

## Palmer-Wasilla Region

The Palmer-Wasilla Region occupies the more central, developed part of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Relatively few state land parcels are situated within this region and most of those have already been allocated to particular uses, like a state recreation site. This region also includes Knik-Point MacKenzie subregion, which is also characterized by few parcels of state land. Maps 6 through 9 depict this region.

### Distribution and Characteristics

State-owned uplands are scattered throughout this region and total about 13,600 acres; which is the smallest acreage of state land by region within the planning boundary. Most of this land is generally level or gently rolling and contains a mix of both vegetated uplands and shrub type palustrine wetlands. There is, however, a block of about 5,500 acres that is situated in moderately to steeply sloping terrain near the base of Bald Mountain in the far northwestern part of the region. This area is heavily vegetated and a portion is important to the state's forest harvest base. Much of the state land is adjoined by either private or borough selected/owned land, most of which remains vacant although a significant amount contains residential uses. Where residential uses occur, access (roads and trails) and limited infrastructure (electrical, telephone) is often available. Other significant blocks of state land either adjoin the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge (SGR) or contain extensive areas of wetlands that are used seasonally for winter recreation. Both of these areas are typically flat and are isolated from other uses.

### Access, Resources, and Uses of State Land

Access to these lands is either readily available or they can be accessed fairly easily through a combination of road and trail access.

Except for the areas adjacent to the Palmer Hay Flat SGR, the only significant wildlife species concentration occurs in the northwestern block where moose calving, rutting, and winter concentration areas are present. In areas adjacent to the Palmer Hay Flats SGR, there are areas of waterfowl and shorebird concentrations, which are seasonal in nature. Anadromous streams cross a few of the units within the region and, depending on location, contain king, silver, pink, sockeye, or chum migration, rearing, or spawning areas.

State land receives moderate to limited use, with the type of use reflecting the pattern of recreation activity in an area and whether facilities are associated with the state land. Most state land is used either to provide habitat protection or to areas for winter recreation (dog mushing, cross country skiing). Such use is necessarily dispersed and limited in amount.

Much more intense use is associated with state facilities which are state recreation sites, although the amount of acreage associated with this use is less than 100 acres. Limited uses of state land include its use as security facilities, experimental forests, or for gravel extraction.

## **Management Constraints**

Several state and local management plans affect the planning area and were consulted in the development of recommendations for the Palmer-Wasilla Region. Only one state resource plan affected this region, the 1982 Willow Sub-Basin Area Plan, which is now superseded with this update. Local plans include the local land use plans of community councils within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the Borough Comprehensive Plan, and the Borough Coastal Management Plan. The revision of the Coastal Management Plan is under review by the Department and has not been completed at the time of this writing. These plans provide management guidance of a general nature and helped in the formulation of recommendations.

## **Management Summary**

State land is to be managed consistent with the plan designations and management recommendations contained in the Resource Allocation Table. Most state land will be managed in a manner similar to that inferred from its designation, which means that most land will be managed either for its habitat resources or recreational values. About 3,700 acres will be managed for these related purposes. (Note: 40,100 acres associated with LDAs will be managed in a similar fashion.) Portions of the state land (2,240 acres) in the northwestern part of the region will be managed for its forestry resources. These areas are an important part of the state's timber harvest base in the Susitna Valley. A few areas (563 acres), usually located next to streams, lakes, or adjacent to or within residential areas, are recommended for land disposal during the planning period. Consult the Resource Allocation Table and maps for specific recommendations.

There are two LDAs that are geographically located within this region; they include the Goose Bay and the Palmer Hay Flats SGRs, which total 40,100 acres. These areas are designated Habitat.

## Resource Allocation Table for Upland Units – Palmer-Wasilla Region

Unit #	Designation(s) / Acres	Map(s) / MTRS	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
P-01	Ha 3,640	Map 4 S018N002W: 1-4, 9-12.	Manage parcel to protect the moose calving, rutting, and winter concentration areas.	Parcel adjoins the Hatcher Pass Management Plan area to the north, and this unit has similar characteristics to those of the more northern area. Parcel is heavily vegetated and is moderately sloped except for deeply incised stream valleys. Small, scattered portions of the parcel are occupied by shrub type wetlands. Moose are present throughout the parcel. Calving, rutting, and winter concentration areas occur in the northern part of the unit and the remainder of the unit is important as a winter concentration area.
P-02	F 1,600	Map 4 S018N002W: 8-10, 16	Manage parcel consistent with Susitna Forest Guidelines and Forest Resources Practices Act. Provide mitigation measures to mitigate significant impacts on moose wintering concentration areas. Recreation use of this parcel is to be considered in a FLUP prepared by DOF. Significant trails are to be protected and recreational activity is to be accommodated in timber harvest design.	Parcel is heavily vegetated (boreal type forest) in parts with areas of shrub-type palustrine wetlands. Terrain varies from generally flat to moderately steep. Moose are present within unit and portions contain a known moose wintering concentration area. Parcel is part of the state's sustained yield area for purposes calculating the annual allowable cut and is currently classified Forest Land. It is included in a Priority 1 area of the DNR Division of Forestry.
P-03	F 640	Map 4 S018N002W: 8, 17	Appropriate for land disposal during the planning period.  Settlement areas should avoid areas of wetlands, concentrating development in better drained, better soil types. Protect anadromous stream and Bench Lake. Maintain a 100' protection area around lake and along anadromous stream. Maintain public access and provide a public use site on lake.	Bench Lake occupies central part of unit; parcel is generally flat except for a stream valley adjoining the northern inlet stream. Unit is heavily vegetated (boreal forest) in areas of better soils; other portions are occupied by shrub-type wetlands. Parcel is not included in a Priority 1 forestry area. The Little Susitna State Recreation River, a Legislatively Designated Area, is situated immediately south. State land important for forestry purposes is situated to north.  Nancy Lake AWC #247-41-10100-2231-0010, provides habitat for coho and sockeye salmon, burbot, Dolly Varden, rainbow trout, whitefish. Northern pike also present.
P-04	Se 98	Map 6 S018N002W: 23	Settlement in Tracts B and C should be carefully evaluated given adjacent wetlands and residential land use patterns. If determined to be appropriate for land disposal, either avoid or ensure that wetland functions are retained. Vegetated buffers should be provided in areas that adjoin existing residential development. Tract A is not to be developed and is to be retained in state ownership.	Parcel consists of the remaining state land (Tracts A, B, and C) within ASLS 79-154. Tract A consists of a common area of 52 acres. Tract A is to be retained in state ownership and is not to be developed. Tracts B and C are occupy terrain that is flat and are composed of both uplands and wetlands. Residential land uses are situated some distance from this parcel.

<b>Unit #</b>	<b>Designation(s) / Acres</b>	<b>Map(s) / MTRS</b>	<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Resources and Uses</b>
P-05	Gu 320	Map 6 S018N002W: 25	Unit is to operate as an experimental forest, consistent with the requirements of the ILMA (ADL 201911). If the Division of Forestry ceases to operate the experimental forest, this parcel converts in classification to Settlement.	Parcel is affected by an ILMA to Division of Forestry for the purpose of operating an experimental forestry.
P-06	Se 160	Map 7 S018N001W: 20	Unit is considered appropriate for land disposal during planning period.	Parcel is in the process of being developed as a state subdivision (Chignaki Pond). It occupies a flat, well vegetated site having direct road access.
P-07	Pr 320	Map 7 S018N001W: 36	Manage unit consistent with the requirements of the ILMA (ADL 64415). If lease is terminated or ceases, the west one-half of this unit converts to the classification of Settlement.	Parcel is affected by an ILMA (ADL 64415) to DMVA (Alaska National Guard). West one-half of parcel is undeveloped. Reevaluate the use of this western area for settlement when the ILMA expires in 2015. Unit converts to the classification of Settlement when/if the lease terminates.
P-08	Pr 25	Map 7 S018N001E: 16	Manage unit consistent with land lease requirements. Public access for sportfishing needs to be maintained. Maintain 100' protection area adjacent to lake.	Parcel is affected by land lease application (ADL 216795) to DPOR for proposed Wolf Lake SRS located on the east side of Wolf Lake.  Wolf Lake supports resident populations of Dolly Varden and is stocked with rainbow trout.
P-09	Pr 48	Map 7 S018N001E: 34	Manage unit consistent with ILMA requirements. Public access for sportfishing needs to be maintained. Maintain 100' protection area adjacent to lake.	Parcel is affected by ILMA (ADL 65710) to DPOR for the Finger Lake Wayside, located between Palmer and Wasilla.  ADF&G stocks lake with rainbow trout, arctic grayling, king salmon and arctic char.
P-10	Pr 1,256	Map 6 S016N002W: 1, 2, 11, 12; S017N002W: 36	Manage unit consistent with requirements of Management Agreements and maintain Iditarod Trail easement of 400 feet total width.	Parcel affected by Management Agreements (ADLs 215477, 225320, 227786) to ADF&G and is contiguous to Palmer Hay Flats SGR, the purpose of which is to create similar management authority and intent to the Palmer Hay Flats SGR.  Cottonwood Creek, AWC# 247-41-10300, also flows through unit, supports Coho and sockeye salmon, Dolly Varden, rainbow trout.  The Iditarod Trail crosses parcel.
P-11	Pr 8	Map 7 S017N001W: 9	Manage unit consistent with requirements of Management Right.	Parcel affected by Management Right to ADOT/PF (ADL 221535).

<b>Unit #</b>	<b>Designation(s) / Acres</b>	<b>Map(s) / MTRS</b>	<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Resources and Uses</b>
P-12	Pr 30	Map 7 S017N001W: 22	Manage unit consistent with requirements of Management Right.	Parcel affected by Management Right to DPOR (ADL 220647).
P-13	Se 185	Map 7 S017N002W: 36	Appropriate for land disposal during planning period.  Settlement areas should avoid areas of wetlands, concentrating development in soil types with better drainage. Maintain a 100' protection area adjacent to Lucy Lake and along outlet stream.	Parcel is situated on the north side of Lucy Lake, directly north of an existing subdivision (EPF 220050). The unit is generally flat, consisting of isolated palustrine wetlands, wetlands adjacent to an inlet stream on the north side of Lucy Lake, and vegetated uplands adjacent to the lake. Road access exists at the western end of the parcel and immediately to the north; Knik Road is situated to the south.  Lucy Lake outlet stream, AWC# 247-41-10300-2001, is anadromous downstream of the lake. Lucy Lake supports Dolly Varden and may support anadromous fish. Numerous tributaries to Lucy Lake are within the parcel and support Dolly Varden spawning; some have had fish passage restoration projects completed on them.
P-14	Pr 119	Map 7 S017N001W: 16	Manage unit consistent with the requirements of the ILMA.	Parcel affected by ILMA (ADL 201961) to ADOT/PF for use as a gravel extraction site and as a permanent maintenance station on Goose Bay Road. Indefinite term.
P-15	Pr 640	Map 7 S017N001E: 21, 22, 28	Manage unit consistent with requirements of the Management Rights and the warranty deed.	Affected by Management Rights agreement (ADLs 228846, 226116) between Nature Conservancy and ADF&G. Warranty deed to ADF&G precludes all uses except related to the Palmer Hay Flats SGR. Adjoins Palmer Hay Flats SGR.
P-16	Rd 80	Map 7 S018N001W: 18	If conveyed to state, retain parcel and manage for consistency with the statutory objectives of the Little Susitna State Recreation River.	Parcel is in state selection status. Unit is generally flat, has direct access to a residential road, and adjoins the Little Susitna River. Residential land uses are located nearby.  Little Susitna River, AWC# 247-41-10100, bisects unit as well as contains braids, sloughs and backwaters of the Little Susitna River. Supports coho, sockeye, king, chum, pink salmon as well as Dolly Varden. Tributary, Swift Creek, AWC# 247-41-10100-2305 occurs within unit. Little Susitna River a high recreational use river and unit is identified as Public Use Site # PU 1c.2 in the Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan. A significant portion of the unit is also within the 100 year flood plain of the Little Susitna River.

<b>Unit #</b>	<b>Designation(s) / Acres</b>	<b>Map(s) / MTRS</b>	<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Resources and Uses</b>
P-17	Se 80	Map 7 S018N001W: 20	Unit is considered appropriate for land disposal during the planning period following the termination of the agricultural lease.	Unit occupies level ground and has immediately access from Shrock Road. An agricultural lease (ADL 33716) currently affects the parcel and portions of the unit have been cleared, probably for agricultural purposes. Residential uses are situated immediately to the south and west. Conversion to settlement cannot occur until the current agricultural lease terminates. There are not apparent wetlands that occupy the unit, although several small drainages cross portions of the parcel.
P-18	Se 40.0	Map 6 S017N002W: 14	Unit is appropriate for land disposal during planning period.	Unit occupies a heavily vegetated, generally level parcel situated on a major road. This parcel is affected by ADL 229739, which identifies this parcel for pre-disposal as a residential subdivision. Lucille Creek may occupy a portion of the site. Part of the unit has previously been cleared.

## Resource Allocation Table for Upland Units – Knik-Pt. MacKenzie Subregion

Unit #	Designation(s) / Acres	Map(s) / MTRS	Management Intent	Resources and Uses
M-01	Rd 3,087	Map 8 S016N003W: 6, 15-19	Manage unit for dispersed recreation use and provide for continued use under Management Agreement as long as this remains valid. Protect RS 2477 and anadromous streams. Retain parcel in state ownership. Maintain Iditarod Trail easement of 400 feet total width.	Parcel occupies a generally flat area consisting primarily of palustrine wetlands interspersed with vegetated uplands. It is affected by a Management Agreement (ADL 228636) which allows private entity to manage, develop, and maintain a system of winter recreation trails (primarily dog mushing). A qualified RS 2477 route (RST 118) and the Iditarod Trail cross portions of parcel. Goose and Fish Creeks, both anadromous streams, also affect the parcel.
M-02	Rd 240	Map 8 S016N003W: 16	Manage unit for dispersed recreation use. Protect RS 2477 and anadromous stream. Retain parcel in state ownership. Maintain Iditarod Trail easement of 400 feet total width.	Generally flat parcel containing vegetated uplands interspersed by wetland areas, particularly adjacent to streams. Fish Creek, an anadromous stream, bisects the parcel. A qualified RS 2477 route (RST 118) and the Iditarod Trail cross portions of parcel. An extensive winter recreation area, primarily consisting of dog mushing trails, abuts this unit to the north.
M-03	Wr 400	Map 8 S016N003W: 21, 28	Manage unit for dispersed recreation use. Protect anadromous stream and wetlands. Retain parcel in state ownership.	Parcel occupies a generally flat area consisting almost entirely of palustrine wetlands. Fish Creek, an anadromous stream, crosses a small part of this parcel in section 28.
M-04	Wr 80	Map 8 S016N003W: 32	Manage unit for dispersed recreation use. Protect anadromous stream and wetlands. Retain parcel in state ownership.	Unit consists of generally flat terrain occupied by extensive wetlands. Goose Creek, an anadromous stream, and an easement (100') for an electric transmission line (ADL 63268) cross the parcel.
M-05	Se 90	Map 8 S015N004W: 12	Unit is considered appropriate for land disposal during planning period. Provide a 200' protection area adjacent to the Goose Bay SGR. Retain or establish an access route into the SGR.	Unit is generally flat and vegetated and adjoins a lake situated to the west. An existing (60') gravel road is located to the southwest (ADL 228754). A pre-disposal action (ADL 226725) affects the unit, the purpose of which is to set aside state lands for eventual land disposal. Unit abuts Goose Bay SGR.
M-06	Pr 78	Map 8 S015N003W: 7, 8.	Unit is to be managed for public purposes consistent with the requirements of the lease.	Unit is affected by a Public and Charitable Lease to the state Division of Corrections for a minimum security prison and correction program (ADL 218069).
M-07	Pr 120	Map 8 S015N003W: 8, 9	Unit is to be managed for public purposes consistent with requirements of Management Agreement.	Parcel is affected by a Management Right agreement to ADOT/PF for an airstrip (ADL 203546).

<b>Unit #</b>	<b>Designation(s) / Acres</b>	<b>Map(s) / MTRS</b>	<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Resources and Uses</b>
M-08	Wr 200	Map 8 S015W004W: 23, 26	Unit is to be managed to maintain the hydrologic functions of the wetlands and its habitat values.	Consisting of two separate parts, this parcel is uniformly flat and consists almost entirely palustrine wetlands. It is situated directly south of the Goose Bay SGR.

Total state land within region (26 units) – 13,583 acres