

## Chapter 2

# Areawide Land Management Policies

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# **Chapter 2**

## **Areawide Land Management Policies**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents land management policies that apply to all state-owned, state-selected, and ANILCA top filed lands for each of the major resources affected by the plan. The resources identified in this chapter are fish and wildlife habitat; materials sites; public access; recreation; tourism and scenery; settlement; shorelands and stream corridors; subsistence and harvest; subsurface; transportation and infrastructure; and water. These policies apply to state land throughout the planning area regardless of the land use designation.

This chapter consists of goals, objectives, and management guidelines that apply to all state-owned and state-selected lands within the Plan boundary. Goals are the general condition the Department is trying to achieve; objectives and guidelines are specific directives that will be applied to land and water management decisions as resource use and development occurs. Additionally, this chapter presents broad management intent statements with unit-specific management intent provided in Chapter 3.

### **Definitions**

For definitions of terms commonly used in this chapter, see Appendix A, Glossary.

### **Overall Management Direction**

Management goals, objectives, guidelines, and intent are focused on maintaining and enhancing opportunities for public and commercial use of the state lands and waters while considering emerging issues related to climate change and conserving the natural resources and habitats necessary to sustain fish and wildlife populations. Access to and within state lands is maintained. Potential access routes to communities or other lands outside the planning area are identified. Lands necessary for current and future development and operation of the oil field and for state infrastructure needs are identified for retention by the State while other lands are appropriately classified for selection and potential conveyance to the Borough in fulfillment of its land entitlement. The State recommends the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lift PLO 5150 to allow the State to receive title to its highest priority land selections within the Dalton Highway Corridor in partial fulfillment of its outstanding land entitlement. A limited amount of State land has been identified for potential sale into private ownership.

## Plan Goals

The following goals are for state lands in the planning area. The goals are listed alphabetically, and no single goal has a priority over the others. Goals are general conditions that ADNR attempts to achieve through management actions. These goals will lay the foundation for maintaining these important uses, resources, or activities, and guide use and development interests.

**Cultural Resources.** Preserve, document, and interpret Alaska's cultural resources and heritage on all lands within the State.

**Dismantlement, Removal, and Restoration (DR&R).** Through consultation with other land management and regulatory state agencies, and with input from local government, manage reuse or rehabilitation of predominantly oil and gas infrastructure, including establishing dismantlement, removal, and restoration requirements and timelines for post-lease land conditions.

**Economic Development.** Develop a minerals and energy industry which will provide stable and diverse job opportunities, increase per capita income, increase local tax revenues, and stimulate growth of non-resource based industries by managing state land, water, and resources to support a vital, self-sustaining, local and statewide economy.

**Environment and Habitat.** Where possible, avoid, or minimize the impact of uses, activities, and development on fish, bird, and wildlife habitats and the natural environment when siting commercial, industrial, or private settlement on state lands.

**Fiscal Costs.** Minimize the need for, and the fiscal cost of, providing government services such as schools or road maintenance activities when considering making lands available for private use (residential, commercial, or industrial).

**Municipal Entitlement.** Identify lands available for conveyance to provide a viable land base to municipal entities.

**Pollution Remediation.** Discharges, spills, or other releases of pollutants will be reported immediately upon discovery and remediated in a timely fashion by the responsible parties, as required by state and federal agencies.

**Public Access.** Provide access to public and private lands and resources to ensure adequate opportunities for the use of public resources.

**Public Health and Safety.** Maintain or enhance public health and safety for users of state land and resources.

**Public Use.** Provide, plan, enhance, and manage diverse opportunities for public use of state lands, including uses such as hunting, fishing, boating and other types of recreation.

**Quality of Life.** Maintain or enhance the quality of the natural environment including land, water, fish and wildlife habitat, and harvest opportunities; provide opportunities to view wildlife and the natural environment; and protect heritage resources.

**Recreation.** Encourage outdoor recreation on public lands and provide for a range of recreational experiences on state land managed for multiple uses while protecting natural resources and public access.

**Settlement.** Provide opportunities for private ownership and leasing of land currently owned by the state.

**Subsistence Harvest Areas.** Retain lands and waters where subsistence harvest occurs in state ownership to support traditional uses.

**Sustained Yield.** Manage renewable resources to maintain the long-term productivity and quality of renewable resources including fish and wildlife habitat.

**Thermokarst.** When planning new, or repurposing existing, infrastructure or other types of development, the applicant must consider and implement measures to minimize thermokarst formation. Where existing infrastructure and development exist and are not actively in use, the lessee shall maintain these sites to minimize thermokarst formation.

**Water Quality.** Provide adequate water quantity and quality to support subsistence and recreational uses; domestic, commercial and industrial uses; and fish and wildlife production.

## Plan Objectives

Objectives provided here are general and apply to all state lands and all authorized uses and activities in the planning area. The NSAP provides for multiple uses of public land, as required by statute, and the objectives provide statements of what the state will do with a resource, use, or activity based on identified goals. In the long-term, the land within the Plan boundary will be used for as many uses as possible, without eliminating or unreasonably limiting other resources.

The objectives of the NSAP are:

- To provide opportunities for oil and gas development;
- To protect local lifestyles, subsistence uses, and scenic qualities;
- To enhance connectivity of communities within and outside of the planning boundaries;
- To provide access to resources necessary for the maintenance of existing state infrastructure or development of new infrastructure;

- To maximize timely and thorough pollution remediation to minimize long-term impairment and monitoring needs according to state standards; and,
- To maintain and protect habitats that support fish and wildlife populations and areas for subsistence harvest.

## Objectives by Activity or Resource Value

The remainder of this chapter specifies objectives that apply to management decisions for each identified resource. ADNR will use these objectives when considering issuing authorizations and conveyances or making management decisions on state lands. These guidelines will also apply to lands that are currently state-selected and ANILCA top filed lands when they are tentatively approved or patented into state ownership.

Chapter 2 guidelines apply to all state land covered by the NSAP unless the Plan explicitly exempts some parcels or designations from a guideline, or the resource or use for which a guideline is intended does not exist in the parcel in question. There are few such exemptions.

## Plan Guidelines

Management guidelines identified are intended to provide specific standards, management direction or procedures to be followed by the Department in the issuance of permits, leases, or other authorizations for the use of state land or resources within the planning area. Guidelines range in their level of specificity, from giving general guidance for decision-making to identifying specific factors that need to be considered when making on-the-ground decisions. In most cases, these guidelines can be implemented through the authorization of applications for proposed uses or through agency actions. In other cases, ADNR may promulgate regulations to ensure that these guidelines can be implemented and are enforceable. Unit specific guidelines are found in Chapter 3.

- A. All authorizations for use of state land within the planning area will be consistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield and with the management intent in this plan.
- B. In considering authorizations for use of state land, ADNR will adjudicate applications to:
  1. minimize damage to streambeds, fish and wildlife habitat, vegetation, trails, anchorages, and other resources;
  2. minimize conflicts between resources and uses; and
  3. protect the long-term value of the resource, public safety, and the environment.
- C. If authorizations from other agencies are required, ADNR will consider issuing a permit or lease contingent upon issuance of these other authorizations.

- D. All DR&R will be completed to a level that leaves the land in a good, clean, and usable condition where infrastructure is removed and future uses are not restricted, except that if a viable plan for reuse or repurposing infrastructure is proposed in the foreseeable future, ADNR may, at its sole discretion, consider an application from another entity to make use of and maintain the repurposed infrastructure.

## **Management Guidelines by Activity or Resource Value**

The remainder of this chapter specifies guidelines to apply to management decisions. ADNR will use these guidelines when considering issuing authorizations and conveyances or making management decisions on state lands. These guidelines will also apply to lands that are currently state-selected and ANILCA-filed when they are tentatively approved or patented into state ownership.

Chapter 2 guidelines apply to all state land covered by the NSAP unless the Plan explicitly exempts some parcels or designations from a guideline or the resource or use for which a guideline is intended does not exist in the parcel in question. There are few such exemptions.

**Other Guidelines Affecting Resources.** Multiple guidelines may affect the use of individual resources. Consult guidelines in other resource sections of this chapter.

## **Plan Management Intent**

Broad management intent for state land is expressed through statements of management emphasis identified on a unit-specific basis. These statements define ADNR's near and long-term management policies (objectives, guidelines, and intent) and are based on resource and use inventories, the review of existing and potential economic trends, state authorizations, existing plans and similar resource management documents, agency review and comment, and public participation.

- A. All general domain state land within the planning area will be managed to allow for multiple use and provide for the balanced use, development, and conservation of the resources.
- B. Lands retained in state ownership will be managed to continue to provide habitats that support: maintaining fish and wildlife populations; subsistence hunting, fishing, and harvest; sport hunting and fishing opportunities; a diversity of recreation opportunities; and, development of the State's mineral and hydrocarbon resources, among other beneficial uses.
- C. Facilitate access to communities inside and outside of the planning area on routes identified through the Alaska Strategic Transportation and Resources (ASTAR) project. This is accomplished through recognition of the routes in unit specific management intent statements.

- D. State land will remain open to mineral entry unless specifically closed or affected by a Leasehold Location Order. Consequently, except areas closed through previous mineral orders, the vast majority of lands remain open to mineral entry.
- E. The designation applied to a unit identifies the recommended use for the unit. In some cases, a unit may have co-designated uses. Up to three classifications may be assigned for one unit. Consistent with the multiple use mandate, other uses may also be allowed if they do not preclude the uses designated for a management unit. This plan emphasizes minimizing land use conflicts through guidelines and intent rather than through prohibitions. However, if ADNR determines that a use conflict exists and that a proposed use is incompatible with the primary use(s), the proposed use should not be authorized, or the use should be modified so that the incompatibility no longer exists (11 AAC 55.040 (c)). Except in areas closed to mineral entry, subsurface uses are considered an allowable use but must take into consideration the effects upon surface uses.
- F. This plan designates state lands in categories that are generally consistent with current use patterns and reflect the significant resources in the planning area.
- G. This plan addresses existing land selections of the North Slope Borough in fulfillment of its municipal entitlement. Where appropriate, lands are designated into a conveyable classification. Additionally, lands necessary for the development and operation of the oil field are identified for retention by the State on the existing selections. Guidelines and intent provided by the Plan will be used to make subsequent municipal entitlement decisions to convey lands to the North Slope Borough. The North Slope Borough has identified interest in lands it may select under its municipal entitlement. Where these occur, they are noted in the Resource Allocation Tables.
- H. Where facilities, developments, and infrastructure on state lands are identified for DR&R, the State will work with appropriate regulatory agencies to determine the method and timing of repurposing or rehabilitation that is in the best interest of the State.
- I. Access across the tundra will follow standards and methods set by the DMLW through the off-road travel management program administered in the Northern Regional Land Office.

## **Other State Land**

Parcels that are donated or acquired after the Plan is adopted will be designated for the uses for which they were acquired or donated without an amendment to the plan. Lands that come into state ownership through other means will be designated and classified consistent with the designation identified in the applicable management unit or, if not so identified, according to the standards of the section, Applicability of Plan Designations and Classifications, in Chapter 4 without an amendment to the Plan or to the Land Classification



Order adopting this plan revision. This same process applies to those parcels of state land that may have been missed during the planning process and are subsequently identified as state land.