

APPROVED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

This Approved Plan replaces the Southcentral Management Framework Plan approved in 1980 and is now the base land use plan for public lands administered by the BLM's Glennallen Field Office. The Approved Plan adopts the management described in Alternative D and the Management Common to All Alternatives section presented in the Proposed East Alaska RMP/Final EIS (USDI-BLM 2006a), with adjustments as described in the *Notice of Modification and Clarification* sections of the ROD.

A. Consideration of Other BLM Plans and Policies

This plan incorporates decisions contained in the following documents unless or until amended or replaced:

- Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment for Wildland Fire and Fuels Management for Alaska (USDI-BLM, 2004).
- River Management Plan for the Delta National Wild and Scenic River (USDI-BLM, 1983).
- Revised Management Plan for the Gulkana National Wild and Scenic River (USDI-BLM, 2006).
- Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Statewide Land Health Standards (USDI-BLM, 2004).

In the event there are inconsistencies or discrepancies between previously approved plans and this Approved Plan, the decisions contained in the Approved Plan will be followed.

The Glennallen Field office will continue to tier to statewide, national, and programmatic EISs and other NEPA and planning documents.

All future resource authorizations and actions will conform to, or be consistent with the decisions contained in the Approved Plan. All existing operations and activities authorized under permits, contracts, cooperative agreements or other authorizations will be modified, as necessary, to conform to this plan within a reasonable timeframe. However, this plan does not repeal valid existing rights on BLM managed lands. A valid existing right is a claim or authorization that takes precedence over the decisions developed in this plan. If such authorizations come up for review and can be modified, they will also be brought into conformance with the plan.

While the Final EIS for the East Alaska RMP constitutes compliance with NEPA for the broad-scale decisions made in this Approved Plan, BLM will continue to prepare Environmental Assessments (EAs) or Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) where appropriate as part of implementation level planning and decision-making.

B. Plan Implementation

Plan implementation is a continuous and active process. Decisions presented in the *Management Decisions* section of this Approved Plan are of three types: Immediate, One-time, and Long-Term.

Immediate Decisions

These decisions go into effect upon signature of the Record of Decision and Approved Plan. These include decisions such as the allocation of lands as available or unavailable for oil and gas leasing, RNA designation, and OHV designations (open, limited or closed). Immediate decisions require no additional analysis and provide the framework for any subsequent activities proposed in the planning area. Proposals for actions such as oil and gas leasing, land adjustments, and other allocation-based actions will be reviewed against these decisions/allocations to determine if the proposal is in conformance with the plan.

One-Time Decisions and Implementation plans

These types of decisions include those that are implemented after additional site-specific analysis is completed or after procedural requirements are carried out. Examples are implementation of recommendations to revoke ANCSA d(1) withdrawals or development of an implementation-level plan (such as revision of Wild and Scenic River management plans or an implementation plan for a Special Recreation Management Area). One-time decisions usually require additional analysis and are prioritized as part of the BLM budget process.

Long-Term Guidance/Life of Plan Direction

These decisions include the goals, objectives, and management actions established by the plan that are applied during site-specific analyses and activity planning. This guidance is applied whether the action is initiated by the BLM or by a non-BLM project proponent. Long-term guidance and plan direction is incorporated into BLM management as implementation level planning and project analysis occurs.

Priorities for implementation of “one-time” RMP decisions will be based on several criteria, including:

- Current and projected resource needs and demands;
- National and Statewide BLM management direction and program emphasis, and
- Funding
- Land status (State or Native selected vs. BLM public lands)

C. General Implementation Schedule of “One-Time” Actions

Decisions in this plan will be implemented over a period of years depending on budget and staff availability. The schedule outlined in Table 1 below establishes tentative timeframes for completion of the “one-time” actions identified in the Approved Plan. Most of these actions require additional analysis and site-specific activity planning. This schedule does not include the decisions which are effective immediately upon approval of the plan, or the actions which describe the ongoing management that will be incorporated and applied as site-specific proposals are analyzed.

This schedule will assist BLM managers and staff in preparing budget requests and in scheduling work. However, the proposed schedule must be considered tentative and will be affected by future funding, changing program priorities, non-discretionary workloads, and cooperation by partners and external publics.

Table 1: Implementation plans

| Implementation Plan | Scheduled FY Year | Comments |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Gulkana SRMA | done | River management plan for the Gulkana WSR corridor. |
| Delta SRMA | Started FY07 | River management plan for the Delta WSR corridor. |
| Bering Glacier RNA | FY 08 | |
| Slana disposal | FY 08 | Covers strategy and details for selective Slana disposal. |
| Delta Range SRMA | FY 09 | Unencumbered lands. |
| Tiekel SRMA | FY 09 | |
| Denali SRMA | FY 10 | If lands are retained. |
| TLAD travel | FY 10 | If lands are retained. |
| West Fork area travel | FY 11 | If lands are retained. |
| Nelchina caribou calving area travel | FY 11 | If lands are retained. |
| Chistochina/Cantwell area travel | FY 12 | If lands are retained. |

D. Maintaining the Plan

Land use plan decisions and supporting information can be maintained to reflect minor changes in data, but maintenance is limited to refining, documenting, and/or clarifying previously approved decisions. Some examples of maintenance actions include:

- Correcting minor data, typographical, mapping, or tabular data errors.
- Refining baseline information as a result of new inventory data.

The BLM expects that new information gathered from field inventories and assessments, research, other agency studies, and other sources will update baseline data and/or support new management techniques, required operating procedures, and scientific principles. Where monitoring shows land use plan actions or required operating procedures are not effective, modifications or adjustments may occur without amendment or revision of the plan as long as assumptions and impacts disclosed in the analysis remain valid and broadscale goals and objectives are not changed.

Plan maintenance will be documented in supporting records. Plan maintenance does not require formal public involvement, interagency coordination, or the NEPA analysis required for making new land use plan decisions.

E. Changing the Plan

The Approved Plan may be changed, should conditions warrant, through a plan amendment or plan revision process. A plan amendment may become necessary if major changes are needed or to consider a proposal or action that is not in conformance with the plan. The results of monitoring, evaluation of new data, or policy changes and changing public needs might also provide the impetus for an amendment. Generally, an amendment is issue-specific. If several areas of the plan become outdated or otherwise obsolete, a plan revision may become necessary. Plan amendments and revisions are accomplished with public input and the appropriate level of environmental analysis.

F. Plan Evaluation

Evaluation is a process in which the plan and monitoring data are reviewed to see if management goals and objectives are being met and if management direction is sound. Land use plan evaluations determine if decisions are being implemented, whether Required Operating Procedures are satisfactory, whether there are significant changes in the related plans of other entities, whether there is new data of significance to the plan, and if decisions should be changed through amendment or revision. Monitoring data gathered over time is examined and used to draw conclusions on whether management actions are meeting stated objectives, and if not, why. Conclusions are then used to make recommendations on whether to continue current management or to identify what changes need to be made in management practices to meet objectives.

BLM will use land use plan evaluations to determine if the decisions in the RMP, supported by the accompanying NEPA analysis, are still valid in light of new information and monitoring data. Evaluation of the RMP will generally be

conducted every five years, unless unexpected actions, new information, or significant changes in other plans, legislation, land conveyances, or litigation triggers an evaluation.

The following estimated evaluation schedule will be followed for the East Alaska RMP:

- January 2011
- January 2016
- January 2021
- January 2026

Evaluations will follow the protocols established by the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) or other appropriate guidance in effect at the time the evaluation is initiated.

II. MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

This section of the Approved Plan presents the goals and objectives, land use allocations, and management actions established for public lands managed by the BLM's Glennallen Field Office. These management decisions are presented by program area. Not all types of decisions were identified for each program. A *Monitoring* section is also included for each program to describe how the program decisions will be tracked to ensure implementation.

The Draft RMP/EIS and Proposed RMP/Final EIS identified *Desired Future Conditions* for several programs, which are included in the Approved Plan as *Objectives*. Most of the identified objectives are long range in nature and will not be achieved immediately, but rather are assumed to require a period of 20 to 50 years to achieve. Some of the sections from the Draft and Proposed RMPs have been combined or reorganized for ease in reference, but the content remains as contained in the Proposed RMP, except as described in the *Notice of Modifications* and *Clarifications* sections of the ROD.

This section is organized alphabetically by program area with the following titles:

- Abandoned Mine Lands**
- Air Quality**
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)**
- Cultural Resources**
- Fire and Fuels Management**
- Fish and Special Status Fish**
- Forest and Woodland Vegetation and Forest Products**
- Hazardous Materials**
- Lands and Realty**
- Minerals (Leasing)**
- Minerals (Locatable)**
- Minerals (Saleable/Mineral Materials)**
- Noxious Weeds, Invasive, and Non-Native Species**
- Paleontological Resources**
- Riparian and Wetland Vegetation**
- Recreation**
- Soils**
- Special Status Plants**
- Subsistence**
- Transportation and Facilities**
- Travel Management and OHV Use**
- Tribal Treaty Rights**
- Visual Resources**
- Water**
- Wild and Scenic Rivers**
- Wildlife and Special Status Birds and Mammals**

Maps depicting the management decisions are provided at the back of the document for easy reference. Some management actions refer to specific Required Operating Procedures (ROPs) or stipulations. These ROPs and stipulations are shown in Appendix A.

A. ABANDONED MINE LANDS

A-1: Goal

Protect humans and the environment from exposure to abandoned mine lands while considering associated resource values such as historic resources.

A-2: Management Actions

1. Continue to update and refine the inventory of abandoned mine sites on BLM-managed lands in the planning area.
2. Prioritize reclamation of abandoned mine lands based on the degree of threat to human health, the environment, and public safety. Place emphasis on those areas that present serious threats to the environment, especially to water quality, and those that pose safety risks to the public. Conduct any reclamation in accordance with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, following project level planning and analysis under NEPA and other pertinent laws.

A-3: Monitoring

Reclamation and mitigation work done on abandoned mine sites will be monitored to ensure compliance with laws and regulations and with the terms of the work order or contract.

Clean-up sites will be monitored to protect and safeguard human health, prevent/restore environmental damage and to limit the BLM's liability. This monitoring includes such things as conducting periodic water and soil sampling, monitoring for revegetation of reclaimed areas, dust control, erosion and other signs of potential danger to human health and harm to the environment.

The number of clean-up efforts in progress on BLM lands in the planning area will be reported in the Annual Program Summary and Planning Update, as well as the number of acres inventoried to identify AML issues.

B. AIR QUALITY

B-1: Goal

Meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards under the Clean Air Act (as amended in 1977), and prevent significant deterioration of air quality within the Glennallen Field Office area with all authorized actions.

B-2: Management Actions

1. Develop burn plans for all prescribed burn treatments that include incident and cumulative air quality considerations.
2. Require permits where necessary for stationary facilities.
3. Burn plans for all prescribed burn treatments will be consistent with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's (ADEC) Enhanced Smoke Management Plan.

C. AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

C-1: Goal

Protect relevant and important values and apply special management where standard or routine management is not adequate to protect the values from risks or threats of damage/degradation or to provide for public safety from natural hazards.

C-2: Allocations

Designate approximately 827,000 acres in the Bering Glacier as a Research Natural Area (see Map 1, page 63). Other areas will not be designated as ACECs, but specific management actions will occur as described below for protection of resource values associated with that area.

C-3: BERING GLACIER RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

C-3-a: Objectives

1. Protect habitats associated with the glacial environment and the retreating glacier in order to continue to provide opportunities for research.
2. Protect wetlands that provide important habitat for migrating birds.
3. Manage to continue to provide a primitive recreation experience.
4. Conduct research activities in a manner that is least obtrusive to the area.
5. Manage to protect anadromous fisheries habitat to support continued, long term subsistence use.

C-3-b: Management Actions

1. **Off Highway Vehicles** will be limited to designated trails during snow-free months. Specific trails will be designated in implementation planning. No restrictions on snowmachines.
2. **New roads or airstrip construction** would be considered only if consistent with protection of the resource values described above.
3. The western 2/3 of the area would be closed to **locatable mineral entry and mineral leasing** through maintenance of PLO 5179. The eastern 1/3 would be open to locatable mineral entry and mineral leasing, subject to Required Operating Procedures and oil and gas stipulations.
4. No new **mineral material** sites would be permitted.

5. Construction of remote **public use cabins** may be considered, consistent with protection of resource values identified.
6. Appropriate use limits will be developed for **Special Recreation Permits** through **implementation-level planning**, consistent with management for a primitive recreation experience. No heli-skiing or helicopter supported commercial recreation activities would be permitted.
7. **R&PP and FLPMA leases** would be considered, consistent with protection of values identified.
8. **Permits:** Occupancy permits, such as trapping or fishing cabins, would be authorized under the following conditions: 1) No new structures within the RNA; 2) Existing structures would be authorized only if they can clearly be tied to a commercial enterprise, such as guiding or trapping. Other permits would be considered if consistent with protection of the values identified.
9. **Forestry** practices may be permitted if primary objective is enhancement of identified values (such as moose winter range). Contingent on utilizing temporary roads.

C-3-c: Monitoring

A long term monitoring program will be established for the Bering Glacier RNA during implementation planning. Monitoring will utilize existing baseline data collected through research that has occurred in the area for the last 15 years. Once baseline condition assessment information has been compiled for different resource values, the RNA will be monitored at least once every five years to identify any potential adverse impacts that might occur and identify trends in resource condition, and to determine whether any actions taking place in the area are causing detrimental changes to the relevant and important values.

C-4: OTHER AREAS CONSIDERED AS ACECs

Other areas were considered for potential ACEC designation in the Draft RMP/EIS and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS (Nelchina caribou calving area, West Fork trumpeter swan area, and the Delta bison calving area). Because the areas are predominantly State-selected, they will not be designated as ACECs. However, specific management actions were developed for resource values present in these areas. Please see the **Wildlife** portion of this Approved Plan (page 59) for a description of these management actions.

D. CULTURAL RESOURCES

D-1: Goal

Protect and preserve important cultural resources. Expand opportunities for scientific and educational uses of these resources.

D-2-a: Objective (Inventory)

Reduce imminent threats from natural or human-caused deterioration, or potential conflict with other resource uses, by identifying priority geographic areas for new field inventory, based upon a probability for unrecorded significant resources.

D-2-b: Management Actions (Inventory)

1. Inventories needed on selected high probability areas that respond to planned management activities, including: a) Holocene shorelines of Lake Ahtna; b) Gulkana and Delta River corridors; c) historic properties associated with Valdez trail; d) areas identified as “limited” for OHV use, with first priority on unencumbered BLM lands; e) the Bering Glacier RNA; f) proposed prescribed burns; g) any trail reroutes or construction; and h) lands identified for disposal.
2. Systematic (Section 110) surveys needed for most of the large blocks of land that BLM manages. Prioritized based on the list described under Section B on page 2.
3. Archeological testing/excavation to fill gaps about prehistory in the Copper River Basin.

D-2-c: Monitoring (Inventory)

A periodic review of the cultural resource program will be conducted to ensure that the program is meeting the established parameters for proactive cultural resources inventory under Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

D-3-a: Objective (Protection)

Ensure that all authorizations for land and resource use avoid inadvertent damage to Federal and non-Federal cultural resources in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

D-3-b: Management Actions (Protection)

1. Comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for all Federal undertakings.
2. Avoid impacts to significant cultural resources (resources considered eligible for the National Register) by project redesign, project abandonment, and/or mitigation of adverse impacts through recovery/alternative means as a last resort.
3. The following Required Operating Procedures will be applied to all permitted activities, as necessary: ROP-Cultural-a-2 and ROP-Cultural-a-3.
4. Assist recreation/trails management with re-location of trails to protect cultural resources. Priorities for this activity are TLAD and unencumbered BLM lands.

D-3-c: Monitoring (Protection)

Where inventory has been conducted and baseline information obtained on site condition, a representative number of sites will be monitored on an annual basis to identify any potential adverse impacts that might occur and identify trends in resource condition and/or deterioration, and to determine whether any actions taking place in the area are causing detrimental changes to the cultural values.

D-4-a: Objective (Education)

Promote stewardship, conservation, and appreciation of cultural resources through educational and public outreach programs in accordance with the BLM Heritage Education program.

D-4-b: Management Action (Education)

1. Coordinate with recreation on placement of education/interpretive materials regarding cultural resources in the following areas: 1) Denali Highway (cultural values in TLAD); 2) Richardson Highway, Tiekel planning region (Valdez Trail, WAMCATS trail); 3) ANCSA 17(b) easements; and 4) cultural/traditional areas as identified by Native villages and corporations.
2. Identify opportunities for historic cabin restoration, maintenance on lands to be retained by BLM.

D-4-c: Monitoring (Education): None.

D-5-a: Objective (Consultation)

Continue consultation with Native and village corporations and village councils regarding protection of cultural values that may be affected by BLM authorizations or actions.

D-5-b: Management Actions (Consultation):

1. Maintain existing MOUs with Ahtna, Inc., Native Village of Tazlina, Cheesh'Na Tribal Council, Native Village of Chitina, Native Village of Chickaloon, Gulkana Village, and Gakona Village. Maintenance includes annual coordination regarding upcoming BLM projects and potential impacts on traditional/cultural areas or sites.
2. Utilize James Kari report and Ahtna place names data, along with annual and semi-annual MOU meetings, to identify important traditional/cultural sites or areas that could be impacted by BLM proposed projects.

D-5-c: Monitoring (Consultation)

The number of consultation and coordination meetings will be reported.

E. FIRE AND FUELS MANAGEMENT

E-1: Goals

- Protect human life and property.
- Use wildland fire and fuel treatments to meet land use and resource objectives.
- Reduce risk and cost of uncontrolled wildland fire through wildland fire use, prescribed fire, manual or mechanical treatment.
- Reduce adverse effects of fire management activities.
- Continue interagency collaboration and cooperation.

Within the planning area, fires are classified as wildland fires that are managed under the 1998 Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, or prescribed fires, which are ignited to accomplish land and resources objectives, and are managed under agency policies and procedures.

E-2: WILDLAND FIRE

E-2-a: Allocations (Wildland Fire)

Within the planning area fire management has been and will continue to be conducted by agreements executed on an interagency, landscape-scale basis. This standardizes policies and procedures among land managing agencies in Alaska. Four wildland fire suppression management options (Critical, Full, Modified, and Limited) are utilized statewide by all Federal, State, and Native land managers. Each management option is defined by objectives, management constraints, and values to be protected. Management options can be changed based on RMP or other land use planning objectives.

The following suppression management classes will be applied as shown on Map 2, page 64.

Critical (22,000 acres): Highest priority for allocation of initial attack suppression forces. The objective is to protect human life, populated areas, inhabited property, designated physical developments, and structural resources designated as National Historic Landmarks. The appropriate response to fires that occur in this option is aggressive and continuing actions to provide complete protection of specifically-identified sites from fire.

Full (1,260,000 acres): Second priority for assignment of available initial attack suppression resources. Full is assigned to cultural and historical sites, uninhabited private property, natural resource high-value areas, and other high-value areas that do not involve the protection of human life and inhabited property. The appropriate response to fires occurring in this designation is aggressive initial attack dependent upon the availability of suppression resources

to minimize resource damage and suppress fires at the smallest reasonably possible number of acres.

Modified (2,189,000 acres): Third priority for assignment of available initial attack suppression resources. The goal is to balance acres burned with suppression costs, and, when appropriate, to use wildland fire to accomplish land and resource objectives. This option provides flexibility in the selection of suppression strategies. When risks are high, the response is analogous to Full; when risks are low, the appropriate response is analogous to Limited.

Limited (11,011,000 acres): This option acknowledges fire as a vital component of Alaskan ecosystems. Wildland fire is used as a management tool to maintain, enhance, and improve ecological condition. Under this option, wildland fires will be allowed to burn under the influence of natural forces within predetermined areas, while human life and site-specific values continue to be protected. This option is also assigned to areas where the cost of suppression exceeds the value of the resources to be protected or the environmental impacts on the than the effects of fire. This designation receives the lowest priority for allocation of initial attack resources. The appropriate response is routing surveillance to observe fire activity and to determine if site-specific values or adjacent higher priority management option areas are compromised.

E-2-b: Management Actions (Wildland Fire)

1. Initial attack and suppression strategies will be based on procedures described in the 1998 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan (AIWFMP). These strategies rely heavily on the use of the suppression management classes listed above.
2. Changes to the suppression management classes described can be initiated by the land manager. These changes can be based on changing conditions (such as increased development, remote facility development, or new sites discovered) or on resource objectives or desired conditions, such as those described in the following section (under Prescribed Fire). Changes should be suggested between September 30 and March 1 to be incorporated for the next fire season.
3. Fire Suppression Constraints are described in the AIWFMP. Additional constraints on the use of suppression tools are at the discretion of the land manager and are documented in a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA).
4. Use wildland fire to achieve desired conditions for caribou and moose habitat as described below. On Nelchina caribou winter range manage for less than 10 percent of range to be burned every decade, to maintain mixed age classes of lichen. If large wildfires occur where this standard is exceeded, consider changing suppression management classes to full or modified for the following season.

5. Wildland fire rehabilitation, if needed, will be conducted consistent with the BLM-Alaska *Programmatic Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan EA*, October, 2006; and with ROP-Veg-b-7.

E-2-c: Monitoring (Wildland Fire)

Monitoring will determine whether fire management strategies, practices, and activities are meeting resource management objectives and concerns. Fire management plans and policies will be updated as needed to keep current with national and state fire management direction. Scheduled program reviews (post season fire review) will be conducted to evaluate fire management effectiveness in meeting goals and to re-assess program direction.

E-3: PRESCRIBED FIRE and FUELS REDUCTION

Prescribed fire is any fire ignited by management action to meet specific objectives. A written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist, and NEPA requirements must be met, prior to ignition.

E-3-a: Objectives/Desired Conditions (Prescribed Fire)

1. Moose habitat: Use wildland fire or prescribed burning to achieve the following desired condition: A mosaic pattern of upland spruce woodland cover types interspersed with a lower seral expression dominated by alder and willow. Upland woodland cover types are mixed with stream terraces and flood plains dominated by sedge and mixed age classes of alder and willow.
2. Caribou habitat: Within portions of the Nelchina caribou summer range, utilize wildland and prescribed fire to create a mosaic of burned and unburned areas. Desired condition for caribou summer range is similar to the description for moose habitat. For caribou winter range, desired condition is uplands spruce woodland cover type where lichen and various herbs dominate the ground layer.
3. Bison habitat (Delta River floodplain): Utilize prescribed fire to improve Delta bison calving range to increase forage productivity and maintain grass dominated vegetation communities. Desired condition is grass-dominated plant communities interspersed with scattered pockets of cottonwood, white spruce, and balsam poplar.
4. Dall sheep: Where tree or shrub encroachment is occurring, utilize prescribed fire to maintain open high elevation grass and forb-dominated plant communities.

E-3-b: Management Actions (Prescribed Fire)

1. Utilize wildland or prescribed fire to achieve desired conditions for moose habitat on moose winter range shown on Map 3, page 65. Priority for treatment will be as follows: a) Completion of Alphabet Hills prescribed burn; b) winter range on unencumbered BLM land; c) projects on State or

- Native-selected land where the selecting entity is a partner and contributor (resources or money).
2. Utilize prescribed fire to achieve desired conditions for caribou only if it is not being achieved through wildland fire or by prescribed burning to improve moose habitat as described under #1. This is second priority to moose habitat improvement listed above.
 3. Utilize prescribed burning to improve Delta bison calving range and achieve desired conditions listed above over 15,000 acres in the area.
 4. Utilize prescribed burning to improve Dall sheep habitat as described above. This would be based on on-going inventory and delineation of these ranges and encroachment of shrubs.
 5. Prescribed burn plans will apply the following Required Operating Procedures, as applicable: ROP-Veg-a-4, ROP-Veg-a-2, ROP-Veg-a-1, and ROP-F&W-a-10.
 6. The prescribed burn plans will address air quality and smoke management. Appropriate contacts and written approval will be obtained from ADEC.

E-3-c: Management Actions (Fuels Reduction)

1. Fuels reduction projects will be considered in areas of urban interface, such as Slana or Native or State-selected lands adjacent to villages. First priority will go to areas where fuels reduction can be achieved while meeting other objectives, such as habitat improvement or providing for personal use firewood.

E-3-d: Monitoring (Prescribed Fire)

Pre-fire condition and post fire effects will be determined by monitoring vegetation response to treatments and progress towards meeting objectives. Monitoring methods may include fuels and vegetation transects, photo points, density, cover and frequency plots, and ocular estimates. When available, applicable remote sensing data will also be incorporated into ecological condition monitoring.

F. FISH AND SPECIAL STATUS FISH

F-1: Goal

Maintain and protect fish habitat on BLM-managed lands and provide for the habitat needs of fish resources necessary to maintain or enhance such populations and to ensure the continued public use, economic and subsistence benefits of such resources. Maintain wild stocks of salmon and steelhead.

F-2: Objectives (Desired Conditions)

Manage to maintain streams in proper functioning condition, in order to provide the following:

- A diversity of instream habitat structure is present.

- Composition and quantity of streambed materials are appropriate for site potential.
- Riparian vegetation and stream channel morphology contribute to maintaining appropriate water temperatures.

F-3: Management Actions

1. Continue the Gulkana fish counting tower operations. This cooperative effort with ADF&G provides the best Chinook salmon escapement data available for the Gulkana River.
2. Continue inventorying for anadromous fish spawning habitat, particularly outside the Gulkana River.
3. Continue to conduct Production Habitat inventory.
4. Continue to support work or studies to provide information on distribution and abundance of steelhead trout in the Gulkana River as well as other watersheds in the planning area.
5. Where OHV trails are designated, continue to coordinate with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) on permitted crossings across anadromous streams.
6. Continue to cooperate with ADF&G on increasing the population of steelhead and rainbow trout in the Gulkana River by habitat manipulation and other enhancement techniques.
7. Provide educational information through the Gulkana website regarding waterflow levels and potential rafting and boating impacts to spawning beds.
8. Cooperate with other BLM programs in identifying the need for re-location, closure, or maintenance of OHV trails to avoid crucial habitat features.
9. For the protection of fish and fish habitat, the following Required Operating Procedures will be used for permitted activities, as applicable: ROP-F&W-a-2, ROP-F&W-a-3, ROP-F&W-a-4, ROP-F&W-a-5, ROP-F&W-a-6, ROP-F&W-a-7, ROP-F&W-a-8, ROP-F&W-a-9, ROP-F&W-a-10, ROP-Water-a-1, ROP-water-a-2, ROP-Water-c-1, ROP-Water-c-2, ROP-Water-c-3, ROP-Water-c-6, and ROP-Water-c-7.

F-4: Monitoring

1. Support continued monitoring and assessment of riparian areas. Use this information as a baseline to support maintenance and enhancement projects.
2. Continue cooperative efforts with ADF&G to conduct creel surveys, focusing on the Gulkana river.

G. FOREST AND WOODLAND VEGETATION, AND FOREST PRODUCTS

G-1: Goals

- Maintain and restore the health, productivity, and biological diversity of forest and woodland ecosystems.
- Consistent with other resource values, provide personal use wood products for local consumption and opportunities for commercial harvests.

G-2: Objectives (Desired Conditions)

- **Timber stands managed for commercial production of white spruce:** These stands occur on floodplains and alluvial terraces on well-drained soils. Where accessible, these stands would be managed to maintain white spruce as the dominant tree species, which may require thinning to minimize early seral competition from other species. Beetle-kill trees within these stands would be salvaged where possible as firewood or house logs. This desired condition would be an objective for a maximum of 10 percent of the approximately 144,000 acres in the area considered suitable for commercial harvest.
- **Timber stands managed for improvement of wildlife habitat:** In mixed white spruce-aspen/poplar/birch stands where wildlife habitat improvement is the primary objective, desired condition would be maintenance of white spruce with a component of aspen, balsam poplar, or paper birch. These stands would consist of shrub-dominated early seral stages after either harvest, wildland or prescribed fire, or mechanical treatment of mature or bark beetle-kill white spruce. This would be the desired condition for the majority of the 144,000 acres in the area considered suitable for harvest.

In addition, the following objectives were identified for the approximately 144,000 acres identified as suitable for timber harvest (see Map 4, page 66):

- Increase access for personal and commercial wood products.
- Improve forest health through salvage of bark beetle-kill spruce.
- Consider potential for commercial harvest.
- Benefit wildlife habitat.
- Manage for desired conditions described above.
- Reduce hazardous fuels.

G-3: Management Actions

1. In cooperation with State (DNR-forestry) or Village councils, identify areas for personal firewood and house log gathering. Clearly mark access to areas and boundaries to prevent unintentional trespass. Provide for secondary objectives such as fuels reduction and habitat improvement. Priority for this and management action number 4 below is on unencumbered BLM lands.

2. Within the Gulkana National Wild River corridor, personal use firewood gathering is allowed consistent with the revised Gulkana River management plan. Consideration will be given to meeting Class I VRM objectives.
3. Forestry practices are allowed within Special Recreation Management Areas. Where possible, access will be through temporary roads, with consideration to retain roads where a roaded-natural experience is being managed for. Cutting units would be designed to meet VRM objectives for the area.
4. Consider providing access to the general public to firewood by working with ADOT to provide pull-outs or gravel ramps off main highways. Temporary roads utilized for commercial harvest may be retained for use by the public for firewood gathering.
5. Provide wood products as a benefit of forest and woodland treatments when feasible and in consideration of other resource concerns.
6. Consider the utilization of black spruce for biomass projects to achieve wildlife habitat desired conditions described under **Fire and Fuels Management**.
7. The following Required Operating Procedures will be applied to forest treatments, as applicable: ROP-Veg-a, ROP-Veg-a-1, ROP-Veg-a-2, ROP-Veg-a-3, ROP-Veg-a-5, ROP-Veg-a-7, ROP-Veg-b-1, ROP-Veg-b-3, ROP-Veg-b-4, ROP-F&W-a-9, and ROP-F&W-a-3.

G-4: Monitoring

Pre-treatment: Estimated volume per acre or biomass tons per acre will be obtained, if applicable, in stands that will be treated. In commercial and non-commercial treatment units, photo points will be established to show approximate percent cover, habitat types, and occurrence of insect infestations/diseases.

Post-treatment: Measurements as described above will be obtained within two years after project implementation on any given unit to evaluate if stand objectives were reached. Representative sample of established photo points will be revisited on a 10 year cycle to document longer term trends.

H. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

H-1: Goal

Protect humans and the environment from exposure to hazardous materials.

H-2: Management Actions

1. Comply with all appropriate laws and regulations regarding hazardous materials.
2. Do not permit unauthorized storage, treatment, or disposal of hazardous waste on public lands.

3. Apply special stipulations to comply with appropriate law, regulation, and policy when the use or storage of hazardous materials is authorized. See Required Operating Procedures ROP-Haz-a-1 through ROP-Haz-c-9.
4. Conduct cleanup and reclamation in accordance with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

H-3: Monitoring

Site clean-ups will be monitored to protect and safeguard human health, prevent/restore environmental damage and to limit the BLM's liability. The performance of the clean-up contractor for all release on public lands will be monitored to ensure full compliance and damaged land restoration. HAZMAT monitoring data will be kept in monitoring files. All data will be collected at the time and place of the incident or until the cleanup is completed and there is no future threat to human health or environment.

I. LANDS AND REALTY

I-1: Goals

- Support the BLM-Alaska State Office in the Alaska Conveyances which involve the survey and conveyance of lands to the State of Alaska, Native Corporations, Native Allottees, and other inholders.
- Provide a balance between land use (rights-of-way, land use permits, leases and sales) and resource protection that best serves the public at large.
- Provide support to other BLM programs to protect and enhance resources.

I-2: Land Use Authorizations

Land use authorizations include various authorizations and agreements to use BLM lands such as right-of-way grants, road, temporary use permits under several different authorities; leases, permits, and easements under section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA); airport leases under the Act of May 24, 1928; and Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases.

I-2-a: Management Actions (Land Use Authorizations)

1. **FLPMA leases:** All FLPMA leases would be at fair market value. No lease would be issued for the Delta or Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridors, unless for a purpose to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values. Cabins or permanent structures used for private recreation cannot be authorized under this authority. FLPMA lease proposals on selected lands would require the views from the Native Corporation to be considered on Native selected land and concurrence

from the State on State selected lands. Proposals for leases for cabins for uses such as guiding or trapping would be subject to the following criteria: a) Proximity to other private property or existing authorized structures; b) proximity to existing transportation routes or systems, and c) documentation of customary lifestyle and need. All FLPMA leases and occupancy type permits for trapping cabins will be issued consistent with 43 CFR 2920.1-1.

2. **R&PP Leases:** Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases would not be issued for sanitary landfill purposes. Existing leases for sanitary landfill purposes may be converted to patents without a reverter clause. No lease would be issued for the Wild and Scenic River corridors. R&PP lease proposals on selected lands would require the views from the Native Corporation to be considered on Native selected land and concurrence from the State on State selected lands.
3. **Permits:** Permits cover occupancy, use, or development of a site. Specific exclusion areas are described in the narrative below. In general:
 - Cabin or permanent structure permits cannot be issued for private recreation purposes, and
 - Trapping shelters would be authorized by short-term (three years maximum) Section 302 permits renewable at the discretion of BLM and tied to the applicant's customary lifestyle and need. Guide shelters would only be authorized in conjunction with Special Recreation Permits issued under FLPMA authority. Criteria for consideration of issuance of such permits is the same as described above for cabin leases.

Regarding permits, selected lands would be treated as follows:

Native-selected: Prior to the issuance of a use authorization the views of the Native Corporation shall be obtained and considered. Monies received for any use authorization on Native-selected lands would go into an escrow account.

State-selected: In accordance with 906(k) of ANILCA, the BLM must receive a letter of concurrence prior to issuance of any use authorization. The BLM may then incorporate comments in the terms and conditions of the use authorization if in compliance with Federal laws and regulations. If the State objects, the BLM would not issue the use authorization. If the proposal is on land that has been top-filed by the State, pursuant to 906(e) of ANILCA, a letter of concurrence is not required.

4. **Unauthorized Use:** Trespass cabins may become the property of the U.S. Government and be managed as administrative sites, as emergency shelters, or as public use cabins. Possible management actions on trespass

cabins include: a) removal of the structure; b) relinquishment to the U.S. Government for management purposes, and c) authorization by lease or permit for legitimate uses if consistent with identified area objectives.

- Under b and c above, the criteria listed above for cabins under lease and permits would be used.

I-2-b: Allocations (Land Use Authorizations)

The following Table summarizes the constraints applied to Land Use Authorizations in special management areas:

Table 2: Land Use Authorization constraints

| Management Action | Management Area | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| | Bering Glacier RNA | Nelchina calving area | West Fork Gulkana watershed | Delta bison calving area | Gulkana and Delta W&S Rivers |
| FLPMA, R&PP leases | OK, but must be consistent with protection of identified values. | OK, consider potential impacts to caribou calving. | OK, with application of ROPs to protect swan nesting, wetlands. | OK, with application of ROP-F&W-b-2. | Could be considered in rec and scenic portions of Delta, consistent with protection of ORVs. None in the Gulkana. |
| FLPMA 302 permits | Occupancy: no new structures. Existing structures OK if they meet criteria identified above and are consistent with RNA objectives. Other permits OK if consistent with protection of resource values. | Occupancy: no new structures. Existing structures OK if they meet the criteria identified above. Other permits OK, subject to timing constraints to protect calving caribou. | Occupancy: no new structures considered if they meet the criteria identified above for cabins. Other permits considered, subject to ROPs identified for protection of trumpeter swan nesting and moose winter range. | Occupancy: no new structures. Existing structures OK if they meet the criteria identified above. Other non-occupancy permits allowed with application of ROP-F&W-b-2. | No occupancy permits for either Gulkana or Delta. Non-occupancy considered if consistent with protection of ORVs. |
| Rights-of-way | Avoidance area. | OK, with mitigation (no activity 5/1 to 6/15, utilize underground powerlines or pipelines whenever possible. | Overhead powerlines will be avoided. | OK, with application of ROP-F&W-b-2. Utilize underground pipelines or powerlines whenever possible. | Delta: OK in rec portion, with measures to protect visual resources. Avoid in scenic and wild portions. Avoid in Gulkana. |
| Communication sites | OK if consistent with RNA objectives. | OK, but no construction 5/1 to 6/15. | None within ¼ mile of lakes, ponds, or marshes with trumpeter swan nests. | OK, with application of ROP F&W-b-2. | None in either. |

I-2-c: Monitoring (Land Use Authorizations)

Land use authorizations will be monitored through field examinations to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the authorizing document. On-the-ground monitoring will occur periodically throughout the life of the authorization.

I-3: Disposal

I-3-a: Management Actions (Disposal)

1. Provide support in the implementation and conveyance of lands pursuant to legislative mandates. These mandates include the Alaska Statehood Act, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the 1906 Native Allotment Act.
2. Public lands meeting one or more of the following criteria could be disposed of through FLPMA section 203: a) A tract that was acquired for a specific purpose and is no longer required for that or any other Federal purpose; b) A tract whose disposal would serve important public objectives, including but not limited to, expansion of communities and economic development that cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on other than public lands and that outweigh other public objectives and values, including but not limited to, recreation and scenic values, which would be maintaining such a tract in Federal ownership; and c) Such tract, because of its location or other characteristics is difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the public lands and is not suitable for management by another Federal department or agency.
3. The following lands would not be disposed of: a) lands withdrawn from the public land laws or segregated by State or Native selection; b) Lands with mining claims of record under section 314 of FLPMA unless BLM policy is changed in the future to allow for their disposal; and c) lands within the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridors.
4. **Other Disposals:** Lands identified for disposal under this authority that are selected by either the State or Native corporations would have to be fully adjudicated before the BLM would entertain a sale. In most instances, the BLM would first lease lands under this act and only convey the lands after the project is constructed in compliance with an approved development and management plan. An important exception to this would be tracts proposed as sanitary landfills, which would always be sold; they would not be leased. Application for tracts to be used as a sanitary landfill would only be conveyed with a clause that would prohibit reversion to the Federal government. Existing leases shall be converted to patents if the lands are used for sanitary landfills.
5. **Act of August 1, 1956 Public Land Order (PLO 1613 Sales):** The BLM would continue to convey PLO 1613 lots to qualified applicants. PLO 1613 lots only exist along the Glenn, Richardson, and Tok Cut-off Highways.
6. **Airport and Airway Improvement Act of September 3, 1982:** Process airport conveyances as requested by the Federal Aviation Administration

(FAA). Each conveyance shall contain appropriate covenants and reservation requested by the FAA. As a condition to each conveyance, the property interest conveyed shall revert to the Federal government in the event the lands are not developed for airport or airway purposes or are used in a manner inconsistent with the terms of the conveyance.

7. An implementation level plan will be done for the Slana area to address: a) resolution of unauthorized claims in the area through disposal; b) access and rights-of-ways; c) determination of fair market value for disposals; d) resolution of other unauthorized use in the area; e) strategy for clean-up of hazardous materials; and f) surveys of homesite parcels.

I-3-b: Allocations (Disposals)

1. All lands within the Slana settlement area (approximately 10,000 acres) would be available for FLPMA Section 203 disposal, under the following priority:
 - Lands would be sold non-competitively to the claimant where the lands contain improvements that are still owned, occupied, or used by the claimant.
 - Lands may be sold with a preference right to a failed claimant where improvements exist that are owned but no longer used by the failed claimant.
 - The remaining lands may be disposed of at the discretion of the Glennallen Field Office, in close consultation with the community of Slana and Ahtna, Inc. Further disposals would be used to consolidate land patterns or provide lands for community infrastructure. Disposal to the general public at large by competitive or modified competitive bid will not be considered.
2. **Other disposals:** Consistent with the criteria listed above (under Management Actions for disposals), isolated, unmanageable tracts resulting from highway realignment along the Richardson and Glenn Highways would be made available for disposal.

I-4: Acquisitions

I-4-a: Management Actions (Acquisitions)

1. Acquire private lands through purchase or exchange with willing owners within areas identified for long-term Federal management and retention and to further the programs of the Secretary, including access. When feasible, the BLM would acquire less than fee title to property if management goals could not be achieved.

I-4-b: Allocations (Acquisitions)

1. The following are identified as emphasis areas for acquisitions: a) Delta River SRMA; b) Gulkana River SRMA; and c) Bering Glacier RNA.

I-5: Exchanges

I-5-a: Management Actions (Exchanges)

1. The BLM would strive to process mutually benefiting public interest land exchanges. Exchanges are authorized in Alaska by FLPMA, ANCSA, and ANILCA. When consolidating public interest, full consideration shall be given to efficient management of public lands and to secure important objectives including: protection of fish and wildlife, cultural resource, wilderness and aesthetic values, enhancement of recreational opportunities, consolidation of mineral and timber holdings for more logical and efficient management expansion of communities, promotion of multiple use values, and fulfillment of public needs. Exchanges would not be actively sought out until State and Native entitlements are fulfilled.

I-5-b: Allocations (Exchanges)

1. No exchanges would take place until all Native and State entitlements are met. Afterwards, exchanges would be considered in the Chistochina/Slana, Tiekel, and Denali planning regions. Exchanges would be considered to consolidate scattered parcels to facilitate Federal subsistence management.

I-5-c: Monitoring (Disposals, Acquisitions, Exchanges)

Land ownership adjustment actions will be monitored through the BLM accomplishment tracking process. Management, realty personnel, and other key staff members in the Glennallen Field Office will meet periodically to review program status. Changes in land ownership affecting BLM lands or interests in lands will be posted to the GFO's official land ownership coverage in a timely manner.

I-6: Access

I-6-a: Goal

Manage trails to provide access to public lands, recreation, and subsistence opportunities.

I-6-b: Management Actions (Access)

1. The BLM will continue to review and reserve ANCSA 17(b) easements under the law and regulations to ensure legal access to publicly owned lands as the remainder of the ANCSA corporation's land entitlements are conveyed. Realignment of reserved 17(b) easements will be considered on a case-by-case basis to resolve on-the-ground issues.
2. BLM will work with the land owner, State and other Federal agencies and subject to availability of funds, personnel and approval, BLM will locate, mark and monitor easements and help educate easement users to

understand the rights reserved to the U.S. and the rights of the private land owner with priority based on:

- Easements accessing lands that are permanently managed by the BLM or are important to BLM programs.
 - Easements receiving high use.
 - Easements required to implement an activity or implementation plan.
 - Easements where land owners support the activity allowed by the easement.
 - Easements where maintenance or education would mitigate environmental damage to the easement or BLM-managed lands.
3. The U.S. has a non-possessory interest in a reserved 17(b) easement, which is the right to use the land for a specified purpose. This does not allow BLM to take civil or criminal action against uses, such as wandering from the easement, camping more than 24 hours or fishing from the easement, when the uses do not interfere with the reserved uses of the easement.
 4. Land use planning decisions do not affect valid R.S. 2477 rights or future assertions; however, if a route should be recognized, the BLM would consider it as a designated or existing trail where it crosses BLM-managed lands.
 5. All proposals for OHV management will be consistent with section 811 of ANILCA, which allows for “appropriate use for subsistence purposes of snowmobiles, motorboats, and other means of surface transportation traditionally employed for such purposes by local residents, subject to reasonable regulation.” The following would be employed in implementation-level planning to ensure consistency with section 811:
 - Distinction (by area) between recreational and subsistence uses.
 - Allowances in areas “limited” to OHVs for subsistence use, which may include: a) travel off existing or designated trails for game retrieval; b) use of classes of vehicles otherwise restricted for recreational use, and c) lifting of seasonal restrictions during subsistence hunting seasons.
 6. Decisions made within this RMP and in implementation-level planning will be consistent with Title XI of ANILCA, which addresses access into Conservation System Units, in this case the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridors. The BLM, under any alternative, would consider application for Transportation and Utility System right-of-ways across the Wild and Scenic River corridors. Applications would be subject to NEPA analysis and Section 7 (WSRA) analysis. Analysis would need to consider impacts to the outstandingly remarkable values and the free-flowing nature of the rivers and would need to consider feasible alternative routes. Title XI also allows for access to inholdings, recognizes valid existing rights, and allows the use of snowmachines, motorboats, airplanes, and non-motorized surface transportation for traditional activities and for travel to and from villages and homesites.

I-6-c: Monitoring (Access)

Periodic monitoring of easements will occur to accomplish the following:

- Assure safe and continued access to public lands and waters.
- Ascertain that the easement is actually being used for the purpose it was reserved.
- Determine maintenance needs and replacement of any markers and signs which are damaged or removed.
- Be able to justify retention of the easement or termination if the easement is no longer needed.

I-7: Withdrawal Review

I-7-a: Management Actions (ANCSA (d)(1) withdrawals)

1. The following withdrawals would be recommended for maintenance:
 - a) Scenic and recreational portions of the Delta Wild and Scenic river corridor (portions of PLOs 5180 and 5150); b) the western 2/3 of the Bering Glacier RNA (see Map 5, page 67); and c) existing withdrawals in the Slana settlement area.
2. Transportation and Utility Corridor withdrawals (PLO 5150): Recommend modification of PLO 5150 to allow for 82,500 acres to be conveyed to the State. These lands include the Gunn Creek segment which is northeast of Paxson, and approximately 59,000 acres north of Paxson and west of the Delta river (see Map 6, page 68).
3. Note: ANILCA withdrawals within the wild portions of the Delta and Gulkana would remain in place. This does not take any management action.
4. The following new withdrawal will be recommended: 16,000 acres within the scenic portion of the Delta Wild and Scenic river corridor to prohibit mineral entry under the mining laws.
5. Recommend modification of PLO 6329 to allow for locatable mineral entry in approximately 700,000 acres in the area around the Alphabet Hills. This area is currently State selected, so the modification would have no effect unless the State selections were relinquished.
6. All ANCSA (d)(1) withdrawals not mentioned in numbers 1-5 above would be recommended for revocation.
7. The Glennallen Field Office and the Alaska State Office would work together on an implementation strategy to list and prioritize all withdrawal actions listed above.

I-7-b: Management Actions (other withdrawals)

Table 3 displays existing withdrawals, segregative effect, and BLM's recommendation for each.

Table 3. Summary of Withdrawals and Recommendations.

| Withdrawal Type | Acres Withdrawn | Department | Segregative Effect | Recommendation |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Lighthouse Reserves | 3,286 | US Coast Guard | Closed to settlement, location, sale, entry, or other disposition. | Maintain until administration can be transferred to another agency. |
| Air Navigation Sites | 1,402 | BLM & FAA | Closed to settlement, location, sale, entry or other disposition, including State selection. | Maintain until FAA deems them no longer necessary. |
| Administrative Site | 48 | BLM | Closed to public land laws including State selection, the mining laws and mineral entry | Maintain. |
| Recreational Withdrawals | 4,413 | BLM | Closed to all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including mining, but not the mineral leasing laws. | Maintain withdrawals. |
| Recreational Withdrawal | 15 | DOD | Withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, mining, but not the mineral leasing laws nor disposal of materials under the act of July 31, 1947. | Maintain withdrawals. |
| Military Withdrawal (Black Rapids Training Sites) | 2,795 | DOD | Withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, mining, but not the mineral leasing laws nor disposal of materials under the act of July 31, 1947. | Maintain. |
| AK Railroad Withdrawals | 5,006 | AKRR | Closed to public land laws including State selection, the mining laws and mineral leasing laws. | Maintain. |
| Power Site Classifications (PSC) | 105,225 | BLM | Closed to public land laws, including State selection but not ANCSA entitlement; open to mineral location (subject to regulations in 43 CFR 3731); and open to mineral leasing. | Maintain. |
| Power Projects | 42,112 | AEA & FERC | Power Project W/D are Closed to public land laws, including State selection and open to mineral location (subject to regulation in 43 CFR 3731), in the application State. Upon issuance of a preliminary permit or license by FERC they are closed to mineral location. It is open to mineral leasing throughout. | Maintain. |

I-7-c: Monitoring (Withdrawals)

Withdrawal actions will be monitored through the BLM accomplishment tracking process. Management, realty personnel, and other key staff members in the Glennallen Field Office will meet periodically to review program status.

I-8: Unauthorized Use

The Glennallen Field Office has a large case load of unauthorized and trespass use.

I-8-a: Management Actions (Unauthorized Use)

1. Trespass cabins may become the property of the U.S. Government and be managed as administrative sites, as emergency shelters, or as public use cabins. Possible management actions on trespass cabins include:
 - Removal of the structure.
 - Relinquishment to the U.S. Government for management purposes, and
 - Authorization by lease or permit for legitimate uses if consistent with identified area objectives.

2. Criteria for prioritizing unauthorized cases are as follows:
 - Situations involving new trespass, public safety, or public complaints.
 - Selected lands on which resources are being removed without authorization or where resource damage is occurring.
 - Other selected lands, and
 - Areas identified for long-term Federal management.

I-8-b: Monitoring (Unauthorized Use)

Lands and Realty staff and other resource staff will continue to monitor in the field and report potential unauthorized use.

J. MINERALS

J-1: Leasables, including Oil and Gas, Coal, Oil Shale, and Phosphate

J-1-a: Goal

Maintain or enhance opportunities for mineral exploration and development while maintaining other resource values.

J-1-b: Allocations

1. Lands currently under selection by the State and Native corporations are segregated from mineral leasing to avoid potential encumbrances on selected lands prior to conveyance. These lands comprise approximately 5.5 million acres out of the 7.1 million acres currently managed by BLM. Therefore decisions made within this land use planning effort to “open” areas for mineral leasing by revoking withdrawals would not go into effect unless lands are retained long-term in Federal ownership.
2. Make approximately 5,593,000 acres of Federal mineral estate in the planning area available for leasing, subject to the stipulations specified in Appendix A or under Standard Lease Terms. All but 93,000 of this is currently State or Native selected, so would not immediately be available for leasing, as explained under Section #1. Most of the remaining 93,000 acres is currently withdrawn from mineral leasing. This RMP recommends revocation of these withdrawals, but until this process is actually carried out, most of these lands would not immediately be available for leasing. Map 7 portrays the lands that would immediately be available for leasing.
 - Areas open to leasing subject to the terms and conditions of the standard lease form: 3,863,000 acres, 3.8 million acres of which are State- or Native-selected.
 - Areas open to leasing, subject to minor constraints such as seasonal restrictions: 1,730,000 acres, 1.7 million acres of which are State- or Native-selected. These lands include a) moose winter range; b) caribou and bison calving areas; c) areas within ¼ mile of bald eagle nests; d) swan nesting habitat; and e) areas greater than 25 percent slope. Specific stipulations related to these areas or resource concerns are described in *Oil and Gas Stipulations* in Appendix A. Pending the actions described under 1 and 2 above, none of these areas are immediately available for leasing.
 - Areas open to leasing, subject to major constraints such as No Surface Occupancy: none.
 - Maintain approximately 1,463,000 acres as closed to leasing. These lands include: a) all segments of the Wild and Scenic Rivers; b) the western 2/3 of the Bering Glacier RNA; and c) lands within the transportation and utility corridor (PLO 5150).

J-1-c: Management Actions

1. Lands will not be offered as available for oil and gas leasing until: a) withdrawals currently in place are revoked; or b) State or Native selections are relinquished **and** any underlying withdrawals have been revoked.
2. Upon completion of either of the above, offer public lands available for oil and gas leasing first by competitive bid at an oral auction. Apply lease notices and stipulations at the time of leasing as summarized in Appendix A. Consider waivers, exceptions, and modifications in accordance with the provisions in Appendix A and provide for a 30-day public review if the grant of a waiver, exception, or modification is determined to be a substantial change.
3. All BLM-administered lands within the planning area subject to leasing are open to coal exploration and study. The coal screening process (as identified by 43 CFR 3420.1-4) has not been conducted in this planning area. Interest in exploration or leasing of Federal coal would be handled on a case-by-case basis. If an application for a coal lease should be received in the future, an appropriate land use and environmental analysis, including the coal screening process, would be conducted to determine whether or not the coal areas are acceptable for development and for leasing under 43 CFR 3425. The East Alaska RMP would be amended as necessary.
4. Prepare a site-specific environmental analysis if interest is expressed in exploring for or developing geothermal resources in the planning area. Apply oil and gas stipulations to any geothermal lease if appropriate. Geothermal exploration and production activity is sufficiently different from oil and gas that the stipulations developed for oil and gas may not be appropriate and can be modified, and additional mitigating measures over and above the oil and gas lease stipulations can be required.
5. Solid leasable minerals include chlorides, sulfates, carbonates, borates, silicates or nitrates of potassium or sodium and related products; sulphur on all acquired lands; phosphate, including associated and related minerals; oil shale, and gilsonite (including all vein-type solid hydrocarbons). Deposits of these minerals are unlikely to occur on BLM-managed lands in the planning area. If deposits were discovered, subsequent leasing, exploration, and development would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

J-1-d: Monitoring

If leasing occurs, monitoring will be done to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, conditions of leases, and the requirements of approved exploration/development plans/applications for permit to drill. Monitoring activities will include:

- Periodic field inspections of leasable mineral activities. Inspections will be conducted to determine compliance with applicable laws, regulations, lease stipulations, and the requirements of approved exploration and development plans, applications for permit to drill, and sundry notices.
- Monitoring of oil and gas drilling/production activities in the planning area. Total surface disturbance from all drilling will be tracked.

An accurate accounting of production will also be tracked on producing leases.

J-2: Locatable Minerals

J-2-a: Goal

Maintain or enhance opportunities for mineral exploration and development while maintaining other resource values.

J-2-b: Allocations

1. This RMP recommends revocation of withdrawals to open a total of 5,988,000 acres to mineral location. However, 5,500,000 of these acres are State or Native selected. These decisions will have no immediate effect on those lands because of the segregation against mineral entry on all selected lands. Map 8, page 70, shows the lands that would be open to mineral entry at the signing of the Record of Decision.
2. Approximately 1,068,000 acres will remain closed to mineral entry. These include the following: a) all portions of the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River (this would require recommended withdrawal of 16,000 acres in the scenic portion of the Delta); b) Slana settlement area; c) inner corridor of the transportation/utility corridor (PLO 5150); and d) the western 2/3 of the Bering Research Natural Area.

J-2-c: Management Actions

1. Mining of locatable minerals would be subject to the surface management regulations found in 43 CFR 3809. Surface occupancy under the mining laws would be limited to uses incident to the mining operation. Bonding would be required in accordance with BLM policy. Specific measures that would be utilized to minimize surface impacts and to facilitate rehabilitation and revegetation of mined areas can be found in Required Operating Procedures in Appendix A.
2. All operations must file a Plan of Operations with the BLM. The Plan must be approved prior to commencement of on-the-ground activities. Areas withdrawn from mineral location in which valid existing rights are being exercised require the filing of a Plan of Operations.
3. Conduct at a minimum annual compliance inspections on each active notice and plan of operation.

J-2-d: Monitoring

Monitoring of mining operations will be done to ensure compliance with 43 CFR 3809 and other regulations and conditions of approval, specifically preventing “unnecessary or undue degradation”. Each Plan of Operation and Notice will have mitigation measures that cover the life of the operation. Field inspections will look for compliance with these measures and include monitoring reclamation of disturbed areas, revegetation and protection of the environment and public health and safety. Findings for each inspection will be documented and placed in the case file. Any non-compliance items will be noted and appropriate regulatory procedures followed.

43 CFR 3809 regulations require inspections at least four times a year for operations that use cyanide or other leachate or where there is a significant potential for acid drainage. Inspections for active operations will occur twice a year and all others will be inspected once per year. Operations in sensitive areas or operations with a high potential for greater than usual impacts will require inspections more often.

J-3: Salable Minerals (Mineral Materials)

J-3-a: Allocations

1. Areas closed to mineral material sale: a) The scenic and wild portions of the Delta Wild and Scenic River; b) the Gulkana National Wild River corridor; c) the Bering Glacier RNA.
2. Areas open, subject to seasonal constraints: a) the Delta bison calving area; b) the Nelchina caribou calving area; and c) the West Fork Gulkana area.
3. The Denali Highway viewshed is an avoidance area. If no alternatives exist, mineral material development could occur with mitigation for visual resource impacts.
4. The recreational portion of the Delta Wild and Scenic River is an avoidance area. If no alternatives exist, mineral material development could occur with mitigation for visual resource impacts.
5. All other areas are open, subject to Required Operation Procedures described in Appendix A.

J-3-b: Management Actions

1. Maintain current mineral material sites until material is exhausted or other circumstances warrant closure.
2. Encourage extraction of mineral materials from previously disturbed sites rather than opening new sites.
3. Do not authorize mineral material disposal from any valid existing mining claim without the consent of the claimant.

J-3-c: Monitoring

Monitoring of salable minerals will be done to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, BLM policy contained in BLM Manual Section 3600 and Handbook H-3600-1.

Field inspections of common use areas, exclusive sale sites and other operations will be done on a periodic basis and will determine compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the requirements of the approved mining plan. Inspections will specifically note compliance with reclamation, weed control and the protection of the environment and public health and safety. Operations in sensitive environmental areas or operations with a high potential for greater than usual impacts will be inspected more often. Identification and resolution of salable trespasses will also be performed.

K. NOXIOUS WEEDS, INVASIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPECIES

K-1: Goal

Prevent the introduction and spread of invasive and noxious plants.

K-2: Objective (Desired Future Condition)

New infestations of noxious weeds are not common across the landscape, and existing infestations are declining.

K-3: Management Actions

1. Participate in education and awareness programs for staff, cooperators, and the public. Continue participation in any interagency cooperative weed management working groups.
2. Work with the State, local NPS, NRDC, and Soil and Water Conservation District to develop a list of noxious weeds and invasive species in this area, listed according to priority for treatment. Priority should be based on economic threat, ecological threat, and effectiveness of treatment.
3. Continue inventory of public lands for noxious and invasive species. Focus inventory on top species from #2 list.
4. Control noxious and invasive species by various methods that include chemical, cultural, physical, mechanical, and biological treatments. Chemical and biological treatments will only be conducted after site-specific analysis in a Glennallen Field Office or State-wide programmatic EA.
5. Ensure that applicable Required Operating Procedures are being applied to control the spread of noxious weeds and invasive species.

K-4: Monitoring

Once treatment begins on BLM-managed lands, a sample of known noxious weed sites identified for treatment will be visited each year and evaluated for effectiveness of control.

L. PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

L-1: Goal

Protect and preserve important paleontological resources. Expand opportunities for scientific and educational uses of these resources.

L-2: Actions

1. Require permits for individuals or institutions conducting paleontological investigations for vertebrate fossils on public lands and insure that fossils remain in Federal ownership.
2. Conduct paleontological inventory for Talkeetna Mountains, Alaska Range, and Chugach Range. We need a revised paleontological review, could be a cooperative effort between BLM and the University of Alaska-Fairbanks (UAF). Inventory will be prioritized based on expected long-term retention of lands.
3. Avoid impacts to paleontological remains through project redesign, project abandonment, and/or mitigation of adverse impacts through scientific recovery and analysis.
4. Encourage scientific use of paleontological resources by university field schools.

L-3: Monitoring

Very little paleontological inventory currently exists for the Glennallen Field Office. If and when inventory occurs, a long term monitoring program will consist of the visitation of a representative sample of paleontological localities to establish a baseline condition assessment. Once the baseline condition assessment information has been compiled, a minimum of one site will be monitored on an annual basis to identify if any adverse impacts are occurring.

M. RECREATION

Note: See the *Travel Management* section for discussion of motorized and non-motorized use for recreational and other purposes.

M-1: Goal

Manage recreation to maintain a diversity of recreational opportunities.

M-2: Allocations

Manage the following five areas as designated Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) and manage them according to the specified recreational emphasis outlined below. Allowable uses or limitations not described below (such as those for Lands and Realty) can be found in the tables in Appendix A of the East Alaska Proposed RMP/Final EIS or in the Lands and Realty section of this Approved Plan.

1. Delta Wild and Scenic River Corridor Area: See Map 9, page 71. This area, consisting of 44,000 acres of unencumbered BLM land, would be designated as an SRMA, with **objectives** to maintain existing recreation opportunities (primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized, semi-primitive motorized, and roaded natural), with emphasis on managing for a primitive experience in the portion of the Wild and Scenic River Corridor classified as wild. Another objective in this SRMA is managing to protect the VRM Class I viewshed. **OHVs** would be restricted to designated trails (Top of the World Trail, Rainy Creek Trail) from May 15 to October 16 or when there is an average of 12 inches of snow or 6 inches frost. Snowmachine use will not be limited at this time. Consistent with the 1983 River Management Plan for the Delta National Wild and Scenic River, BLM will recommend to the State of Alaska limitations on motorized use on the Tangle Lakes. No **public use cabins** would be considered. General **visitor use and commercial use limits** would be established in implementation-level planning, consistent with objectives identified above. The Tangle Lakes Campground will be renovated, and the river take-out at mile 212 on the Richardson Highway would have increased signage. If the opportunity presents itself, acquisition of one of the area lodges for a visitor center would be considered.

2. Gulkana Wild and Scenic River Corridor Area: See Map 10, page 72. This area would be designated as an SRMA, including 105,000 acres, 95 percent of which is unencumbered BLM land. Management will be consistent with the recently revised Gulkana River Management Plan, which directs management to maintain primitive, semi-primitive motorized, and developed recreation experiences within the corridor. The revised plan **establishes general visitor use limits** through monitoring of camp encounters and takes appropriate management actions if standards are not met. In addition, it sets standards for campsite impacts, litter, and human waste, and takes appropriate management actions to address these impacts.

3. Denali Highway Area: See Map 11, page 73. This area consists of the middleground and foreground viewshed off the Denali Highway. This is predominantly State-selected land. This section describes two management scenarios: *interim* describes management of State and Native selected lands in the area until conveyance occurs, and *long-term* describes management of lands if they are retained in long-term Federal ownership.

Interim Management (Denali Highway area):

No SRMA would be designated. Interim **objectives** would be to manage for roaded natural, semi-primitive non-motorized, and semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences, to mitigate impacts to the viewshed, and to provide education and interpretive opportunities. The area would be **managed as “limited” for OHVs**, consistent with State Statute 11 AAC 96.025, which limits OHVs to existing trails whenever possible. OHVs using areas within Tangle Lakes Archeological District (TLAD) in this area would be required to stay on designated trails from May 15 to October 16 or when there is an average of 12 inches snow or 6 inches frost. Snowmachine use would require adequate snow cover, but **snowmachines would not be restricted to designated trails**. There would be **no mineral development on State or Native selected lands** because of segregation due to selection. **No public use cabins** would be developed. On State or Native selected lands, **no new recreational facilities would be considered until land status is resolved**. Development of facilities may be considered on BLM recreational withdrawals along the highway, as described below. **Education and interpretive sites** would be consistent with direction in the Interpretive Master Plan for the Denali Highway (BUCY Associates 1999), with special consideration within TLAD given to protection of artifacts. Applications for **commercial recreation activities** would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Long-term management (Denali Highway area):

SRMA designation would be considered if lands retained in Federal ownership are in large contiguous blocks. **Objectives** would be to manage to maintain the existing recreation opportunities, including primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized, semi-primitive motorized, and roaded natural. The area would be **designated as “limited” to OHVs**, with implementation-level consideration of designated trails, maintenance of some non-motorized trails, and construction of day-hike and motorized trail loops, particularly associated with waysides and rest areas. Designated trails for snowmachines may be considered in future if winter trail densities and encounters are exceeding user tolerances, as determined through user surveys. The area would be **open for locatable mineral entry and for leasable minerals**. **Public cabins would be considered** in the area, in particular the Welsh cabin on the Maclaren River. **Visitor use limits** would be developed for commercial uses along the highway, consistent with management objectives and long-term development of recreational facilities. The following **facilities** would be developed if maintained in long-term Federal ownership or in association with BLM recreational withdrawals:

1. Day-use waysides at 39-mile (Maclaren River), 56-mile (Clearwater Creek), and 80-mile (Susitna River).
2. Possible boat launch at Susitna River.
3. Upgrade trailheads and use for presentation of education/interpretive material.

4. Develop education/interpretive sites to highlight the area's wildlife, scenic, cultural, and geologic features, as outlined in the Interpretive Master Plan for the Denali Highway (BUCY Associates 1999).

4. Tiekel Area

See Map 12, page 74. This area consists predominantly of State-selected lands, although there is some Native-selected land as well. This section describes two management scenarios: *interim* describes management of State- and Native-selected lands in the area until conveyance occurs, and *long-term* describes management of the lands if they are retained in long-term Federal ownership.

Interim Management (Tiekel Area)

Under interim management, **only the unencumbered** BLM lands in the Tiekel corridor would be designated as an **SRMA**. Objectives would be to manage for roaded natural, semi-primitive non-motorized, and semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences within the corridor. **OHVs would be "limited"** to designated trails on unencumbered BLM lands. Implementation-level considerations would include maintenance of specific trails as non-motorized (including snowmachines), construction of both non-motorized and motorized trail loops, and vehicle class restrictions (such as weight limitations) on specific trails. Where these designations affect trails on State-selected lands, the BLM would work with the State of Alaska on designations. **Existing withdrawals** against mineral leasing and locatable mineral entry within the transportation and utility corridor would remain in place. This area would be considered **a priority area for forest management**. This SRMA would not preclude timber management activities, but proposed timber sales would consider impacts to recreational facilities, experiences, and viewsheds. Temporary roads utilized for forestry access may be considered for retention if they are within areas managed for a roaded natural recreation experience. This SRMA is within the transportation and utility corridor; this would remain the area's primary purpose.

Visitor use limits would be determined for **helicopter-supported commercial** uses, consistent with existing ROS classes. **Recreational facilities** would include updating and development of selected trailheads, construction of one wayside, and consideration of a bike trail utilizing the old Richardson Highway. The Egan cabin would be **considered for public use**.

Long-term Management (Tiekel Area)

If large contiguous blocks within this area are retained in Federal ownership, they would be considered for inclusion into the SRMA, with objectives (for lands outside the transportation and utility corridor) emphasizing maintenance of primitive and semi-primitive recreation. **OHVs would be "limited"** to designated trails, with some trails designated non-motorized (including snowmachines). If contiguous blocks are retained in the southern portion of the Tonsina sub-unit, they would be closed year-round to all motor vehicles, including helicopter-

supported recreational activities. Within the entire SRMA, minimal or no development will be considered at trailheads that access areas managed for a primitive or semi-primitive recreation experience. **Existing withdrawals** associated with the transportation and utility corridor would be **maintained**, but other areas would be **open to leasable and locatable mineral entry**. **Public use cabins would be considered**, and **visitor use limits for commercial heli-ski** operations would be established based on maintenance of existing ROS classes. Consideration would be given to not authorizing heli-skiing in some areas managed for a primitive recreation experience.

5. Delta Range Area

See Map 13, page 75. This area would be **designated a SRMA** encompassing 276,000 acres, most of which are unencumbered BLM lands. **Objectives** for the area would be to maintain the existing ROS classes, which include primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized, semi-primitive motorized, and roaded natural. The area would be designated as **“limited’ to OHVs**, with implementation-level consideration given to designated trails and maintenance of some non-motorized trails. **BLM-managed portions of the Fels, Canwell, Castner, and McCallum Creek glaciers and drainages would be designated as closed to snowmachines (see Delta Mountains Sub-units on Map 13) from 10/15 – 5/15**. Snowmachines in these areas would be permitted to access subsistence hunting. The existing withdrawal against leasable mineral entry would be maintained but the area would be open for locatable mineral entry except within the inner corridor of the transportation and utility corridor. **Public cabins** would be considered in the Jarvis Creek area. **Recreational facilities** would include development of some trailheads and some improvement of dispersed camping sites in the Jarvis Creek area. Minimal or no development will be considered at trailheads that access areas managed for a primitive or semi-primitive recreation experience. **No helicopter-supported commercial activities** would be permitted in areas managed for a primitive recreation experience. The area would be managed under VRM Classes II and III. Most of this SRMA is within the transportation and utility corridor; this would remain the area’s primary purpose.

6. Other Areas

Areas outside those identified above would be managed as Extensive Recreation Management Areas, with recreation management based on maintenance of existing ROS classes in the areas. Inventory and monitoring could occur and standards may be identified for trail density in these areas based on monitoring and inventory information. Some education/interpretation at trailheads may occur, particularly at 17(b) easement trailheads within these areas.

M-3: Management Actions

1. Public use cabins would be considered consistent with objectives described in each SRMA. In general, existing structures would be considered for public use cabins before the construction of new cabins. Land status would need to be resolved before major investment occurs in a public cabin system. Outside of SRMAs, the following have been identified for potential public use cabins: Tyone cabin, Monsoon Lake cabin, and Welsh cabin on the Maclaren River.
2. Authorize special recreation permits in accordance with Special Recreation Permit Handbook 2930-1.
3. Manage special recreation permits in accordance with Federal regulations, special stipulations, and established terms and conditions.

M-4: Implementation planning

1. Implementation plans will be done for each SRMA. These plans will describe specific objectives for each area, based on the objectives outlined above as well as benefits-based analysis conducted for each area. Implementation plans will be done first for areas of unencumbered BLM lands (Delta, Gulkana, and Delta Range) followed by the Denali Highway and Tielkel areas. The Gulkana plan is already done.
2. Implementation plans will include travel management and describe specific trail limitations and designations.
3. Implementation plans will include facility maintenance and construction plans, based on guidance described above.
4. Implementation plans, where necessary and as described above, will determine general visitor use or commercial limits. These will be based on achievement of SRMA objectives. If necessary, assessment of visitor recreation experiences, tolerance for impacts, and benefits will be conducted through user surveys or benefits-based analysis.
5. Implementation planning for the Tielkel area will include determination of a limit on commercial heli-ski operators (or their activities) on BLM-managed lands. Limitations will be based on achieving objectives, safety considerations, minimizing conflicts with other users, and other factors.

M-5: Monitoring:

Monitoring of recreation resources will continue to occur throughout the planning area with emphasis placed on developed recreation sites and SRMAs. Monitoring will include regular patrols to check on signing, visitor use, recreation use-related impacts, and user conflicts. Monitoring will also emphasize identification of areas where there may be problems with compliance with rules and regulations resulting in user conflicts or resource damage. Actual visitor and/or vehicle counts will be documented at all developed sites as sites are visited or based on campground host reports or

campground fee payments. These numbers will then be used to validate recreation use trends.

Monitoring on the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic Rivers will be described in the revised river management plans for those rivers. Monitoring is critical on the rivers and will be used to determine whether standards are being met. Monitoring will include litter, human waste, fire rings, camp encounters, campsite condition and trend, and water quality. Visitor use on the rivers will be monitored through the use of boat-launch registers, river overflights, the Gulkana fish-tower counts, and observations at the Paxson portal.

Monitoring of Special Recreation Permits will be conducted for compliance with terms, conditions, and special stipulations, as well as annual monitoring and evaluation of compliance with administrative requirements. Periodic assessments will be made to ensure that uses in SRMAs are consistent with their prescribed recreation opportunity classes.

Average visitor numbers at developed recreation sites and on the Delta and Gulkana rivers will be reported in the annual Program Summary and Planning Update to track visitor use and recreation use trends over time. The number of recreation management plans prepared and special recreation permits issued will also be reported in the annual Program Summary and Planning Update.

N. RENEWABLE ENERGY

N-1: Goal

Provide opportunities for the development of renewable energy resources from sources such as wind, biomass, solar while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values.

N-2: Management Actions

1. Analyze proposals for the development of renewable energy resources on a case-by-case basis. Although no areas would be specifically designated for renewable energy development, opportunities for such development would be provided to the extent consistent with other goals, objectives, and requirements of the land use plan.
2. Consider designated right-of-way avoidance and exclusion areas as well as designated right-of-way corridors and use areas in those situations in which a renewable energy project would require a right-of-way.

3. Manage rights-of-way proposals for renewable energy consistent with the provisions in the “Land Use Authorizations” portion of the *Lands and Realty* section of this plan.
4. Adopt Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to renewable energy development, including but not limited to those proposed in BLM’s Programmatic Wind Energy EIS, and apply when and where applicable.

N-3: Monitoring

Renewable energy projects will be monitored through the BLM accomplishment tracking process. Where renewable energy projects require land use authorizations, monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the monitoring in the *Lands and Realty* section.

O. RIPARIAN AND WETLAND VEGETATION

O-1: Goal

Maintain riparian areas in proper functioning condition.

O-2: Objectives (Desired Condition)

Ongoing assessments have determined that riparian/wetland vegetation within the planning area is in good condition. The desired condition for riparian and wetland vegetation within the planning area is to maintain the current situation, specifically for the following traits:

- Diverse age-class distribution and composition.
- Species are present that indicate maintenance of riparian/wetland soil moisture characteristics.
- Deep-rooted riparian species.
- Vigorous riparian vegetation.
- Adequate vegetative cover to protect streambanks and dissipate energy during high flows.
- Plant communities with an adequate source of coarse and/or large woody material.

O-3: Management Actions

1. Continue assessment of riparian areas, using proper functioning condition assessment methodology. Priority areas include wild and scenic river corridors (Delta and Gulkana), the Bering Glacier RNA, other unencumbered BLM lands, and riparian areas within anticipated or ongoing mining areas.
2. Apply Required Operating Procedures and stipulations for protection of riparian vegetation to permitted activities.
3. Focus and prioritize OHV trail management and hardening on stream crossings or trails that parallel or approach riparian areas or wetlands, in order to minimize impacts to riparian areas.

O-4: Monitoring

Riparian assessments will be used as a baseline for future monitoring. Monitoring will be focused on areas where potential exists for areas currently in proper functioning condition to fall into a functioning-at-risk or non-functioning condition. In general, these would be areas with high visitation, such as the Delta and Gulkana wild and scenic river corridors, or riparian areas with a high density of OHV trails. Monitoring will also be directed at areas with large scale proposed development, such as placer mining or mineral material development, which have potential for altering riparian function.

P. SOILS

P-1: Goal

Maintain or improve soil health, prevent or minimize soil erosion and compaction, and reduce the possibility of mass wasting on unstable soils.

P-2: Management Actions

1. Consider soil conditions and types and their influence during activity level planning. Utilize existing soil surveys where they exist, particularly for trails management in the Gulkana and Delta wild and scenic river corridors.
2. Give greatest consideration to soils susceptible to compaction and erosion when assessing proposed activities. Trail re-location should include an assessment of soil types prior to relocation.
3. Implement Required Operating Procedures and stipulations at the site-specific project level to maintain or improve the soil resource.
4. Consider the intensity of the disturbance when addressing activities proposed in slump or unstable areas. Require detailed engineering design, geologic analysis, and mitigation plans for surface-disturbing projects proposed in areas of suspected instability or where permafrost is present.
5. Continue soil surveys, with first priority to unencumbered BLM lands within the Bering and Tielke planning sub-regions. Second priority is other unencumbered BLM lands and those designated as "limited" for OHVs.

P-3: Monitoring

A sample of ground-disturbing projects with the potential to affect soil resources will be evaluated on a periodic basis to determine if required operating procedures were followed and if they were effective.

Q. SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES—PLANTS

Q-1: Goal

Increase knowledge of sensitive status plant species location through continued inventory. Manage to conserve known populations of sensitive species.

Q-2: Management Actions

1. Conduct a baseline inventory for sensitive plant species. Utilize existing documentation from Wrangell/St.Elias National Park and Preserve or Alaska Natural Heritage Program to focus inventory on specific habitat or community types.
2. Enhance, restore and/or maintain habitat conditions and availability for special status species and prevent all avoidable loss of habitat.
3. Consider the potential for adverse effects on BLM sensitive plants during project level planning and recommend mitigation measures.
4. Conduct field inspections to identify special status plant species prior to authorizing surface disturbing activities. Grant waivers for on-the-ground inventory on projects where no suitable habitat is known to exist.
5. Once sensitive species populations are known, adopt or develop habitat management plans and conservation strategies for BLM special status species and habitats that occur on public land.
6. Ensure that all required operating procedures applicable to vegetation and particularly ROP-Veg-a-7 are applied to permitted activities.

Q-3: Monitoring

Surveys will be conducted to determine the distribution, resource conditions, and trends of special status plant species and representative habitats. Once specific populations are located, plant composition at the site will be determined and the site(s) will be monitored for localized disturbances (OHV use, recreational use, etc.) Monitoring methods will include establishing photo points and doing periodic ocular surveillance.

R. SUBSISTENCE

R-1: Goals

1. Conserve healthy populations through management and protection of habitat and Federal subsistence harvest permitting and regulations.
2. Provide reasonable access to subsistence resources.
3. Maintain a viable and accessible Federal subsistence unit in Unit 13 in order to provide a rural preference to the residents of the Copper Basin.

R-2: Allocations

The Federal subsistence hunting unit administered by the Glennallen Field Office will consist of the BLM public (unencumbered) lands in GMU 13.

The State of Alaska regulates State subsistence fisheries and hunts on private lands and all state lands and waters.

BLM is committed to providing a Federal subsistence unit within GMU 13 that provides a rural priority. BLM's standard is to maintain enough total acres in the Federal unit to maintain the current annual average harvest for moose and caribou. Data used to monitor this standard will be based on records of past and current Federal subsistence harvest data. Within the implementation period of this RMP, BLM would be willing to recommend further modification of PLO 5150 to allow for conveyance of lands within the pipeline/utility corridor to the State of Alaska, as long as rural subsistence use priorities are provided. Any recommended modifications subsequent to those described in this ROD would be subject to ANILCA section 810 analysis and public participation and review.

R-3: Management Actions

1. Involve subsistence users in issues identification: Ten Regional Advisory Councils were established in Section 100.22 of the Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska as an administrative structure to provide a "meaningful voice" for subsistence users in the management process. BLM field staff members, along with those of other agencies, meet twice each year with the Regional Councils to identify emerging issues in conservation, allocation, and appropriate regulation of subsistence harvests.
2. Manage Land/Habitat, Assess Impacts to Subsistence: ANILCA Section 810 establishes a distinct set of requirements for assessment of potential impacts to subsistence from Federal land decisions. These supplement the discussion of potential impacts to subsistence resources and uses found as part of conventional NEPA environmental reviews.
3. Monitor Resource Populations Used for Subsistence Purposes: When these monitoring efforts are focused on key subsistence resources, they are a major contribution to the quality of subsistence management efforts.
4. Develop Interagency Subsistence Management Regulations and Policies: With heavy reliance on Regional Council input and interagency coordination, the development of subsistence regulations is a multi-step process.
5. Manage Subsistence Harvests: Although regulatory authority for subsistence management rests with the Federal Subsistence Board, implementation of Federal subsistence hunting and fishing opportunities rests largely on local Federal agency field staff. Tasks include distribution of Federal regulation booklets, responding to questions, issuing Federal subsistence permits, contacting hunters in the field, and assisting in tallying permit and harvest reports.

R-4: Monitoring

Glennallen Field Office staff issue Federal subsistence permits to rural residents. As harvest reports are turned in, the information into a data base maintained by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This information can be accessed to determine current harvest levels and average levels of harvest by area. BLM law enforcement at GFO work with Alaska State Troopers to ensure compliance with Federal harvest regulations.

S. TRANSPORTATION AND FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

S-1: Goal

Manage facilities, including trails and roads, to provide for public access or administrative needs, while maintaining or protecting resource values and in coordination with other Federal and state agencies and private landowners.

S-2: Management Actions

1. Roads: BLM is currently responsible for very little road maintenance...approximately 7 miles associated with six campgrounds and waysides. Maintenance is conducted annually in-house or through contract.
2. Trails (non-17(b) easements): Maintenance will be prioritized based on the following order: 1) where public safety concerns exist; 2) where serious resource problems occur, particularly related to stream crossings, multiple trails paralleling streams, runoff or erosion from trails contributing to sedimentation into waterways, or damage to wetlands (first priority within this category would be unencumbered BLM lands); 3) State- or Native-selected lands where funding exists to conduct maintenance based on protection of resource values (such as TLAD); and 4) other BLM-managed trails. Implementation-level planning for SRMAs or the Bering Glacier RNA or TLAD will include trail maintenance prioritization.
3. Trails (17(b) easements): Generally, maintenance will not be conducted on 17(b) easements, unless they access unencumbered BLM lands. Maintenance on 17(b) easements might also be considered if it is a public safety concern or if cooperative funding is obtained from the State or from the Native corporation.
4. Maintain other facilities such as boat ramps, communication facilities, etc. according to Bureau standards and to meet public health and safety requirements.
5. Analyze new road, trail, or facility construction on a case-by-case basis, consistent with allowable uses and constraints described elsewhere in this Approved Plan.

6. New roads determined by BLM to be necessary on a temporary basis will be constructed to the minimum standard necessary for the activity proposed, and closed or reclaimed when use is over.
7. New roads determined by BLM to be necessary for permanent or long-term use as part of BLM's transportation system will be constructed in consideration of the type of use and level of road necessary and in accordance with standards and guidelines in BLM Handbook 9113.

S-3: Monitoring

The condition of BLM facilities will be assessed in accordance with procedures under development by the BLM National Condition Assessment Program. Comprehensive condition assessments (CCA) will be completed at recreation sites and administrative sites on a five year schedule, with periodic inspections (PIs) at least every three years. CCAs are detailed, formal inspections to verify and update the inventory and condition data in the Facility Asset Management System (FAMS). PIs are a quick walk through review to verify existing FAMS data on inventory and condition. With all facilities, informal inspection and discovery will be a major part of the condition monitoring program. Information provided by BLM employees and the public on problems or concerns as a result of storms, vandalism, river break-up, and/or normal wear and tear to facilities will also be used to monitor the condition of BLM facilities.

T. TRAVEL MANAGEMENT AND OHV USE

T-1: Goals (OHVs)

- Manage trails to provide access to public lands, recreation, and subsistence opportunities.
- Manage trails to provide a diversity of recreation experiences and opportunities, including motorized and non-motorized.
- Manage trails to minimize resource impacts and reduce user conflicts.
- Manage trails with an emphasis on education where appropriate.
- Manage OHV use associated with permitted and development activities to provide for access while protecting resources.

T-2: Allocations (OHVs)

1. Manage no areas as "open" under the regulations at 43 CFR Part 8340-8342.
2. Manage 1,692,000 acres as "limited" to designated routes for OHV use. Specific designated routes are listed under the travel area descriptions below.
3. Manage 5,320,000 acres of State and Native selected lands as "limited" to existing trails, under the following criteria:
 - Highway vehicles with a curb weight of less than 10,000 pounds and off-road or all-terrain vehicles with a curb weight of less than 1,500 pounds will utilize existing trails, whenever possible.

- If necessary (game retrieval, etc.), travel off existing trails will be conducted in a manner that minimizes: a) disturbance of vegetation, soil stability, or drainage systems; b) changing the character of, polluting, or introducing silt and sediment into streams, lakes, ponds, water holes, seeps, and marshes; and c) disturbance of fish and wildlife resources.
 - Interim management will emphasize education but citations could be issued if deliberate violations of these conditions result in significant resource damage.
 - More intensive OHV management, such as designated trails, may be implemented in cooperation with the selecting entity, based on specific management concerns.
4. Manage 44,000 acres in the Delta Range area as closed to snowmachines. See specific travel management area description below.

T-3: Implementation-level Planning (OHVs):

Each area designated as “limited” or “closed” to OHVs would have an implementation-level plan completed (see schedule, Table 1). This plan would show a complete inventory of trails in the area, describe specific resource concerns or conflicts, and describe specific designated trails and conditions of limitations (seasonal, weight, or vehicle class, etc). These planning processes would include public, State, and Native coordination. These plans would describe tools necessary for implementation (method of signing specific trails, trailhead development, education/interpretation, map production, and law enforcement). These plans would identify and prioritize specific maintenance needs, as well as opportunities for trail development or loops, both motorized and non-motorized. Priority for implementation-level planning would be BLM public lands (unencumbered). Implementation-level planning for these lands would occur within five years of the signing of the Record of Decision for this RMP.

T-4: Travel Management Area Prescriptions (OHVs and Roads):

These areas are shown on Map 14, page 76.

(1) West Fork Area

(a) RMP Decisions (West Fork Area)

OHVs would be “limited” to existing trails, subject to criteria described above. The need for limitations is based on protection of wetlands and trumpeter swan breeding and nesting habitat and management of OHV trails to prevent unmanaged proliferation. This area consists of predominantly State-selected lands. BLM interim management of trails in the area would consist of inventory of trails in the area, definition of “existing” trails through mapping, and education regarding staying on existing trails. Under interim management there would be no snowmachine restrictions. Road construction

would be considered if necessary for resource development, consistent with the measures described in *Required Operating Procedures* and *Oil and Gas Leasing Stipulations*.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (West Fork Area)

If any lands in the area are retained in long-term Federal ownership, trails would be designated, with designation based on avoidance of trumpeter swan breeding and nesting habitat and wetlands. Long-term, designated trails for snowmachines may be considered in the future if research shows definitive impacts to quality of moose winter range or significant impacts to predator/prey relationships with increased use.

(2) Nelchina Caribou Calving Area

(a) RMP Decisions (Nelchina Caribou Calving Area)

OHVs would be “limited” to existing trails, consistent with criteria described above. While the area currently has few trails, future OHV trail management is necessary in this area to prevent potential unmanaged proliferation of trails that might adversely impact caribou calving habitat or disturb calving caribou. This area consists of predominantly State-selected lands. BLM interim management of trails in the area would consist of inventory of trails in the area, definition of “existing” trails through mapping, and education regarding staying on existing trails. There would be no snowmachine restrictions. Road construction would be permitted for resource development, subject to seasonal restrictions from May 1 to June 15.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Nelchina calving)

If any lands in the area are retained in long-term Federal ownership, trails would be designated, based on avoidance of caribou calving areas.

(3) Delta WSR Corridor Area

(a) RMP Decisions (Delta WSR Corridor Area)

This area would be designated as “limited” to OHVs. Designation of trails is necessary in this Wild and Scenic River corridor to comply with Title XI of ANILCA and Executive Order 11644 (as implemented by 43 CFR 36.11(g)) and to ensure management to protect outstandingly remarkable values. OHVs would be restricted to designated trails (Top of the World Trail, Rainy Creek Trail) from May 15 to October 16 or when there is an average of 12 inches snow or 6 inches frost. These trails are shown on Map 15, page 77. These are existing routes and will not limit access into the area for subsistence hunting or access to mining claims. Snowmachine use will not be limited at this time. There are other existing trails in the corridor (portage

trail, trails out of Tangle Lakes Campground) that will be managed as non-motorized trails. This decision does not preclude future consideration of development of motorized or non-motorized trails, if consistent with protection of the outstandingly remarkable values of the river corridor.

Road construction would be avoided in all segments of the river, but overland transportation systems within or across the river corridor may be authorized if it is determined that there are no economically feasible and prudent alternative routes. This is consistent with ANILCA, section 1105. Any road crossings of the river would be subject to evaluation consistent with section 7 of the Wild and Scenic River Act.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Delta WSR Corridor)

OHVs have been limited to designated trails by the RMP decisions listed above. If additional trails are considered for designation in the future, they would be located to minimize resource damage, maintain primitive and semi-primitive recreation experience, and facilitate maintenance of designated trails. Some trails would be designated as non-motorized and a non-motorized trail system out of Tangle Lakes Campground would be developed. Snowmachines may be limited to designated trails seasonally to minimize disturbance to heavy concentrations of wintering moose within the Wild and Scenic River corridor, subject to closure procedures in 43 CFR Part 36.11.

(4) Delta Range Area (including Delta Mountains Sub-unit)

(a) RMP Decisions (Delta Range)

This area would be designated as “limited” to OHVs. Limitations will be considered in order to prevent unmanaged proliferation of OHV trails and to maintain existing recreation experiences in the area. In order to maintain an existing non-motorized winter recreation experience in rugged, glaciated terrain, the Delta Mountains Sub-unit (labeled A on Map 13) would be closed to snowmachine use, though access to subsistence resources would be allowed. Seasonal closure would begin on October 15 or when there is 12 inches average snowfall or 6 inches of frost. Seasonal closure would run until May 15. Snowmachine use outside those defined sub-units would be unrestricted. OHV use for resource development will be permitted consistent with Required Operating Procedures. New road construction would be permitted in the transportation utility corridor and for resource development. Retention of temporary roads would be considered in areas managed for a roaded natural recreation experience.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Delta Range)

OHV use would be limited to designated trails, which would be located to minimize resource damage; maintain primitive, semi-primitive, and roaded

natural recreation experience; and facilitate maintenance of designated trails. Non-motorized hiking trails may be considered off the Richardson Highway or in the Jarvis Creek area.

(5) Denali Highway Area

(a) RMP Decisions (Denali Highway area)

OHVs would be “limited” to existing trails, consistent with criteria described above. OHV limitations will be considered in order to prevent unmanaged proliferation of OHV trails, to maintain existing recreation experiences and a diversity of dispersed and backcountry experiences, and to prevent visual impacts from unmanaged OHV use within the viewshed of the highway. This area is predominantly State-selected. BLM interim management of trails in the area would consist of inventory of trails in the area, definition of “existing” trails through mapping, and education regarding the importance of staying on existing trails. There would be no immediate snowmachine restrictions. Road construction would be permitted for resource development, utilizing guidelines for maintenance of VRM Class II and III viewsheds.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Denali Highway)

If any lands in the area are retained in long-term Federal ownership, trails would be designated to minimize resource damage, minimize impacts to the viewshed, and maintain a diversity of recreation experiences. Development of non-motorized loop trails would be considered on BLM recreational withdrawals located along the Denali Highway. Designated trails for snowmachines may be considered in the future (on lands retained in Federal ownership) if winter trail density and encounters are exceeding user tolerances, as determined through user surveys.

(6) Gulkana WSR Corridor Area

(a) RMP Decisions (Gulkana WSR)

BLM’s management intent under this alternative, consistent with management under a wild classification, is no new road construction. This area would be designated as “limited” to OHVs. Designated trails are necessary in this Wild and Scenic River corridor to comply with Title XI of ANILCA and to ensure management to protect outstandingly remarkable values. As identified through the Gulkana implementation planning process, use of OHVs would be limited to the following designated trails: Swede Lake Trail, Hungry Hollow Trail, Middle Fork Trail, Haggard Creek Trail, Dickey Lake Trail, Twelve Mile Creek Trail, South Middle Fork Trail, Northeast Middle Fork Trail, Northwest Middle Fork trail, West Fork Trail, and Fish Lake Trail. These trails are shown on Map 16, page 78. Seasonal closure may be considered on Haggard Creek to minimize use during wet trail conditions, but access to subsistence

resources would be allowed. Within the Wild and Scenic River corridor, there would be a 1,500 pound GVW limit on vehicles used for recreational purposes. There would be no snowmachine restrictions.

(7) Tiekel Area (including Tonsina Sub-units)

(a) RMP Decisions (Tiekel Area)

This area would be designated as “limited” to OHVs. Limitations will be considered in order to maintain existing backcountry and dispersed recreation experiences and to prevent unmanaged proliferation of OHV trails. If lands adjacent to the existing corridor are retained in long-term Federal ownership, management of OHVs would also be designated as “limited,” including some consideration of area closures for snowmachines consistent with the description under Alternative C for the Tonsina sub-unit (both North and South sub-units, labeled B and C, respectively, on Map 12), as described under the *Tiekel Area (Including Tonsina Sub-units)* section of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Road construction would be permitted within the transportation and utility corridor for resource development or transportation and utility maintenance, consistent with measures identified in *Appendix A*. Use of temporary or winter roads would still be encouraged, but retention of roads may be considered if consistent with management for a roaded natural experience. If lands adjacent to the transportation and utility corridor are retained in long-term Federal ownership, new roads would not be permitted in areas being managed for a primitive recreation experience.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Tiekel Area)

Within this area, OHVs would be limited to designated trails. Trails would be designated to minimize resource damage, to maintain a diversity of recreational opportunities, and to minimize impacts to the viewshed. Some specific trails would be designated non-motorized. Construction of both non-motorized and motorized loops would be considered. Some vehicle class restrictions (such as weight limitations) would apply on specific trails. Snowmachines would not be permitted on specific trails managed for non-motorized use.

(8) Bering Glacier Area

(a) RMP Decisions (Bering Glacier)

This area would be designated as “limited” to OHVs to prevent unmanaged proliferation of trails and to protect unique ecological values associated with this glacial environment. Road construction would be permitted for resource development only if consistent with protection of resource values identified for the area. There would be no snowmachine restrictions.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Bering Glacier)

OHVs would be limited to designated trails. Trails would be designated to avoid nunataks, sensitive waterfowl areas, and to prevent unmanaged proliferation of trails.

(9) Tangle Lakes Archaeological District (TLAD) Area

(a) RMP Decisions (TLAD)

Management of this area would continue as presently managed with designated trails in order to protect the high-density occurrence of archeological sites in the area. OHVs would be restricted to designated trails (Swede Lake Trail, South Landmark Gap Trail, Osar Lake Trail, Dickey Lake Trail, and Alphabet Hills Trail) from May 15 to October 16 or when there is an average of 12 inches snow or 6 inches frost. Trails would be designated to avoid cultural resources in the area and to prevent the unmanaged proliferation of trails. Road construction would be permitted if necessary for resource development. Proposed routes would be subject to compliance with requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act before potential authorization.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (TLAD)

Consideration would be given to class restrictions such as weight limits on specific trails. Consideration would be given to designation of new trails (including non-motorized), consistent with recreation or subsistence management objectives for the area. New trails must be routed to avoid cultural resources.

(10) Chistochina-Cantwell Area

(a) RMP Decisions (Chistochina-Cantwell)

OHV use within this area would be “limited” to existing trails subject to criteria listed above. The area will be limited in order to provide more intensive and proactive OHV management, as requested by Ahtna, Inc, the selecting entity. Where immediate concern exists regarding protection of traditional and cultural areas or sites, the BLM would work with the Native or village corporations to inventory, designate, and post trails to avoid negatively impacting such sites. Road construction would be considered on a case-by-case basis, consistent with section 906(k) of ANILCA and consistent with existing 17(b) easement limitations.

(b) Implementation-level Considerations (Chistochina-Cantwell)

Consideration would be given to rerouting trails to avoid culturally sensitive sites, to maintaining some trails as non-motorized, and to education/interpretation at trailheads. Vehicle class restrictions (such as weight limitations) may be considered if necessary to minimize impacts. Where long-term traditional use is documented, consideration may be given to limiting some specific trails to recreational snowmachine use to allow for traditional trapping.

(11) Other State- and Native-selected Lands

(a) RMP Decisions (Other selected lands)

Within these areas (3,311,000 acres), OHVs use would be limited to existing trails. OHVs must use existing roads and trails; activities must be conducted in a manner that minimizes disturbance of vegetation, soil stability, or drainage systems, and minimizes disturbance of fish and wildlife resources. Road construction would be permitted on a case-by-case basis, utilizing measures described in *Appendix A: Required Operating Procedures*.

(12) Other Unencumbered BLM Lands

(a) RMP Decisions (Other unencumbered BLM lands)

Within these areas (222,000 acres), OHVs would be “limited” to existing trails. On-the-ground management would consist of identification, posting, and education regarding existing trails. Road construction would be permitted, consistent with measures identified in *Appendix A: Required Operating Procedures*.

T-5: Management Actions (OHVs and Roads)

1. Trail inventory and assessment work will continue, with an emphasis on BLM public lands (unencumbered) designated as “limited” to OHVs. Inventory and assessment will be necessary in these areas to identify all existing trails and assess trail density and resource impacts. This information will be used in implementation-level designation of specific trails. Inventory and assessment information will also be used to prioritize trail maintenance needs.
2. Through contract and survey, characterize trail users, their perception of resource impacts associated with trails (summer and winter), their tolerance of such impacts, user displacement, and tolerance of trail management actions or regulations. Use this information in site-specific implementation decisions regarding identification, construction, or closure of trails. Priority for this work would be Delta Wild and Scenic River, followed by proposed Bering Glacier RNA, followed by any proposed SRMAs.

3. Permitted activities and uses that involve OHV use would contain stipulations stating that OHV use would be consistent with management in limited and closed areas. If necessary, permitted cross-country travel would be stipulated in a manner that minimizes impacts (i.e., winter use or low ground pressure tires). Specific operating procedures related to OHVs can be found in Appendix A: *Required Operating Procedures*.
4. Current BLM policy is to defer any processing of R.S. 2477 assertions except where there is a demonstrated and compelling need to make a determination. Land use planning decisions do not affect valid R.S. 2477 rights or future assertions; however, if a route should be recognized, the BLM would consider it as a designated or existing trail where it crosses BLM-managed lands.
5. All OHV management considered in implementation planning will be consistent with section 811 of ANILCA, which allows for “appropriate use for subsistence purposes of snowmobiles, motorboats, and other means of surface transportation traditionally employed for such purposes by local residents, subject to reasonable regulation.” The following would be employed in implementation-level planning to ensure consistency with section 811: a) Distinction (by area) between recreational and subsistence uses; and b) Allowances in areas limited to OHVs for subsistence use, which may include travel off existing or designated trails for game retrieval, use of classes of vehicles otherwise restricted, and lifting of seasonal restrictions during subsistence hunting seasons.
6. Decisions made within this Approved Plan and in implementation-level planning will be consistent with Title XI of ANILCA, which addresses access into Conservation System Units, in this case the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridors. The BLM will consider application for Transportation and Utility System right-of-ways across the Wild and Scenic River corridors. Applications would be subject to NEPA analysis and Section 7 (WSRA) analysis. Analysis would need to consider impacts to the outstandingly remarkable values and the free-flowing nature of the rivers and would need to consider feasible alternative routes. Title XI also allows for access to inholdings and recognizes valid existing rights.

T-6: Monitoring (OHVs and Roads)

Trail inventory and assessment work will continue, as described above. Currently, approximately 1,000 out of an anticipated 1,200 miles of trail have been GPS'ed. This data will be used as a baseline for future monitoring purposes and to determine future trends in trail proliferation and density.

Travel management and OHV use monitoring within the planning area will focus on compliance with specific route and area designation and restrictions, with primary emphasis on those routes or areas causing the highest levels of user conflicts or adverse impacts to resources. The secondary focus will be to establish trends in trail proliferation and density, as discussed above. Various

methods of monitoring may be employed including aerial monitoring, ground patrol, and appropriate methods of remote surveillance such as traffic counters, etc. Route or area closures will be regularly monitored for compliance.

U. TRIBAL TREATY RIGHTS

U-1: Goal

Accommodate treaty and legal rights of appropriate Native American groups in management of public lands.

U-2: Management Actions:

1. Continue to notify and consult with Native American tribes on BLM authorized actions. Conduct consultation and coordination on a government-to-government basis with Federally recognized tribes.
2. Maintain current MOUs with Native villages of Cheesh'Na, Chickaloon, Chitina, Gakona, Eyak, Tazlina, Yakutat, Gulkana, and Mentasta.

U-3: Monitoring

A minimum of one “face-to-face” general consultation and project coordination meeting will be held on an annual basis with the villages where BLM has MOUs. Specifics of the frequency and location of meetings are described in each specific MOU.

Dates of consultation meetings and other tribal contacts will be reported in the Annual Program Summary and Planning Update.

V. VISUAL RESOURCES

V-1: Goal

Manage scenic values in accordance with the objectives established for VRM classes as presented in Table 4:

Table 4: Visual Resource Management Class Objectives

| |
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| Class I |
| Preservation of the landscape is the primary management goal in Class I areas. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention. |
| Class II |
| The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. Activities or modifications of the environment should not be evident or attract the attention of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements of form, line, color and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. |
| Class III |
| The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention, but should not detract from the existing landscape. |
| Class IV |
| Class IV VRM objective is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. Changes may attract attention and be dominant landscape features but should reflect the basic elements of the existing landscape. Class IV rating is generally reserved for areas where the visual intrusions dominate the viewshed but are in character with the landscape. |

V-2: Allocations

Map 17, page 79, depicts the location of the VRM classes across the planning area.

V-3: Management Actions

1. Use the visual resource contrast rating system during project level planning to determine whether or not proposed activities will meet VRM objectives. Identify mitigation measures to reduce visual contrasts and prepare rehabilitation plans to address landscape modifications on a case-by-case basis.

V-4: Monitoring

Any project design features or mitigation measures identified to address visual resource management concerns will be monitored to ensure compliance with established VRM classes. Where appropriate, monitoring will include the use of the visual contrast rating system, described in BLM Manual 8400 during project review and upon project completion to assess the effectiveness of project design features and any mitigating measures.

W. WATER

W-1: Goal

Maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters in the Glennallen Field Office to protect beneficial uses. Prevent water quality degradation, and maintain or improve watershed function throughout the planning area.

W-2: Objectives (Desired Future Conditions)

All water sources provide water quality and quantity sufficient to meet Alaska State standards and to protect beneficial uses.

Stream channels display the dimensions, pattern and profile that are representative of site potential to allow flood plain aquifer recharge, moderate stream flows and buffer the effects of flooding.

W-3: Management Actions

1. Develop water quality data base in priority fish habitats and important recreation use areas to establish baseline for monitoring. In heavy use recreation rivers, include fecal coliform monitoring. First priority is Gulkana and Delta Wild and Scenic River corridors.
2. Continue assessment of riparian areas, using proper functioning condition assessment methodology. Priority areas include Wild and Scenic River corridors, ACECs, and riparian areas within anticipated or ongoing mining areas.
3. Continue to monitor water flows and develop web-accessed information for the Gulkana and Delta Wild and Scenic Rivers.
4. Water rights application for the Gulkana River has been submitted to the State of Alaska. Complete instream flow needs assessment documentation and obtain water rights for the Delta Wild and Scenic River. In addition (second priority) any streams, lakes, or other riparian areas found to support a quality of fish habitat, recreation, or extractive resources, should be considered as a candidate for an instream flow reservation.
5. Use Required Operating Procedures (see Appendix C, FEIS, particularly ROPs-Water and ROPs-Wetlands) to prevent non point source water pollution when implementing projects.
6. Obtain appropriate permits pertaining to projects affecting water quality, wetlands, and/or streams prior to implementing BLM projects.
7. Require outside applicants to provide copies of pertinent permits prior to BLM authorizations.

W-4: Monitoring

A sample of ground-disturbing projects with the potential to affect water resources will be evaluated on a periodic basis to determine if Required Operating Procedures or identified mitigation measures were followed and if they were effective.

X. WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

X-1: Goal

Manage Gulkana and Delta Wild and Scenic River corridors to protect the outstandingly remarkable values.

X-2: Allocations

The Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridors will continue to be managed consistent with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended by ANILCA. Specific management prescriptions for these rivers are described below under ***Management Actions***.

Through the land use planning process, it was determined that 15 rivers in the planning area are eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers system. These rivers are: 1) Brushkana Creek; 2) Clearwater Creek; 3) headwaters of the Duktoth River; 4) Hungry Hollow Creek; 5) headwaters of the Kulthieth River; 6) Kosakuts River; 7) Liberty Creek; 8) Maclaren River; 9) Monsoon Creek and Lake; 10) headwaters of the Nenana River; 11) headwaters of the Susitna River; 12) Tonsina River system; 13) Twelvemile Creek; 14) Victor Creek; and 15) West Fork of the Gulkana River, south branch. Maps of the eligible segments, outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classification, and interim protective measures for all listed eligible rivers are described in Appendix I of the East Alaska FEIS.

A suitability determination for these eligible rivers will be deferred until ANCSA and State entitlements are met and land status has been stabilized.

X-3: Management Actions

Gulkana River: The Gulkana will be managed as a Special Recreation Management Area. An implementation-level plan was recently completed, revising the 1983 Gulkana River Management Plan. The new (revised) plan is consistent with this RMP and manages the river to protect outstandingly remarkable values.

Delta River: This Wild and Scenic River corridor will be designated as an SRMA, with objectives to maintain existing recreation opportunities (primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized, semi-primitive motorized, and roaded natural), with emphasis on managing for a primitive experience in the portion of the corridor classified as wild. Another objective in this SRMA is managing to protect the VRM Class I viewshed. The area will be designated as “limited” to OHVs, with specific trails designated to minimize unmanaged proliferation of trails, to reduce user conflicts, to continue to provide access to recreation and subsistence activities, and to maintain primitive and semi-primitive motorized experiences. Designated trails for OHVs will be Top of the World trail and Rainy Creek trail.

Consistent with the 1983 River Management Plan for the Delta National Wild and Scenic River and during implementation-level planning, BLM would recommend to the State of Alaska limitations on motorized use on the Tangle Lakes. No

public use cabins will be considered. General visitor use and commercial use limits will be established in implementation-level planning, consistent with objectives identified above. The Tangle Lakes Campground will be renovated, and the river take-out at mile 212 on the Richardson Highway will have increased signage. If the opportunity presents itself, acquisition of one of the area lodges for a visitor center will be considered.

Current withdrawals against leasable mineral entry will be maintained in the scenic and recreational portions of the river corridor (existing under PLO 5150), and a withdrawal from locatable mineral location will be recommended for the scenic and recreational portions (approximately 16,000 acres). Access to exiting mining operations will be permitted in a manner that minimizes disturbance to the river and scenic resources. Consistent with section 1110 of ANILCA, new road construction in the scenic and recreational portions of the river corridor may be authorized if it is determined that there are no economically feasible and prudent alternative routes and a determination is made that construction would be compatible with values for which the river was established.

X-4: Monitoring

Specific monitoring to measure impacts and initiate management actions is described for the Gulkana River corridor in the 2006 Gulkana River Management Plan. The same will be done for the Delta river, with a plan revision due out in 2007.

Monitoring will be conducted for the eligible rivers listed above to see that interim protective measures described are effective.

Y. WILDLIFE including SPECIAL STATUS BIRDS AND MAMMALS

Y-1: Goals

1. In cooperation with ADF&G, ensure optimum populations and a natural abundance and diversity of wildlife resources, including those species that are considered BLM sensitive status species.
2. Perpetuate a diversity and abundance of waterfowl and wetland habitat.

Y-2: Objectives (Desired Future Conditions)

1. A full spectrum of biological communities, habitats, and their ecological processes is present.
2. Wetland habitats support a healthy diversity and abundance of dependent wildlife species, with emphasis on special status species needs.
3. Habitat is in suitable condition to allow wildlife movement between large blocks of habitat and seasonal and special habitats on a localized and landscape scale.

4. *Moose habitat*: Desired condition is a mosaic pattern of upland spruce woodland cover types interspersed with a lower seral expression dominated by alder and willow. Upland woodland cover types are mixed with stream terraces and flood plains dominated by sedge and mixed age classes of willow.
5. *Caribou habitat*: Summer range would be similar to the description for moose habitat. For caribou winter range, desired condition is uplands spruce woodland cover type where lichen and various herbs dominate the ground layer.
6. *Bison calving area*: Delta floodplain, grass-dominated plant communities interspersed with scattered pockets of cottonwood, white spruce, and balsam poplar.
7. *Dall sheep and mountain goat habitat*: Open high elevation grass and forb-dominated plant communities with a minor shrub or tree component.

Y-3: Management Actions

1. **Bison**: Wildland fire and prescribed burning would be used to improve Delta bison calving range on over 15,000 acres. Objectives would be to increase forage productivity and maintain grass dominated vegetation communities.
2. **Caribou**: Wildland and prescribed fire would be utilized within portions of the Nelchina caribou summer range to create a mosaic of burned and unburned areas. To maintain mixed age classes of lichen on Nelchina caribou traditional winter range, less than 10 percent of the range would be burned every decade. If large wildfires occur on or adjacent to winter range, changing the suppression class to full or modified would be considered.
3. **Dall Sheep**: Based on inventory, areas for maintenance or enhancement of Dall sheep range would be identified. Fuels treatment projects and wildland fire would be used to achieve objectives.
4. **Moose**: The BLM will use wildland fire and pursue vegetation treatment such as prescribed burning, mechanical treatment, or logging to improved moose habitat and achieve desired condition described above. The first priority for such projects is critical winter range (see Map 3) on BLM public lands (unencumbered). The second priority is critical winter range on State or Native selected lands. Combined, there are an estimated 1,450,000 acres of moose winter range on BLM-managed lands in the planning area. Wherever possible, wildlife objectives would be combined with fuels reduction in forestry objectives.
5. Ensure that impacts to wildlife habitat are minimized by application of Required Operating Procedures and stipulations. Particularly applicable to wildlife habitat and sensitive species are the ROP-F&W required operating procedures.
6. A cooperative Habitat Management Plan will be developed with ADF&G for the Delta bison calving area. In addition, the following measures will

apply to this area: 1) OHVs will be limited to designated trails from May 1 to June 15; 2) road construction will be permitted for resource development, but activity would be restricted from May 1 to June 15; and 3) maintain existing withdrawals against mineral leasing and locatable mineral entry (a portion of the area is currently open to locatable entry and would remain open).

7. Nelchina calving area: Within defined calving areas, the following uses would not be permitted from May 1 to June 15: a) surface disturbing activities; b) FLPMA leases or permits that exceed 14 days of activity; or c) mining exploration. Aircraft associated with permitted activities would maintain an altitude of at least 1,000 feet. No oil and gas exploration or development activities may occur from May 1 to June 15.
8. Moose winter range: Within defined moose winter range, the following use would not be permitted from October 15 to March 31: a) surface disturbing activities; or b) FLPMA lease or permits that exceed 14 days of activity. Aircraft associated with permitted activities would maintain an altitude of 1,000 feet. For oil and gas activities, these areas would be closed to drilling, pipeline construction, road construction, or construction of permanent facilities from October 15 to March 31. Exceptions may be granted for mining activities where no feasible alternative exists and for other activities based on actual occupancy of the area by wintering moose.
9. Raptor Nests: Within ¼ mile of bald eagle nests, the following would not be permitted from April 1 to August 31: a) surface disturbing activities; or b) FLPMA leases or permits. Aircraft associated with permitted activities would maintain an altitude of 1,000 feet within one-half mile of documented eagle nests. Appropriate buffers around other raptor nest will be determined based on site-specific analysis. For oil and gas activities, areas within ¼ mile of bald eagle nests will be closed to drilling, pipeline construction, road construction, or construction of permanent facilities from April 1 to August 31.
10. Mountain Goats and Dall Sheep: In critical mountain goat and Dall sheep habitat, helicopters used in support of permitted activities would maintain one-half mile horizontal and 1,500 foot vertical distance from goats or sheep. Heli-ski landings or skiing is not permitted in mountain goat or Dall sheep critical ranges, as identified based on ADF&G maps and refined by monitoring.
11. Trumpeter swans: Within ¼ mile of the shores of waterbodies that contain trumpeter swan nests, the following uses would not be permitted from May 1 to August 31: a) ground disturbance or surface use exceeding 14 days; b) FLPMA leases, c) FLPMA permits where surface use exceeds 14 days; or d) overland access to permitted activities. Exceptions may be granted for mining operations on a site specific bases where no feasible alternative exists and where mitigation measures can be identified to minimize impacts. The same areas

would be closed to oil and gas drilling, pipeline construction, road construction, or construction of permanent facilities.

12. Coordinate vegetation treatment projects and management activities that influence wildlife habitat with ADF&G.

Y-4: Inventory and Monitoring

First priority for the following activities is on BLM public lands (unencumbered) or low-priority State selections. Inventories may be conducted on State or Native selected lands if cooperatively funded by the State or Native Corporation.

- Conduct detailed condition assessments of critical moose habitats, especially in areas of intensive motorized use and/or mining operations.
- Work cooperatively with ADF&G to research effects of winter and summer OHV use on moose in critical habitat areas.
- Identify critical Dall sheep and mountain goat ranges in areas of current or potential high-level recreational activities (helicopter or snowcat-supported skiing) and within areas with high potential for mineral development.
- Identify critical habitat for high-profile furbearer species (wolverines, Canada lynx).
- Identify critical habitat for harbor seals in Vitus Lake/Bering Glacier area.
- Continue tri-annual bald eagle monitoring in Gulkana River watershed; conduct thorough analysis of existing data.
- Monitor effects of human disturbances on breeding, nesting, brood-rearing behavior of adult and young trumpeter swans.
- Resume annual monitoring of dusky Canada geese within the Bering Glacier area.
- Document usage/habitat preferences of Tule white-fronted geese and Vancouver Canada geese within the Bering Glacier area.
- Identify and document red-throated loons usage in Bering Glacier/Vitus Lake area.
- Establish and monitor breeding bird survey transects. Develop and participate in research partnership efforts to gain better understanding of sensitive status bird occurrence and habitat in the planning area. Monitor effects of fire (prescribed and natural) on breeding bird habitat and preference.

