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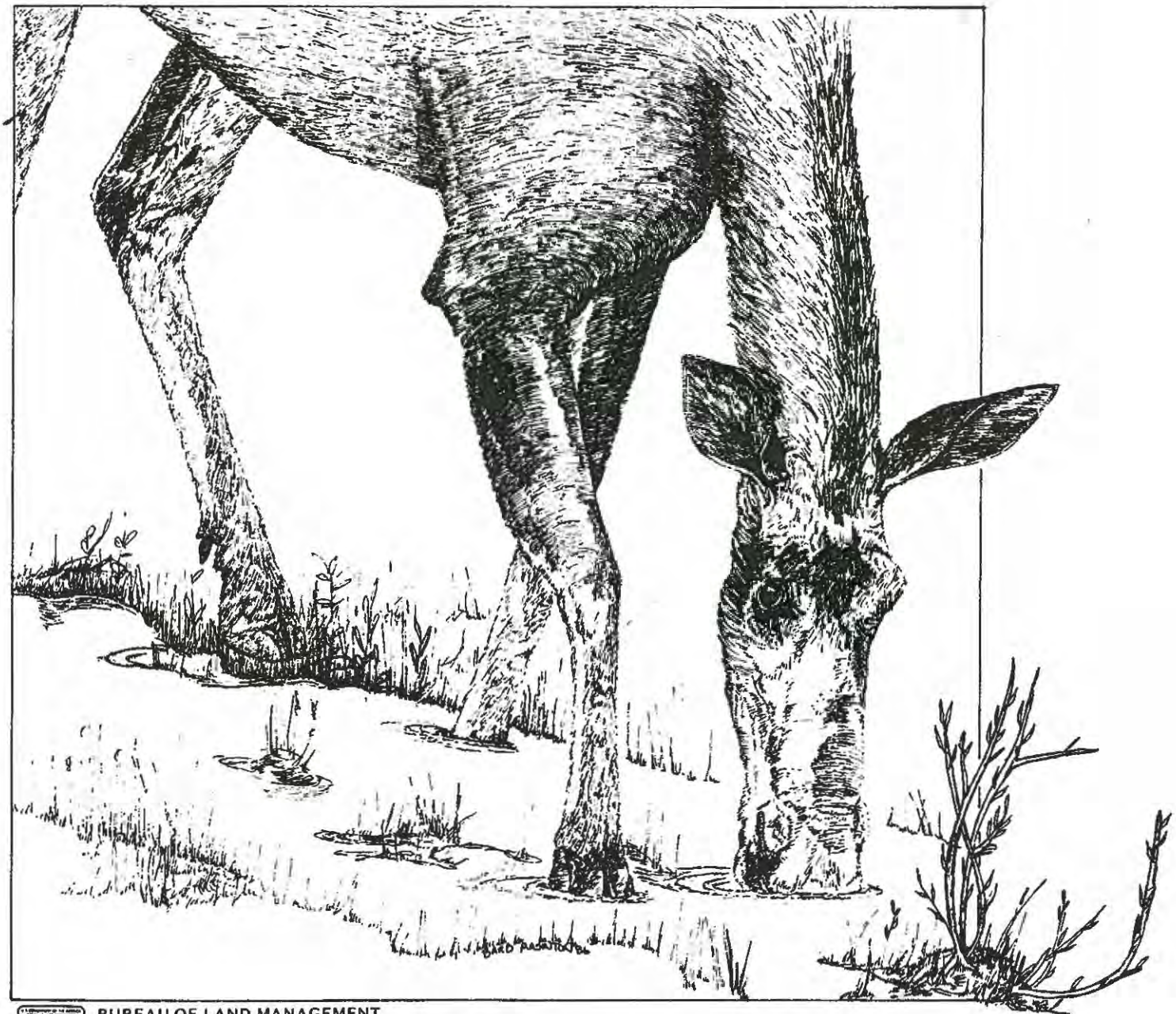
Resource Management Plan

and

Record of Decision

for the

Central Yukon Planning Area



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
FAIRBANKS DISTRICT OFFICE
NORTHWEST RESOURCE AREA
SEPTEMBER 1986

C/OL

RECORD OF DECISION

for the

CENTRAL YUKON PLANNING AREA
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Michael J. Penfold

Michael J. Penfold

9-26-86

Date

RECORD OF DECISION
for the
Central Yukon Resource Management Plan

Introduction:

This document identifies the decisions reached by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for managing the 9.5 million acres of public land within the Central Yukon Planning Area. These decisions are presented in the enclosed Resource Management Plan (RMP). Management actions have been summarized under part one of the RMP. Part two lists the multiple-use management prescriptions needed to implement actions contained in the management summary.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) were filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and distributed to the public for review and appeal over a thirty-day period beginning April 15, 1986. BLM received two letters of comment on the plan. Neither contained information that has caused BLM to change the Preferred Alternative or the Proposed Resource Management Plan.

Decision:

The enclosed Resource Management Plan, reviewed as the Preferred Alternative in Part 1 of the FEIS/PRMP and as the Proposed Resource Management Plan in Part 2 of the same document, is approved as the Resource Management Plan for the Central Yukon Planning Area of BLM's Fairbanks District. The management direction to be followed under this decision is fully described in the enclosed RMP.

Detailed guidance for implementation of this RMP will be provided in activity plans and other site-specific project development directives.

Discussion of Comments on the RMP:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Governor's Office, State of Alaska, expressed concern over the FEIS analysis of placer mining impacts (page 167 FEIS) and the continued enforcement of regulations contained in 43 CFR 3809.

In brief summary, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency expressed concern over FEIS statements dealing with the economic feasibility of attaining waste water discharge that would comply with federal/state limits: This response correctly points out that "the ability to meet standards and permit conditions is not separable from other economic considerations when determining the overall economic feasibility of a mining operation."

The State of Alaska, Office of the Governor points out that "the analysis and conclusions on page 23 of the (F)EIS concerning new technologies are premature considering the continuing efforts being made within the Department of Environmental Conservation, in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency, through demonstration grants and flocculant studies (PEO/Polyethlyene Oxide)."

Both responses state that BLM should assume a major role in assuring compliance with state and federal water quality standards. This activity should be carried out in conjunction with field compliance examinations and during the office review of 3809 notice and plan submissions.

Mining operations are required under 3809.2-2 to comply with all state and federal laws, including those concerning water quality, that apply to mining operations on the public lands in Alaska. Under the court stipulation in Sierra Club, et. al. v. Michael Penfold, et. al. (Civil Case No. A86-083), BLM has been monitoring all active mining operations. Where measurable settleable solids exceeded .2ml/liter, copies of BLM's 3809 Field Compliance Report have been provided to EPA and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). BLM has found this measure to be a reasonably reliable indication of how well mining practices are working for a given operation.

The BLM fully recognizes the technological advances made in water treatment and mining practices by the mining industry, the Bureau of Mines, the EPA and the ADEC. These changes have resulted primarily from the role of EPA and ADEC in water quality enforcement and not just from the requirement to comply with BLM's 3809 Surface Management Regulations. The mining industry continues to question the economic feasibility of achieving mining water discharge effluent measurements which meet the state water quality standard of 5 NTUs or less (drinking water standard). The appropriateness of water quality standards for placer mining operations is an issue that can only be resolved by the State of Alaska and the EPA.

The degree of enforcement of the BLM 3809 program is dependent on the availability of funding. This plan was prepared under the assumption that adequate funding would be provided to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

nis ROD completes the EIS process for the RMP.

Alternatives Including Proposed Action:

Five alternative plans were developed for analysis and consideration in the selection of this Resource Management Plan. These alternatives are described as follows:

Alternative A - No Action. Under the "no action" alternative land management would continue as it presently exists. Approximately 82 percent of the planning area would remain open to mineral location and .07 percent to mineral leasing. Subsistence impacts would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, primarily in conjunction with other proposed land uses such as mineral exploration, development, access proposals and other forms of resource usage. Protection of wildlife resources would also be limited to mitigating measures developed in response to specific land use proposals.

Alternative B - Resource Protection. This alternative maximizes protection of wildlife resources through withdrawal of the land base from various forms of resource appropriation. Additional areas having identified subsistence potential would also be protected through withdrawal from mineral location. Approximately 10 percent of the planning area would remain open to mineral location and 41 percent to mineral leasing. Management actions under this alternative would be greatly reduced through implementation of protective withdrawals over large areas.

Alternative C - Balanced Resource Use, Production. This alternative expands the areas open to mineral location (31 percent) and mineral leasing (56 percent). Crucial wildlife habitat would remain closed to all forms of disposal, including mineral location and mineral leasing. Under this alternative, additional lands would be opened to settlement under the land disposal laws applicable to Alaska. Fewer location restrictions would be placed on leases and sales proposed under authority given to BLM by the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Land uses which might restrict subsistence users or their needs in specific areas could be considered for approval under this alternative.

Alternative D - Resource Production. This alternative maximizes opportunities for resource development. Approximately 99 percent of the lands would be open to mineral leasing and 92 percent to mineral location. Only identified crucial spawning habitat would be withdrawn from mineral location. With the exception of designated RNAs and crucial wildlife habitats, all lands would be open to settlement under the Alaska settlement laws. This alternative has the highest potential for cumulative negative impacts on subsistence use and the associated resource base.

Alternative E - Preferred Alternative. This alternative was developed as a balance between resource development and resource protection. Through public review and comments, Alternative E was modified into the final form as presented in the Final EIS. The Central Yukon RMP, which was based on the Preferred Alternative, was developed to define decisions derived through the EIS process. This alternative allows a reasonable level of resource development while protecting renewable resources having value for subsistence and commercial use. Under this alternative, 93-96 percent of the lands would be open to mineral leasing and 85-92 percent would be open to mineral location.

Areas having values requiring levels of protection above those normally afforded under public land management have been designated as either Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) or Research Natural Areas (RNAs), or have been identified for various levels of protection through withdrawals.

All of the plan alternatives analyzed in the Draft and Final EIS's were considered by BLM to be environmentally acceptable. Alternative B is the most-favored alternative and Alternative D is the least-favored alternative from an environmental viewpoint. The Preferred Alternative represents a balance between these two extremes.

Monitoring:

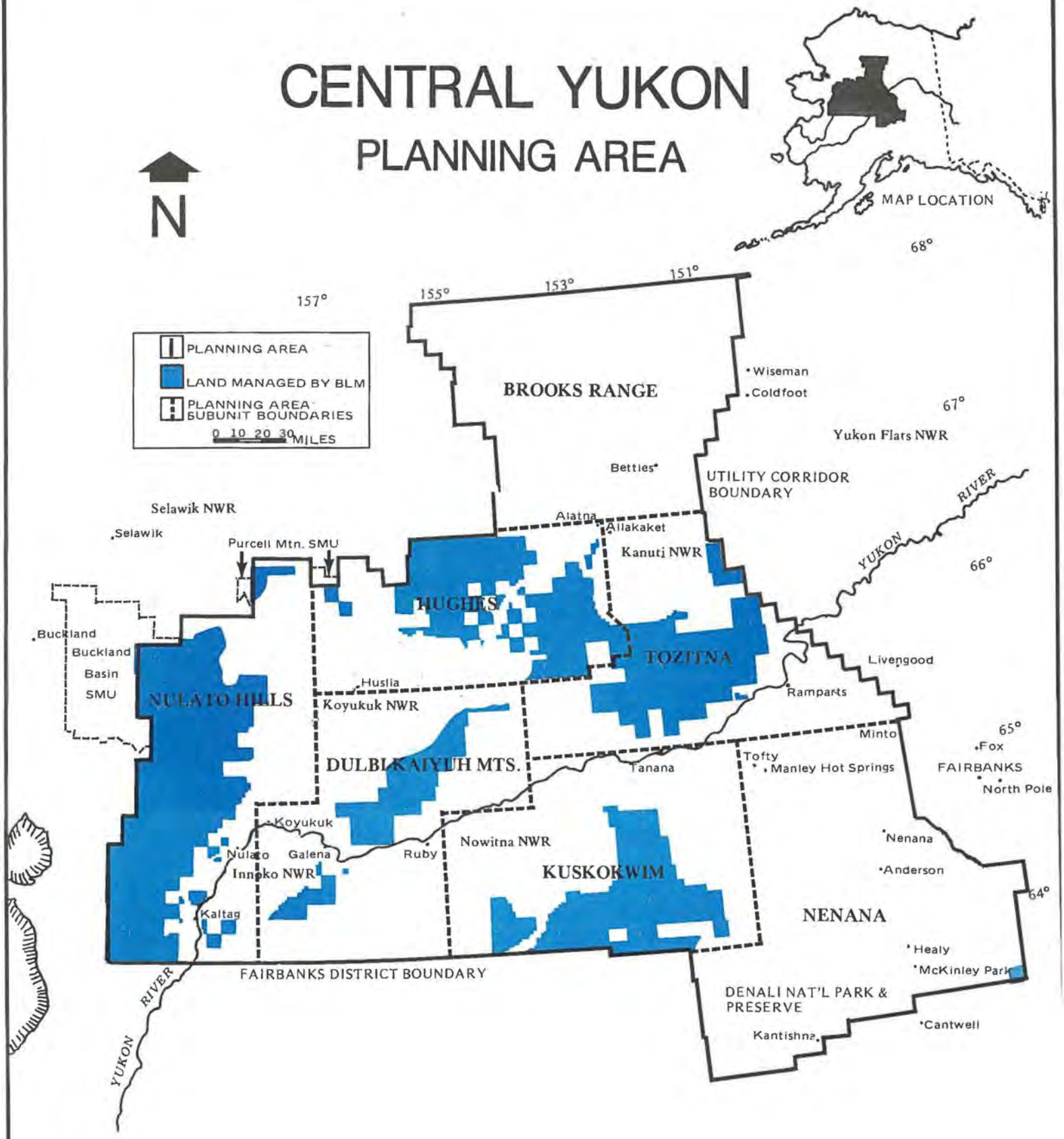
The effects caused by implementing this RMP will be monitored and evaluated on a periodic basis to ensure that the desired results are being achieved. Monitoring will be carried out to: (1) determine the accuracy of impacts projected in the EIS, (2) discover any unanticipated impacts, and (3) determine if mitigating measures are working as originally predicted.

Monitoring will continue throughout the life of the plan. Full monitoring reviews will be completed on a five-year cycle. Informal monitoring will take place routinely as a matter of standard management activity and as planning decisions are implemented.

Public Involvement:

Active public participation was sought during the EIS process for the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan. Informing and involving the public was accomplished through notices in the Federal Register, direct mailings, district Advisory Council meetings, scoping meetings, public meetings, media announcements, and briefing meetings with federal, state and local government agencies. Formal hearings as required under section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) were held in 12 villages and Fairbanks in conjunction with the local public meetings (See page 269 FEIS).

Four hundred and fourteen copies of the Draft EIS were mailed to the public on July 22, 1985. Twenty-five written responses were received by BLM. Four hundred and seventy-six copies of the FEIS/PRMP were mailed to the public on April 15, 1986. Two responses containing comments on the text were received from this mailing.


CENTRAL YUKON
PLANNING AREA
N
MAP LOCATION
PLANNING AREA
LAND MANAGED BY BLM
PLANNING AREA SUBUNIT BOUNDARIES
0 10 20 30 MILES
157°
155°
153°
151°
68°
67°
66°
65°
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BROOKS RANGE
Wiseman
Coldfoot
Yukon Flats NWR
Betties
UTILITY CORRIDOR BOUNDARY
Selawik NWR
Selawik
Purcell Mtn. SMU
Alatna
Allakaket
Kanuti NWR
YUKON RIVER
HUGHES
TOZITNA
Buckland
Buckland Basin SMU
NULATO HILLS
Huslia
Koyukuk NWR
Livengood
Ramparts
DULBI KAIYUH MTS.
Minto
Tofty
Manley Hot Springs
Tanana
Fox
FAIRBANKS
North Pole
Koyukuk
Nulato
Galena
Ruby
Nowitna NWR
Innoko NWR
KUSKOKWIM
Nenana
Anderson
Kaltag
NENANA
Healy
McKinley Park
FAIRBANKS DISTRICT BOUNDARY
DENALI NAT'L PARK & PRESERVE
Cantwell
Kantishna
YUKON RIVER

CENTRAL YUKON PLANNING AREA

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

I. Section 1 - Resource Management Plan Summaries

II. Section 2 - Multiple-Use Management Prescriptions

III. Section 3 - Compliance with Section 810 of ANILCA

Section 1

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARIES

Introduction

Multiple-use resource management has two facets; resource use and resource protection which usually occur in some level of combination. While a resource is being used or developed, measures are applied to preserve environmental quality. Some measures are stipulated by the Bureau while others are stipulated by State, Federal, and local governments which have jurisdictional responsibilities for resource management. The State of Alaska's responsibilities for management of wildlife populations and the Environmental Protection Agency/State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's responsiblity for enforcement of the Clean Water Act are two of many examples.

The Bureau of Land Management, through land use planning, reaffirms the commitment to supporting the local, state and national economy while providing for protection of a wide range of public resources. Land use planning is accomplished by allowing uses to occur where conflicts with other resource uses are absent or in some cases, conflicts can be mitigated. Resource protection is provided by land withdrawals of various forms or by designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

The Central Yukon Resource Management Plan (RMP) is a land use plan as prescribed by the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (P.L. 94-579, 43 U.S.C. 1712). This plan addresses land management and resource allocation issues that were developed and carried through the preceding EIS process. The Central Yukon RMP is based on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Preferred Alternative as amended by public comments.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
CENTRAL YUKON RMP

GOAL 1. Manage lands consistent with multiple-use principles.

OBJECTIVES

1. Consistent with Departmental policy, provide opportunities for mineral exploration location, development and extraction under the 1872 mining law as amended.

2. As required by Section 1008 of ANILCA, provide opportunities for mineral leasing and development.

3. Provide opportunties for mineral material sales where environmentally feasible.

4. Provide continued public settlement opportunities in the Minchumina Settlement block up until expiration of the Alaska settlement laws on October 21, 1986.

5. Designate Research Natural Areas for scientific research purposes.

6. Provide opportunities for FLPMA leases and sales on federal lands where environmentally feasible and where compatible with management objectives.

7. Identify federal lands for exchange when in the National Interest in order to provide manageable land patterns and lower administrative costs.

8. Maximize opportunities for the harvest of forest products where feasible and practical.

9. Provide for protection of subsistence uses and needs as required by Section 810 of ANILCA.

10. Manage lands in conformance with visual quality standards in order to maintain scenic values. Mitigate visual impacts where surface disturbances occur.

11. In cooperation with the McGrath Resource Area, manage the Unalakleet River as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

12. In cooperation with the McGrath Resource Area, manage the Iditarod National Trail.

13. Manage cultural and paleontological resources for a balance of current and future scientific use, socio-cultural use, and public interpretation.

14. Continue leases on hot springs which presently have authorized development.

GOAL 2. Manage activities on public lands consistent with maintenance of environmental quality.

OBJECTIVES

1. Require permits for ORV vehicles in excess of 1,500 pounds using federal lands.

2. Designate Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns on federal lands with identified critical environment issues.

3. Manage crucial peregrine falcon habitat in conformance with the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Team Plan guidelines by limiting or precluding habitat destruction or human activity abatement.

4. Manage surface uses of federal mining claims in accordance with 43 CFR 3809 Surface Management Regulations and policy.

5. Prohibit leasing of undeveloped hot springs in order to allow for non-commercial public usage of these resources.

6. Protect cultural resources in accordance with the requirements of 36 CFR 800. Avoid adverse impacts to significant cultural and paleontological sites.

7. Manage wildfire in cooperation with the Alaska Fire Service to achieve Interagency Fire Plan goals.

GOAL 3. Manage activities on public lands consistent with maintenance and protection of subsistence uses and needs.

OBJECTIVES

1. Protect selected crucial salmon spawning beds from adverse environmental impacts by mineral location and development.

2. Protect watersheds used as community water sources by closing public lands to mineral location and development.

3. Prohibit domestic livestock grazing due to identified wildlife conflicts and the lack of suitable grazing lands within the planning area.

4. Protect important cultural sites which have socio-cultural values.

GOAL 4. Provide support activities to implement the above goals.

OBJECTIVES

1. Inventory and monitor caribou populations and distribution of use patterns in cooperation with ADF&G.

2. Inventory and monitor fish populations and habitat condition in cooperation with ADF&G.

3. Inventory and monitor peregrine falcon populations and habitat conditions in cooperation with the USF&WS to achieve the goals of the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan.

4. Manage 17(b) easements to accommodate public access to public lands.

5. Process R.S. 2477 right-of-way claims.

6. Maintain and expand the inventory of cultural and paleontological resources to enable the Bureau to respond with compliance requirements for surface-disturbing activities.

7. Monitor recreation uses to determine the need for providing future access and facilities.

8. Cooperate with other federal agencies in construction and maintenance of water gauging stations and snow courses.

9. Inventory water needs and secure Federal Reserved Water Rights where needed.

10. Inventory and monitor moose populations and habitat condition in cooperation with ADF&G.

11. Inventory and monitor subsistence uses and needs in accordance with Sec. 810 of ANILCA and in cooperation with ADF&G and rural communities.

12. Inventory and provide for management of hazardous waste sites.

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Mineral Resources

Locatable Minerals

At present there are 7,772,784 acres of land within the Central Yukon Planning Area open to mineral location. Under this RMP there will be 8,267,022 acres within the Central Yukon open to mineral location and development under the 1872 Mining Law as amended. An additional 73,865 acres of land located within the Purcell Moutains SMU of the Seward 1008 study will be open to mineral location (8,340,887 acres total). The following areas totaling 1,207,762 acres will be closed to mineral location.

1. Spawning habitat of selected anadromous fish streams. This habitat includes portions of the North Fork Unalakleet River; Kateel River; Gisasa River; Tozitna River; Indian River; Clear, Bear and Caribou Creeks (Hogatza River Tributary streams) - 15,776 acres.

2. Crucial peregrine falcon habitat - 20,480 acres.

3. The Kaltag and Nulato River watersheds - 460,000 acres.

4. Eight Research Natural Areas - 43,010 acres.

5. All subsistence withdrawal study areas - 179,200 acres.

6. Withdrawal/Exchange lands - 461,047 acres.

7. The Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River withdrawal - 28,249 acres (within Fairbanks District).

All of the above withdrawals are subject to valid existing rights. Mining operations on existing claims located within fish spawning habitat withdrawals and Research Natural Areas and withdrawals for threatened and endangered species will be allowed to continue but exploration and development will require an approved plan of operations under 43 CFR 3809.

Leasable Minerals

There are presently 69,000 acres of land within the Central Yukon Planning Area which are open for oil and gas leasing. Under this RMP there will be approximately 8,768,334 acres of land open to mineral leasing (including oil and gas leasing), under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented. An additional 1,349,673 acres within the Seward 1008 Buckland Basin and Purcell Mountains SMUs will be opened to mineral leasing under this plan (10,118,007 acres total). The following areas totaling 706,450 acres will be closed to all mineral leasing.

1. The Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River withdrawal - 28,249 acres.

2. Eight Research Natural Areas - 43,010 acres.

3. All subsistence withdrawal study areas (except linear withdrawals) - 174,144 acres.

4. Withdrawal/Exchange lands - 461,047 acres.

Mineral leases within areas having an identified subsistence interest but not designated as withdrawn from mineral leasing (Rodo River, Kateel River, South Fork Huslia River, Tagagawik River, Ray River and the three tributaries of Squaw Creek (northwest of Rampart) will be subject to a 300-foot "no surface occupancy" setback zone along either side of the water course (measured from the mean high-water line or center line of non-navigable water courses).

Mineral leases within areas withdrawn for anadromous fish spawning habitat will have a "no surface occupancy" setback zone which corresponds with the outer withdrawal limits. Designated portions of the Nulato River having important anadromous fish spawning habitat will have a "no surface occupancy" setback zone which runs along both sides of the river and is measured 300 feet back from the mean high water line.

WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Terrestrial

Based on wildlife concerns (wintering areas of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd), all lands within the Tagagawik/Buckland watershed (Nulato subunit) and Purcell Mountains (Hughes subunit) are closed to FLPMA sales/leases. Crucial caribou habitats within the Tozitna and Dulbi subunits have been designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). Mineral exploration and development is allowed in all ACECs. An approved Plan of Operations is required before any surface-disturbing activity (other than those defined under 43 CFR 3809 as casual use) can occur. Monitoring programs will be continued in cooperation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Aquatic

Based on documented fisheries information, selected crucial spawning habitat will be withdrawn from mineral location and FLPMA sales and leases. These withdrawals extend 300 feet back along each side of the streams mean high-water line to also include the stream bed of waterways unless known to be navigable. These withdrawals include portions of the North Fork Unalakleet River, Kateel River, Gisasa River, Tozitna River, Indian River and Clear-Bear-Caribou Creeks (Hogatza River tributaries). Stream monitoring programs initiated in cooperation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game will be continued.

Watershed ACECs have been established for all portions of the watershed lying above the lower limit of the above identified river withdrawals. These ACEC designations include all lands within the river withdrawal area. In addition to the above, an ACEC designation has been placed on that portion of the Sulukna River (Kuskokwim subunit) lying within the Fairbanks District. This designation was made to protect identified sheefish spawning habitat within this drainage.

A 300-foot "no surface occupancy" setback zone has been identified for a portion of the Nulato River which contains crucial salmon spawning habitat. This zone will extend 300 feet back along each side of Nulato River segment mean high-water line. If this segment is determined to be non-navigable the 300 foot zone will extend back along both sides of the river center line.

All withdrawals are subject to valid existing rights including properly recorded unpatented mining claims. Areas designated as ACECs are open to mineral location under the 1872 Mining Law and to mineral leasing under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented. Lands withdrawn from mineral location are open to non-surface-disturbing mineral leasing, such as oil and gas. Mining operations within designated ACECs will require an approved plan of operations prior to starting any surface-disturbing activities other than those described as casual use by 43 CFR 3809. Plan approval will require compliance with both the general guidelines established in this plan and the specific watershed ACEC Management Plan.

Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species

Areas identified as crucial habitat for peregrine falcon are separated into three categories under this plan. The first category containing 36,480 acres deals with those lands which have been identified for withdrawal from all forms of appropriation and further classified for exchange. These lands (located southeast of Kaltag) are withdrawn for five years. Those lands not exchanged or being considered for exchange at the end of the five-year period will be designated as ACECs.

Category two lands, totaling 20,480 acres, are lands not identified for exchange. These lands are withdrawn from metalliferous mineral location under the 1872 Mining Law. All discretionary actions, including actions associated with oil and gas leasing, would be reviewed for consistency with both the Endangered Species Act and the existing protection guidelines established by the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan.

Category three lands, totaling 54,000 acres, are lands which have been identified as ACECs. These lands are open to mineral entry and location and mineral leasing. The ACEC management plan will require that all actions within the ACEC be consistent with existing protective guidelines established by the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan. An approved plan of operations will be required for all surface disturbing activities associated with mineral exploration/development (casual use as defined under 43 CFR 3809 is excepted).

Any surface-disturbing activities associated with existing federal mining claims on lands withdrawn for threatened and endangered species will require an approved plan of operations before activities are initiated. Peregrine falcon monitoring programs will be continued in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Subsistence Resources

Three categories of withdrawals designed to protect subsistence resource values are part of this plan. These withdrawals will retain existing closures or close lands to all activities until scheduled subsistence studies or other identified actions are complete. These withdrawals are described as follows:

a. River Study Areas - A linear withdrawal of 300 feet on either side of the stream's mean high-water line to also include the stream bed of waterways not known to be navigable. Lands within river study areas will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation including mineral leasing for a three year period. This withdrawal category applies to the lower Kateel River, a segment of the South Fork Huslia River, and the Rodo River. During this withdrawal period, subsistence studies will be conducted by Bureau personnel in cooperation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game or by a Bureau contract, funding permitting in either case. On completion of the studies, recommendations will be made concerning retention, modification or repeal of the withdrawal.

b. Subsistence Study Areas/Retention Lands - There are three tracts of land in this category. One tract is located approximately 13 miles south-southwest of Galena and the other two are located 18 and 25 miles respectively northeast of Galena. Lands in this category will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation for a three-year period. The study and withdrawal review requirements of this category are the same as those for the River Study Areas category previously listed.

c. Withdrawal/Exchange Lands - These are lands located within the ANCSA original village withdrawal boundaries which were not selected. Lands in this category are located in the vicinity of Allakaket/Alatna, Hughes, Nulato and Kaltag.

A subsistence study will be completed on lands identified for possible exchange during the five-year withdrawal period. The findings of these studies will then be considered when the withdrawals are reviewed after the five-year exchange period. The BLM will continue to exchange and coordinate the collection of subsistence data with the Subsistence Division of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Based on identified subsistence usage, designated portions of the following streams will have 300-foot wide (each side) "no surface occupancy" setback zones. These zones will extend from the center line of the river or stream. The affected river areas are the Tagagaruk River (Nulato subunit), the Ray River, and three short tributaries of Squaw Creek (Tozitna Unit). Lands within these zones will be closed to FLPMA sales or leases, and surface occupancy in conjunction with mineral leasing activities. The zones will be open to mineral location (no presently known potential).

The Kaltag and Nulato River watersheds have been closed to mineral entry and location under the 1872 Mining Law since village residents use these watersheds as their principle source of potable water.

REALTY ACTIONS

Settlement

The existing Minchumina settlement area will continue to be open to operation of the Alaska Settlement laws. This is the only BLM land within the Central Yukon Planning Area where settlement is allowed (homesites, headquarters sites, and trade and manufacturing sites). After the Alaska Settlement laws expire on October 21, 1986, this area will remain open to FLPMA lease and sale proposals.

FLPMA Leases and Sales

All other lands within the planning area will be open to FLPMA leases and sales except lands within:

1. The Tagagawik/Buckland watershed,
2. Purcell Mountains SMU (Hughes subunit),
3. Eight Research Natural Areas,
4. Identified 300-foot "no surface occupancy" setback zones,
5. Subsistence study areas,
6. Withdrawn crucial wildlife habitat,
7. Lands within the Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River Corridor,
8. Lands withdrawn for possible exchange.

Leases on undeveloped hot springs will not be issued within the Central Yukon Planning Area. Renewal or reassignment of existing leases would be allowed. Public shelter cabins could be constructed in the vicinity of hot springs which are not presently developed.

Exchange

Lands within the original ANCSA village withdrawal boundary which were not selected by village or regional corporations will be made available for exchange. These lands are located in the vicinity of Kaltag, Nulato, Allakaket/Alatna and Hughes. The existing withdrawal or its equivalent will be retained for five years. Exchange negotiations for these lands could be conducted with the State of Alaska, the village/regional corporations and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Three tracts have been identified as sensitive to management of adjacent lands in the Koyukuk and Kanuti National Wildlife Refuges. Under this plan, these tracts are to remain withdrawn (as they presently are) and be classified as available for exchange. Through withdrawal, these lands will be maintained in an unencumbered state, thus simplifying future exchanges. The Bureau would consider offered lands which:

1. consolidate BLM administered lands,
2. contain identified mineral values, or
3. contain other resource values comparable to those transferred through exchange.

If there is no interest in exchange during the five-year withdrawal period, these tracts will be managed for multiple use under plan prescriptions that are in place on contiguous BLM-administered lands. Note: These lands are not available for consolidating inholdings, ANILCA boundary adjustments, or for parks or wildlife refuges.

The single township in the Yanert drainage (Nenana subunit) will not be available for exchange. This township is adjacent to a large tract of BLM-administered land in the Anchorage District.

Access

Access to or across public lands will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Under this RMP, the use of vehicles of greater than 1,500 pounds GVW will be allowed by authorization only. Vehicle use may be authorized under a mining plan of operations (43 CFR 3809), with a permit (43 CFR 2800 or 43 CFR 2920), or by other appropriate means. Approval would be subject to conditions which minimize the impact to other land uses and/or prevent unnecessary damage to the environment.

Normally, use of vehicles of greater than 1,500 pounds GVW will be limited to winter months with adequate snow cover and would be limited to exisiting trails where practical. Under certain circumstances the Authorized Officer

may authorize summer moves. These circumstances include but may not be limited to the following when:

1. A winter move would be impractical.
2. A summer move would not result in undue or unnecessary impacts.
3. An existing trail would be used, and the proposed use would not damage the trail to the extent that it becomes unusable by other users (recreation vehicles).
4. Specialized equipment such as low-ground-pressure vehicles would be used which would minimize impacts.

Management of 17(b) easements will be in accordance with current management policy. Any proposed access into or through the Unalakleet Wild River Corridor as identified in the approved river management plan is subject to Title XI of ANILCA. R.S. 2477 right-of-way assertions will be processed in accordance with the existing Memorandum Of Understanding. Based on future needs, a transportation plan may be prepared for all or part of the lands within the Central Yukon Planning Area.

CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Management of these resources with other land use proposals would avoid or mitigate impacts, where possible and warranted. Consumptive uses of archaeological and historical sites would be allowed for scientific use and interpretation.

FORESTRY RESOURCES

All forest lands within this planning area are open to subsistence and commercial timber harvest except crucial wildlife habitat and the eight RNAs. Timber may be harvested on subsistence study/exchange withdrawals under a subsistence or personal use type permit. No commercial sales will be permitted on these withdrawals. Data on forest lands will be accumulated and maintained until identified needs require a more intensive forest inventory.

RECREATION RESOURCES

The Central Yukon Planning Area has some outstanding dispersed recreational potential. Many of the values found in the area are related to the remote and isolated characteristics that have sheltered the area from the pressures of intensive public use. The most important values are opportunities for hunting, fishing and associated activities in primitive settings.

The primary objective for management of recreation resources will be to allow opportunities that presently exist, and support or encourage opportunities for improving access. This will require continued close coordination with other programs to assure that recreational opportunities are expanded, not limited, by on-going proposals.

Iditarod Trail and Unalakleet Wild River - These two areas are presently covered by activity management plans administered by the McGrath Resource Area (Anchorage District - BLM). Use authorizations are coordinated with the Northwest Resource Area (Fairbanks District - BLM).

Hot Springs - All undeveloped hot springs will be studied for their suitability for remote public-use cabins with winter access trails.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Areas of outstanding scenic value in the Ray Mountains would be managed where possible to retain the existing character of the landscape. Other areas would be managed to lessen impacts from other activities. Potential impacts would be evaluated, and mitigative measures implemented on a case-by-case basis through the environmental analysis process.

The viewshed of the Unalakleet National Wild River, outside the designated corridor, would be managed with an awareness of the important scenic values associated with the river.

RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

The eight Research Natural Areas would be proposed for inclusion into the Ecological Reserve System. These RNAs would be closed to FLPMA leases and sales, mineral entry and mineral leasing. There would be no restriction on hunting and fishing by the public or subsistence activities within the RNAs. Access through RNAs for vehicles over 1,500 pounds GVW would be allowed by permit. An approved plan of operations would be required for any surface-disturbing activity on existing mining claims within RNAs.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

The ACECs designated under this plan are described under the sections of Wildlife Resources--Terrestrial, Aquatic, and Threatened and Endangered. All ACECs will require that surface-disturbing activities associated with mineral exploration and development be conducted under an approved plan of

operations. Casual uses as defined under 43 CFR 3809 are exempt from this requirement. Additional requirements will be identified in the appropriate ACEC management plans. ACEC management plans are subject to public review before they are finalized.

SOIL, WATER AND AIR

These programs within this planning unit consist primarily of coordination and cooperation with other agencies. Under this RMP, the Northwest Resource Area will continue to:

1. Cooperate with state and other federal agencies in obtaining water quality and quantity inventory data.
2. Cooperate with state and other agencies in monitoring air quality to verify compliance with lease or pemit requirements.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Central Yukon Planning Area is included under all or part of three approved Interagency Fire Management Plans. Actions dealing with implementation and modification of approved fire plans will be implemented in accordance with guidelines contained in the plans. Plan review and monitoring evaluations are conducted on an annual basis. Modifications of existing protection boundary lines will be coordinated with affected land owner(s) and Alaska Fire Service.

Table 1-1
Resource Management Plan Acreages

Withdrawals	
Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River Corridor	
Nulato	28,249 acres
Total	28,249 acres
Research Natural Areas by Planning Subunit	
Nulato	11,200 acres
Tozitna	15,890 acres
Kuskokwim	14,600 acres
Hughes	1,320 acres
TOTAL	43,010 acres
Lands Identified for Exchange by Planning Subunit	
Nulato	148,000 acres
Tozitna	100,247 acres
Hughes	211,840 acres
TOTAL (5-year withdrawal)	461,047 acres
Anadromous Fish Spawning Habitat by Planning Subunit	
Nulato	10,560 acres (1)
Hughes	2,325 acres (1)
Tozitna	2,891 acres
TOTAL	15,776 acres
Subsistence Study Area Deferrals by Planning Subunit	
Nulato (River)	5,056 acres (1)
Dulbi/Kaiyuh Mountain	174,144 acres
TOTAL (3-year withdrawal)	179,200 acres
Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat by Planning Subunit	
Dulbi Kaiyuh Mountain	10,240 acres
Kuskokwim	10,240 acres
TOTAL	20,480 acres
Potable Water Sources by Planning Subunit	
Nulato	460,000 acres (2)
TOTAL OF LAND WITHDRAWALS	1,207,762 acres

(1) Withdrawal pertains to FLPMA sales/leases and locatable minerals only.

(2) Withdrawal pertains to locatable minerals only.

NOTE: Acreages are an average of three planimeter measurements made on 1:250,000 scale maps.
There are 9,474,784 acres of BLM-administered lands within the Central Yukon Planning Area.

Table 1-2

Resource Management Plan Watershed Acreages
for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

Watershed Acreages as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

Nulato Subunit	1,568,189 acres total	
Inglutalik River	78,098 acres	
North River	88,932 acres	
Shaktoolik River	188,151 acres	
Kateel River	551,297 acres	
Gisasa River	272,656 acres	
Ungalik River	111,306 acres	
Unalakleet River	241,269 acres	
Threatened and Endangered	36,480 acres	(1)
Dulbi/Kaiyuh Mt. Subunit	79,840 acres total	
Galena Mountain (Caribou)	24,800 acres	
Dulbi River Threatened and Endangered	55,040 acres	
Kuskokwim Subunit	10,240 acres total	
Sulukna River	10,240 acres	
Tozitna Subunit	919,202 acres total	
Tozitna North (Caribou)	127,344 acres	
Tozitna South (Caribou)	5,134 acres	
Tozitna River	786,724 acres	
Hughes Subunit	190,390 acres total	
Clear, Caribou, Bear Creeks	35,000 acres	
Indian River	155,390 acres	
Total ACEC acreage for plan	2,767,861 acres	

(1) This acreage is also included under "Land Identified for Exchange" in Table 1-1.

Table 1-3

Deferred Areas Within the Seward 1008 Study Considered Under This RMP

Unit	Considered Under	Acres Presently Closed to Mineral Location	Acreage to be Opened to Mineral Leasing	Acreage that Will be Open to Mineral Location
Buckland Basin	Nulato Hills	N/A	1,275,808	N/A
Purcell Mountains	Hughes	28,894	73,865	73,865
	TOTAL		1,299,673	73,865

Note: There are 9,474,784 acres of BLM-administered lands within the Central Yukon Planning Area.

Nulato Hills Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

1

see next page

Resource Management Plan

NULATO HILLS SUBUNIT

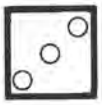
AREAS OPEN TO MINERALS

Open to Mineral Location
Multiple Use Management Prescription # 8...Page 48

Open to Mineral Leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #14...Page 56

AREAS CONDITIONALLY OPEN TO MINERALS

Crucial wildlife habitat (anadromous spawning areas)
Closed to mineral location
Open to leasing with no surface occupancy
Multiple Use Management Prescription # 3...Page 39



River corridors 300'(each side) deferred for 3 year subsistence studies
Closed to mineral location
Open to mineral leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #6...Page 43

Kaltag/Nulato Watershed
Closed to mineral location
Open to Mineral Leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #1... Page 37

AREAS TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO MINERALS

Areas deferred for 3 year subsistence studies
Multiple Use Management Prescription #5...Page 42

Land offered for exchange deferred for 5 years
Multiple Use Management Prescription #7...Page 47
Multiple Use Management Prescription #13...Page 55

AREAS CLOSED TO MINERALS

Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
Multiple Use Management Prescription #4...Page 40

159°

68°

SOUTH FORK HUSLIA RIVER

KATEEL RIVER

GISASA RIVER

65°

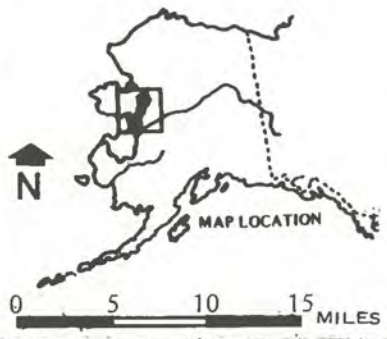
NULATO RIVER

NORTH FORK UNALAKLEET RIVER

RODO RIVER

Unalakleet National Wild River Corridor Boundary
(Withdrawn from Mineral Location, Mineral Leasing, FLPMA Sales & Leases)

NULATO HILLS SUBUNIT



0 5 10 15 MILES

Nulato Hills Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

2

see next page

Resource Management Plan

NULATO HILLS SUBUNIT

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Aquatic (Watershed Boundary) ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription #9...Page 51

Threatened & Endangered Species Habitat ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription #11...Page 54

Management Constraints

300' (each side) No occupancy set back zone (subsistence resource protection)
Multiple Use Management Prescription #3...Page 39
Multiple Use Management Prescription #6...Page 43

Closed to FLPMA sales & leases (Wildlife, subsistence)
Multiple Use Management Prescription #12...Page 55

159°

66°

TAGAGAWIK RIVER

TAGAGAWIK/BUCKLAND RIVER WATERSHEDS

KATEEL RIVER

GLUTALIK RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

KATEEL RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

GISASA RIVER

GISASA RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

UNGALIK RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

KATEEL RIVER

NULATO RIVER

SHAKTOOLIK RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

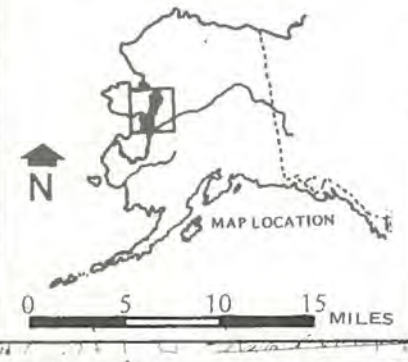
NORTH RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

NORTH FORK UNALAKLEET RIVER

Unalakleet National Wild River Corridor Boundary
Withdrawn from Mineral Location, Mineral Leasing, FLPMA Sales & Leases)

UNALAKLEET RIVER WATERSHED ACEC

NULATO HILLS SUBUNIT



Dulbi-Kaiyuh Mts. Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

1

see next page

Resource Management Plan

DULBI–KAIYUH MTS. SUBUNIT

AREAS OPEN TO MINERALS

Open to Mineral Location
Multiple Use Management Prescription #8...Page 48

Open to Mineral Leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #14...Page 56

AREAS CONDITIONALLY OPEN TO MINERALS

Crucial wildlife habitat (Threatened & Endangered Species)
Closed to mineral location
Open to mineral leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #2...Page 38

AREAS TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO MINERALS

Areas deferred for 3 year subsistence studies
Multiple Use Management Prescription #5...Page 42

DULBI-KAIYUH MT. SUBUNIT

Dulbi-Kaiyuh Mts. Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

2

see next page

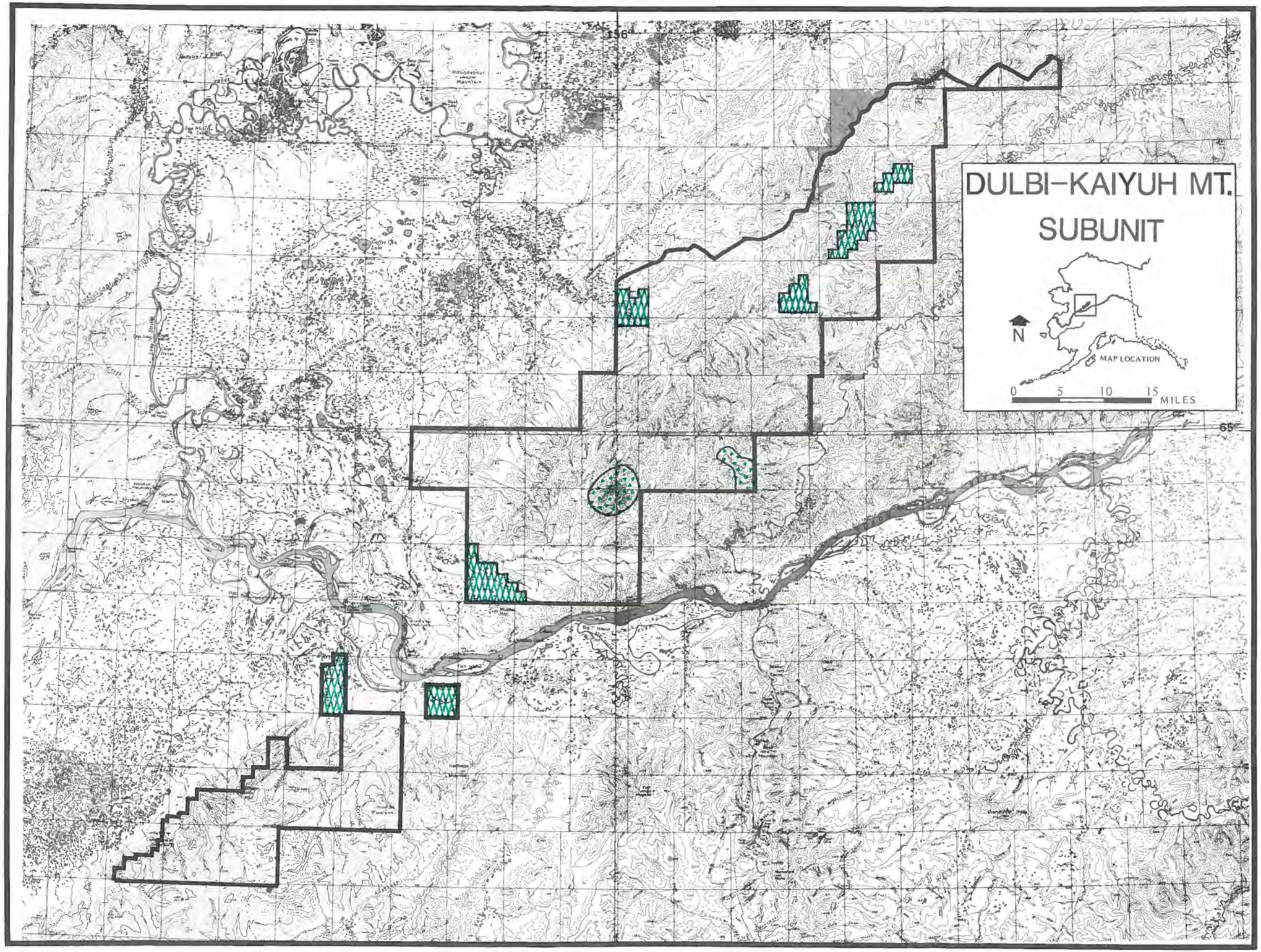
Resource Management Plan

DULBI–KAIYUH MTS. SUBUNIT

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Threatened & Endangered Species Habitat ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription #11...Page 54

Terrestrial Species Habitat ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription #10...Page 53


DULBI-KAIYUH MT.
SUBUNIT
N
MAP LOCATION
0 5 10 15 MILES
156°
65°

Kuskokwim Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

1

see next page

Resource Management Plan

KUSKOKWIM SUBUNIT

AREAS OPEN TO MINERALS

Open to Mineral Location
Multiple Use Management Prescription #8...Page 48

Open to Mineral Leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #14...Page 56

AREAS CONDITIONALLY OPEN TO MINERALS

Crucial wildlife habitat (Threatened & Endangered Species)
Closed to mineral location
Open to mineral leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #2...Page 38

AREAS CLOSED TO MINERALS

Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
Multiple Use Management Prescription #4...Page 40

153°

65°

64°

KUSKOKWIM SUBUNIT

Kuskokwim Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

2

see next page

Resource Management Plan

KUSKOKWIM SUBUNIT

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Aquatic (Watershed Boundary) ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription #9...Page 51

Management Constraints

Minchumina settlement area
Text Page 9

153°

65°

KUSKOKWIM SUBUNIT

N

MAP LOCATION

0 5 10 15 MILES

64°

SULUKNA RIVER
WATERSHED ACEC

Tozitna Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

1

see next page

Resource Management Plan

TOZITNA SUBUNIT

AREAS OPEN TO MINERALS

Open to Mineral Location
Multiple Use Management Prescription # 8...Page 48

Open to Mineral Leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #14...Page 56

AREAS CONDITIONALLY OPEN TO MINERALS

Crucial wildlife habitat (anadromous spawning areas)
Closed to mineral location
Open to leasing with no surface occupancy
Multiple Use Management Prescription #3...Page 39

AREAS TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO MINERALS

Land offered for exchange deferred for 5 years
Multiple Use Management Prescription #13...Page 55

AREAS CLOSED TO MINERALS

Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
Multiple Use Management Prescription #4...Page 40

TOZITNA SUBUNIT

0 5 10 15 MILES

153°

150°

66°

TOZITNA RIVER

Tozitna Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

2

see next page

Resource Management Plan

TOZITNA SUBUNIT

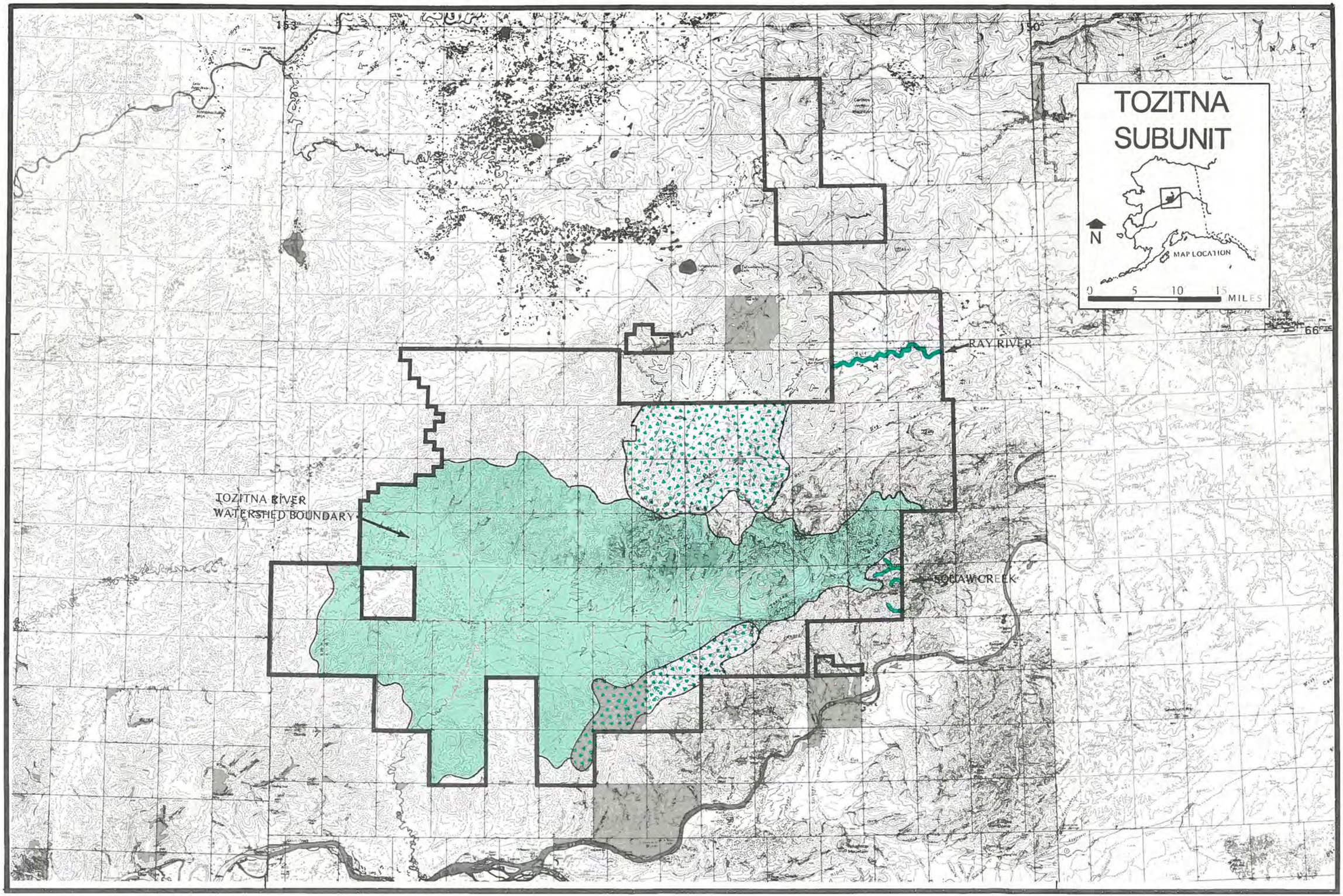
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Aquatic (Watershed Boundary) ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription # 9...Page 51

Terrestrial Species Habitat ACEC
Multiple Use Management Prescription #10...Page 53

Management Constraints

300' (each side) No occupancy set back zone (subsistence resource protection)
Multiple Use Management Prescription # 3...Page 39
Multiple Use Management Prescription # 6...Page 43
Text Page 8,9


TOZITNA
SUBUNIT
N
MAP LOCATION
0 5 10 15 MILES
RAY RIVER
TOZITNA RIVER
WATERSHED BOUNDARY
TOZITNA CREEK

Hughes Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

1

see next page

Resource Management Plan

HUGHES SUBUNIT

AREAS OPEN TO MINERALS

Open to Mineral Location
Multiple Use Management Prescription #8...Page 48

Open to Mineral Leasing
Multiple Use Management Prescription #14...Page 56

AREAS CONDITIONALLY OPEN TO MINERALS

Crucial wildlife habitat (anadromous spawning areas)
Closed to mineral location
Open to leasing with no surface occupancy
Multiple Use Management Prescription #3...Page 39

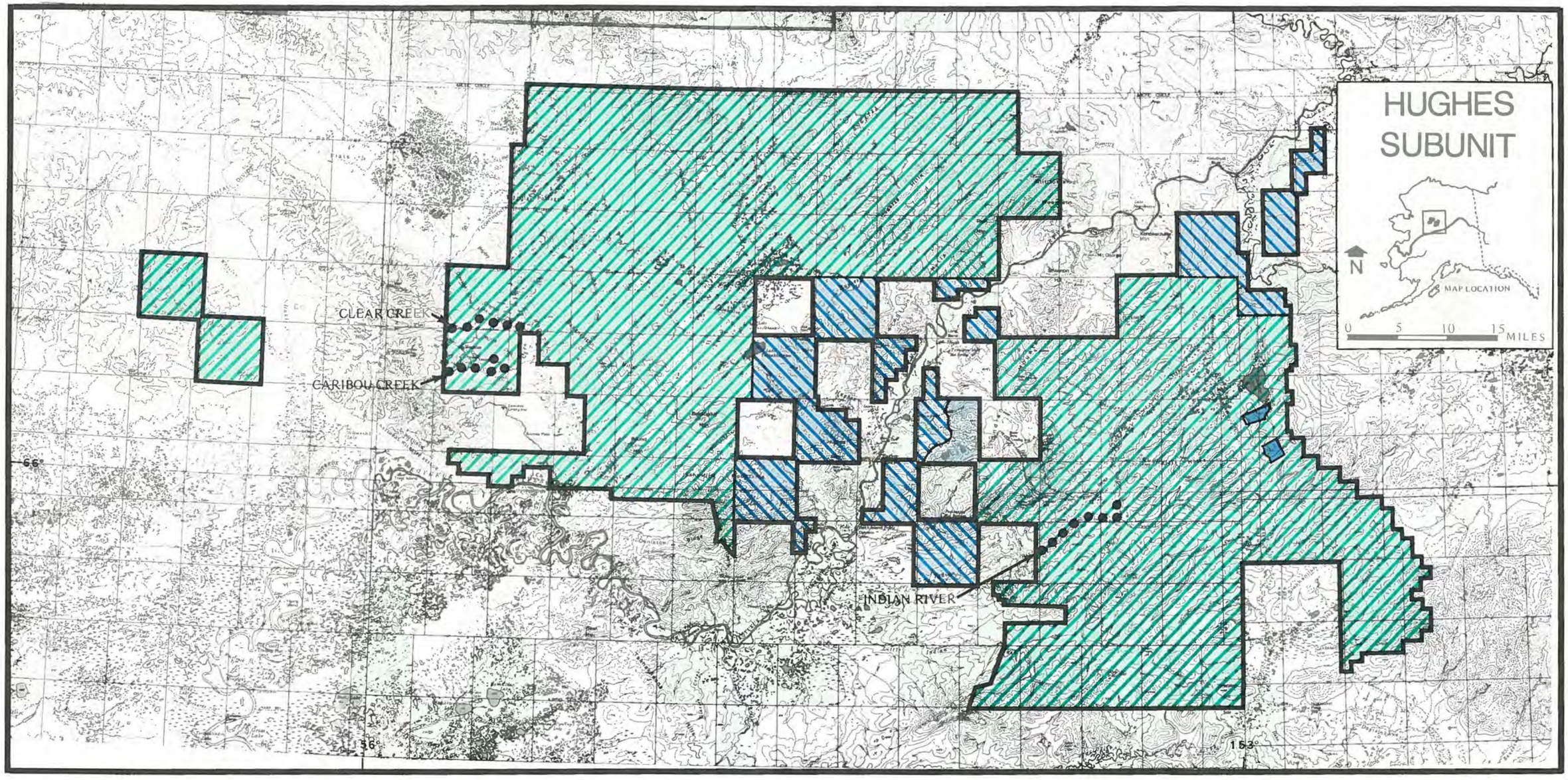
AREAS TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO MINERALS

Areas deferred for 3 year subsistence studies
Multiple Use Management Prescription #5...Page 42

Land offered for exchange deferred for 5 years
Multiple Use Management Prescription #7...Page 47

AREAS CLOSED TO MINERALS

Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
Multiple Use Management Prescription #4...Page 40


HUGHES
SUBUNIT
N
MAP LOCATION
0 5 10 15 MILES
CLEAR CREEK
CARIBOU CREEK
INDIAN RIVER
66°
156°
153°

Hughes Subunit

Resource Management Plan Map

2

see next page

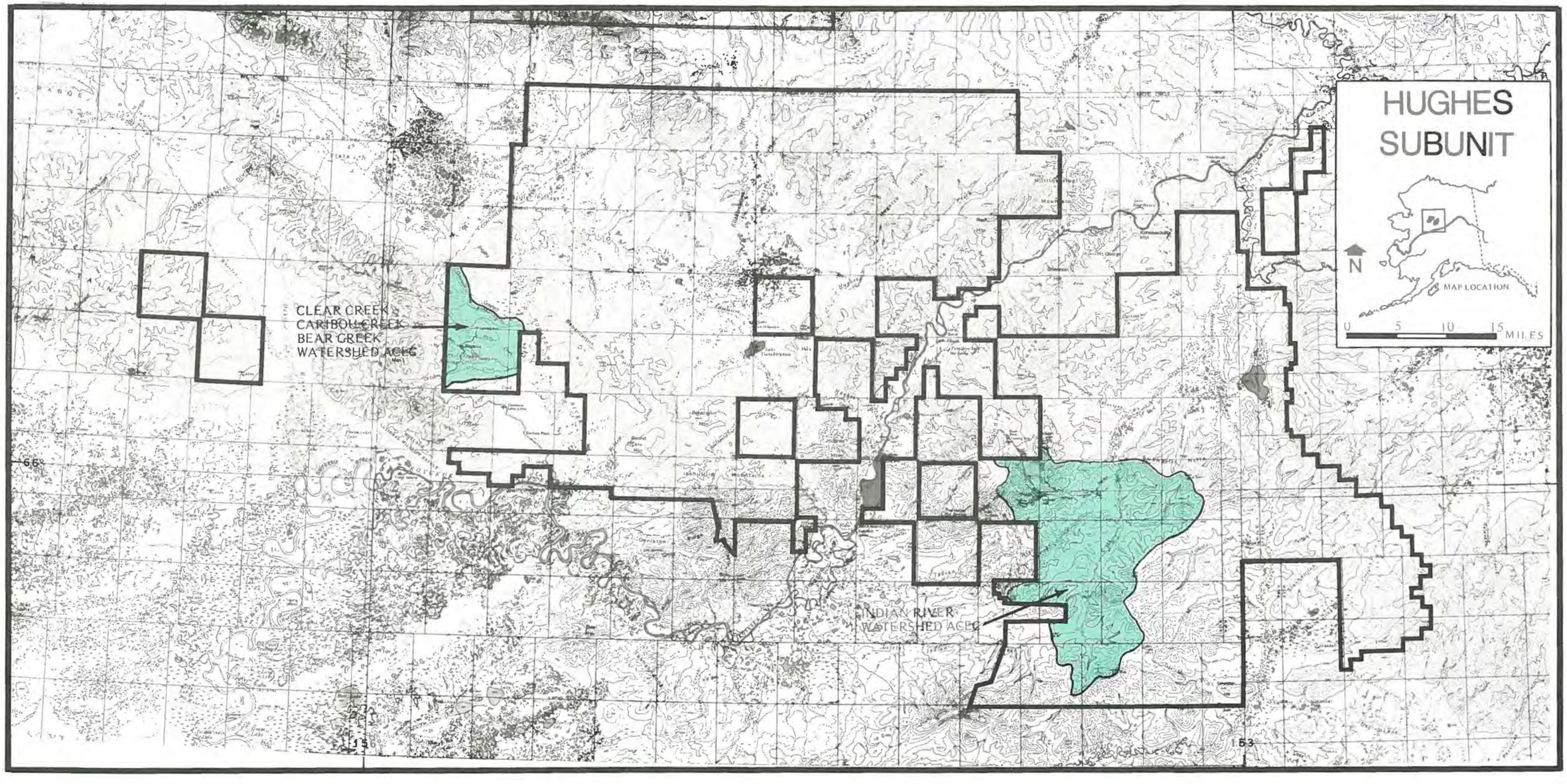
Resource Management Plan

HUGHES SUBUNIT

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Aquatic (Watershed Boundary) ACEC

Multiple Use Management Prescription #9...Page 51


HUGHES
SUBUNIT
N
MAP LOCATION
0 5 10 15 MILES
CLEAR CREEK
CARIBOU CREEK
BEAR CREEK
WATERSHED ACEC
INDIAN RIVER
WATERSHED ACEC
156
153

Section 2

MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

The following multiple-use management prescriptions were assembled by resource specialists assigned to the Central Yukon Planning Team. Prescriptions define procedures necessary to implement the general management decisions described under Section 1. All implementation costs are estimates.

Subsistence Watershed

1. Prescription: Maintain the existing water quality of the Kaltag and Nulato watersheds through closure of all public lands within these watersheds to operation of the 1872 Mining Law. There are approximately 460,000 acres of public land included in this prescription.

Support

A. Rationale: These two watersheds provide the principal sources of potable water for the villages of Nulato and Kaltag. Surface disturbing activities normally associated with minerals exploration and development (placer and lode deposits) have historically resulted in lower water quality during periods of operation. Because any increases in suspended solids/turbidity is unacceptable, these watersheds are closed to mineral entry and location. Mineral exploration and oil and gas surface geology studies will be authorized by permit.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal description for all public lands within the Kaltag/Nulato watershed boundaries.
2. Identify and draft legal descriptions for the boundaries and locations of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation Public Land Order (PLO).
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.

5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

C. Costs

1. Personnel Costs - $13,000 (3 workmonths and transportation)
2. Publication Costs - unknown

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through on-the-ground examination of authorized uses.
2. Monitor mineral leasing and other permitted watershed uses.

Wildlife (Threatened and Endangered)

2. Prescription: Protect, through withdrawal, 20,480 acres of crucial peregrine falcon habitat from mineral entry under the 1872 Mining Law.

Support Lands

Minerals

A. Rationale: Crucial peregrine falcon nesting habitat exists within the Kuskokwim and Dulbi-Kaiyuh Mountains subunits. A complete mineral withdrawal is necessary in order to minimize impacts to this endangered species. There are presently no adequate safeguards which would permit modification of impacts to falcon habitat for lands appropriated under the 1872 Mining Law.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal descriptions for identified crucial peregrine falcon habitat areas.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

C. Costs

1. Personnel Costs - ($11,000 estimated 2 workmonths and $4,000 for transportation)
2. Publication Costs - unknown

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through review of permitted discretionary actions.
2. Track implementation and program status through monitoring of falcon aerie sites. Monitoring programs are coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Wildlife (Aquatic)

3. Prescription: Maintain, through withdrawal, the existing quality of 15,776 acres of selected crucial salmon spawning habitat from mineral entry and location under the 1872 Mining Law and FLPMA sales and leases. This closure will extend 300 feet back on either side of the stream's mean high-water line. The bed of non-navigable waterways will also be included in the withdrawal area.

Support
Soil/Water/Air
Lands

A. Rationale: Selected high-quality salmon spawning beds have been identified on Bear, Caribou and Clear Creeks, and the Tozitna, Indian, Kateel, Gisasa and North Fork Unalakleet Rivers. These closures are necessary to protect, to the maximum extent possible, the highest quality salmon spawning area known in this planning area from actual physical disturbance. These streams have value for production of fish for subsistence, sport and commercial uses. Potential adverse impacts to fishery resources from placer mining, and to a lesser extent lode mining, in or adjacent to spawning areas have been documented.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal descriptions for selected high quality salmon spawning beds as identified in the plan.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

C. Costs

1. Personnel Costs - ($22,000 estimated 4 workmonths and $8,000 for transportation per year)
2. Publication Costs - unknown

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through 3809 permitting process.
2. Monitor, and where necessary mitigate, impacts of 3809-permitting on the ground.
3. Continue monitoring/inventorying of anadromous fish habitat and population to provide input into the NEPA/permitting process. (The above personnel costs are to cover monitoring and permit review only.)
   Monitoring of anadromous fish habitat is coordinated with the Sport and Commercial Fish Divisions of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Cultural Resources (Research Natural Areas)

4. Prescription: Maintain the relatively undisturbed resource values on 43,010 acres of land, by withdrawal from all forms of appropriation including mineral location under the 1872 Mining Law, and mineral leasing under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented. Eight areas have been identified in this plan for designation as Research Natural Areas (RNAs).

Support
Lands
Wildlife
Soil/Water/Air
Forestry

A. Rationale: Closure to all appropriation is necessary to protect natural scientific features which would be adversely impacted by uses permitted under the mineral laws or leases granted in accordance with FLPMA. Designated RNAs within this planning area are Box River Treeline, Redlands Lake, Arms Lake, Ishtalitna Creek Hot Springs, McQuesten Creek, Spooky Valley, Lake Todatonten Pingos and South Todatonten Summit.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal descriptions for all RNA boundaries as identified in Appendix H of the Draft PRMP/EIS.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by section 202(e) of FLPMA.
6. Prepare RNA management plans to include a complete list of resource values and acceptable research usage.

C. Costs

1. Personnel Costs - ($1,700 estimated 0.5 workmonths for each RNA)
2. Publication Costs - unknown

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will be made on proposals received from university/research organizations which submit research proposals for use in various RNAs.

Subsistence

5. Prescription: Provide for subsistence studies on 174,144 acres of public land near Galena by withdrawing these areas from mineral entry under the 1872 Mining Law, mineral leasing under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented, and FLPMA sales and leases.

Support
Lands
Minerals
Wildlife-(Terrestrial
-Aquatic)

A. Rationale: This closure allows for studies and inventories to evaluate the importance of these lands near villages for subsistence uses and needs. (Note: At the end of three years, management decisions would be made for these areas based on new or existing information.) Decisions to be made would include 1) leaving all portions of the areas closed, or 2) opening all or portions of these areas to mineral entry and/or mineral leasing.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal descriptions of all subsistence study areas.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.
6. Within one year after publication of the PLO, develop a study/inventory design for obtaining information on the possible effects and importance of the withdrawal areas for subsistence uses and needs. This may include, for example, cooperative research work with the State of Alaska, contract work, and/or work performed by BLM's resource specialists.
7. Within two years after publication of the PLO, complete the subsistence study and within six months following its completion, have a copy of the results available for BLM management review/decision.

8. Within three years after publication of the PLO, issue a management decision on those lands, if any, within the subsistence study areas which would be open. This decision would be included in an amendment to the Record of Decision for this PRMP/FEIS and would contain appropriate Section 810(a) compliance.

C. Costs

1. Personnel/study Costs - Not exceeding $30,000 (This is the not to exceed total cost for prescriptions 5, 6 and 7).
2. Publication Costs - unknown
3. Publication Costs of Amendment to ROD: $1,000 estimated

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through steps B-6, 7 and 8 above.
2. Coordinate with representatives of villages near the area to get feedback on impacts to subsistence uses (if any) which may result if lands within subsistence study areas are opened after three years. All studies will be coordinated with the Subsistence Division of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Subsistence

6. Prescription: Provide for subsistence studies on 5,056 acres of riverine areas by withdrawing from mineral entry and location under the 1872 Mining Law and FLPMA sales and leases. This closure will extend 300 feet back from both sides of the stream mean high-water lines. The bed of non-navigable waterways will also be included in the withdrawal area. Designated portions of the South Fork Huslia River, the lower end of Kateel River and the Rodo River are included in this withdrawal. All mineral leasing activities within the withdrawal boundary will be subject to a "no surface occupancy" setback zone .

Support
Lands
Minerals
Wildlife-(Terrestrial
-Aquatic)

A. Rationale: This withdrawal will allow for studies and inventories designed to better understand the anadromous fish spawning value of these rivers, which support subsistence fishing locally or elsewhere. Studies will also contribute to a better understanding of any other subsistence-related resource values important to these areas.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal descriptions of all subsistence studies areas.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.
6. Within one year after publication of the PLO, develop a study/inventory design for obtaining information on the possible effects and importance of the withdrawal areas for subsistence uses and needs. This may include, for example, cooperative research work with the State of Alaska, contract work, and/or work performed by BLM's resource specialists.
7. Within two years after publication of the PLO, complete the subsistence study, and within six months following its completion have a copy of the results available for BLM management review/decision.
8. Within three years after publication of the PLO, issue a management decision on which lands, if any, within the subsistence study areas would be open. This decision would be included in an amendment to the Record of Decision for this PRMP/FEIS and would contain appropriate Section 810(a) compliance.

C. Costs

See prescription 5 for total study costs.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through steps B-6, 7 and 8 above.
2. Coordinate with representatives of villages near the area to get feedback on impacts to subsistence uses (if any) which may result if lands within subsistence study areas are opened after three years. All studies will be coordinated with the Subsistence Division of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Lands
Subsistence

7. Prescription: Withdraw for five years lands to be considered for exchange. Maintain the present unencumbered status of 461,047 acres of vacant and otherwise unappropriated public lands by withdrawing these lands from all forms of appropriation including mineral entry and location under the 1872 Mining Law, mineral leasing under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, and FLPMA Leases and Sales. These lands are located within the expired 25 township village withdrawal boundaries for Kaltag, Nulato, Hughes, Allakaket/Alatna.

Support Lands
Minerals
Wildlife-(Terrestial
-Aquatic)

A. Rationale: The checkerboard land ownership pattern created under the selection provisions of ANCSA complicates land management. In an attempt to simplify future management of federal and private lands, an exchange program should be established to consolidate holdings. A three-year subsistence resource study will be conducted on these lands to evaluate their importance and identify future concerns that might apply after the five-year withdrawal expires.

Lands

B(1). Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal descriptions of lands identified by this prescription.

2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO. Lands identified are to be classified as available for exchange within the PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.
6. Evaluate exchange proposals under existing manual requirements. The key purpose of this classification is to consolidate Bureau of Land Management and private holdings.
7. Re-evaluate and modify the Implementation PLO after five years for those lands where no expressed interest in exchange has been identified.

C(1). Costs

1. Personnel Costs - Dependent on number and type of exchange proposals received.
2. Publication Costs - Unknown

D(1). Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Initiate proposals if none are received.
2. Revoke classification if no interest is shown in exchanges.
3. Monitor costs of exchanges.

Subsistence

B(2). Implementation Action

1. Draft legal descriptions of all subsistence studies areas.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

6. Within one year after publication of the PLO or sooner, develop a study/inventory design for obtaining information on the possible effects and importance of the withdrawal areas for subsistence uses and needs. This may include, for example, cooperative research work with the State of Alaska, contract work, and/or work performed by BLM's resource specialists.
7. Within two years after publication of the PLO or sooner, complete the subsistence study, and within six months following its completion have a copy of the results available for BLM management review/decision.
8. Within three years after publication of the PLO or sooner, issue a management decision on which lands, if any, within the subsistence study areas would be open to mineral location, mineral leasing or FLPMA sales and leases. This decision would be included in an amendment to the Record of Decision for this PRMP/FEIS and would contain appropriate Section 810(a) compliance.

C(2). Costs

See prescription 5 for total study costs.

D(2). Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through steps B(2) 6, 7 and 8 above.
2. Coordinate with representatives of villages near the area to get feedback on impacts to subsistence uses (if any) which may result if levels within subsistence study areas are opened after these years. All studies will be coordinated with the Subsistence Division of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Minerals
Locatable

8. Prescription: Open approximately 8,267,022 acres of land within the Central Yukon and 73,865 acres within the Purcell Mountains SMU (as generally described in the following) to the operation of the 1872 Mining Law as amended and supplemented.

Support
Lands
Wildlife
Cultural Resources
Subsistence

A. Rationale: The Secretary of the Interior has responsibility and authority to manage federal lands under the following laws, statutes and regulations:

-1872 Mining Law as amended
-Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Sections 304(a), 310, 314(a), and 314(b)
-Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 3800

The Bureau of Land Management Minerals Policy of 1984 further states that except for Congressional withdrawals, public lands shall remain open and available for mineral exploration and development unless withdrawal or other administrative action is clearly justified in the national interest. The Bureau will actively encourage and facilitate the development, by private industry, of public land mineral resources to satisfy national and local needs and to provide for economically and environmentally sound exploration, extraction and reclamation practices.

Land descriptions:

All lands in the Nulato Hills subunit are open to the full operation of the 1872 Mining Law except:

1. The Box River Treeline Research Natural Area
2. The streambed and 300 feet either side of the streambed of portions of the following salmon spawning streams:
   - Kateel River
   - North Fork Unalakeet River
   - South Fork Huslia River
   - Gisasa River
   - Rodo River

3. The following drainage watersheds are closed to protect potable water sources:
   Nulato River
   Kaltag River
4. T 3 N and T 4 N., R 5 E, KRM are closed for five years and classified for possible exchange with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
5. Those lands within the original Kaltag/Nulato village withdrawal boundaries are closed for five years and classified for possible exchange.

All lands in the Dulbi-Kaiyah Mountains subunit are open to the full operation of the 1872 Mining Law except:

1. Bear Creek drainage basin is closed to protect crucial wildlife habitat in part, and in part is deferred for three years to allow completion of a subsistence study determination.
2. Kala Creek and Branch Creek drainage basins are deferred for opening for three years pending completion of a subsistence determination.
3. All sections within two miles of identified peregrine nesting sites.
4. Deferred opening for three years pending the completion of a subsistence determination on: T 6 S, R 13 E and R 14 E, KRM; T 5 S, R 14 E, KRM.

All lands in the Hughes subunit including the Seward 1008 Purcell Mountains SMU are open to the full operation of the 1872 Mining Laws except:

1. The streambed and 300 feet either side of streambed on the following streams to protect anadromous fish spawning habitat:
   Clear Creek
   Caribou Creek
   Bear Creek
   Indian River, a portion of
2. Research Natural Areas:
   Lake Todatonten Pingos
   South Todatonten Summit

3. Opening deferred for five years pending possible exchange and completion of subsistence studies:
   T 6 N, R 21 W, R 23 W, KRM
   T 7 N, R 20 W, R 22 W, KRM
   T 8 N, R 21 W, R 23 W, KRM
   T 9 N, R 20 W, R 22 W, KRM
   T 10 N, R 21 W, R 23 W, KRM
   T 11 N, R 28 W, KRM
   T 17 N, R 25 W, FM
   T 18 N, R 25 W, FM

All lands in the Tozitna subunit are open to the full operation of the Mining Law except:

1. Research Natural Areas:
   Spooky Valley
   Ishalitna Creek Hot Springs
   McQuesten Creek
2. Anadromous fish spawning streambed and 300 ft either side of the streambed for a portion of the Tozitna River.
3. Areas identified for possible exchange adjacent to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuges:
   T 14 N, R 19 W, FM
   T 16 N, R 15 W, R 16 W, FM
   T 17 N, R 16 W, FM
   T 18 N, R 16 W, FM

All lands in the Kuskokwim Subunit are open to the full operation of the 1872 Mining Law except:

1. Research Natural Areas:
   Redlands Lake
   Arms Lake

2. All sections within two miles of identified peregrine falcon nest sites.

B. Implementation Actions

   1. Draft complete legal description of lands identified by the prescription.
   2. Incorporate legal descriptions developed by other activities under other prescriptions into the overall description.

3. This legal description will serve as the basis for preparation of the Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

C. Costs

1. Personnel Costs - $3,500 (workmonth/aircraft)
2. Publication Costs - Unknown

Past activity levels indicate a minimal cost of implementation. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern require the submission of a plan of operations regardless of the level of surface disturbance on mining claims. In the past five years, the only surface disturbance due to mining has occurred on patented mining claims in the Hogatza River.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Track implementation through MBO and PIPR process.
2. Monitor compliance of operations under 3809 at least twice during each working season.
3. All operations within ACEC and RNA boundaries will be field-examined at start-up, mid-season, and shut-down for 3809/ACEC compliance.

Wildlife (Aquatic)

9. Prescription: Designate 2,328,673 acres of identified public lands within the following watersheds as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

a. The combined watersheds of: Caribou, Clear and Bear Creeks (Hogatza River Tributaries).
b. Those portions of the watershed lying above the lower limit of the river withdrawal for the Indian River, Tozitna River, Kateel River and Gisasa River.

c. All of the watershed area within this plan's boundary for the Inglutalik, Ungalik, Shaktoolik, North, Unalakleet and Sulukna Rivers.

Support
Lands
Minerals

A. Rationale: The purpose of these watershed ACECs is to provide a higher level of protection to salmon and sheefish spawning and rearing habitat than would otherwise exist without the ACEC designation. These areas contain that portion of the watershed (including all lands within the linear river withdrawals) to minimize potential impacts of land usage on important fish production rivers. These fisheries have been identified as having high commercial, sport and subsistence economic values. The Sulukna River sheefish spawning area is unique in that it is the only documented sheefish habitat that occurs on BLM-administered lands within the State of Alaska.

B. Implementation

1. Designation of ACECs is accomplished by plan approval and publishing in the Federal Register.
2. Complete ACEC Management Plans within six months of plan approval to include complete legal descriptions, resource management concerns, stipulations for possible actions, and monitoring plans.

C. Costs

1. Personnel Costs - $20,000 estimated (five workmonths)
2. Publication Costs - $600/plan estimated

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Development of plans will be monitored through the MBO and PIPR process.
2. Plan monitoring requirements will be identified in the specific ACEC Management Plan.

Wildlife (Terrestrial)

10. Prescription: Designate the following lands totaling 157,278 acres as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern to focus management on crucial caribou calving habitat and movement zones.

    a. Two tracts within: T. 6 S., R. 14 E., T. 7 S., R. 14 E., and T. 6 S., R. 16 E., KRM.
    b. Approximately six townships which surround Kilo Hot Springs (north side of Ray Mountains).
    c. All lands above 2,000 feet in elevation between T. 6 N., R. 21 W., and T. 8 N., R. 17 W., F.M. (mostly within the Tozitna Aquatic ACEC - the overlap acreage has been included in the Tozitna River ACEC and is not included in the above total acreage figure).

Support
Lands
Minerals

A. Rationale: The purpose of these ACECs is to provide a higher degree of protection to caribou calving grounds for the Ray Mountains and Galena Mountain caribou herds.

B. Implementation Actions

    1. Designation of ACECs is accomplished through plan approval and publishing in the Federal Register.
    2. Complete ACEC Management Plan within six months of plan approval to include complete legal descriptions, resource management concerns, stipulations for possible actions, and monitoring plans.

C. Costs

    1. Personnel - $8,000 estimated (two workmonths)
    2. Publication Costs - $600/plan estimated
    3. Monitoring - $12,000 per year (contract aircraft)

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

    1. Monitor caribou population numbers, distribution and use patterns.

2. Track implementation of approved ACEC management plans through MBO and PIPR system.

Wildlife (Threatened and Endangered)

11. Prescription: Designate the following areas totaling 91,520 acres as ACEC's to protect crucial riparian habitat for peregrine falcons.

   a. Crucial habitat within the original 25 township village withdrawal boundaries for the village of Kaltag. (Nulato subunit).
   b. Crucial habitat within the Dulbi-Kaiyuh Mountains subunit.

Support

A. Rationale: Under the recovery plan for peregrine falcons, all riparian habitat within a 15 mile radius of nesting sites is classified as crucial habitat. Riparian habitat is subject to special management considerations. Proposed land use actions may require a formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

B. Implementation Actions:
   1. Designation of ACECs is accomplished by plan approval and publishing in the Federal Register.
   2. Complete ACEC - Management Plans within six months of plan approval to include complete legal descriptions, resource management concerns, stipulations and monitoring plans.

C. Costs
   1. Personnel Costs - (Costs are included under prescription 2)
   2. Publication Costs - $200/plan estimated

D. Monitoring and Evaluation
   1. Development of plans will be monitored through the MBO and PIPR process
   2. Plan monitoring requirements will be identified in the specific ACEC Management Plan.

Wildlife (Terrestrial)

12. Prescription: Withdraw all public lands within the Purcell SMU (Hughes subunit), Tagagawik and Buckland watersheds from FLPMA sales and leases.

Support Lands

A. Rationale: This withdrawal will minimize disturbance of a crucial wintering area for the Western Arctic Caribou herd. Additionally, this withdrawal is consistent with the withdrawals made for winter ranges covered under the Seward 1008 study (contiguous lands).

B. Implementation Actions

1. Draft legal description for watershed boundaries involved.
2. Identify the location(s) of all private inholdings/valid existing rights.
3. Provide legal description input into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

C. Costs

1. Personnel - $2,000 estimated (1/2 workmonth)
2. Publishing Costs - unknown

Lands

13. Prescription: Withdraw for five years 138,000 acres of lands for exchange with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These lands will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation including mineral location under the 1872 Mining Law, and mineral leasing under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented.

Support Minerals Soil/Water/Air

A. Rationale: Development on these BLM-administered lands could impact downstream water quality. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has expressed concerns relating to these possible impacts. The five-year period is needed to complete refuge management plans on the Kanuti and Koyukuk Refuges.

B. Implementation Actions

1. Identify and write legal descriptions for all tracts of land identified under the prescription.
2. Identify and write legal descriptions for all existing rights within the three tracts.
3. Incorporate withdrawal description into Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. In response to exchange proposals, prepare notice of realty action identifying subject lands offered for exchange.
6. Publish notice of realty action in Federal Register once and three times in local newspaper.

C. Costs

1. Personnel costs to identify lands and write notice of realty action - $3,500
2. Publication costs - $1,300 (Federal Register and local papers)
3. Processing costs per exchange - $3,500 per exchange x 3 exchanges = $10,500

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Initiate proposals if none are received.
2. Revoke classification if no interest is shown in exchanges.
3. Monitor costs of exchanges.

Minerals Leasable

14. Prescription: Open the following described areas, totaling approximately 8,775,704 acres, to operation of the mineral leasing act as amended and supplemented. Leasing would include oil and gas (non-competitive), coal, geothermal, and other leasable minerals.

Support Lands

A. Rationale: The Secretary of the Interior, under the authority of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation

Act (ANILCA); the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 and the Omnibus Budget Reconstruction Act of 1981 has promulgated regulations regarding non-competitive oil and gas leasing. These regulations are found in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, subpart 3110.

Further, it is the policy of the Bureau of Land Management to make public lands available for orderly and efficient development of these energy resources under principles of balanced multiple-use management.

The U.S. Geological Survey has classified these lands as being within two separate oil and gas subregions: the Nulato Hills Oil and Gas Subregion and the Interior lowlands Oil and Gas Subregion.

Areas to be Opened:

All lands within the Seward 1008 Study which were deferred from mineral leasing in the Buckland Basin subunit and the Purcell Mountain subunit.

All lands within the Nulato Hills subunit except for:

1. Box River Treeline Research Natural Area
2. T. 3 N., and T. 4 N., R. 5 E. KRM - These lands are closed and will be classified for possible exchange with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
3. All lands within the original 25 township village withdrawal boundaries which have been identified for possible exchange.

All lands within the Dulbi-Kaiyuh Mountains subunit except for:

1. Areas that are deferred from opening for three years pending completion of a subsistence study/determination:

Bear Creek Drainage Basin
T 6 S, R 13 E, R 14 E, KRM
T 5 S, R 14 E, KRM
The Kala Creek-Branch Creek drainage basin

All lands in the Hughes subunit except for:

1. Research Natural Areas:
   Lake Todatonten Pingos
   South Todatonten Summit
2. Those public lands within the original village withdrawal areas for Hughes and Alakaket/Alatna.

All lands in the Tozitna subunit except for:

1. Research Natural Areas:
   Ishalitna Creek Hot Springs
   Spooky Valley
   McQuesten Creek
2. The following townships which are closed and classified for exchange to protect wildlife habitat adjacent to the Kanuti refuge:
   T 14 N, R 19 W, FM
   T 16 N, R 15 W, R 16 W, FM
   T 17 N, R 16 W, FM
   T 18 N, R 16 W, FM

All lands in the Kuskokwim subunit except for:

1. Research Natural Areas:
   Redlands Lake
   Arms Lake

B. Implementation Action

1. Draft complete legal description of lands identified by the prescription.
2. Incorporate legal descriptions developed by other activities under other prescriptions into the overall description.
3. This legal description will serve as the basis for preparation of the Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
4. Publish Central Yukon Implementation PLO.
5. Report to Congress as required by Section 202(e) of FLPMA.

C. Costs/Monitoring

1. Personnel Costs - $11,000
2. Publication Costs - Unknown

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

None: Costs of opening lands to oil and gas leasing are not expected as the resource area would only be involved in compliance work on seismic activity. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates of oil and gas potential in the planning area indicate the probability of this type of activity to be nil during the life of this plan.

Wildlife - (Terrestrial)

15. Prescription: Monitor implementation of approved Alaska Interagency Fire Plans within the Central Yukon Planning Area in order to document achievement of wildlife resource management goals through selected fire management options. Documentation will be used to support retention, modification, or deletion of existing fire management options.

Support
Fire, Subsistence, Recreation, Soil, Water, Air

A. Rationale: The Alaska Interagency Fire Plans were developed in order to reduce fire suppression costs as directed by OMB. Resource management support for plan development and implementation is based on broad resource management objectives which can reasonably be obtained through sound fire management planning.

Within the Central Yukon Planning Area 6,420,440 acres presently receive "limited" fire protection and 2,216,312 acres received "modified" fire protection under approved Interagency Fire Management Plans. The status of moose populations (the principal big game species having value for subsistence and sport hunting) within fire management areas serves as an index which is used to judge the effectiveness of selected fire management options. Long term monitoring of population levels for the moose will provide information that supports or identifies modifications of fire management selected options.

B. Implementation Actions
   1. Prioritize watersheds within the planning area based on:
      a. Estimated levels of subsistence usage
      b. Estimated levels of sport harvest
      c. Known history of fire occurrence
      d. Alaska Department of Fish and Game recommendations
   2. Identify survey level for prioritized watersheds. Survey methods will be derived from Gassaway's Moose Survey techniques.
   3. Complete surveys in accordance with the survey schedule.

C. Cost
   1. Personnel - $5,200 (1.5 workmonths per year)
   2. Survey Costs - $7,500 approximate aircraft cost per survey year.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation
   1. After baseline inventories are completed, monitoring will identify moose population response to fire management prescriptions.
   2. Watersheds which show no response over a 10 to 20 year period will be reviewed for fire management option change or prescribed fire management--based on demand for wildlife resources.

Lands, Minerals
Recreation

16. Prescription: Require no permits for vehicles under 1500 pounds (GVW). Restrict access to public lands for "Off Road Vehicles" (ORVs) having a Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) greater than 1500 pounds. Access for ORVs having a GVW greater than 1500 pounds will be considered on a case by case basis. Authorization will be granted by approval of mining plan notices/plans of operations (43 CFR 3809), a permit (43 CFR 2800 or 2920), or by other appropriate authorization. This prescription does not pertain to access over reserved easements, granted rights-of-way's, BLM recognized or valid RS2477 rights-of-way's or aircraft access on unimproved landing areas.

Support
Wildlife
Soil, Water, Air

A. Rationale: Public land access within the Central Yukon Planning Area consists of widely scattered airstrips (primarily associated with mining claim access) and a poorly identified trail system which provides intervillage travel and overland access to mining claims. The requirement for additional ORV access in conjunction with minerals location/leasing exploration, development, and other legitimate public land uses is provided under this plan.

It is not anticipated that the use of light ORV's (less than 1500 pounds GVW) or wheel/ski/skid equipped fixed wing or rotary aircraft will cause any significant resource damage. These uses are associated primarily with recreation, minerals, and subsistence activities over undeveloped access routes.

To minimize impacts of ORVs over 1500 pounds (GVW), land access will normally be limited to winter months when adequate snow cover and frozen ground exists. The authorized officer may permit summer moves under, but not limited to, the following circumstances.

1. Winter use would be impractical.
2. Summer use would not result in undue or unnecessary impacts.
3. An existing trail is used, and the proposed use would not damage the trail.
4. Specialized equipment, such as low ground pressure vehicles, is used which minimizes impacts.
5. A limited number of trips over a trail could result in minimal impacts.

Note: Public land access over reserved easements is limited to "identified allowable uses" as defined in the appropriate conveyance document.

B. Implementation Actions:
1. Publish ORV prescriptions in the Federal Register as a part of the Central Yukon PRMP implementation P.L.O.

2. Review all activity proposals which have access requirements for consistency with this prescription.

C. Costs
   1. Personnel - $3,200 (one workmonth per year generally divided between lands and minerals activities for permit processing).
   2. Monitoring - $1,500 - estimated aircraft costs for recreation monitoring.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation
   1. Monitoring activities are conducted under 3809 Regulations and land use permit compliance examinations. All approved access permits for vehicles over 1500 pounds GVW will require route compliance examinations.
   2. ORV uses under 1500 pounds GVW and aircraft will be monitored on a casual basis to identify/document the extent of usage plus any resource use problems.

Section 3

COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 810 OF ANILCA

INTRODUCTION

The RMP as explained is a modified version of Alternative E - the Preferred Alternative, as described in the Draft EIS. In terms of subsistence, the modifications made are substantial enough in key aspects to require a new Section 810(a) evaluation finding for the RMP. Accordingly, this new finding is presented below, but is first preceded by explanatory sections focusing on settlement, mineral leasing and mineral location and their respective impacts on subsistence uses and needs. Also noted is relevant information which resulted from the subsistence hearings held for the Central Yukon Plan pursuant to ANILCA Section 810(a)(2).

SETTLEMENT

Only the currently open Minchumina settlement area would be open to the settlement laws under the RMP. On October 21, 1986 this area also would be closed due to the expiration of the ten-year extension of the settlement laws in Alaska as provided under the terms of FLPMA. It is not anticipated that there will be any substantial increase in the number of settlers in this area from the present population before October 21, 1986. Thus, no major increases in demand for subsistence-related resources are expected.

Further, no information was received during the subsistence hearings or from comments during the comment period suggesting that new rural resident settlers in the Minchumina settlement area were causing impacts of any degree to any other subsistence users in the vicinity of the Minchumina settlement area. Therefore, with regard to the effect of settlement, the RMP will not significantly restrict subsistence uses and needs.

MINERAL LEASING

As explained throughout the EIS under mineral leasing, BLM retains substantial discretionary control over how, when and where specific mineral leasing-related roads and facilities could be located. In particular, all such roads and facilities would first be proposed under a permit request, which BLM would review and potentially modify before approval.

A site-specific ANILCA Section 810 evaluation is required for each permit request. Appropriate mitigation will be developed to lessen any impact to subsistence uses below a level of significant restriction. Appropriate mitigation can be developed for all of the lands opened to mineral leasing under this RMP, with certain special conditions in certain special locations. These special conditions include:

1. 300-foot occupancy setbacks on the following river segments to provide additional buffering against any possibility of pollution to downstream subsistence fishery areas in the Tag, Lower Kateel, and Gisasa Rivers and tributaries to the Nulato and Ray River and Squaw Creek;
2. closure of crucial riverine habitat the surface occupancy in conjunction with mineral leasing activities to protect anadromous spawning areas;
3. closure for five years of lands near villages identified for possible exchange to allow time for the exchange to occur;
4. closure for three years of lands identified for subistence studies to develop further information to better understand potential subsistence-related impacts to these areas which might result from mineral leasing (subsistence study areas are explained in more detail in a later segment).

In terms of information received during the subsistence hearings, people of Allakaket expressed concern for mineral leasing on lands near their village. But as noted, such lands near that village and others, such as Hughes, Galena, Nulato and Kaltag are not to be opened immediately, if at all, to mineral leasing to allow for possible exchanges and/or subsistence studies.

No additional concerns about mineral leasing and its potential for impacts to subsistence uses and needs were received during the comment period. Therefore, with regard to the effect of mineral leasing, the places it is to be allowed and the way it is to be managed under the RMP will not cause a significant restriction to subsistence uses and needs.

MINERAL LOCATION

Under Alternative E, the Preferred Alternative, mineral location was the issue which caused the overall ANILCA Section 810(1) finding to conclude that a possible significant restriction of subsistence uses could occur. This was further explained as follows:

> "...uncertainty exists as to the degree of restriction to subsistence uses that would result from mineral location in a scenario of extensive mining development outside protected areas, particularly around the villages of Kaltag and Nulato. With this uncertainty in mind, the possibility of significant restriction to subsistence uses cannot be ruled out."

Under the RMP, this "uncertainty" has been effectively diminished so that the possibility of significant restrictions to subsistence uses is ruled out. This has been accomplished by the following management prescriptions including certain changes and/or new information relevant to this issue:

1. As proposed under Alternative E, and adopted into the RMP, the Nulato and Kaltag River drainages are closed to mineral location under the 1872 mining law as amended. But under the RMP, additional adjacent areas also are to be given a new degree of protection via ACEC designation of much of the southern and middle portions of the Nulato Hills. This would mean that any mining plans of operation would have to be reviewed and approved by the Bureau before any mining activity could take place on the ground.

2. As proposed under Alternative E, and adopted into the RMP, mineral location would not be allowed in designated crucial riverine habitats and Research Natural Areas. The RMP also prohibits mineral location for five years in areas identified for possible exchange to provide time for the exchange to occur. Meanwhile, such areas would receive additional subsistence study within three years (as noted earlier under mineral leasing).

3. No information was received during the subsistence hearings held in Kaltag and Nulato, or from public response during the comment period, to substantiate BLM's "uncertainty" that mining outside "protected areas" (the Kaltag and Nulato River drainages) around the villages of Kaltag and Nulato would cause significant restriction to subsistence uses. Any such possibility, as previously noted, has been further decreased by the additional ACEC designation. Also of relevance is that the mineral evaluation as presented in the Central Yukon EIS pointed out that there is a very low likelihood that high minerals values exist anywhere near Nulato and Kaltag.

In light of the above, the places mineral location is to be allowed and the way it is to be managed under the RMP will not cause a significant restriction to subsistence uses and needs.

SECTION 810(a) FINDING FOR THE RMP

For reasons stated above, there would be significant restriction of subsistence uses under the RMP. (Note: See the following section for a discussion of "subsistence study areas" and additional compliance with ANILCA Section 810.)

SUBSISTENCE STUDY AREAS

Areas near the villages of Kaltag, Nulato, Galena, Hughes and Allakaket/Alatna have been designated subsistence study areas. These are areas which have been identified as used for subsistence purposes, and which are presently closed to mineral entry. Thus, to make the best-informed judgment on the eventual fate of these areas, the RMP will close these areas to all forms of appropriation for a period of three years. Subsistence studies to be done in these areas will be designed to evaluate the possible effects of mineral entry, mineral leasing and FLPMA sales and leases in these areas if any of these actions are to be allowed, plus the importance of these lands near the villages for subsistence uses and needs.

There are also three riverine areas which have been identified as subsistence study areas. These will be dealt with in terms of possible openings in the same way as described in the preceding. For these areas, the study emphasis will be different since the objective is to determine the importance of these areas as anadromous fish spawning areas which contribute to either local or non-local subsistence fishing and their importance for any other subsistence-related reason.

It should be emphasized that the RMP, itself, does not have the effect or intent to open up these subsistence study areas to mineral leasing, mineral location and/or compliance. Rather, what the RMP does is create a process that may or may not result in the partial or complete opening of these areas to mineral leasing, mineral location and/or FLPMA sales and leases.