

S B

407

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

FURTHER

FINANCE

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE _____

3/30/88

Mr. President:

Resources _____ Committee considered SB 407 _____

establishing the Ch^elatna Public Use Area

and recommended

[] replace with _____ CS _____) [] same title
[] or adopt _____ CS _____) [] new title

[] attached amendment(s) and

[] do pass

[] do not pass

[] no recommendation

[] individual recommendations

[] further referral to _____

[] letter of intent adopted _____

Committee [] attached or [] adopted fiscal note(s)
[] new [] updated or [] previous
[] zero [] fiscal impact

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairman signature and recommendation

[] Committee Backup attached

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

FIRST COMMITTEE OF REFERRAL

Date of 3/17/88 5-DAY NOTICE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNIFORM RULE 23

FURTHER: Resources
Finance

**FISCAL NOTE(S) ATTACHED yes **
IN ACCORDANCE WITH AS 24.08.035
(see below)

2/10/88

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE 3/30/88

Mr. President:

CCRA Committee considered SB 407

establishing the Choptana Public Use Area.

5-1516L
(b)

and recommended:

[X] replace with CS for SB 407 (C+RA) same title
[] attached amendment(s) and new title

[] do pass

[] do not pass

[] no recommendation

[X] individual recommendations

[] further referral to _____

[] letter of intent adopted and attached

** Committee [X] attached or [] adopted fiscal note(s)
[X] zero [] fiscal impact

OFN

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS

1 Mike Sturgulewski - outstanding legislation

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

2 Fred Elphinstone No Rec
2 Tim Kelly No Rec

1
Arthur Sturgulewski Do Pass
Chairman signature and recommendation

[X] Committee Backup Attached

Alaska State Legislature

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, Chairman
TIM KELLY, Vice Chairman
RICK HALFORD
MIKE SZYMANSKI
FRED ZHAROFF



P. O. BOX V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-4989

Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee

March 22, 1988

TO: Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee Members

FROM: Senate C&RA Staff *MZ*

RE: CS for SB 407 (C&RA) - "An Act establishing the Chelatna Public Use Area."

This bill has been the subject of debate between the departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources. Fish and Game would like the area to be larger, DNR would like it to be smaller.

The departments have now agreed to agree and will be submitting a joint proposal for a revised boundary later this week. The departments agree on the text in the CS before the committee.

Two additional changes need to be made to the text. An effective date needs to be added and on page 2, line 17, the words "inside the Chelatna Public Use Area" need to be inserted to clarify that the state can only acquire inholdings for inclusion in the area.

A position paper and fiscal note from DNR, a description of the area from Fish and Game, a letter of support, and a map of the area is included in this packet.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

400 WILLOUGHBY AVE.
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1798
PHONE: (907) 465-2400

March 22, 1988

The Honorable Arliss Sturgulewski
Chair, Community and Regional
Affairs Committee
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

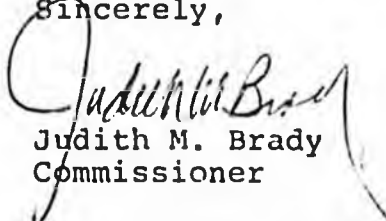
Subject: Senate Bill 407 establishing the Chelatna Public Use Area.

Position: The department supports this bill with boundary adjustments to make it consistent with the Susitna Area Plan. We are working with the Department of Fish and Game to provide joint recommendations to make the bill consistent with the Susitna Area Plan adopted by the Commissioner and completed with the cooperation of other state agencies.

Background: On April 24, 1985, the Commissioner of Natural Resources adopted the Susitna Area Plan which provides policy for state lands within the planning area. The proposed Chelatna Public Use Area falls within the boundary of this Plan. Other agencies were involved in the planning process and supported its adoption. The Susitna Area Plan provides for legislative designation of areas to be managed for specific uses or retained in public ownership. My staff is working with ADF&G to refine the legal description of the proposed area to make this legislation consistent with the Plan.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,


Judith M. Brady
Commissioner

cc: Members of the Committee
Bill Sponsors
Rod Swope
Bob Evans
Meg Hayes

March 18, 1988

Senator Sturgulewski
Community and Regional Affairs
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

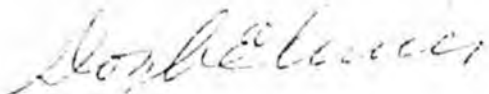
Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

Regarding Senate Bill 407, Chelatna Public Use Area.

This is a great Bill. It would provide for future generations enjoyment of the Alaska outdoors without costing the State large operating expenses such as parks. This is a critical moose, grizzly and swan habitat area. Also it contains many salmon spawning streams. The area is above 1,000' elevation and really does not have harvestable timber. In all of Unit 16B there is very little land set aside for public use.

I feel that the people would benefit greatly from this Bill now and in the future.

Respectfully,



Doyle E. Currier

Proposed Peters Hills/Sunflower Basin Public Use Area
Background Information

Location: The proposed area is located approximately 10 miles west of Talkeetna, and about 120 miles north northwest of Anchorage in the upper Susitna River Basin. The proposed area includes a major portion of the northern part of Game Management Subunit 16A, as well as a smaller portion of the northern part of Subunit 16B. The Petersville road extends through the NW portion of the proposed area. The northern and western boundaries are adjacent to Denali State Park and Denali National Park/Preserve.

Area Description: The proposed area includes approximately 898,560 acres, and covers broad forested lowlands with abundant lakes and wetlands. Portions of the south slope of the Alaska Range are included, as well as the Peters Hills and Yenlo Hills area.

The proposed area includes the upstream portions of two large rivers, the Yentna and Kahiltna, as well as several smaller important drainages, Lake Creek, Peters Creek, Kroto Creek and Moose Creek. Numerous minor drainages and wetlands are also included. These drainages flow predominately in a south-southeast direction into the Susitna River.

Vegetation is quite diverse, with the majority of the area covered by stands of mixed deciduous forest. Stands of white spruce cover some areas along Peters Creek near the southern boundary, as well as other locations scattered throughout the area. Extensive wetlands occur in the area, representing areas of low relief with poor drainage, as well as important streamside riparian areas.

Justification: The area encompassed by the proposed special area boundaries, includes some of the most heavily utilized recreational lands in the entire Susitna Basin. More people use these lands for more activities than any other road accessible area in Southcentral Alaska.

In 1985, the DNR finalized the Susitna Area Plan (SAP) for use as a guideline in development of the area. The proposed area contains all or portions of 3 SAP planning units identified in that plan: Sunflower Basin, Petersville Road, and Susitna Lowlands. Preferred primary and secondary land uses were designated for smaller management units within these planning units. The majority of these management units included within the proposed area have wildlife habitat or public recreation as their primary designated use.

The SAP also identified several areas meriting legislative consideration for special management designation. One of these areas was called the Peters Hills-Peters Creek Area and is included in the eastern half of the proposed area (see map C6).

This area is one of the most popular moose hunting areas in the region. It sustains more than twice the hunting effort of any other comparable harvest area in the Susitna planning area. The popularity stems from the relatively dense moose populations present, as well as the extensive road and trail system available. Highway and all-terrain vehicles provide access to remote areas over an extensive trail system that extends to the Kahiltna River.

Harvest Figures: Moose harvest information for the proposed area is presented below, for the years 1984-86. This information is derived from returned harvest reports for statistical areas encompassed by the proposed boundaries. No estimate is available for unreported harvest, therefore these numbers represent minimum use figures. Reported use is relatively high and indicates substantial interest in moose hunting within the proposed area.

	Hunters	Hunter Days	Harvest
1984	1069	5539	343
1985	718	4010	143
1986	710	3706	212
Average	832	4418	233

Moose populations in the proposed area are healthy, with some drainages having very high seasonal densities. For example, pre-rut concentrations of 30+ moose have been observed in the vicinity of Black Creek and near Bunco and Swan Lakes. Winter concentrations can also be quite large, but are limited in distribution because of dependence on adequate winter range. For example, an area near the base of the Kahiltna Glacier had over 160 moose present during a 1984 census, for a density of about 14 moose/sq. mile.

Additionally, the SAP also identified several areas for special designation to protect trumpeter swan habitat. Two of these areas, upper Kahiltna River and upper Yentna River, are included in the proposed area. These two areas provide important nesting and rearing habitat for trumpeter swans. As many as 48 nesting pairs have been observed in these areas, with a total number of over 175 swans.

There is evidence that swans have already been displaced from former nesting areas by human activity in the Susitna basin. By dedicating some wetland areas for trumpeter swan habitat we can provide for the continued nesting and rearing of swans near a large population center such as Anchorage.

Three stream corridors within the proposed area have also been identified as areas meriting special attention, and have been included in the Recreational Rivers Corridor legislation. They are Lake Creek, Kroto Creek and Moose Creek.

Kroto Creek is part of the Deshka River which is the most important drainage in the entire area for public recreation and riparian habitat. Public use of this system is the highest of any stream in the Susitna Planning Area. In 1986, over 16,000 anglers fished almost 30,000 man-days on this system. Lake Creek is the second most important river in the area for public use and habitat values. High recreation values occur on this river because of the extensive use by fishermen, and rafting groups. Over 4,500 anglers fished over 15,600 man-days on this system in 1986. Moose Creek also receives intensive public recreational use and provides highly valuable riparian habitat including moose winter range and salmon spawning areas.

Recreational fishing occurs in all major streams within the area, with some streams receiving very intensive use. Thousands of man-days are spent fishing for king, coho, pink, chum and sockeye salmon. Additional effort is spent fishing for resident fish species, such as rainbow trout, grayling and Dolly Varden.

Further public use of the proposed area is extensive, and includes hunting for black and brown bear and small game species such as hares, grouse and ptarmigan. Commercial and recreational trapping also occurs for marten, lynx, beaver, mink, coyote, fox, wolf and wolverine.

Current Uses: As previously stated, this area receives some of the highest recreational use activity of any area in Southcentral Alaska. Hunting, fishing, river rafting, and sightseeing provide tremendous recreational opportunity for residents and nonresidents. In addition, winter activities of trapping, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and dog mushing provide further recreational use.

Extensive mining activity has occurred in the past in the northern portion of the proposed area. Current activity there is low, and is expected to remain at low levels. Mineral potential in most other areas is unknown, but is believed to be relatively low. The Peters Hills forestry unit is contained within the proposed boundaries. The DNR/DOF has proposed to include this area in a large timber sale scheduled for 1988. The original intent, developed during SAP negotiations, was for this area to be enhanced for moose winter range utilizing forestry practices. The forestry potential in the northern portion of this unit is very limited, and therefore, minimizes the possibility of significant vegetative enhancement. However, small-scale harvest activity such as house logs, or private fuel wood sales should be allowed.

Land Status: Numerous private land inholdings are present in the area from OTE programs, remote settlement and other DNR disposal programs. Many of these are centered in remote disposal areas near the upper Yentna River, between Kroto Creek and Moose Creek, and near Amber Lake. Additional private land is located along the Petersville Road, at Chelatna Lake and in the small communities of Peters Creek and Petersville. Matanuska-Susitna Borough land is present in the area, however exact locations are unknown.

Alaska State Legislature

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, Chairman
TIM KELLY, Vice Chairman
RICK HALFORD
MIKE SZYMANSKI
FRED ZHAROFF



P. O. BOX V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-4989

Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee

March 29, 1988

TO: Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee Members

FROM: Senate C&RA Staff

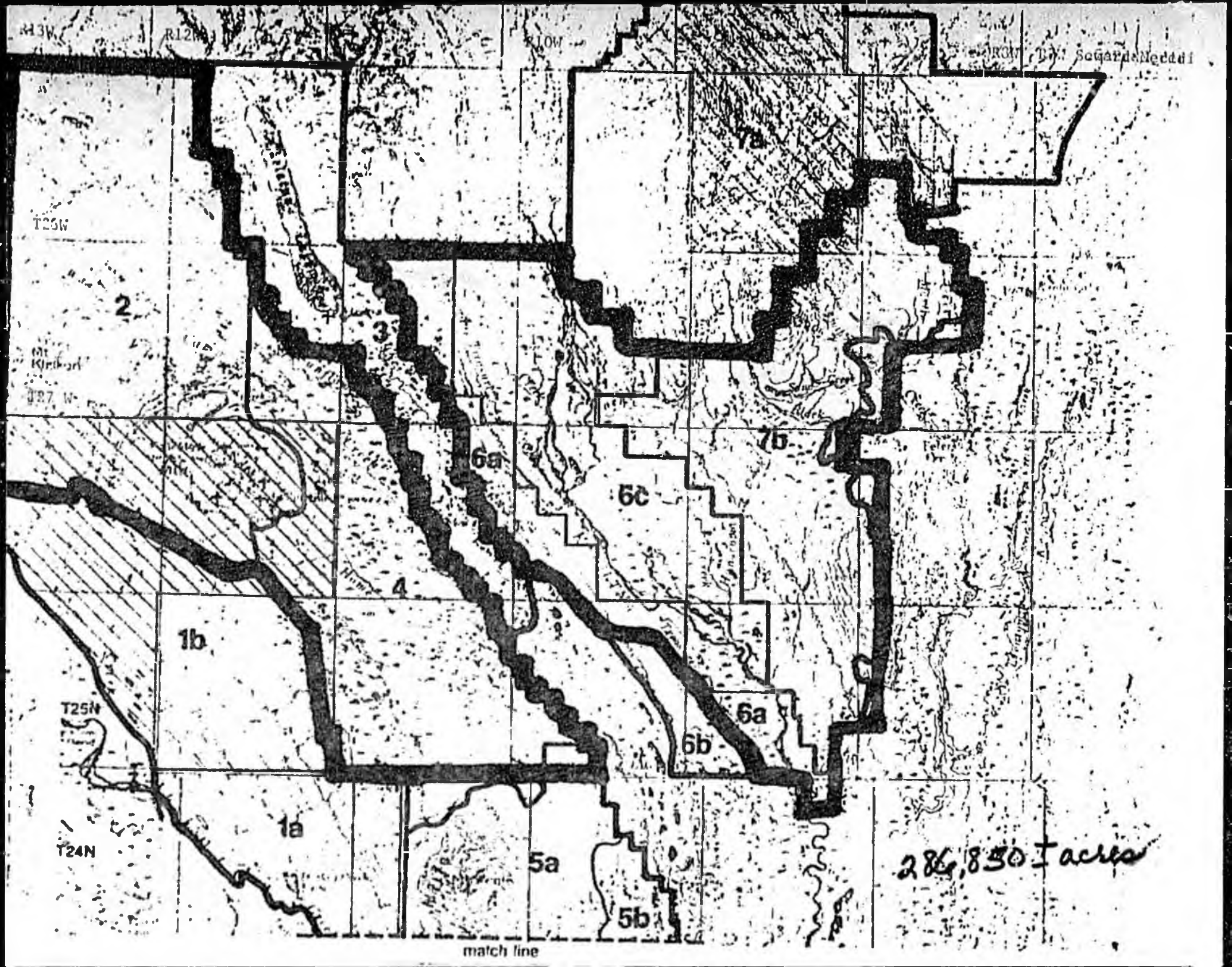
RE: CS for SB 407 (C&RA) - "An Act establishing the Chelatna Public Use Area."

Attached is a new CS with the four changes the Committee discussed last week. The departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources have agreed on revised boundaries and those boundaries are reflected in the CS. A map which shows the new boundaries is attached.

A section of temporary law has added to specify that until the management plan is adopted, the mineral estate will be managed in accordance with the Susitna Area Plan.

The words "described in AS 41.23.230" have been inserted in page 2, section (d), to clarify that the state can only acquire inholdings for inclusion in the area.

A July 1, 1988 effective date has been added. These changes are marked on the CS.



FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title: Chelatna Public Use Area

Agency Affected: Natural Resources
BRU: Land and Water Management

Sponsor: Sen. Kertulla and Szymanski
Requestor: Senate Comm. & Regional Affairs

Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES		0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING		0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		0	0	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL		0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The required management plan will be completed on a time available basis in consideration with other planning projects.

Prepared by: Janet Burleson
Division: Land and Water Management

Phone: 465-3400
Date: 3/22/88

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature]
Agency: Natural Resources

Date: _____

Distribution (by preparer):
Legislative Finance
Legislative Sponsor
Requestor
Office of Management and Budget
Impacted Agency(ies)

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Designations in CAPITAL LETTERS are primary designations, those in lower case letters are secondary designations; areas shown with stars * are proposed for legislative or administrative designation. Statements in *italics* indicate whether areas are open or closed to mineral location and coal leasing; all areas are available for oil and gas leasing.

MGT. UNIT 1 – YENTNA RIVER LAND SALES

- 1a SETTLEMENT (past remote parcel offering); forestry, public recreation, wildlife habitat; *Closed*
- 1b SETTLEMENT; forestry, public recreation, wildlife habitat; *Closed Prior to Disposal*

MGT. UNIT 2 – FAIRVIEW MOUNTAINS

- 2 MINERALS, WILDLIFE HABITAT, public recreation; *Open*

MGT. UNIT 3 – CHELATNA LAKE/LAKE CREEK

- *3 PUBLIC REC., WATER RESOURCES, WILDLIFE HAB.; forestry; *Closed*

MGT. UNIT 4 – WETLANDS

- 4 WATER RESOURCES, WILDLIFE HAB.; remote cabins; *Open Except Along Selected Streams*

MGT. UNIT 5 – YENLO HILLS

- 5a WILDLIFE HABITAT, public recreation; *Open Except Along Selected Streams*
- 5b PUBLIC REC., SETTLEMENT, WILDLIFE HABITAT; forestry; *Open Except Along Selected Streams & Settlement Area Closed Prior to Disposal*





MGT. UNIT 6 – KAHILTNA RIVER

- 6a WATER RESOURCES, WILDLIFE HABITAT, forestry; *Open*
- 6b SETTLEMENT; forestry, wildlife hab.; *Closed Prior to Disposal*
- *6c WATER RESOURCES, WILDLIFE HAB.; forestry, public rec.; *Open*

MGT. UNIT 7 – PETERS HILLS

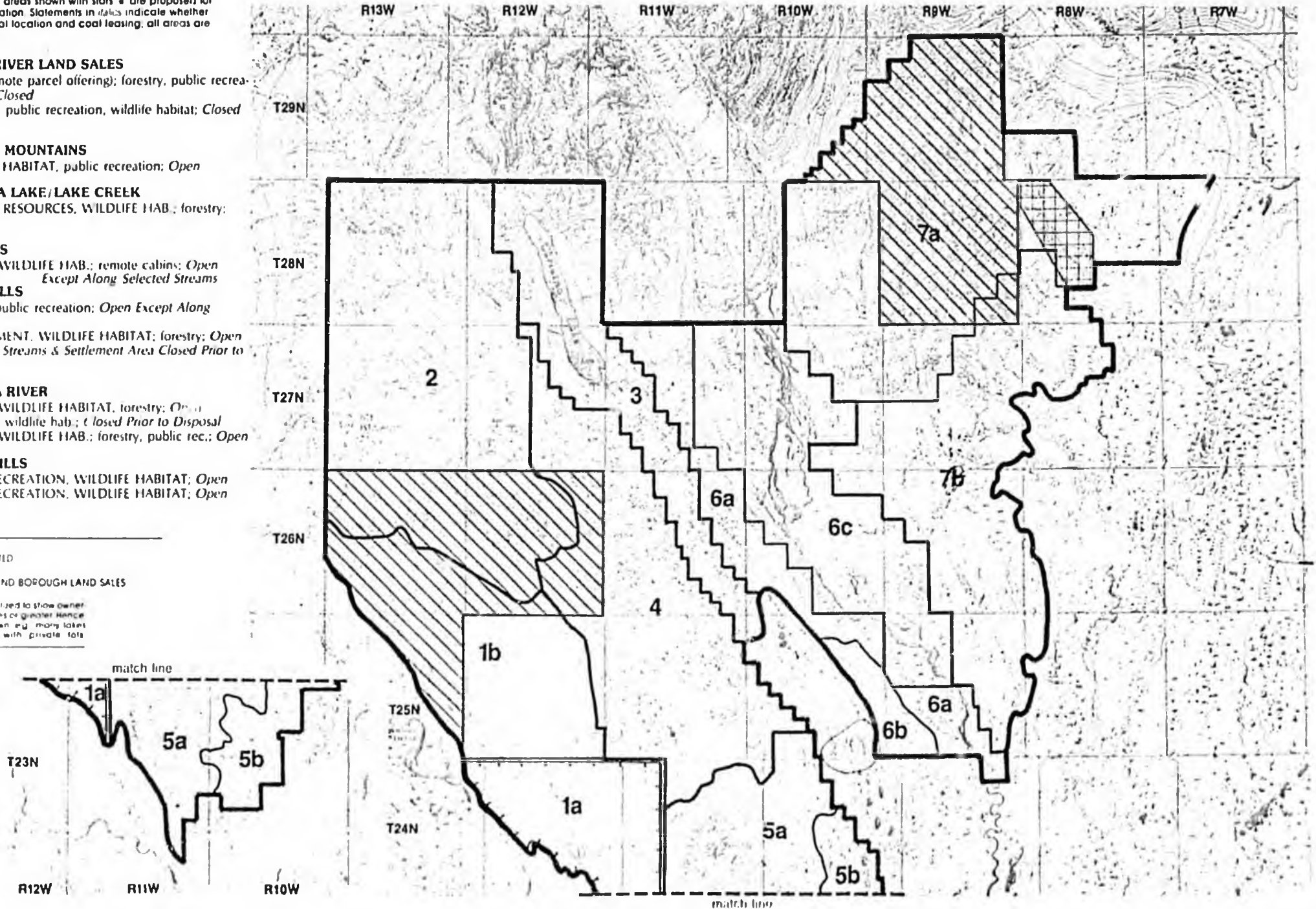
- 7a MINERALS, PUBLIC RECREATION, WILDLIFE HABITAT; *Open*
- *7b FORESTRY, PUBLIC RECREATION, WILDLIFE HABITAT; *Open*

LAND STATUS

-  FEDERAL
-  STATE SELECTED
-  STATE
-  PAST STATE AND BOROUGH LAND SALES

NOTE: This information has been generalized to show ownership in blocks of approximately 320 acres or greater. Hence many smaller private lots are not shown, e.g., many lakes which appear public are ringed with private lots.

SUNFLOWER BASIN



Map Scale 1:250,000
 U.S.G.S. Quads:
 Talkeetna