

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4 – BELUGA MT.

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Management Unit 4 extends from the Talachulitna River corridor east to include lowlands within the Talachulitna drainage, Beluga Mt. and adjacent foothills. The unit contains a variety of important habitat for moose and small game in the lowlands; salmon in Bear and Clear creeks, and in the Talachulitna River and its tributaries; black bear along the foothills of Beluga Mt.; and brown bear above the 2000' elevation level on Beluga Mt. At present, the major land uses in Management Unit 4 are sport and subsistence hunting and trapping. In addition to important habitat values, the unit contains mineral resources, good agricultural soils, and areas suitable for settlement. With the exception of areas containing settlement and agricultural values, this unit will be retained in long term public ownership and managed for preservation of the fish and wildlife habitat. The foothills of Beluga Mt. may be open to domestic livestock grazing in the future if grazing becomes economically feasible and access is developed. The area containing agricultural soils will be retained in public ownership in the near term, and later reevaluated for possible agricultural use. Low density land disposals will be offered south of Hiline Lake. Access into Management Unit 4 is possible via the Talachulitna River or by float plane on Hiline Lake. A right-of-way originating in Management Unit 3 and traveling northwest extends into Management Unit 4 through subunit 4d. Management Unit 4 will remain open to mineral location and available for coal leasing except for the proposed settlement area south of Hiline Lake (subunit 4b). Land along Lower Sucker Creek is closed to mineral location. All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing.

There are four subunits within Management Unit 4: high value forest, fish and wildlife lands which constitute the majority of the management unit (4a), state lands suitable for settlement south of Hiline Lake (4b), borough owned lands around Hiline Lake (4c), and about 17,000 acres of agricultural soils on the lowlands southeast of Beluga Mt. (4d). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses in each subunit.

Subunit 4a, the forest and fish and wildlife lands which include a large portion of the Talachulitna drainage and Beluga Mt., will be retained in long term public ownership and managed to protect fish and wildlife habitat and to encourage fishing and hunting activities. Timber harvesting for personal use is also a primary land use. It will be particularly important

in the vicinity of potential settlement areas around Hiline Lake. Additional public access to this subunit, particularly airstrips, is encouraged. Remote cabins are an allowed use in subunit 4a.

Subunit 4b, state lands between the Talachulitna River and Hiline Lake, is designated for settlement. The subunit is accessible by floatplane to Hiline Lake.

Subunit 4c, borough owned lands surrounding Hiline Lake, is designated as borough land bank. Some of the surveyed lots around the lake are in private ownership. Additional land sales are not likely in the near term (5 years), but may occur in the long term.

Subunit 4d (Beluga Mt. Ridge) contains some soils with agricultural potential and will be designated resource management. In the short term, timber and habitat management are encouraged. Agricultural sales and grazing may be allowed uses in the future if they are determined to be the best long term land use. Should the land be sold for agriculture, personal use timber harvest will be a secondary land use. Should a road along the existing right-of-way through subunit 4d be funded, the resource management lands in 4d should be reevaluated with respect to the economic feasibility of agricultural development and grazing. When these lands are reevaluated, forestry, habitat and settlement values also will be considered.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The complete set of areawide management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2 of this plan. All of the guidelines potentially apply to uses within this management unit; however, those that are most likely to be applicable are indicated with asterisks in the list below.

- Agriculture
- Fish and Wildlife
- *Forestry
- *Recreation
- *Settlement
- Subsurface
- *Transportation
- *Instream Flow
- *Lakeshore Management
- *Public Access
- *Remote Cabin Permits
- *Stream Corridors
- *Trail Management
- *Wetlands Management
- *Resource Management

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Mt. Susitna

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4 – Beluga Mountain

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
4a Beluga Mt.	State	Forestry Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat	Remote Cabins	Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals	—
4b Hiline Lake South	State	Settlement	Forestry (personal use) Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed prior to disposal	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	—	Estimated net disposal area = 600 acres
4c Hiline Lake	Borough/Private	Borough Land Bank Values: Forestry, Public Recreation, Settlement, Wildlife Habitat		Open	Available for leasing	—	—
4d Beluga Mt. Ridge	State	Resource Management (high) Values: Agriculture, Forestry, Grazing, Wildlife Habitat, Settlement		Open except along Lower Sucker Creek (see mgmt. guidelines)	Available for leasing	—	—

*Other uses such as material sales, land leases, remote cabin permits, etc., that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement and management guidelines of this unit, and with the relevant management guidelines in chapter 2.

Management guidelines that apply to this management unit only are presented below by subunit.

Subunit 4b, 4c and 4d (Hiline Lake South, Hiline Lake and Beluga Mt. Ridge)

Stream Corridors

The management intent for land adjacent to the streams referenced below is to permit fishing, camping and other active uses, and to protect water quality and riparian habitat. Consequently, this land should be retained in public ownership. Corridor widths will be set on a case-by-case basis using policies in Chapter 2. The standard minimum buffer width (200' on each side of the river) should be used on unnamed creeks that appear on the 1:63,360 scale USGS topographic maps, including but not limited to the several tributaries to the Talachulitna River in subunit 4c. The public corridor on Lower Sucker Creek should be approximately ¼ mile on each side to accommodate hunting within the corridor and provide opportunities for camping in a natural setting along one of the most important tributaries to Alexander Creek.

Subunit 4c (Hiline Lake)

Lakeshore Management

Although the state has retained portions of the north and south shores of Hiline Lake in public ownership, the plan recommends that the borough retain additional public land when lakefront property is sold. The total amount of land sold should not exceed 50% of the land within 500' of the lakeshore. Retained lands should include at least 50% of the lakeshore. This will ensure public access to and around the lake and retain the opportunities for future use of the area as a local recreation site and/or campground.

Subunit 4d (Beluga Mt. Ridge)

Mining

Public lands within 200' of Lower Sucker Creek will be closed to mineral location. The closure is intended to protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat on one of the most important tributaries to Alexander Creek.