

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4P

North Slope of the Alaska Range

MANAGEMENT INTENT

General. State land in this unit is retained in public ownership for multiple use management. The emphasis is on subsurface resource development and protection of habitat. All state land in this unit is open to mineral entry.

Fish and Wildlife. Fish and wildlife habitat is designated a primary use in subunits 4P1 and 4P2.

The high mountain areas of the Western Alaska Range contain areas of important-rated habitat for most species, prime-rated habitat for grizzly bear, raptors, furbearers, and caribou, and critical-rated habitat for moose, dall sheep, and peregrine falcon (mostly A-2 habitat; see Appendix A, *Glossary*).

Mineral licks in this subunit and the surrounding areas are critical-rated habitat for dense sheep populations (A-1 habitat; see Appendix A, *Glossary*). Sheep winter range is also critical-rated habitat and is limited.

The mineral licks in Subunit 4P2 and other places not yet identified are heavily used, primarily in the spring. The regular use of these licks suggests an important biological role, especially for sheep. Licks may also be an indicator of mineral values.

The management intent for Subunit 4P2 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 4P2 in the future.

Minerals. Minerals is designated a primary use in Subunit 4P1. The north flank of the Alaska Range has extremely high potential for large scale hard rock mining. This subunit is the core of the Bonnefield Mining District, a small but steady producer of placer gold for nearly 100 years, with an output of about 50,000 ounces. An unusual stanniferous massive sulfide which has grades of 4% copper, 14.5%

zinc, 6% lead, and 7.6 oz/ton silver is known on Sheep Creek. This subunit has significant potential for the production of lead, zinc, silver, and gold. Exploration is active, with five placer miners working in the region during the 1981 season. Coal bearing formations occur around Buzzard Creek and north of Mystic Mountains.

Subunit 4P2 and the nine sections surrounding each mineral lick are subject to leasehold location to protect wildlife habitat values. Existing claims in the leasehold areas will not be converted to leasehold location or be required to obtain a lease from the state prior to production. However, exploration and mining on existing claims will be managed according to additional guidelines listed for this unit.

Recreation. Recreation is designated a secondary use in Subunit 4P1. There is a moderate amount of recreational use.

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.

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.

**LAND-USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY -
MANAGEMENT UNIT 4P: *North Slope of the Alaska Range***

Subunit	Primary Surface Uses	Secondary Surface Uses	Subsurface ¹	Prohibited ² Surface Use	Comments
4P1	Minerals Wildlife habitat	Public recreation	Open	Land disposals Remote cabins	
4P2	Wildlife habitat		Open through leasehold location	Land disposals Remote cabins	Dall sheep Mineral licks See text for guidelines

¹ Subsurface designations refer to locatable minerals. All areas are available for leasing for leasable minerals, except as noted for coal.

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