to destabilization if the vegetation is disturbed. This unit may have high scientific and tourism values deriving from the neighboring Bering Glacier (see explanation in Management Unit 2). The beach is eroding approximately 65 yards inland each year. The Gulf of Alaska is eventually expected to breach the 1.8 mile expanse of dunes and grassland currently separating the ocean from Vitus Lake. High tides exceeding two meters in the Gulf of Alaska currently enter Vitus Lake through Seal River.

Icebergs up to 20 meters long currently float down Seal River into the Gulf. Larger icebergs (as long as 500 meters) are expected to wash into the Gulf of Alaska after the beach is breached.

Subunit 1b - tidelands and submerged lands between Cape Suckling and Midtimber Lake

■ Designation

Habitat and harvest (H2, HV2)

■ Management intent

Maintain conditions for fish and wildlife habitat and harvest. All activities will minimize significant adverse impacts to habitat resources and harvest activities.

■ **Guidelines:** None. There are no guidelines specific to this subunit.

■ General information

Tsunami hazards are high, both from earthquakes and submarine slides. There are near-surface faults and potential submarine slide areas just offshore from Management Unit 1.

Unit 1 - Cape Suckling

Area # & name	Desig-nation	Resource or Use (See the resource reports and maps for more complete information)	Background
1a-1 Okalee River	H1	▪ no commercial timber ▪ willow, alder, cottonwood and grass over the entire unit ▪ moose winter habitat ▪ moose rutting in northern part of unit ▪ trumpeter swan nesting and brood rearing ▪ eagle feeding concentration areas and documented nest sites ▪ eagle winter concentration area ▪ waterfowl/shorebirds spring/fall concentration area ▪ anadromous fish habitat has not been surveyed by DFG	▪ Remote. No commercial timber. Timber within 400 feet of Okalee River is excluded from harvest.
1a-2 north face of Suckling Hills	F1	▪ mature spruce and hemlock ▪ mountain goat winter habitat on timbered slopes oriented east to southwest, between 300 to 1,500 foot elevation, and within 1/4 mile of cliffs ▪ eagle winter concentration area and feeding concentration areas ▪ community harvest: goat ▪ anadromous fish habitat has not been surveyed by DFG	▪ Suckling Hills goat population is geographically isolated and has recently declined by 75 percent. ▪ The Suckling Hills have been closed to goat hunting since the early 1990s.
1a-3 Suckling Hills	H1 RD2	▪ mountain goat winter habitat ▪ alpine vegetation on most slopes ▪ eagle winter concentration area ▪ bear spring feeding concentration area on south slopes	▪ Suckling Hills goat population is geographically isolated and has recently declined by 75 percent. ▪ The Suckling Hills have been closed to goat hunting since the early 1990s.
1a-4 south face of Suckling Hills	F1	▪ mature spruce ▪ mountain goat winter habitat on timbered slopes oriented east to southwest, between 300 to 1,500 foot elevation, & within 1/4 mile of cliffs ▪ community harvest: goat, moose ▪ bear spring concentration areas on south slopes ▪ guided moose hunting ▪ moose winter habitat ▪ anadromous fish streams ▪ eagle winter concentration area ▪ trumpeter swan nesting and brood rearing area	▪ Suckling Hills goat population is geographically isolated and has recently declined by 75 percent. ▪ The Suckling Hills have been closed to goat hunting since the early 1990s.

Unit 1 - Cape Suckling, continued

Area # & name	Desig-nation	Resource or Use (See the resource reports and maps for more complete information)	Background
1a-5 Kiklukh River corridor	H1 HV1 RD1	▪cottonwood, willow and alder; scattered stands of young spruce ▪eagle winter concentration area ▪eagle roosting, eagle nest sites ▪trumpeter swan nesting and brood rearing area ▪commercial set net & guided sport fishery on Kiklukh River ▪community harvest: moose, fish ▪bear summer/fall feeding concentration area ▪beaver concentration area upstream from confluence ▪anadromous fish production: 14,000 coho (third-highest coho-producing river in planning area)	▪A corridor averaging one-half-mile wide along the Kiklukh River will be managed as a no-timber-harvest area for habitat and recreation, as mapped in ADL 223456. See map in Unit 1.
1a-6 above Kiklukh River confluence	F1	▪immature spruce and cottonwood on 1/3 of acreage; 2/3 is non-forested or inoperable ▪eagle feeding and winter concentration area ▪trumpeter swan nesting and brood rearing area ▪moose rutting	
1a-7 lowlands between Kiklukh & Tashalich rivers	F1	▪mature spruce ▪marten habitat in dense timber ▪eagle winter concentration area ▪swan nesting along Kiklukh River ▪commercial sport fishery on Kiklukh River ▪community harvest: moose, fish ▪trumpeter swan nesting and brood rearing area ▪anadromous fish production: 14,000 coho, also pink salmon	▪ A corridor 400-feet wide on either side of the Tashalich River will be managed as a no-timber-harvest area for habitat and recreation, as mapped in ADL 223456. See map in Unit 1.
1a-8 Suckling shoreline	RD1	▪primarily dunes and grassland ▪Wildlife viewing, beach hiking, beach combing, photography. High recreation values based on contrasting scenery and pristine qualities. ▪wheel planes on beaches provide primary access ▪bear spring/summer/fall feeding concentration area along shore and dunes ▪sea otter known concentration ▪eagle winter concentration area	▪No commercial timber in this subunit. ▪Dunes are subject to destabilization if vegetation is disturbed.

Unit 1 - Cape Suckling, continued

Area # & name	Desig-nation	Resource or Use (See the resource reports and maps for more complete information)	Background
1a-9 Bering Glacier forelands & middle Tashalich River	H1 RD2	▪mmature cottonwood and spruce with alder and willow dominating eastern unit ▪anadromous fish production: Tashalich River ▪bear summer/fall feeding concentration areas along Tashalich River & the coast ▪bear spring feeding west of Seal River mouth and in interior of unit ▪moose rutting ▪moose winter habitat throughout unit ▪guided moose hunting ▪community harvest: moose ▪geese molting on lakes ▪swan nesting and brood rearing concentration areas in wetlands, along Tashalich River, & on lakes southwest of Bering Glacier ▪seal haul out concentration in Vitus Lake and along Seal River ▪eagle winter concentration area	▪Mostly non-commercial timber or non-forest, or inoperable. ▪USGS has predicted imminent breach of seal beach and rapid retreat of Bering Glacier, creating a tidewater fjord. Seal River is a barrier to overland transport because channel instability and icebergs make crossing or bridging difficult. ▪Waterfowl use the lakes; specifics are unknown. ▪The timber in this unit has low value or is inoperable at present but it may have value in the future.
1a-10 Tashalich headwater lakes	RD1	▪mostly non-forest: sparse patches of immature spruce ▪beaver concentration area	▪USGS predicts expansion of Vitus Lake with retreat of the Bering Glacier.
1a-11 lowlands east of Tashalich River	F1	▪immature spruce and cottonwood ▪moose winter habitat and moose harvest in south & east parts of this unit, close to cottonwood/alder areas ▪guided moose hunting ▪community harvest: moose	
1a-12 mouth of Seal River	H1 RD1 HV2	▪dunes, grassland, and alders ▪wildlife viewing for seals, waterfowl, shorebirds ▪seal concentrations in Seal River (approx. 50-75) and passage for seals to Vitus Lake (approximately 300) ▪eagle feeding concentration area ▪eagle winter concentration area ▪commercial set net fishery ▪An airstrip east of Seal River is used for access to scientific research and recreation. ▪anadromous fish production	▪USGS has predicted imminent breach of Seal Beach, creating a tidewater fiord: probable scientific and natural history attraction.

Unit 1 - Cape Suckling, continued			
Area # & name	**Desig-nation**	**Resource or Use** (See the resource reports and maps for more complete information)	**Background**
1b tidelands & submerged lands between Cape Suckling & Midtimber Lake	H2 HV2	▪ major migratory bird corridor ▪ Waterfowl spring/fall migratory staging area at cape is largest staging area along this coast. ▪ recreation: hiking, beachcombing, wildlife viewing ▪ eagle winter concentration ▪ sea otters at Cape Suckling ▪ scoter molting concentration area at Cape Suckling ▪ community harvest of fish at mouth of Kiklukh River ▪ waterfowl hunting near mouth of Tashalich River ▪ commercial salmon setnets at mouths of Kiklukh, Tashalich, and Seal rivers ▪ commercial salmon trolling ▪ commercial tanner crab harvest offshore	