

MANAGEMENT UNIT 12: DESHKA FLATS

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Deshka Flats management unit lies east of the Kahiltna and Yentna Rivers, north of Lockwood Lake and west of the existing Kahiltna Flats state subdivision. It is dominated by lowland forest with interspersed wetlands. The land is highly productive for wildlife and commercially valuable for timber. Moose Creek is an anadromous fish stream that receives a moderate amount of public use for fishing.* The area includes extensive zones with moderate suitability for moose winter range. It also has large areas of soils that offer opportunities for agricultural development or settlement. In addition, the portion of the Kahiltna River within the unit is lined with numerous mining claims. Both public and private land uses will be accommodated in this subregion, and a large area will be designated resource management to allow future reevaluation of its best long term use. Management Unit 12 will remain open to mineral location and available for coal leasing except for the existing and proposed disposal areas (subunits 12c and 12d). All public lands in this unit are available for oil and gas leasing.

Access into this management unit is limited to fly-in access to lakes. Two routes are proposed for consideration for future road construction. These routes would connect this unit with the Amber Lakes area to the north.

Four subunits are contained in Management Unit 12: the densely forested central region around Deshka Flats (12a), the mixed wetlands and forests adjacent to the Kahiltna River and Yentna River corridor (12b), the existing Kahiltna Flats subdivision (12c), and an additional settlement area adjacent to the subdivision (12d). See the maps at the end of this section for boundaries of these areas, and the accompanying chart for a summary of land uses for each subunit.

Subunit 12a (Deshka Flats) contains relatively large contiguous areas of class II and III soils considered to have potential for commercial agriculture. This area is also densely forested and contains valuable upland habitat. It will be designated resource management. In the near term (5-10 years) it will be retained in public ownership and managed for timber, wildlife, and water resources. This area will be reevaluated to determine

its best long-term use when the Susitna Area Plan is revised or when road access to the area is imminent. Agriculture, forestry, settlement and habitat values will be considered when the area is reevaluated.

Subunit 12b will be retained in public ownership. It has a higher proportion of wetlands and lower agriculture and settlement values than does the remainder of the management unit. Its major values are for timber and riparian habitat. It is particularly important for moose winter range. This subunit will be managed for forestry, mining, habitat, and protection of water resources. In addition, it will be proposed for legislative designation as a multiple use area.

Subunit 12c is the existing Kahiltna Flats subdivision. Its primary designation is settlement. There are many unsold surveyed lots in this subdivision, and they will remain available for sale over-the-counter.

Subunit 12d is adjacent to the existing Kahiltna Flats subdivision. It is designated for settlement and may be offered for sale in the future as either an extension to the existing subdivision or a homestead area.

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

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

* Note: The Moose Creek in Management Unit 12 is a different stream than that in the Moose Creek-Kroto Creek (Deshka River) system proposed for legislative designation.

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

SUBREGION Susitna Lowlands

MANAGEMENT UNIT 12 - Deshka Flats

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
12a Deshka Flats	State	Resource Management (high) Values: Agriculture, Forestry, Settlement, Wildlife Habitat		Open	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Land Disposals	—
12b Yentna Forest	State	Forestry Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat		Open	Available for leasing	Land Disposals	Recommended for legislative designation
12c Kahiltna Flats	State/ Private	Settlement (existing sub-division)	Forestry (personal use) Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	Remote Cabins Trapper Cabins	Approximately 200 unsold surveyed lots remain available over-the-counter
12d Kahiltna Flats addition	State	Settlement	Forestry Public Rec. Wildlife Hab.	Closed prior to disposal	Not available for coal leasing or prospecting	—	Estimated net disposal area = 670 acres

*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.

Subunits 12a, 12b, & 12c (Deshka Flats, Yentna Forest, and Kahiltna Flats)

Protection of Transportation Routes

Chapter 4 of this plan identifies a system of possible improvements to the regional and local transportation system. One route passes through this subunit. The precise location of this route has not been determined, although a general location is shown on the maps in Chapter 4. Land use authorizations in this unit such as land sales, leases, or other actions should be located so as not to preclude the option to build this road along a feasible and efficient route.

Subunits 12a and 12d (Deshka Flats and Kahiltna Flats addition)

Stream Corridors

The management intent for land adjacent to unnamed streams that appear on the USGS 1:63,360 scale topographic maps 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.

Subunit 12b (Yentna Forest)

Management Plans and Remote Cabins

It is recommended that a management plan be prepared for subunit 12b. The management plan will determine, among other things, whether or not remote cabins will be permitted in this subunit. Remote cabin permits will not be offered until and unless areas open to remote cabins are designated by a management plan.