



governmentattic.org

"Rummaging in the government's attic"

Description of document: **Correspondence between Sarah Palin, in her capacities of Mayor of Wasilla, Chairman of the Alaska Oil and Gas Commission, and Governor of Alaska, and the Bureau of Land Management - Alaska (BLM - Alaska) 2006-2007**

Requested date: 06-September-2008

Released date: 16-September-2008

Posted date: 08-October-2008

Date/date range of document: 30-August-2006 - 11-May-2007

Source of document: United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Alaska State Office
FOIA Coordinator
222 West 7th Avenue, #13
Anchorage, AK 99513-5076
Phone: 907-271-5711
Fax: 907-271-3624
Email: AK_FOIA@blm.gov

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file.



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Alaska State Office
222 West Seventh Avenue, #13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7504
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

In Reply Refer To:
FOIA-BLM-2008-01034
blh (954)

SEP 16 2008

VIA USPS EXPRESS MAIL

This letter is being written in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated September 6, 2008, and received in this office on September 8. In your letter you ask for copies of all correspondence between Sarah Palin, in her capacities of Mayor of Wasilla, Chairman of the Alaska Oil and Gas Commission, and Governor of Alaska, and the Bureau of Land Management - Alaska (BLM - Alaska).

In response to your request, BLM – Alaska has located 39 pages of documents which we are providing to you in their entirety (see documents enclosed). The fee for providing these documents is less than \$30 and is not being charged in accordance with 43 CFR 2.16(b)(2) and 2.18(a).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (907) 271-3356 or by email at bhenry@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Brendan L. Henry
Acting FOIA Coordinator
Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office

Enclosures



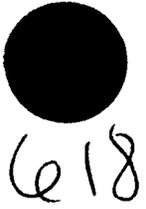
United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Alaska State Office
222 West Seventh Avenue, #13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7504
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>



In Reply Refer To:
1610.3-2 (050)

MAY 11 2007



The Honorable Sarah Palin
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor:

This letter is in response to the Governor's Consistency Review (GCR) for the East Alaska Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS). Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planning regulations in 43 CFR 1610.3-2 afford state Governors an opportunity to review an RMP/EIS to identify any known inconsistencies between the RMP and approved state or local plans, policies or programs. The East Alaska PRMP/FEIS was published on June 2, 2006, and made available for State review at that time. The GCR, dated August 29, 2006, found the PRMP/FEIS to be inconsistent with state priorities, policies, and land use plans. This finding was based on the BLM's proposal to retain certain lands under Public Land Order 5150, which resulted in continued federal management of portions of the pipeline/utility corridor.

The GCR recommended that the inconsistency be resolved as follows: "I request that PLO 5150 be revoked and State selections be made available for conveyance." In addition, the GCR requested clarification of certain technical and administrative points. As previously discussed with Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff, the Record of Decision will clarify the technical and administrative points in a manner that meets the State's concerns. I cannot; however, recommend at this time the complete revocation of PLO 5150 to allow for conveyance of pipeline/utility corridor lands to the State. My reasons for not accepting this recommendation are explained below.

Since the issuance of PLO 5150 in 1971, the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) provide Congressional direction and mandates under which public lands, including those in the pipeline/utility corridor, are to be managed. FLPMA established the general policy that public lands be retained in federal ownership and emphasizes multiple use management of the lands. ANILCA requires federal agencies to evaluate the effect on subsistence use and needs in determining whether to permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands.

The East Alaska PRMP/FEIS describes the resource values and the uses that occur on the lands withdrawn for the pipeline/utility corridor. These include recreation, forestry, subsistence, minerals, and use as a transportation/utility corridor. The public, in comments submitted during the planning process, supported continued federal management of pipeline/utility corridor lands with multiple use management. Decisions made within the East Alaska PRMP/FEIS support this public sentiment by maintaining administration of the lands as federal public lands and emphasizing their use as a transportation/utility corridor, as Special Recreation Management Areas, as a forestry emphasis area (for the Tiekel block), and as an area available for subsistence.

The State's topfiling on the pipeline/utility corridor is not a current valid selection. It represents a potential selection that will only become effective after the withdrawal is lifted. The general provision of ANILCA section 810(c) does not require the BLM to ignore its specific obligations under section 810(a) nor does subsection (c), on its own, mandate that the BLM modify PLO 5150 to make lands, in addition to those identified in the PRMP/FEIS, available to the State of Alaska. The determination of whether to revoke or modify PLO 5150 is a discretionary BLM decision to be made in the course of our resource management planning efforts in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Given the public testimony and the analysis presented in the PRMP/FEIS, I do not believe that a recommendation to revoke PLO 5150 would be consistent with ANILCA. Specifically, I do not believe that such an action would meet the three determinations required by ANILCA section 810.(a) (3)(A), (3)(B) and (3)(C).

The BLM worked with the state throughout this planning process to ensure consistency with State priorities, policies, and land use plans. This is evident in the State/BLM coordination and consultation that occurred during the planning process and in the PRMP/FEIS treatment of issues such as travel management on State-selected lands. Efforts were made throughout the planning process to reach decisions that would be consistent with DNR area plans where possible. The BLM made reasonable efforts during the planning process and prior to the publication of the PRMP/FEIS to work with the State on the resolution of the pipeline/utility corridor issue. In the PRMP/FEIS, we agreed to recommend the modification of PLO 5150 to allow for the conveyance of 82,500 acres to the State. The East Alaska PRMP/FEIS is the product of a well-reasoned, properly implemented, and comprehensive resource management planning effort on the part of the BLM and the Proposed RMP reflects the quality of the process.

I am committed to working with the State of Alaska in the implementation of the East Alaska RMP and in assisting the State in meeting the December 2008 deadline for providing final priorities for conveyance. In the Record of Decision for the PRMP/FEIS, the BLM will provide for future negotiations with the State regarding the pipeline/utility corridor. I am willing to consider and recommend further modification of PLO 5150 to allow for the conveyance of additional lands within the pipeline/utility corridor to the State of Alaska as long as the BLM is able to adequately meet all of its other management responsibilities, including management of the pipeline/utility corridor and subsistence resources and activities.

This concludes my response to your Governor's Consistency Review. According to our planning regulations in 43 CFR 1610.3-2, you have 30 days from receipt of this letter to submit a written appeal to the BLM Director. The Director will accept your recommendations if he determines that the recommendations provide for a reasonable balance between the national interest and the State's interest. The Director must communicate to you in writing and publish in the *Federal Register* the reasons for accepting or rejecting your recommendations. If you or your staff have any questions regarding this letter or the consistency review process, please call me at 271-5080 or Gary Reimer at 267-1205.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Lonnie

Thomas P. Lonnie
State Director

cc: Tom Irwin, Commissioner, DNR

TRANSACTION REPORT

P. 01

MAY-11-2007 FRI 01:03 PM

FOR: BLM AK STATE DIRECTOR 907 271 4596

DATE	START	RECEIVER	TX TIME	PAGES	TYPE	NOTE	M#	DP
MAY-11	01:01 PM	919074653886	1'27"	4	SEND	OK	492	

TOTAL : 1M 27S PAGES: 4

Bureau of Land Management

Alaska State Office

222 West Seventh Avenue, #13

Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599

Phone: 907-271-5080

Fax: 907-271-4596

Fax Cover Sheet



BLM

To: Commissioner Tom Irwin

Phone: _____ Fax: 907-465-3886

Office: Department of Natural Resources

From: Bureau of Land Management - Alaska

Phone: 907-271-5080

TRANSACTION REPORT

P. 01

MAY-11-2007 FRI 01:00 PM

FOR: BLM AK STATE DIRECTOR 907 271 4598

DATE	START	RECEIVER	TX TIME	PAGES	TYPE	NOTE	M#	DP
MAY-11	12:59 PM	919074853532	39"	4	SEND	OK	491	
TOTAL :						39S PAGES:	4	

Bureau of Land Management

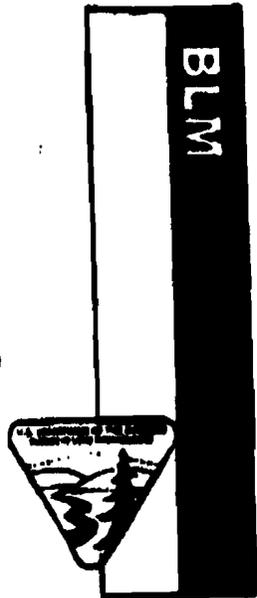
Alaska State Office

222 West Seventh Avenue, #13

Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599

Phone: 907-271-5080 Fax: 907-271-4596

Fax Cover Sheet



To: The Honorable Sarah Palin

Phone: _____ Fax: 907-465-3532

Office: Office of the Governor

From: Bureau of Land Management - Alaska

907 271 5080

DIVISION TRACKING SHEET

(Note: Attention: Staff Assistant, please track within your Division)

SD # 0618

DUE DATE: 09/12/406

SPECIAL

Date Received: 09/06/06

FILE CODE:

Congressional

Controlled
Correspondence

To: AK-910 Julia Dougan

Referred To: AK-050 (Faxed 8/30)

From: Office of the Governor

Return To: ASD STAFF ASSISTANT, AK-910

Signator: Julia Dougan

Reference:

DUE DATE to requester: 09/12/06

Letter from State of Alaska, Office of the Governor, seeking clarification on various issues in the East Alaska Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement. Please see attachment with letter outlining what areas they are requesting clarification on.

Action Taken:

Faxed pp #

Please draft a response for Julia's signature.

Answered By and Date:

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR@GOV.STATE.AK.US



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

P.O. Box 110001
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0001
(907) 465-3500
FAX (907) 465-3832
WWW.GOV.STATE.AK.US

RECEIVED AUG 30 2008

August 29, 2006

Ms. Julia Dougan
Acting State Director
Bureau of Land Management
Alaska State Office
222 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 13
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599

Dear Ms. Dougan:

Thank you for providing the State of Alaska with a copy of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) East Alaska Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) prepared using BLM's planning regulations and guidance issued under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). We appreciate BLM's efforts to work and consult with state resource agencies throughout the development of this plan. I believe that this cooperative approach has benefited both the state and BLM. We appreciate this additional opportunity to identify inconsistencies with approved state plans, policies, and programs.

There remains one major issue where the plan is not consistent with state policy and plans - that being the RMP/EIS proposal to retain the Pipeline Utility Corridor established through Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 in federal ownership. As you know, the state and the federal governments, including BLM, share many of the same goals, objectives, and interests pertaining to Alaska's resources and the benefits that accrue to our citizens. We have a shared interest in seeing a transportation corridor maintained to support development of resources owned by the U.S. government and the State of Alaska. BLM has previously modified PLO 5150 to allow for state acquisition of lands in the corridor north of the Brooks Range and certain areas south of the Yukon River, subject to existing rights-of-way. The federal government anticipated additional conveyances of pipeline corridor land from federal ownership as evidenced in the process described in the Federal Agreement and Grant Right-of-Way for the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). Clearly the federal government envisioned additional conveyances to the state within the

Ms. Julia Dougan
August 29, 2006
Page 2

corridor and the state has planned for future conveyances as evidenced by state policies and land use plans.

The lands in PLO 5150 were withdrawn to enable construction of the pipeline and to ensure a viable transportation and utility corridor for future development opportunities. The TAPS line is well established and additional rights-of-way have been established for a future gas pipeline. As a result, future use of the corridor for oil and gas transportation is assured, regardless of ownership, and the state's commitment to the development of Alaska's resources and the ability to move them to market is strong. There is no need for further federal retention of corridor lands. Irrespective of land ownership, BLM and the state will continue to cooperate in the administration of the oil pipeline and any future gas pipeline. In addition, any lands transferred to the state will be subject to valid existing rights such as the TAPS lease. The state believes that state ownership of corridor lands is desirable and appropriate and I consider this a high priority of my administration.

The state has articulated our policy of state ownership of the corridor lands through the Ownership Priority List submitted to the BLM state director Henri Bisson on September 28, 2005. The list establishes the priorities for state land selections as required under Section 906(f)(1) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and Section 404 of the Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act. The state has a remaining land entitlement of approximately 13 million acres, and the land within PLO 5150 is some of the very best federal land remaining that can be transferred to the state. Most of the state selections that are within PLO 5150 are ranked as #1 priority (the highest ranking) for state ownership.

Although most of our selections within PLO 5150 are ranked high, those portions of PLO 5150 that abut large blocks of existing state owned lands, such as the land along the Richardson Highway from Paxson to Sourdough, would be of utmost priority to the state. The state has also focused its final selections on high value multiple use lands with mineral and recreation values, such as land within PLO 5150 in the Alaska Range. Some of the areas of greatest interest to the state are near Canwell Glacier east of the Richardson Highway and BLM land west of the Delta River. We appreciate that the final version of the East Alaska RMP would revoke a portion of PLO 5150 in the area west of the Delta River. Our prioritization of state selections demonstrates the importance the State of Alaska attaches to state ownership of these lands.

Ms. Julia Dougan
August 29, 2006
Page 3

The Copper River Basin Area Plan for State Lands prepared by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in December 1986 further articulates state policy for the transfer of corridor lands to the state. The state land use plan calls for state selection of PLO 5150 lands and incorporates planning decisions for these corridor lands within the Copper River Basin plan area, including specific references on pages 3-109, 3-179, 4-1 to 4-5, 4-7, and maps for management units 16 and 27 (copies of referenced pages are enclosed).

The Tanana Basin Area Plan for State Lands prepared by DNR in 1991 also includes land use designations for PLO 5150 lands in the northern portion of the BLM planning area (see page 3-178 and maps for Management Subunit 5C). These state land provisions were included based on the assumption that these state selections would eventually become state owned.

While we appreciate BLM's modification of the Draft RMP/EIS to accommodate the conveyance of additional lands within the corridor, we find that BLM's reluctance to revoke PLO 5150 in its entirety is inconsistent with state selection priorities and policies, and the Copper River Basin and Tanana Basin Area Plans for state lands.

Furthermore, we find that much of the analysis and justification for the retention of PLO 5150 is incorrectly based upon a perceived need to retain the PLO for subsistence purposes. PLO 5150 was not established to provide for subsistence uses of federal land, therefore, this is not a valid reason for BLM to retain the PLO. In fact, the conveyance of the selected lands within PLO 5150 to the state will not remove these lands from subsistence hunting but will merely remove overlapping federal hunting regulations. The state's subsistence hunting regulations will remain in effect and may be able to be modified to reflect a more sensible, consolidated land ownership pattern. These lands, should they be conveyed, will not be lost to subsistence hunters. They will merely be regulated by one less entity.

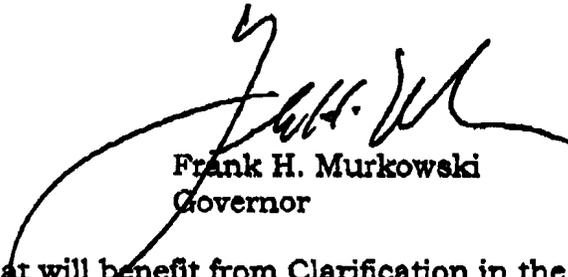
Therefore, pursuant to 43 CFR § 1610.3-2, I find the retention of PLO 5150 to be inconsistent with state priorities, policies, and state land use plans. I request that PLO 5150 be revoked and state selections be made available for conveyance. In addition, I request that you consider the points outlined in the enclosure to this letter that would benefit from further clarification within the Record of Decision for this plan.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend your staff for their fine work in developing the East Alaska Resource Management Plan/EIS and

Ms. Julia Dougan
August 29, 2006
Page 4

in particular acknowledge BLM's efforts to address state concerns throughout the development of this plan. Our respective agency representatives have developed an effective working relationship that I trust will serve BLM and the state well in future planning efforts.

Sincerely yours,



Frank H. Murkowski
Governor

Enclosures: Points that will benefit from Clarification in the Record of Decision
Copper River Basin Area Plan, excerpts:
-Page 3-109, Management Unit 16 Tiekel/Richardson
-Map Unit 16
-Page 3-179, Management Unit 27, Gulkana River-Richardson Highway
-Map Unit 27
-Pages 4-1 through 4-5, and 4-7, Chapter 4, Implementation
Tanana Basin Area Plan, excerpts:
-Page 3-178, Management Unit 5C, North Slope of the Alaska Range
-Map Unit 5

cc: Michael L. Menge, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Natural Resources
McKie Campbell, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
John Katz, Director of State/Federal Relations and Special Counsel,
Alaska Office of the Governor

Points that will benefit from Clarification in the Record of Decision

Please clarify in the Record of Decision that Section 1110(a) of ANILCA allows the use of snowmachines, motorboats, airplanes, and non-motorized surface transportation for traditional activities and for travel to and from villages and homesites. Clarification of this issue as it pertains to Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Record of Decision would be beneficial to the public and land managers. *(Page 43, Access, 1st paragraph.)*

Please clarify that 43 CFR Par 36.11(g) implements Executive Order 11644 which allows the use of off-highway vehicles on routes or areas designated for such use instead of Title XI of ANILCA as mentioned in the text. *(Page 51 and 53, Delta and Gulkana W&SR Corridor Area, RMP Decisions.)*

Please note that in contrast to BLM policy, the state does not consider trapping a "commercially oriented activity." We request that BLM clarify in the Record of Decision that FLPMA leases and occupancy type permits for trapping cabins will be issued consistent with 43 CFR § 2920.1-1. *(Page 122, FLPMA Sec.302 permits.)*

Please clarify that "The State of Alaska regulates State subsistence fisheries and hunts on PRIVATE LANDS and all state lands and waters" in order to avoid future confusion. *(Page 378, Current Program Administration.)*

Please clarify how the conclusion in Appendix E that actions taken under Alternative B would significantly affect access to subsistence resources by the 26 communities that have a customary and traditional use of resources in Unit 13 was reached. Currently this assumes that all communities with a positive C&T use determination use the affected BLM lands and, more specifically, that the affected BLM lands are a key component of the areas used by these communities. It is difficult to reach this conclusion based on the information provided in the text of the EIS. *(Appendix E, Page 10, ANILCA Section 810 Analysis, Section B.2.4, Findings, 2nd paragraph.)*

MANAGEMENT UNIT 16: Tielkel/Richardson

Background

This management unit includes the land along the Richardson Highway - Trans-Alaska Pipeline Utility Corridor from Tonsina to the Tsina River. The entire unit (except two small recreation sites) is federal (BLM) land that the state will select. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior will need to revoke Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 to allow the state to receive this land. The state has requested that this federal withdrawal be revoked.

In addition to serving as one of Alaska's most important transportation routes, the area is also used for recreation, has some forestry values, and provides access to adjacent lands for hunting, hiking, and trapping. The road through the area follows the Little Tonsina and Tielkel Rivers and is very scenic. The spruce bark beetle has infested and killed many of the trees in this area.

Management Intent

Land that the state selects and acquires in this area will be managed for multiple use with emphasis on transportation, recreation, forestry, and settlement. The area will be opened to mineral entry (under BLM, most of this area is closed by PLO 5150) except the pipeline right-of-way. Little Tonsina River will be closed to new mineral entry to protect salmon spawning and rearing areas and recreation values. The state should not select all land in the Tielkel Block as a condition of receiving title to these lands proposed for selection.

Up to 500 acres (net) of settlement land will be offered for private ownership if the state receives title to land in this unit. Areas offered for settlement will be carefully located to avoid harming views from the highway. Land in avalanche chutes and run-outs will not be transferred to private ownership through land offerings. DOT/FF will also be consulted in decisions regarding land sales to minimize impacts on traffic flow and avoid safety hazards caused by the location of access roads for land offerings. Because of these potential hazards, most suitable settlement land will be found in the northern part of this management unit.

The existing state recreation site at Little Tonsina and rest area at Mount Billy Mitchell will be retained in public ownership and managed as state recreation sites.

Management Guidelines

Trails and Access to Federal Land. The state will reserve access to federal lands through areas proposed for land offerings consistent with the guidelines in Chapter 2 of this plan.

Potential Gas Line Corridor. A route for the Yukon-Pacific natural gas line from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez is proposed through this unit. The route roughly parallels the TAPS line. A corridor 600 feet wide on both sides of the TAPS line should be reserved in state ownership for a possible future gas line until a more specific route is established.

Gravel Pits. Existing gravel pits will be retained in public ownership for material sites.

Scenic Values. All development along the Richardson Highway corridor should be located and designed to minimize impacts on views from the highway. The planning

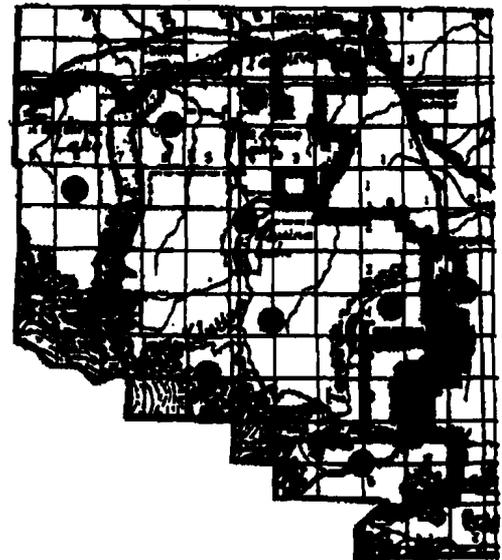
MANAGEMENT UNIT 16

Tlekel/Richardson



U.S.G.S. Quad:
Valdez
Map scale:
1:250,000

Location Map



-  State Owned
-  State Selected
-  Native/Private Owned
-  Native Selected
-  Federal
-  Proposed State Selections
-  Trails on public lands

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

MANAGEMENT UNIT 27: Gulkana River - Richardson Highway

Background

This management unit includes state-owned land and state-selected land, and federal land that the state should select along the Richardson Highway from Sourdough to Paxson. It also includes state-owned shorelands under the Gulkana River and Paxson Lake. The Gulkana River upstream from Sourdough is a National Wild and Scenic River and is popular for fishing and river floating. From Sourdough to the Copper River, the Gulkana River flows through Native corporation land. The river is navigable; therefore, the land under the portion of the river that flows through the Native land conveyances is state owned. However, legal appeals on the navigability decision are pending from Ahtna, Inc. The Gulkana River and Paxson Lake are important for salmon spawning and rearing. Most land around Paxson Lake is federally owned although it has been selected by Native corporations. BLM maintains a campground on the east shore of the lake, a popular starting point for people floating the Gulkana River.

Land along the Richardson Highway is used for hunting and trapping. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline and possible routes for a future natural gas line also traverse this unit. Meiers Lake, near the Richardson Highway, is used as a camping area; it is scenic and has the only major cottonwood stands for some distance. The southern end of the lake is privately owned. Several off-road vehicle trails that provide access to the Gulkana River country start at a lake to the northwest. There are wonderful views of the Wrangell Mountains and the surrounding countryside from Hogan Hill.

Federal land in the pipeline corridor has been withdrawn from state selection by the Secretary of the Interior through Public Land Order 5150. The state has requested this withdrawal be removed to select land within the corridor. BLM contends that the state should not make land selections in the pipeline corridor.

Management Intent

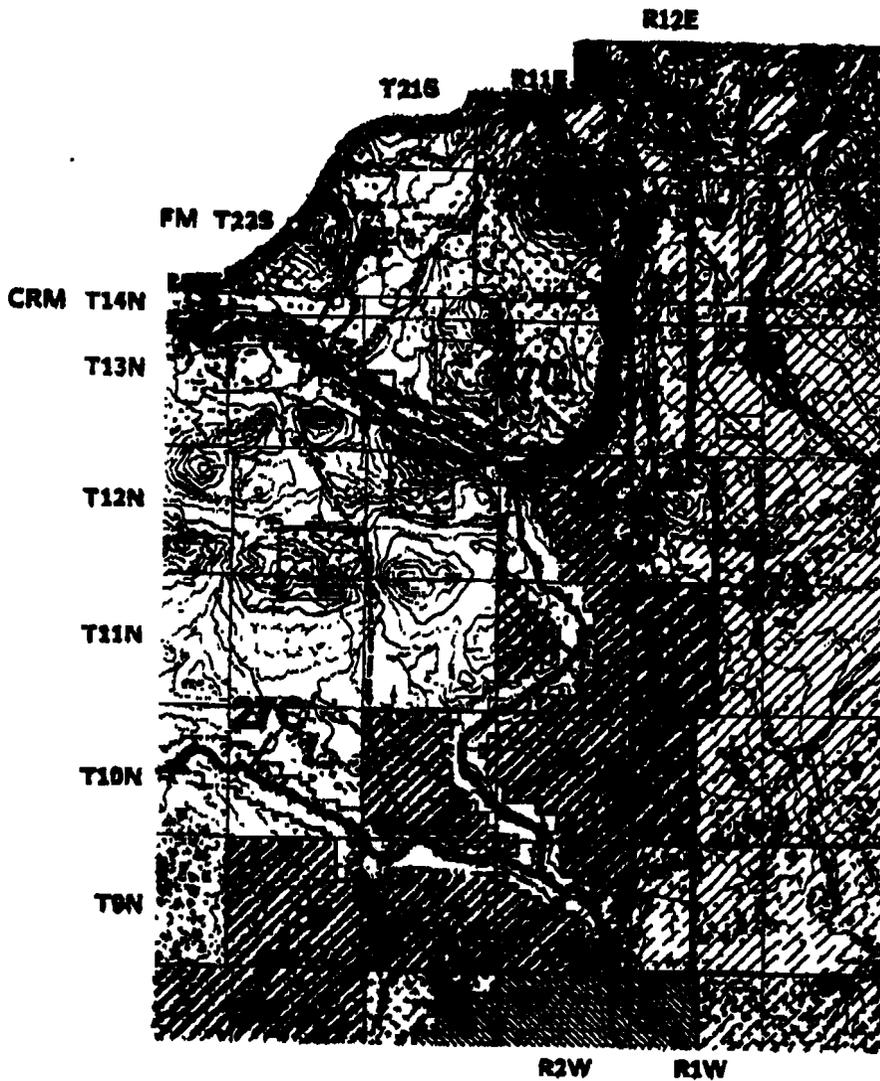
This entire management unit should be managed for multiple uses with emphasis on public recreation, providing a transportation and utility corridor, and protecting fish and wildlife. Meiers and Paxson Lakes will be managed as recreation lakes (see p. 2-41).

Management Subunit 27A. This is the road and pipeline corridor from Sourdough to Meiers Lake. The state should select federal land in the corridor that will be managed for multiple use, with emphasis on transportation, recreation, and wildlife habitat. State-owned land in the subunit is open to mineral entry. Additional lands conveyed to the state will be opened to mineral entry, except the TAPS right-of-way and Spring Creek. Spring Creek is closed to mineral location to protect salmon spawning habitat. This subunit lies within a major migration route for caribou. All land uses will be sited and designed so as not to impede caribou migrations.

Management Subunit 27B. This is the road and pipeline corridor from Meiers Lake to just north of Paxson. The land will be managed for multiple use, with emphasis on transportation, wildlife habitat, recreation, and settlement. The subunit is open or, on conveyance to the state, will be open to mineral entry. The TAPS right-of-way will remain closed to mineral location to protect existing and future utility uses; Spring Creek will remain closed to mineral location to protect salmon spawning habitat. Additional sites for public access to Paxson Lake should be identified and reserved. Land offerings for recreational and year-round settlement are allowed in this subunit, with an estimated net land offering of 400 acres. Land offerings will probably be in scattered parcels of land suitable for settlement along the highway.

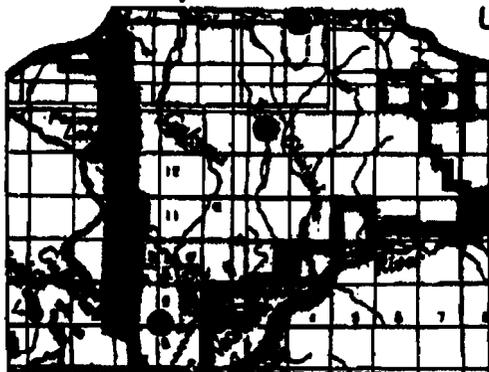
MANAGEMENT UNIT 27

Gulkana River/Richardson Highway



Unit 27C includes all navigable segments of the Gulkana River

Location Map



U.S.G.S. Quads:
Gulkana
Mt. Hayes

Map scale:
1:500,000

-  State Owned
-  State Selected
-  Native/Private Owned
-  Native Selected
-  Federal
-  Proposed State Selections
-  Proposed Relinquishments
-  Trails on public lands

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

CHAPTER 4

Implementation

Introduction

This chapter describes the actions necessary to implement the land use policies proposed by this plan. Included are proposed selections, relinquishments, and exchanges; proposed cooperative agreements; land use classifications; management planning priorities; recommendations for legislative designations; and procedures for plan modification and amendment.

Proposed Selections, Relinquishments, and Exchanges

The Copper River Basin Area Plan identifies several areas within the basin for future state selections, relinquishment of selections, or land exchanges. This section provides details of these selections and relinquishments and also discusses other land ownership issues. The maps on pages 4-3 and 4-5 delineate these selections and relinquishments.

ADDITIONAL STATE SELECTIONS

The state is entitled to select additional lands for state ownership from vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved public lands. In the Copper River Basin, there are over 1 million acres of federal lands that the state could still select. Most of this land is in the Tielke Block, Denali Block, or near Slana.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Tielke Block. This area, approximately 500,000 acres, has been considered for state selection in the past, but was rejected due to limited resource values and because BLM's management objectives for most of these lands are similar to those of the state. Primary resource values are fish and wildlife habitat. Some forestry, recreation, and mineral potential exists on this land. The Richardson Highway traverses part of this area, but is presently withdrawn from state selection. Three specific parts of the Tielke Block are proposed for state selections; the state is not interested in selecting the entire Tielke Block as proposed by BLM.

- a. **Proposed Thompson Pass - Mt. Billy Mitchell Selection.** The state owns the Thompson Pass and Worthington Glacier area. The area to the east of the pass along the Richardson Highway also includes spectacular scenery with excellent recreation opportunities. This area includes the lower Tsina River, and the middle section of the Tielke River, and Mount Billy Mitchell. It should be selected by the state to be managed for recreation and included in any future recreation area.

The federal BLM manages the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Utility Corridor that was withdrawn from state selection by Public Land Order (PLO) 5150. Part of the proposed selection lies within PLO 5150. The state has requested that the Secretary of the Interior remove this withdrawal. To date, the secretary has not

honored the state's request. This withdrawal in the Copper River Basin includes all federal land along the Richardson Highway from Sourdough to Paxson Lake and from Tonsina to the Tsina River.

Most of the area is alpine; most good forest lands along the Tlekel River are north of this selection (see area "c"). The proposed selection encompasses approximately 46,000 acres.

Legal Description: T. 7 S., R. 1 E., Sections 13-36; T. 7 S., R. 1 W., Sections 13-36; T. 8 S., R. 1 E., Sections 1-18; T. 8 S., R. 1 W., Sections 1-18. All CRM.

- b. **Tonsina Plateau Area.** The state should select approximately 7,000 acres of land located east of the Richardson Highway and west of Bernard Creek. A gravel road passes through the western part of this tract. The road is in good condition from the south, but impassible to most vehicles at its northern end due to landslides. The land is well drained with mixed deciduous and coniferous tree cover and is on a plateau (elevation 2,100 to 2,400 feet) above the Tonsina River valley. The land has potential for low density settlement and, if acquired by the state, will be offered for private ownership. The land is outside PLO 5150. A small part of the Bernard Creek Valley is included in the selection. The Bernard Creek valley would be retained in state ownership because of its fish and wildlife values and to protect an important trail to Kimball Pass.

Legal Description: T. 3 S., R. 1 E., Sections 1, 11-14, 23-26; T. 3 S., R. 2 E., Sections 6, 7, 18, 19. All CRM.

- c. **Richardson Highway Corridor from Tonsina to Tsina River.** Land along the Richardson Highway has some settlement and forestry potential and is an important transportation and utility corridor. In addition to the highway, the Trans-Alaska oil pipeline and Valdez-Copper River electric intertie follow this route. The draft plan identifies several areas suitable for land offerings in this corridor.

The state should select the entire highway and utility corridor. Land west of the corridor, between state land near Tonsina Lake and the corridor (65,000 acres), should not be selected by the state because it is mountainous terrain with limited resource values.

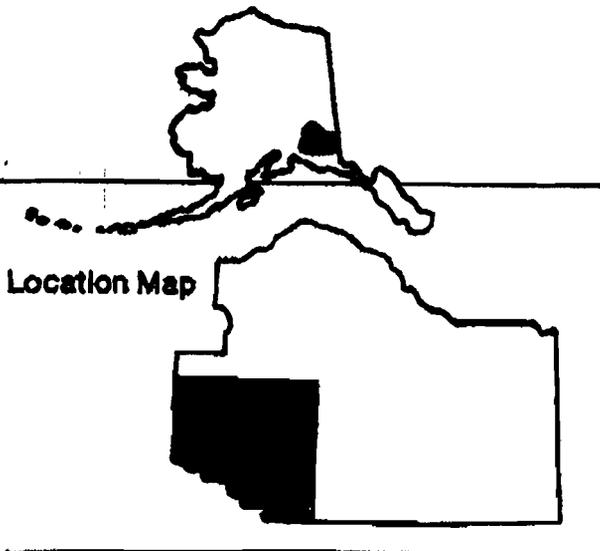
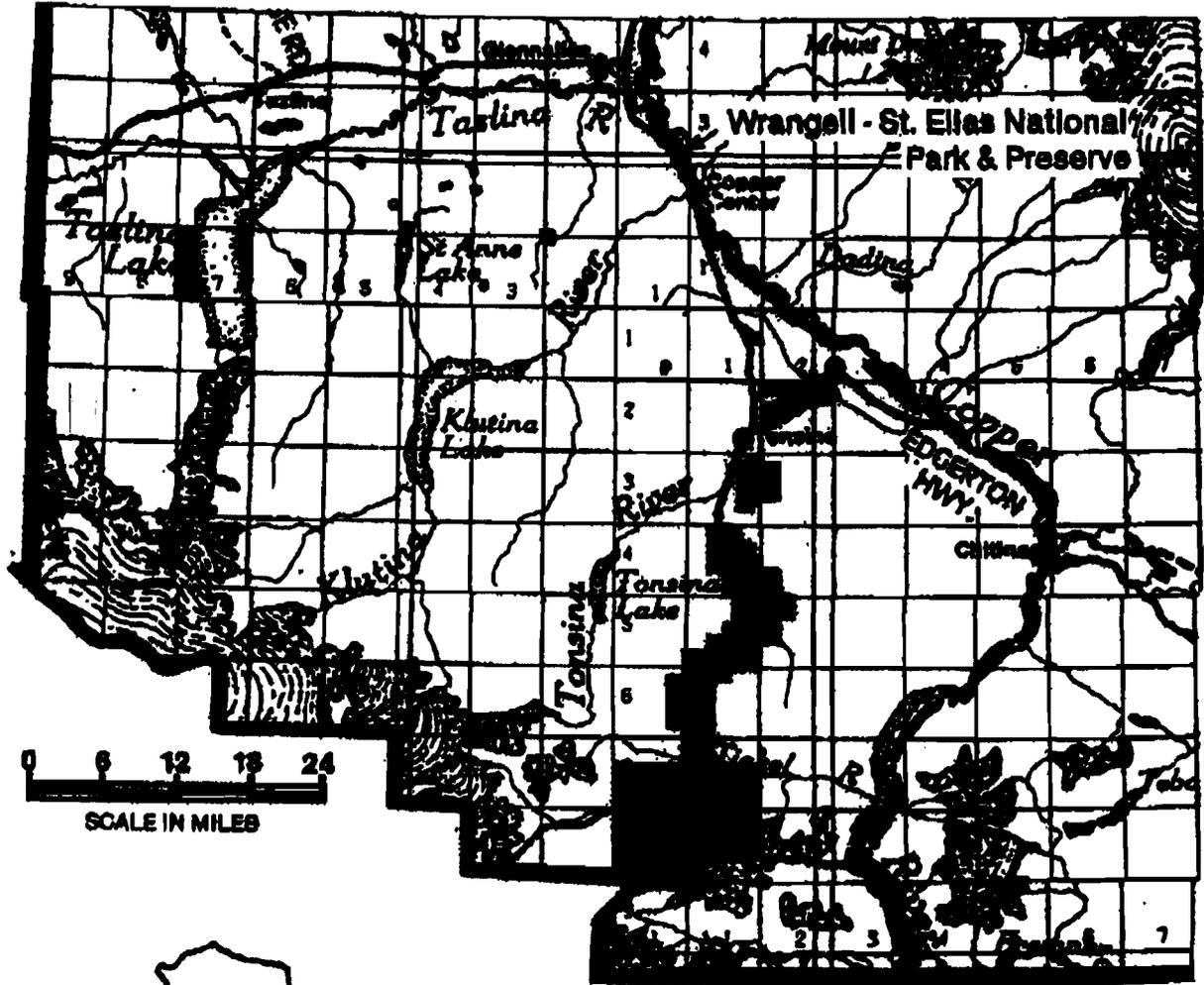
The corridor is temporarily withheld from state selection by PLO 5150 [see description in 1(a)].

Total selections would be approximately 49,920 acres.

Legal Descriptions: T. 4 S., R. 2 E., Sections 30, 31; T. 4 S., R. 1 E., Sections 3-10, 14-36; T. 5 S., R. 2 E., Sections 5-8, 18-19; T. 5 S., R. 1 E., Sections 1, 2, 11-14, 22-28, 31-36; T. 6 S., R. 1 E., Sections 4-8, 17-20, 29-32; T. 6 S., R. 1 W., Sections 13, 24, 25; T. 7 S., R. 1 E., Sections 5-8. All CRM.

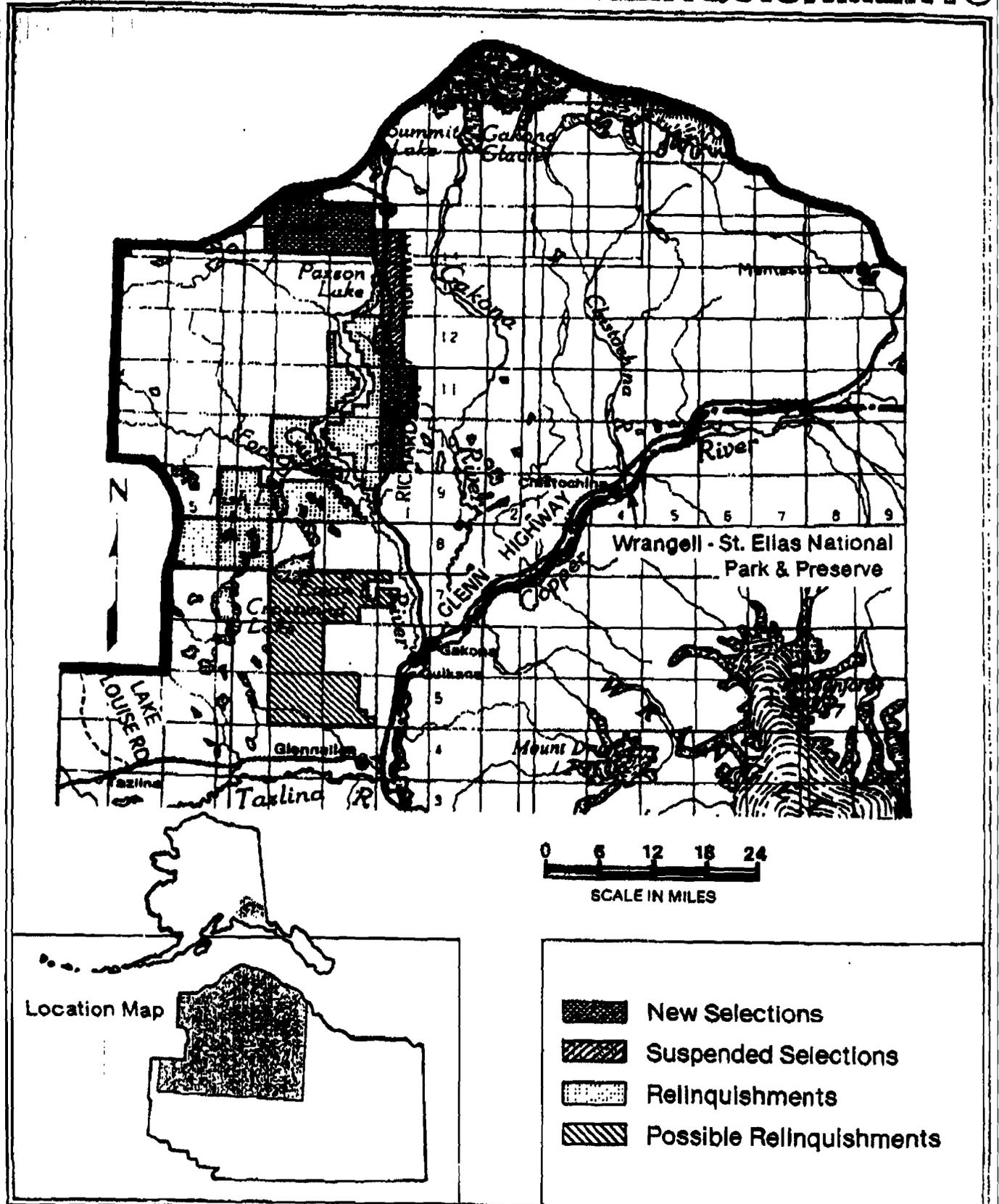
North Richardson Highway Corridor. The land ownership pattern along the Richardson Highway from Sourdough to Paxson is confusing. Several federal land withdrawals and state selections made at different times affect land in this area. Most of this area lies within the area withheld by PLO 5150 [see description under 1(a)].

SELECTIONS & RELINQUISHMENTS



 **New Selections**

SELECTIONS & RELINQUISHMENTS



A few of these areas are already selected by the state; however, most selections will not become valid until PLO 5150 is lifted. Much of this land meets the criteria for state selection because of its recreation, transportation, wildlife, and settlement values. The land is also used for access to other state-owned land to the east.

The state should acquire most land within the utility corridor and the area outside the corridor that surrounds Paxson at the junction of the Denali and Richardson Highways. Land near Paxson and Meiers Lake has settlement potential. Some areas around Meiers Lake are used as camping areas. The Hogan Hill area offers excellent views of the Wrangell mountains and has been proposed as the location for a scenic pullout. The state would select about 60,000 acres of land in this area and may need to reassert other selections in the area when PLO 5150 is revoked. Land surrounding Paxson Lake is withdrawn by BLM for public recreation through PLO 225.

Legal Description: T. 10 N., R. 1 W., CRM, Section 4-9, 16-21, 28-33 (all in PLO 5150); T. 11 N., R. 1 W., CRM Sections 3-10, 15-22, 27, 28, 30-34 (all in PLO 5150); T. 22 S., R. 12 E., F.M., Sections 1-36, CRM.

Denali Highway. On November 12, 1986, the state filed selections on over 2 million acres of federal land along the Denali Highway. These selections border the Copper River Basin area. The purpose of these selections was to give the state the option of receiving title to high value recreation, habitat, and mineral lands along the Denali Highway. The state should select the remaining land between Paxson and these selections to the east because their resource values are similar to lands selected on November 12. DNR will evaluate these selections to determine which land the state desires to receive title to: the township including Swede Lake, the township including Paxson Mountain, and part of the township west of management unit 28B that includes the Denali Highway. This block of land is incorporated in management unit 28B.

Legal Description: T. 22 S., R. 10 E.; T. 21 S., R. 10 E.; T. 22 S., R. 11 E. FM.

Edgerton Highway Area and Tonsina River. Land along the Edgerton Highway between Kenny Lake and the Richardson Highway has been identified as a potential land offering. Land along the Tonsina River south of the Edgerton Highway has high recreation and habitat values. The land is Native selected; however, if it is not conveyed to Ahtna, Inc., the state should acquire this land. The state should top-file a selection on this area. The area encompasses approximately 4,500 acres:

Legal description: T. 2 S., R. 2 E., Sections 1 - 10 (parts). CRM.

OTHER LAND CONSIDERED FOR STATE SELECTION

BLM land in the Siana Area - Mentasta Mountains. Several isolated blocks of BLM land (less than 100,000 acres), some of which have also been selected by Native corporations, were previously not selected by the state because of their limited resource values. Some of these BLM lands have been made available for settlement by the federal government and are no longer available for state selection. The Copper River plan currently proposes no new state selections in this area.

STATE SELECTIONS - PRIORITIES FOR ADJUDICATION AND CONVEYANCE

The state annually submits to BLM a list of lands it wants to receive conveyance on. This action lets the state receive title to higher quality land according to the state's priorities. The list should include, but is not be limited to, several areas in the Copper River Basin:

Chapter 3 - Subregion 5

MANAGEMENT UNIT 5C

North Slope of the Alaska Range

MANAGEMENT INTENT

General. State land in this management unit is retained in public ownership for multiple use management. The management emphasis is on recreation, and maintaining fish and wildlife habitat.

Fish and Wildlife. Fish and wildlife habitat is designated a primary use in this unit. Values include prime-rated habitat for moose, caribou, grizzly bears, and sheep (B-1 habitat; see Appendix A, *Glossary*).

There are several smaller areas that contain critical-rated caribou calving grounds (Subunit 5C1) and two known critical-rated sheep mineral licks (A-1 habitat). The caribou calving grounds lie at the headwaters of the Delta River and south of Molybdenum Ridge.

The mineral licks in Subunit 5C1 and other places not yet identified are heavily used primarily during the spring. The regular use of the licks suggests an important biological role, especially for sheep. Licks may also be an indicator of mineral values.

The management intent for Subunit 5C1 is to protect the mineral licks for wildlife use and allow exploration and development of mineral resources. The licks should be managed as a group and some licks should be available to wildlife at all times. Additional lick areas may be added to Subunit 5C1 in the future.

Minerals. The mineral potential of this unit is moderate. Leasehold location has been made on low silica, high calcium limestone near the Hoodoos in Subunit 5C1. Limestone will be produced to provide agricultural lime for the Delta Barley Project with secondary uses as cement mix and for road de-icing. Mining claims have been located near Mt. Moffit and Mt. Skarland.

Subunit 5C1 (the nine sections surrounding the mineral lick) is subject to leasehold location to protect wildlife habitat values. Existing claims in the leasehold area will not be converted to leasehold location or be required to obtain a lease from the state prior to production. However, exploration and min-

ing on existing claims will be managed according to additional guidelines listed for this unit. The remainder of state land is open to mineral entry.

Recreation. Recreation is designated a primary use in subunits 5C2 and 5C3. Areas of heavy use and high recreation values are the Castner, Cantwell, and Gulkana glaciers, Black Rapids, and the Delta River. High scenic values at the southern tip of Subunit 5C2 should be protected.

The Black Rapids access site should be retained in public ownership to facilitate access to and from the Delta River and Black Rapids Glacier.

The Delta River downstream from the National Wild and Scenic River will be managed consistently with the Delta Wild and Scenic River.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Management guidelines that apply to all state land are listed in Chapter 2. Some or all of those guidelines may apply to uses in this unit.

Black Rapids Glacier Selection. The plan recommends selecting blocks of land within Subunit 5C3. For further description, see Chapter 4, *Proposed State Selections*.

Subsurface Resources. Permits or operating plans for activities within the mineral licks and immediately adjacent sections must show how direct or indirect impacts on the mineral licks and wildlife trails will be avoided during the exploration and development phases.

The Department of Natural Resources will ensure, as much as possible, that a minimal number of licks are being explored at the same time.

The nine sections surrounding each lick will be under leasehold location. These concerns should be addressed in the permits or leases: 1) avoiding licks and trails leading to the licks; 2) mitigating negative impacts; 3) compensation for destruction or loss of a lick; and 4) type and location of access in the area.

Tanana Basin Area Plan • 1991



Map 3-17 • Subregion 5



- LEGEND**
- Area Plan Boundary
 - Subregion Boundary
 - Subunit Boundary
 - State Owned
 - State Selected
 - Federal
 - Private
 - Proposed State Selection
 - Borough Owned



U.S.G.S. 1:250,000 Quad:
Guliana
Hedley
Mt. Hayes

MAP SCALE 1:500,000

TRANSACTION REPORT

P.01

AUG-30-2006 WED 11:55 AM

FOR: BLM AK STATE DIRECTOR 907 271 4596

DATE	START	RECEIVER	TX TIME	PAGES	TYPE	NOTE	M#	DP
AUG-30	11:47 AM	GFO	7' 25"	17	SEND	OK	100	

TOTAL : 7M 25S PAGES: 17

09-30-06 11:28am From-Office of the Governor - Anchorage

T-481 P.01 F-888

FAX TRANSMITTAL

STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
GOVERNOR

LOREN LEMAN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ROBERT ATWOOD BUILDING
550 WEST 7TH AVENUE,
SUITE 1700
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Telephone: (907) 269-7450
Fax: (907) 269-7461

Date: August 30, 2006

To: Ms. Julia Dougan

Fax No.: 271-4596

Pages: 17 Including cover

From: Governor Murkowski

Comments: The original letter is in the mail.

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
GOVERNOR
GOVERNOR@GOV.STATE.AK.US



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

P.O. Box 110001
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0001
(907) 465-3500
FAX (907) 465-3532
WWW.GOV.STATE.AK.US

August 29, 2006

Ms. Julia Dougan
Acting State Director
Bureau of Land Management
Alaska State Office
222 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 13
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599

2006 AUG 21 PM 1:50

BLM 465 3532

Dear Ms. Dougan:

Thank you for providing the State of Alaska with a copy of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) East Alaska Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) prepared using BLM's planning regulations and guidance issued under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). We appreciate BLM's efforts to work and consult with state resource agencies throughout the development of this plan. I believe that this cooperative approach has benefited both the state and BLM. We appreciate this additional opportunity to identify inconsistencies with approved state plans, policies, and programs.

There remains one major issue where the plan is not consistent with state policy and plans – that being the RMP/EIS proposal to retain the Pipeline Utility Corridor established through Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 in federal ownership. As you know, the state and the federal governments, including BLM, share many of the same goals, objectives, and interests pertaining to Alaska's resources and the benefits that accrue to our citizens. We have a shared interest in seeing a transportation corridor maintained to support development of resources owned by the U.S. government and the State of Alaska. BLM has previously modified PLO 5150 to allow for state acquisition of lands in the corridor north of the Brooks Range and certain areas south of the Yukon River, subject to existing rights-of-way. The federal government anticipated additional conveyances of pipeline corridor land from federal ownership as evidenced in the process described in the Federal Agreement and Grant Right-of-Way for the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). Clearly the federal government envisioned additional conveyances to the state within the

Ms. Julia Dougan
August 29, 2006
Page 2

corridor and the state has planned for future conveyances as evidenced by state policies and land use plans.

The lands in PLO 5150 were withdrawn to enable construction of the pipeline and to ensure a viable transportation and utility corridor for future development opportunities. The TAPS line is well established and additional rights-of-way have been established for a future gas pipeline. As a result, future use of the corridor for oil and gas transportation is assured, regardless of ownership, and the state's commitment to the development of Alaska's resources and the ability to move them to market is strong. There is no need for further federal retention of corridor lands. Irrespective of land ownership, BLM and the state will continue to cooperate in the administration of the oil pipeline and any future gas pipeline. In addition, any lands transferred to the state will be subject to valid existing rights such as the TAPS lease. The state believes that state ownership of corridor lands is desirable and appropriate and I consider this a high priority of my administration.

The state has articulated our policy of state ownership of the corridor lands through the Ownership Priority List submitted to the BLM state director Henri Bisson on September 28, 2005. The list establishes the priorities for state land selections as required under Section 906(f)(1) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and Section 404 of the Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act. The state has a remaining land entitlement of approximately 13 million acres, and the land within PLO 5150 is some of the very best federal land remaining that can be transferred to the state. Most of the state selections that are within PLO 5150 are ranked as #1 priority (the highest ranking) for state ownership.

Although most of our selections within PLO 5150 are ranked high, those portions of PLO 5150 that abut large blocks of existing state owned lands, such as the land along the Richardson Highway from Paxson to Sourdough, would be of utmost priority to the state. The state has also focused its final selections on high value multiple use lands with mineral and recreation values, such as land within PLO 5150 in the Alaska Range. Some of the areas of greatest interest to the state are near Canwell Glacier east of the Richardson Highway and BLM land west of the Delta River. We appreciate that the final version of the East Alaska RMP would revoke a portion of PLO 5150 in the area west of the Delta River. Our prioritization of state selections demonstrates the importance the State of Alaska attaches to state ownership of these lands.

Ms. Julia Dougan
August 29, 2006
Page 3

The Copper River Basin Area Plan for State Lands prepared by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in December 1986 further articulates state policy for the transfer of corridor lands to the state. The state land use plan calls for state selection of PLO 5150 lands and incorporates planning decisions for these corridor lands within the Copper River Basin plan area, including specific references on pages 3-109, 3-179, 4-1 to 4-5, 4-7, and maps for management units 16 and 27 (copies of referenced pages are enclosed).

The Tanana Basin Area Plan for State Lands prepared by DNR in 1991 also includes land use designations for PLO 5150 lands in the northern portion of the BLM planning area (see page 3-178 and maps for Management Subunit 5C). These state land provisions were included based on the assumption that these state selections would eventually become state owned.

While we appreciate BLM's modification of the Draft RMP/EIS to accommodate the conveyance of additional lands within the corridor, we find that BLM's reluctance to revoke PLO 5150 in its entirety is inconsistent with state selection priorities and policies, and the Copper River Basin and Tanana Basin Area Plans for state lands.

Furthermore, we find that much of the analysis and justification for the retention of PLO 5150 is incorrectly based upon a perceived need to retain the PLO for subsistence purposes. PLO 5150 was not established to provide for subsistence uses of federal land, therefore, this is not a valid reason for BLM to retain the PLO. In fact, the conveyance of the selected lands within PLO 5150 to the state will not remove these lands from subsistence hunting but will merely remove overlapping federal hunting regulations. The state's subsistence hunting regulations will remain in effect and may be able to be modified to reflect a more sensible, consolidated land ownership pattern. These lands, should they be conveyed, will not be lost to subsistence hunters. They will merely be regulated by one less entity.

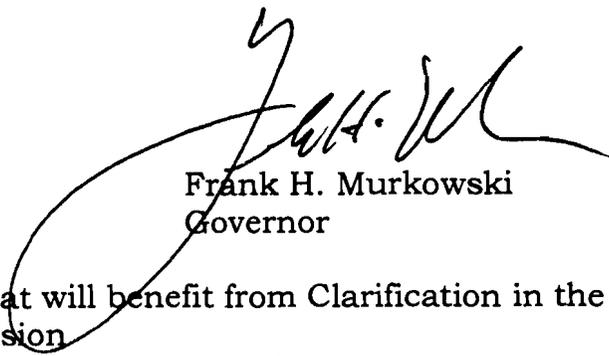
Therefore, pursuant to 43 CFR § 1610.3-2, I find the retention of PLO 5150 to be inconsistent with state priorities, policies, and state land use plans. I request that PLO 5150 be revoked and state selections be made available for conveyance. In addition, I request that you consider the points outlined in the enclosure to this letter that would benefit from further clarification within the Record of Decision for this plan.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend your staff for their fine work in developing the East Alaska Resource Management Plan/EIS and

Ms. Julia Dougan
August 29, 2006
Page 4

in particular acknowledge BLM's efforts to address state concerns throughout the development of this plan. Our respective agency representatives have developed an effective working relationship that I trust will serve BLM and the state well in future planning efforts.

Sincerely yours,



Frank H. Murkowski
Governor

Enclosures: Points that will benefit from Clarification in the Record of Decision
Copper River Basin Area Plan, excerpts:
-Page 3-109, Management Unit 16 Tikel/Richardson
-Map Unit 16
-Page 3-179, Management Unit 27, Gulkana River-Richardson Highway
-Map Unit 27
-Pages 4-1 through 4-5, and 4-7, Chapter 4, Implementation
Tanana Basin Area Plan, excerpts:
-Page 3-178, Management Unit 5C, North Slope of the Alaska Range
-Map Unit 5

cc: Michael L. Menge, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Natural Resources
McKie Campbell, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
John Katz, Director of State/Federal Relations and Special Counsel,
Alaska Office of the Governor

Points that will benefit from Clarification in the Record of Decision

Please clarify in the Record of Decision that Section 1110(a) of ANILCA allows the use of snowmachines, motorboats, airplanes, and non-motorized surface transportation for traditional activities and for travel to and from villages and homesites. Clarification of this issue as it pertains to Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Record of Decision would be beneficial to the public and land managers. (*Page 43, Access, 1st paragraph.*)

Please clarify that 43 CFR Par 36.11(g) implements Executive Order 11644 which allows the use of off-highway vehicles on routes or areas designated for such use instead of Title XI of ANILCA as mentioned in the text. (*Page 51 and 53, Delta and Gulkana W&SR Corridor Area, RMP Decisions.*)

Please note that in contrast to BLM policy, the state does not consider trapping a “commercially oriented activity.” We request that BLM clarify in the Record of Decision that FLPMA leases and occupancy type permits for trapping cabins will be issued consistent with 43 CFR § 2920.1-1. (*Page 122, FLPMA Sec.302 permits.*)

Please clarify that “The State of Alaska regulates State subsistence fisheries and hunts on PRIVATE LANDS and all state lands and waters” in order to avoid future confusion. (*Page 378, Current Program Administration.*)

Please clarify how the conclusion in Appendix E that actions taken under Alternative B would significantly affect access to subsistence resources by the 26 communities that have a customary and traditional use of resources in Unit 13 was reached. Currently this assumes that all communities with a positive C&T use determination use the affected BLM lands and, more specifically, that the affected BLM lands are a key component of the areas used by these communities. It is difficult to reach this conclusion based on the information provided in the text of the EIS. (*Appendix E, Page 10, ANILCA Section 810 Analysis, Section B.2.4, Findings, 2nd paragraph.*)

MANAGEMENT UNIT 16: Tielcel/Richardson

Background

This management unit includes the land along the Richardson Highway - Trans-Alaska Pipeline Utility Corridor from Tonsina to the Tsina River. The entire unit (except two small recreation sites) is federal (BLM) land that the state will select. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior will need to revoke Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 to allow the state to receive this land. The state has requested that this federal withdrawal be revoked.

In addition to serving as one of Alaska's most important transportation routes, the area is also used for recreation, has some forestry values, and provides access to adjacent lands for hunting, hiking, and trapping. The road through the area follows the Little Tonsina and Tielcel Rivers and is very scenic. The spruce bark beetle has infested and killed many of the trees in this area.

Management Intent

Land that the state selects and acquires in this area will be managed for multiple use with emphasis on transportation, recreation, forestry, and settlement. The area will be opened to mineral entry (under BLM, most of this area is closed by PLO 5150) except the pipeline right-of-way. Little Tonsina River will be closed to new mineral entry to protect salmon spawning and rearing areas and recreation values. The state should not select all land in the Tielcel Block as a condition of receiving title to these lands proposed for selection.

Up to 500 acres (net) of settlement land will be offered for private ownership if the state receives title to land in this unit. Areas offered for settlement will be carefully located to avoid harming views from the highway. Land in avalanche chutes and run-outs will not be transferred to private ownership through land offerings. DOT/PF will also be consulted in decisions regarding land sales to minimize impacts on traffic flow and avoid safety hazards caused by the location of access roads for land offerings. Because of these potential hazards, most suitable settlement land will be found in the northern part of this management unit.

The existing state recreation site at Little Tonsina and rest area at Mount Billy Mitchell will be retained in public ownership and managed as state recreation sites.

Management Guidelines

Trails and Access to Federal Land. The state will reserve access to federal lands through areas proposed for land offerings consistent with the guidelines in Chapter 2 of this plan.

Potential Gas Line Corridor. A route for the Yukon-Pacific natural gas line from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez is proposed through this unit. The route roughly parallels the TAPS line. A corridor 600 feet wide on both sides of the TAPS line should be reserved in state ownership for a possible future gas line until a more specific route is established.

Gravel Pits. Existing gravel pits will be retained in public ownership for material sites.

Scenic Values. All development along the Richardson Highway corridor should be located and designed to minimize impacts on views from the highway. The planning

MANAGEMENT UNIT 16

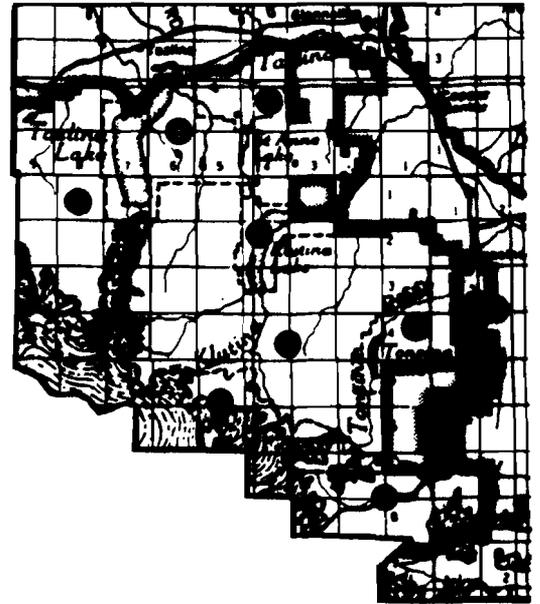
Tiegel/Richardson



U.S.G.S. Quad:
Valdez

Map scale:
1:250,000

Location Map



-  State Owned
-  State Selected
-  Native/Private Owned
-  Native Selected
-  Federal
-  Proposed State Selections
-  Trails on public lands

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

MANAGEMENT UNIT 27: Gulkana River - Richardson Highway

Background

This management unit includes state-owned land and state-selected land, and federal land that the state should select along the Richardson Highway from Sourdough to Paxson. It also includes state-owned shorelands under the Gulkana River and Paxson Lake. The Gulkana River upstream from Sourdough is a National Wild and Scenic River and is popular for fishing and river floating. From Sourdough to the Copper River, the Gulkana River flows through Native corporation land. The river is navigable; therefore, the land under the portion of the river that flows through the Native land conveyances is state owned. However, legal appeals on the navigability decision are pending from Ahtna, Inc. The Gulkana River and Paxson Lake are important for salmon spawning and rearing. Most land around Paxson Lake is federally owned although it has been selected by Native corporations. BLM maintains a campground on the east shore of the lake, a popular starting point for people floating the Gulkana River.

Land along the Richardson Highway is used for hunting and trapping. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline and possible routes for a future natural gas line also traverse this unit. Meiers Lake, near the Richardson Highway, is used as a camping area; it is scenic and has the only major cottonwood stands for some distance. The southern end of the lake is privately owned. Several off-road vehicle trails that provide access to the Gakona River country start at a lake to the northwest. There are wonderful views of the Wrangell Mountains and the surrounding countryside from Hogan Hill.

Federal land in the pipeline corridor has been withdrawn from state selection by the Secretary of the Interior through Public Land Order 5150. The state has requested this withdrawal be removed to select land within the corridor. BLM contends that the state should not make land selections in the pipeline corridor.

Management Intent

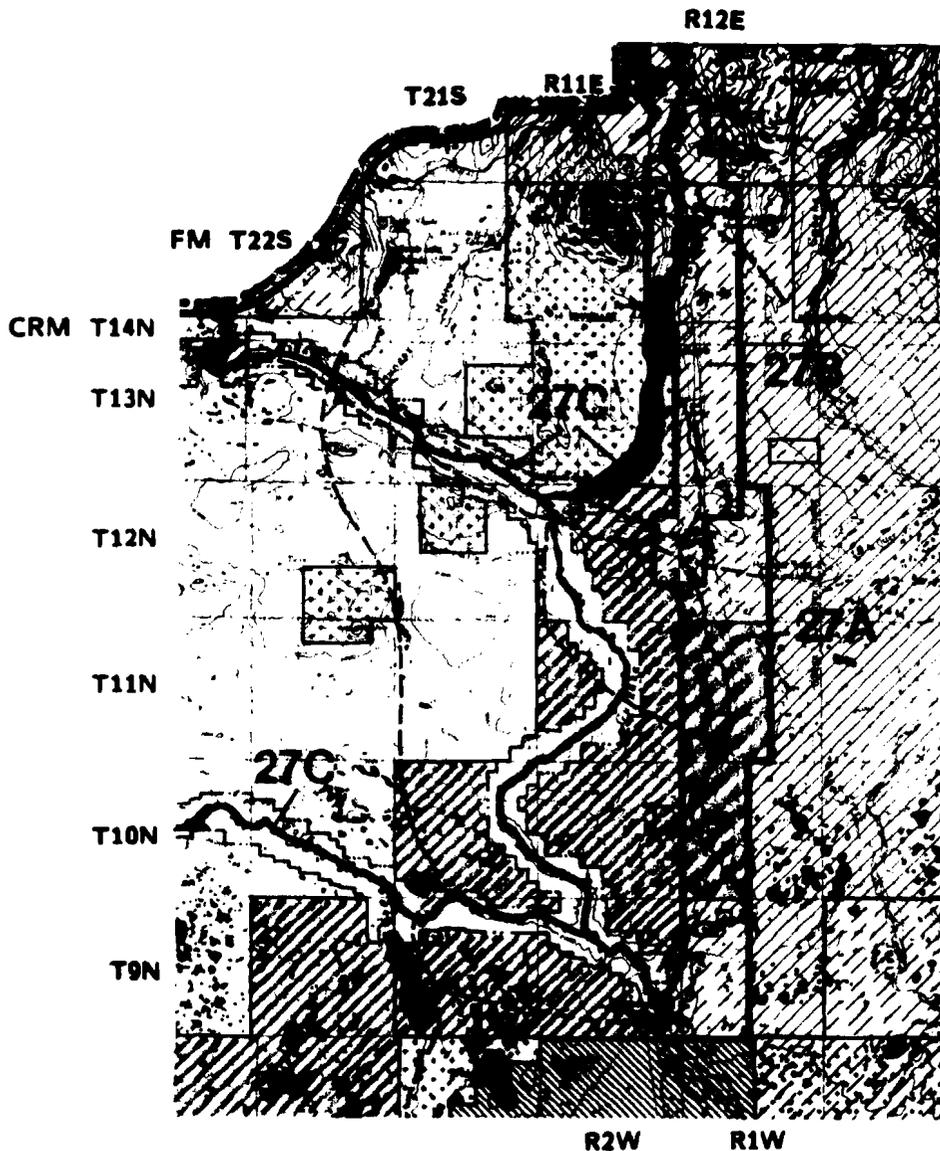
This entire management unit should be managed for multiple uses with emphasis on public recreation, providing a transportation and utility corridor, and protecting fish and wildlife. Meiers and Paxson Lakes will be managed as recreation lakes (see p. 2-41).

Management Subunit 27A. This is the road and pipeline corridor from Sourdough to Meiers Lake. The state should select federal land in the corridor that will be managed for multiple use, with emphasis on transportation, recreation, and wildlife habitat. State-owned land in the subunit is open to mineral entry. Additional lands conveyed to the state will be opened to mineral entry, except the TAPS right-of-way and Spring Creek. Spring Creek is closed to mineral location to protect salmon spawning habitat. This subunit lies within a major migration route for caribou. All land uses will be sited and designed so as not to impede caribou migrations.

Management Subunit 27B. This is the road and pipeline corridor from Meiers Lake to just north of Paxson. The land will be managed for multiple use, with emphasis on transportation, wildlife habitat, recreation, and settlement. The subunit is open or, on conveyance to the state, will be open to mineral entry. The TAPS right-of-way will remain closed to mineral location to protect existing and future utility uses; Spring Creek will remain closed to mineral location to protect salmon spawning habitat. Additional sites for public access to Paxson Lake should be identified and reserved. Land offerings for recreational and year-round settlement are allowed in this subunit, with an estimated net land offering of 400 acres. Land offerings will probably be in scattered parcels of land suitable for settlement along the highway,

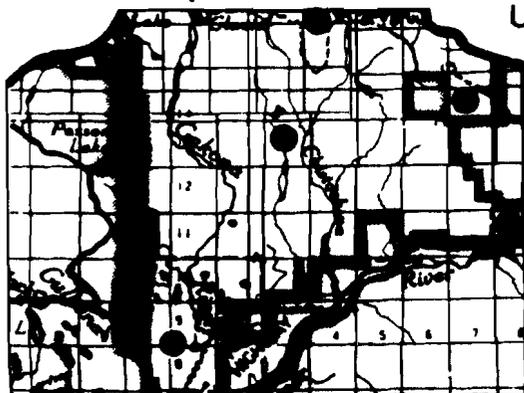
MANAGEMENT UNIT 27

Gulkana River/Richardson Highway



Unit 27C includes all navigable segments of the Gulkana River

Location Map



U.S.G.S. Quads:
Gulkana
Mt. Hayes

Map scale:
1:500,000

-  State Owned
-  State Selected
-  Native/Private Owned
-  Native Selected
-  Federal
-  Proposed State Selections
-  Proposed Relinquishments
-  Trails on public lands

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

CHAPTER 4

Implementation

Introduction

This chapter describes the actions necessary to implement the land use policies proposed by this plan. Included are proposed selections, relinquishments, and exchanges; proposed cooperative agreements; land use classifications; management planning priorities; recommendations for legislative designations; and procedures for plan modification and amendment.

Proposed Selections, Relinquishments, and Exchanges

The Copper River Basin Area Plan identifies several areas within the basin for future state selections, relinquishment of selections, or land exchanges. This section provides details of these selections and relinquishments and also discusses other land ownership issues. The maps on pages 4-3 and 4-5 delineate these selections and relinquishments.

ADDITIONAL STATE SELECTIONS

The state is entitled to select additional lands for state ownership from vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved public lands. In the Copper River Basin, there are over 1 million acres of federal lands that the state could still select. Most of this land is in the Tielkel Block, Denali Block, or near Slana.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Tielkel Block. This area, approximately 500,000 acres, has been considered for state selection in the past, but was rejected due to limited resource values and because BLM's management objectives for most of these lands are similar to those of the state. Primary resource values are fish and wildlife habitat. Some forestry, recreation, and mineral potential exists on this land. The Richardson Highway traverses part of this area, but is presently withdrawn from state selection. Three specific parts of the Tielkel Block are proposed for state selections; the state is not interested in selecting the entire Tielkel Block as proposed by BLM.

- a. **Proposed Thompson Pass - Mt. Billy Mitchell Selection.** The state owns the Thompson Pass and Worthington Glacier area. The area to the east of the pass along the Richardson Highway also includes spectacular scenery with excellent recreation opportunities. This area includes the lower Tsina River, and the middle section of the Tielkel River, and Mount Billy Mitchell. It should be selected by the state to be managed for recreation and included in any future recreation area.

The federal BLM manages the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Utility Corridor that was withdrawn from state selection by Public Land Order (PLO) 5150. Part of the proposed selection lies within PLO 5150. The state has requested that the Secretary of the Interior remove this withdrawal. To date, the secretary has not

honored the state's request. This withdrawal in the Copper River Basin includes all federal land along the Richardson Highway from Sourdough to Paxson Lake and from Tonsina to the Tsina River.

Most of the area is alpine; most good forest lands along the Tielke River are north of this selection (see area "c"). The proposed selection encompasses approximately 46,000 acres.

Legal Description: T. 7 S., R. 1 E., Sections 13-36; T. 7 S., R. 1 W., Sections 13-36; T. 8 S., R. 1 E., Sections 1-18; T. 8 S., R. 1 W., Sections 1-18. All CRM.

- b. **Tonsina Plateau Area.** The state should select approximately 7,000 acres of land located east of the Richardson Highway and west of Bernard Creek. A gravel road passes through the western part of this tract. The road is in good condition from the south, but impassible to most vehicles at its northern end due to landslides. The land is well drained with mixed deciduous and coniferous tree cover and is on a plateau (elevation 2,100 to 2,400 feet) above the Tonsina River valley. The land has potential for low density settlement and, if acquired by the state, will be offered for private ownership. The land is outside PLO 5150. A small part of the Bernard Creek Valley is included in the selection. The Bernard Creek valley would be retained in state ownership because of its fish and wildlife values and to protect an important trail to Kimball Pass.

Legal Description: T. 3 S., R. 1 E., Sections 1, 11-14, 23-26; T. 3 S., R. 2 E., Sections 6, 7, 18, 19. All CRM.

- c. **Richardson Highway Corridor from Tonsina to Tsina River.** Land along the Richardson Highway has some settlement and forestry potential and is an important transportation and utility corridor. In addition to the highway, the Trans-Alaska oil pipeline and Valdez-Copper River electric intertie follow this route. The draft plan identifies several areas suitable for land offerings in this corridor.

The state should select the entire highway and utility corridor. Land west of the corridor, between state land near Tonsina Lake and the corridor (65,000 acres), should not be selected by the state because it is mountainous terrain with limited resource values.

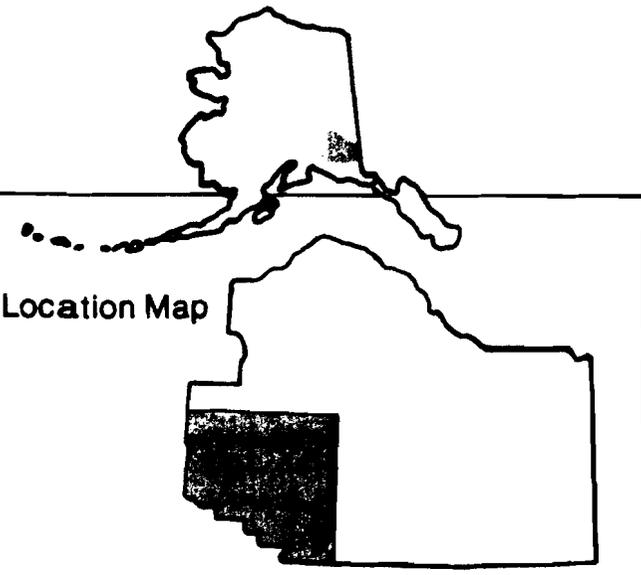
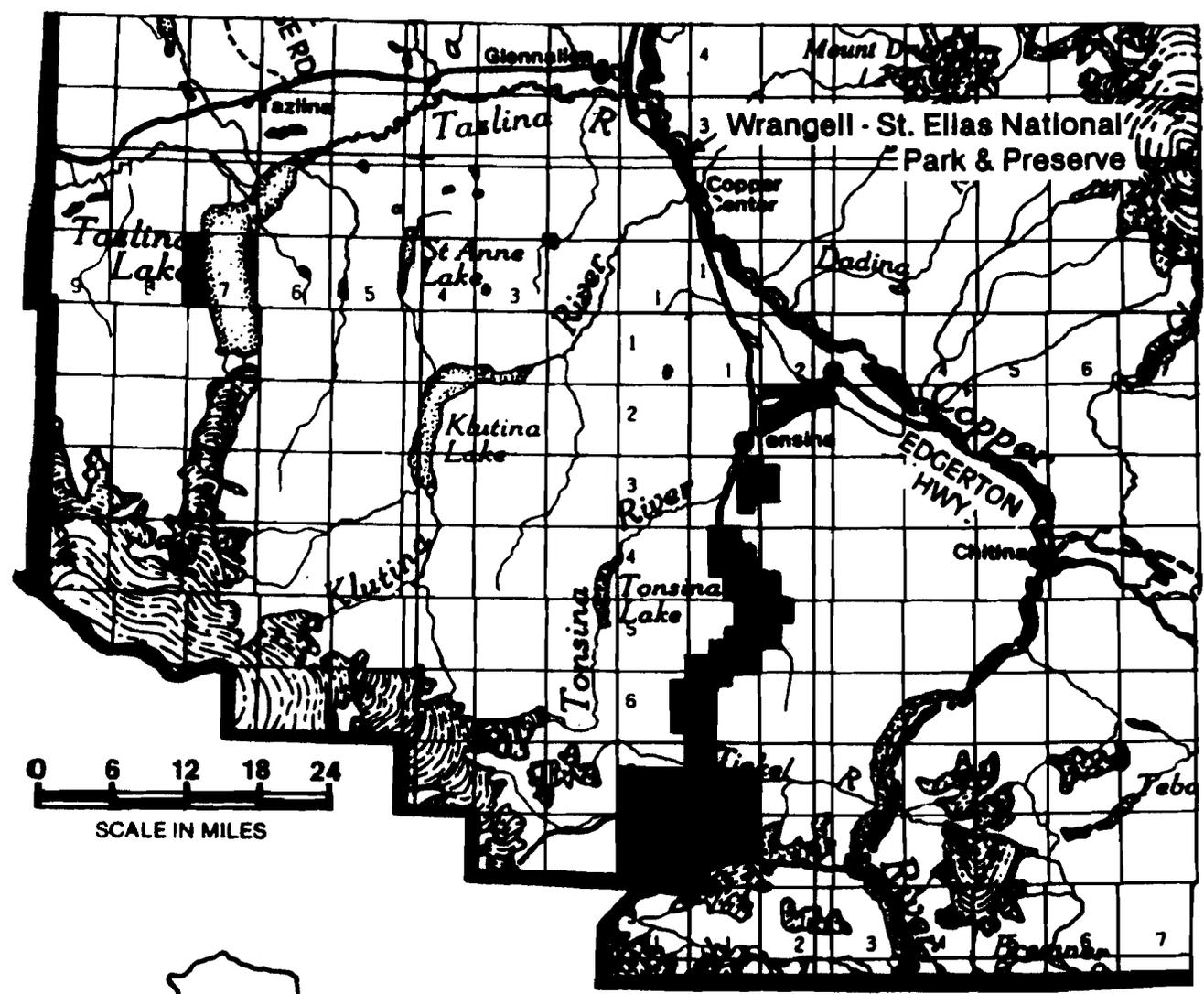
The corridor is temporarily withheld from state selection by PLO 5150 [see description in 1(a)].

Total selections would be approximately 49,920 acres.

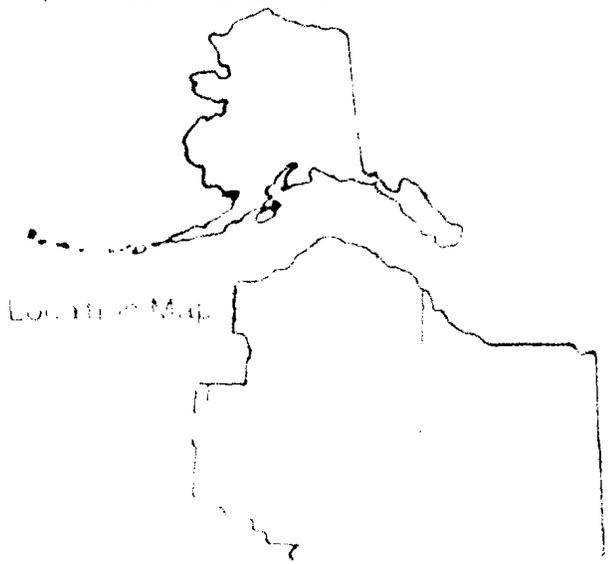
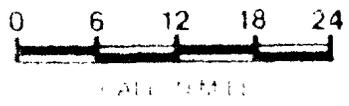
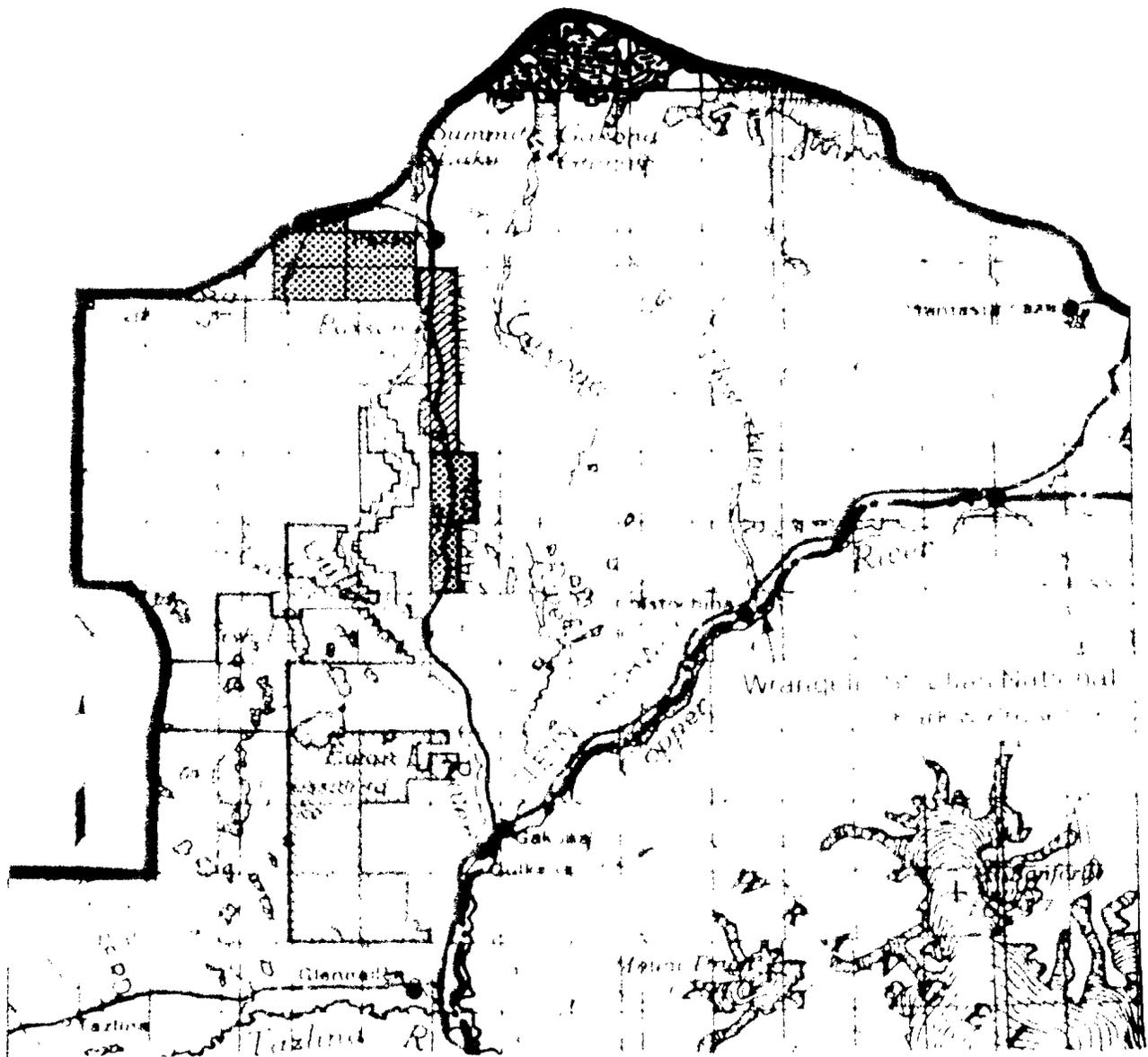
Legal Descriptions: T. 4 S., R. 2 E., Sections 30, 31; T. 4 S., R. 1 E., Sections 3-10, 14-36; T. 5 S., R. 2 E., Sections 5-8, 18-19; T. 5 S., R. 1 E., Sections 1, 2, 11-14, 22-28, 31-36; T. 6 S., R. 1 E., Sections 4-8, 17-20, 29-32; T. 6 S., R. 1 W., Sections 13, 24, 25; T. 7 S., R. 1 E., Sections 5-8. All CRM.

North Richardson Highway Corridor. The land ownership pattern along the Richardson Highway from Sourdough to Paxson is confusing. Several federal land withdrawals and state selections made at different times affect land in this area. Most of this area lies within the area withheld by PLO 5150 [see description under 1(a)].

SELECTIONS & RELINQUISHMENTS



SELECTIONS & RELINQUISHMENTS



-  New Selections
-  Suspended Selections
-  Relinquishments
-  Possible Relinquishments

A few of these areas are already selected by the state; however, most selections will not become valid until PLO 5150 is lifted. Much of this land meets the criteria for state selection because of its recreation, transportation, wildlife, and settlement values. The land is also used for access to other state-owned land to the east.

The state should acquire most land within the utility corridor and the area outside the corridor that surrounds Paxson at the junction of the Denali and Richardson Highways. Land near Paxson and Meiers Lake has settlement potential. Some areas around Meiers Lake are used as camping areas. The Hogan Hill area offers excellent views of the Wrangell mountains and has been proposed as the location for a scenic pullout. The state would select about 60,000 acres of land in this area and may need to reassert other selections in the area when PLO 5150 is revoked. Land surrounding Paxson Lake is withdrawn by BLM for public recreation through PLO 225.

Legal Description: T. 10 N., R. 1 W., CRM. Section 4-9, 16-21, 28-33 (all in PLO 5150); T. 11 N., R. 1 W., CRM Sections 3-10, 15-22, 27, 28, 30-34 (all in PLO 5150); T. 22 S., R. 12 E., F.M., Sections 1-36. CRM.

Denali Highway. On November 12, 1986, the state filed selections on over 2 million acres of federal land along the Denali Highway. These selections border the Copper River Basin area. The purpose of these selections was to give the state the option of receiving title to high value recreation, habitat, and mineral lands along the Denali Highway. The state should select the remaining land between Paxson and these selections to the east because their resource values are similar to lands selected on November 12. DNR will evaluate these selections to determine which land the state desires to receive title to: the township including Swede Lake, the township including Paxson Mountain, and part of the township west of management unit 28B that includes the Denali Highway. This block of land is incorporated in management unit 28B.

Legal Description: T. 22 S., R. 10 E.; T. 21 S., R. 10 E; T. 22 S., R. 11 E. FM.

Edgerton Highway Area and Tonsina River. Land along the Edgerton Highway between Kenny Lake and the Richardson Highway has been identified as a potential land offering. Land along the Tonsina River south of the Edgerton Highway has high recreation and habitat values. The land is Native selected; however, if it is not conveyed to Ahtna, Inc., the state should acquire this land. The state should top-file a selection on this area. The area encompasses approximately 4,500 acres:

Legal description: T. 2 S., R. 2 E., Sections 1 - 10 (parts). CRM.

OTHER LAND CONSIDERED FOR STATE SELECTION

BLM land in the Slana Area - Mentasta Mountains. Several isolated blocks of BLM land (less than 100,000 acres), some of which have also been selected by Native corporations, were previously not selected by the state because of their limited resource values. Some of these BLM lands have been made available for settlement by the federal government and are no longer available for state selection. The Copper River plan currently proposes no new state selections in this area.

STATE SELECTIONS - PRIORITIES FOR ADJUDICATION AND CONVEYANCE

The state annually submits to BLM a list of lands it wants to receive conveyance on. This action lets the state receive title to higher quality land according to the state's priorities. The list should include, but is not be limited to, several areas in the Copper River Basin:

MANAGEMENT UNIT 5C

North Slope of the Alaska Range

MANAGEMENT INTENT

General. State land in this management unit is retained in public ownership for multiple use management. The management emphasis is on recreation, and maintaining fish and wildlife habitat.

Fish and Wildlife. Fish and wildlife habitat is designated a primary use in this unit. Values include prime-rated habitat for moose, caribou, grizzly bears, and sheep (B-1 habitat; see Appendix A, *Glossary*).

There are several smaller areas that contain critical-rated caribou calving grounds (Subunit 5C1) and two known critical-rated sheep mineral licks (A-1 habitat). The caribou calving grounds lie at the headwaters of the Delta River and south of Molybdenum Ridge.

The mineral licks in Subunit 5C1 and other places not yet identified are heavily used primarily during the spring. The regular use of the licks suggests an important biological role, especially for sheep. Licks may also be an indicator of mineral values.

The management intent for Subunit 5C1 is to protect the mineral licks for wildlife use and allow exploration and development of mineral resources. The licks should be managed as a group and some licks should be available to wildlife at all times. Additional lick areas may be added to Subunit 5C1 in the future.

Minerals. The mineral potential of this unit is moderate. Leasehold location has been made on low silica, high calcium limestone near the Hoodoos in Subunit 5C1. Limestone will be produced to provide agricultural lime for the Delta Barley Project with secondary uses as cement mix and for road de-icing. Mining claims have been located near Mt. Moffit and Mt. Skarland.

Subunit 5C1 (the nine sections surrounding the mineral lick) is subject to leasehold location to protect wildlife habitat values. Existing claims in the leasehold area will not be converted to leasehold location or be required to obtain a lease from the state prior to production. However, exploration and min-

ing on existing claims will be managed according to additional guidelines listed for this unit. The remainder of state land is open to mineral entry.

Recreation. Recreation is designated a primary use in subunits 5C2 and 5C3. Areas of heavy use and high recreation values are the Castner, Cantwell, and Guikana glaciers, Black Rapids, and the Delta River. High scenic values at the southern tip of Subunit 5C2 should be protected.

The Black Rapids access site should be retained in public ownership to facilitate access to and from the Delta River and Black Rapids Glacier.

The Delta River downstream from the National Wild and Scenic River will be managed consistently with the Delta Wild and Scenic River.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

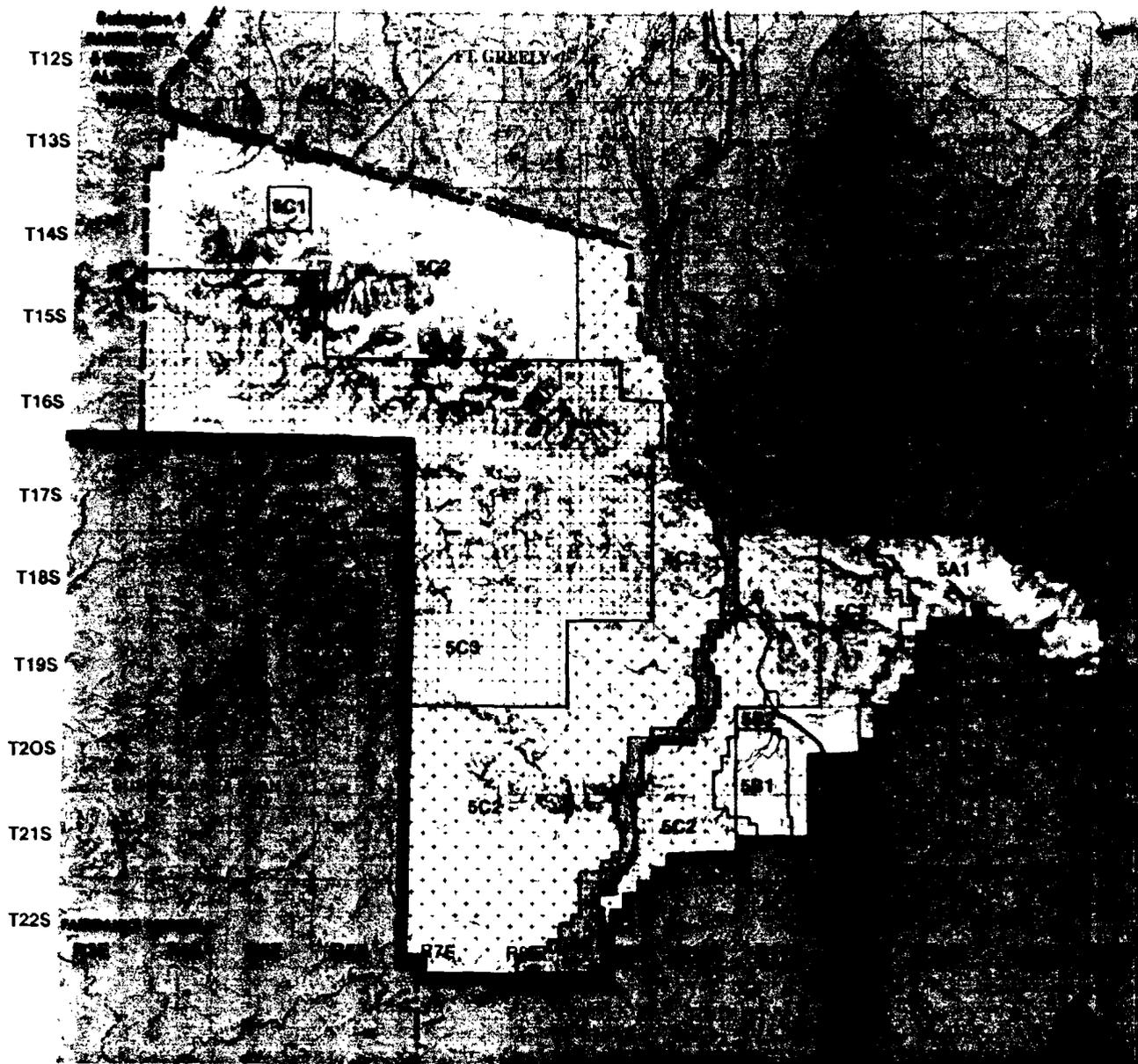
Management guidelines that apply to all state land are listed in Chapter 2. Some or all of those guidelines may apply to uses in this unit.

Black Rapids Glacier Selection. The plan recommends selecting blocks of land within Subunit 5C3. For further description, see Chapter 4, *Proposed State Selections*.

Subsurface Resources. Permits or operating plans for activities within the mineral licks and immediately adjacent sections must show how direct or indirect impacts on the mineral licks and wildlife trails will be avoided during the exploration and development phases.

The Department of Natural Resources will ensure, as much as possible, that a minimal number of licks are being explored at the same time.

The nine sections surrounding each lick will be under leasehold location. These concerns should be addressed in the permits or leases: 1) avoiding licks and trails leading to the licks; 2) mitigating negative impacts; 3) compensation for destruction or loss of a lick; and 4) type and location of access in the area.



LEGEND

- Area Plan Boundary
- Subregion Boundary
- Subunit Boundary
- State Owned
- State Selected
- Federal
- Private
- Proposed State Selection
- Borough Owned



U.S.G.S. 1:250,000 Quads:

- Gulikana
- Healy
- Mt. Hayes

MAP SCALE 1:500,000