495 HRES HB 211

NORTHWEST (B)

COLVILLE
RIVER
Chandler
River
Nakashok
Jumper
Canning
Marsh Fork
Junjik
Chandalar Fork
Ackerman
Chandal
Hadweenzic
Graphite Fork
West Fork
Hess
Creek
YUK
Todatonten
Schwatka

As in northeastern Alaska, temperature ranges are greater in the interior. On the Arctic coast, there is nearly continuous darkness from November 18 to January 24 and uninterrupted daylight from May 10 to August 2.

Mineralized zones and oil and gas provinces underlie much of the region. Several areas of geothermal energy potential are present. There is some timber, mostly along major rivers, of possible commercial value and some lands marginally suitable for agriculture.

This region, while also sparsely populated by national standards, has a larger population than northeastern Alaska. Settlements tend to be of larger size and three communities, Kotzebue, Nome, and Barrow, serve as regional centers having growing populations of over 2,000. Fairbanks, located to the southeast, has socioeconomic ties with the region. Aside from tourism in the major population centers, mineral exploration, some small-scale mining and logging, and recent oil and gas exploration, there is little industry activity within the region. Most of the region is predominantly populated by Inupiat Eskimos, with the exception of the Koyukuk drainage settled by Athabascan Indians. Fish and game and other products of the land are still taken by many of the region's residents to meet their subsistence needs. The State's road network does not extend into the region, but a few local roads radiate from Nome. Access is by air or by water in the summer months.

When the land entitlement to Alaska Native corporations is satisfied, approximately 15 percent of the region will be privately owned. Another 3 percent has been selected by the State of Alaska which may make other selections in this region to complete its entitlement. Eighty-two percent or less, depending upon future State selections, will then be retained in Federal ownership.

One large Federal reserve of 23.1 million acres, National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, lies in the region as does the small Chamisso National Wildlife Refuge. The following areas for study as national interest lands were withdrawn under Section 17(d)(2) by the Secretary of the Interior:

1. two small areas around Cape Lisburne (74,000 acres) and Cape Thompson (10,000 acres);

2. a large section of the Central Brooks Range (8.17 million acres);

3. a large portion of the Noatak River (7.5 million acres) and Kobuk River (2.8 million acres) drainages;

4. a section of the Koyukuk River drainage (3 million acres);

5. the Kanuti Flats (750,000 acres);

6. the Selawik River basin (2.1 million acres); and

7. a part of the Seward Peninsula (3.3 million acres).

Central Brooks Range

The Brooks Range is the continent's only Arctic mountain range. One of its most rugged and scenic sections is the central portion, with waves of ridges and peaks up to 8,000 feet. Broad, glacially carved valleys with clear, free-flowing rivers intersperse the mountains. On the Range's southern slopes, valleys are forest-lined with birch, aspen, spruce, and poplar; while on the north, alpine tundra predominates with occasional willows and other brush along watercourses. The rolling Arctic foothills just north of the Brooks Range is an area characterized by irregular buttes, knobs, and elongated scarps. Scenic peaks within the central section of the Range include Arrigetch Peaks with steep granite walls, buttresses, and spires; Mt. Igikpak, the highest peak in the Central Brooks, towering above its surroundings; Frigid Crags and Boreal Mountain forming "The Gates of the Arctic"; and other mountains of interesting geological origin, formation, shape, and historical note. River canyons and several large lakes, including Walker Lake and Kurupa Lake, are also found in this area. Small glaciers and glacial tarns enhance the scenery in certain mountainous areas. The western Arctic caribou herd migrates throughout the area. Dall sheep, grizzly bear, and wolf are also present.

TO PROVIDE PROTECTION TO THE NATURAL VALUES OF NATIONAL INTEREST IN THE CENTRAL BROOKS RANGE, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS:

1. TWO LARGE AREAS WITHIN THE RANGE BE DESIGNATED UNITS OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM (5.2 MILLION ACRES);

2. TWO RIVERS WITHIN THE PROPOSED PARK UNITS, THE ALATNA RIVER AND THE NORTH FORK OF THE KOYUKUK-TINAYGUK, BE DESIGNATED WILD RIVERS;

3. LANDS BETWEEN THE TWO PROPOSED PARK UNITS NOT CONVEYED TO THE ARCTIC SLOPE NATIVE CORPORATIONS BE INCORPORATED WITHIN THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM (2.0 MILLION ACRES); BECAUSE OF THE VALUES RELATED TO THE PROPOSED ADJACENT PARK UNITS, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS RECOMMENDED AS THE MANAGER OF THIS UNIT; AND

4. FIVE RIVERS--KILLIK, NOATAK, ANAKTUVUK, JOHN, AND UPPER KOBUK--FLOWING THROUGH OR FROM THE PROPOSED PARK, ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS AND ADJOINING LANDS BE DESIGNATED POTENTIAL WILD OR SCENIC RIVERS FOR FURTHER EVALUATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLASSIFICATION OF THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS UNIT AND OTHER ADJOINING LANDS.

The Commission has attempted in these recommendations to protect representative cross-sections of the major terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and landforms of the central Brooks Range. In addition, the Commission finds that adjacent lands in the lower Alatna River drainage currently selected by the State of Alaska have natural values of national interest and potential suitable for designation as Alaska National Lands. The Commission proposes that these lands be a subject of future land exchange discussions between the State and Federal governments. Should the lower Alatna River drainage be acquired by the Federal government, the Commission

recommends that the National Park Service be designated as manager to facilitate coordinated planning and management with adjacent lands in the National Park System.

The proposed park and Alaska National Lands units contain portions of a large petroleum province receiving current exploration. The petroleum province extends well beyond the boundaries of the recommended units. Two areas of geothermal energy potential are located within the proposed western park unit, but another potential source is found further to the west near the headwaters of the Selawik River and outside any recommended national interest reserves. The park units are traversed by three mineral belts with potential for copper, silver, gold, nickel, lead, zinc, tin, iron, barite, molybdenum, platinum, chromium, tungsten, titanium, and asbestos. All of the three mineral belts extend into adjoining lands, or into the proposed Alaska National Lands unit where mineral exploration and extraction could be allowed if eventual classification permits.

Areas with wildlife populations used extensively by residents of the area for subsistence purposes have largely been excluded from the proposed park units. Where these areas have natural values of high national interest, they have been incorporated in the new management system, where hunting, fishing, and trapping would be permitted.

Coordinated planning and management in the Central Brooks Range and adjoining areas is needed to insure adequate protection of the caribou range and herd. Major surface access routes to the Arctic and western coast and to potential mineral development zones adjoining the proposed park units have been identified in this region, necessitating coordinated planning among various landowners and managers to assure future access needs as they arise. Land ownership in this area is fragmented, with private inholdings or valid existing claims a likelihood in any future management unit.

Noatak-Kobuk

Free-flowing rivers traverse the area, coursing through bluffs, canyons, forest, and tundra, with mountains in some sections providing a scenic backdrop. Important scenic features are the Great Kobuk Sand Dunes, a unique geologic occurrence in a setting of forests, mountains, marshes, and ponds; the canyons along the Noatak, Salmon, and other rivers; and certain formations in the Baird and Delong Mountains. The area provides rangelands for the Arctic caribou herd and one of Alaska's few small herds of musk ox. Waterfowl nest in the region, with particularly high density concentrations along the Kobuk River and places along the coast. There are several sites of prehistoric aboriginal settlement, most notably those at Cape Krusenstern and Onion Portage. A relatively diverse Arctic flora grows along the Noatak River.

THE COMMISSION HAS FOUND THESE VALUES TO BE OF NATIONAL INTEREST AND MAKES THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEIR PROTECTION:

1. DESIGNATION OF THE GREAT KOBUK SAND DUNES AND THE IMMEDIATE SCENIC ENVIRONMENTS (110,000 ACRES) AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.

2. DESIGNATION OF THE CAPE KRUSENSTERN AREA (190,000 ACRES) AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM TO PROTECT ITS ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUES, UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURES, AND ITS COASTAL BIRD AND OTHER HABITATS.

3. INCORPORATION INTO THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM OF THE LOWER AND MIDDLE SECTIONS OF THE NOATAK AND KOBUK RIVER DRAINAGES, THE BAIRD MOUNTAINS, AND THE DRAINAGES OF SEVERAL SMALLER RIVERS FLOWING INTO THE CHUKCHI SEA (11.9 MILLION ACRES). BECAUSE THE AREA IS AN IMPORTANT HABITAT FOR THE ARCTIC CARIBOU HERD AND SUSTAINS A VARIETY OF OTHER WILDLIFE, THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE IS RECOMMENDED AS THE MANAGER FOR THIS RESERVE.

4. A PORTION OF THE NOATAK RIVER DRAINAGE IS RECOMMENDED AS A WILDERNESS STUDY AREA. THREE OF THE MANY FREE-FLOWING STREAMS, THE NOATAK, SALMON, AND WULIK RIVERS, HAVE BEEN STUDIED AS POSSIBLE WILD OR SCENIC RIVERS AND ARE RECOMMENDED FOR POTENTIAL DESIGNATION PENDING CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESERVE LANDS.

Some potential for oil and gas exists within the proposed units, but the provinces extend well beyond the recommended boundaries. Four proposed hydroelectric projects (Agashashok, Misheguk, Nimiuktuk, and Kobuk), if constructed, would inundate large parts of the proposed units and are incompatible with the protection of the natural values. Several small areas of bituminous coal deposits, two of which are in the proposed Alaska National Lands unit lie in the Kobuk valley. Major coal deposits are found to the north of the proposed units. The proposed park and new management unit is underlain by metallogenic provinces with potential for copper, gold, silver, nickel, lead, zinc, tin, iron, barite, molybdenum, platinum, chromium, tungsten, titanium, and asbestos. Exploration and extraction may occur on the Alaska National Lands wherever eventual classification allows.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping for subsistence purposes are intensive and widespread along the coast, the lower reach of the Noatak, and along the Kobuk River valley. THE COMMISSION RECOGNIZES THIS CONTINUING NEED OF LOCAL RESIDENTS FOR THE FISH AND GAME IN THE AREA, AND RECOMMENDS THAT HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING BE ALLOWED IN ALL PROPOSED UNITS, INCLUDING THE TWO RECOMMENDED FOR NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM STATUS. The boundaries of the proposed wilderness study area along the Noatak River have been delineated to make available some opportunities for future mineral development in the general area. The lower reach of the Noatak River, which is used more intensively for subsistence activities, is excluded.

If the important caribou herd and range of this area is to be protected, coordinated management will be required. In addition, access through this region to the western Arctic for energy resources of potential national interest may become necessary and would require coordinated planning.

Selawik

This middle section of the Selawik River drainage contains high density waterfowl habitat supporting migratory birds and other wildlife. This habitat is used for summering, nesting, molting, feeding, and resting during migration.

Significant populations of pintail, scaup, widgeon, old squaw, and scoter ducks; white-fronted geese; and sandhill cranes nest here, as well as the cackling and taverner's subspecies of Canada geese. Two to five percent of the whistling swans using the Pacific Flyways nest in the area. Migrating snow geese, numbering 200,000 to 300,000 birds, feed and rest around Kotzebue Sound, as do raptors and some Asiatic birds. Moose and caribou use the Selawik River drainage as winter habitat.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS DESIGNATION OF THIS AREA (1.5 MILLION ACRES) AS A WILDLIFE REFUGE TO PROTECT HABITAT AND PERPETUATE WILDLIFE POPULATIONS.

A sedimentary basin with petroleum and uranium potential underlies part of the area, but the basin extends well beyond the proposed refuge boundaries. A metallogenic province with potential for tin and molybdenum also underlie portions of the proposal, but extends beyond the proposed boundaries.

Taking of fish and game for local subsistence purposes is a common and important practice. HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING WOULD CONTINUE UNDER STATE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS IN COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL WILDLIFE AND HABITAT MANAGEMENT.

Adequate protection of the Arctic caribou herd and range and the extensive waterfowl habitat will require intergovernmental coordination with the involvement of private landowners. Coordinated planning for any future development of access through this area to the western Arctic will also be necessary.

Cape Lisburne and Cape Thompson

The prime natural value of these areas is their coastal cliff habitat for northwest Alaska's largest seabird colonies, with estimated populations of 2 to 3 million birds. The beaches and coastal waters also provide resting and feeding areas for migratory birds and hauling out grounds for marine mammals. Birds of prey, including gyrfalcons, golden eagles, and peregrine falcons, frequent the cliffs. Loons and a variety of other waterfowl, shorebirds, and perching birds are also present. Walrus, seal, whale, and occasional polar bear are seen along the coastal waters. The beaches, scenic cliffs, and adjoining tundra-covered uplands at Cape Lisburne form a relatively small ecosystem containing a coastal area and representative uplands of the northwest Arctic coast.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THESE VALUES OF NATIONAL INTEREST BE PROTECTED BY DESIGNATING TWO SMALL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE UNITS, ONE AT CAPE LISBURNE OF 63,000 ACRES, INCLUDING THE DRAINAGES OF ADJOINING

UPLANDS, AND 11,000 COASTAL ACRES AT CAPE THOMPSON. An area adjacent to the proposed Cape Thompson unit is noted for its scientific values and has received extensive ecological research. Most of the adjacent area has been selected by the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation.

Both units contain small portions of a potential oil and gas province. The proposed unit at Cape Lisburne contains some coal potential, and portions of Cape Thompson have potential for uranium, copper, lead, antimony, barite, and molybdenum. All these provinces extend well beyond the boundaries of the proposed units.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE IN THESE PROPOSED UNITS FOR MEETING THE SUBSISTENCE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS, THE COMMISSION HAS RECOMMENDED THAT CONTINUED HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING BE ALLOWED UNDER STATE REGULATIONS UNLESS RESTRICTED BY THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO PROTECT MIGRATORY SPECIES.

Seward Peninsula

A combination of ocean currents, barrier islands, coastal lagoons, and estuaries make the northwestern coast of the Seward Peninsula an important coastal habitat for migrating birds and marine mammals. Breeding habitat for pintail and scaup ducks and white-fronted geese is provided, as well as nesting areas for black brant, whistling swans, and a resting and feeding area for migrating snow geese. Sea mammals, mainly seal, walrus, and the Beluga whale, are seen in the coastal waters. Seals occasionally come ashore. Grizzly bear, wolf, wolverine, and smaller animals occur throughout. The area has uncommon scenic and scientific qualities, including the volcanic maar lakes near Devil Mountain, hot springs, scenic rock outcroppings, and pingos and other frost phenomena. The Seward Peninsula has significance as a relic of the Bering Land Bridge with evidence of past migration of animals, plants, and aboriginal peoples. Several archaeological sites have been identified in the area.

IN RECOGNITON OF THE IMPORTANT TERRESTRIAL WETLAND AND COASTAL HABITATS FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS AND MARINE MAMMALS, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS WILDLIFE REFUGE DESIGNATION FOR TWO UNITS, TOTALLING 1.5 MILLION ACRES. Nearby scenic areas with scientific and recreational values are included in the larger eastern unit.

A potential oil and gas province underlies part of the proposed unit but extends well beyond the recommended boundaries. A sedimentary basin with potential for uranium lies within the larger unit and is one of approximately 20 such basins in Alaska having potential for these minerals. Four areas on the Seward Peninsula, in addition to the hot springs incorporated within the proposal, are considered to have geothermal energy potential. Mineral provinces with potential for fluorine, silver, lead, zinc, tin, and tungsten underlie small portions of the proposed refuge, but extend under adjoining lands as well.

Taking of fish and game in the coastal zone for subsistence purposes is common and important to local residents. Hunting, fishing, and trapping would continue under State regulations in coordination with Federal

wildlife habitat and population objectives. The Seward Peninsula has an active reindeer industry, and reindeer grazing occurs under lease within the proposed refuge units. THE COMMISSION FINDS THAT REINDEER GRAZING IS GENERALLY COMPATIBLE WITH PROTECTION OF HABITAT VALUES, AND RECOMMENDS THAT CONTINUED GRAZING BE ALLOWED UNDER REGULATION.

Koyukuk

The lower Koyukuk River is composed of an extensive network of streams and lakes among forest, marsh, and brush, providing high density waterfowl habitat. Prevalent duck species include scaup, pintail, widgeon, and scoters. White-fronted geese and Canada geese are common nesters. Caribou and moose winter in the general area. Scenic features of scientific interest are the Nogahabara Sand Dunes, and the exemplary variety of oxbow, meander scroll, and thaw lakes in the Three Day Slough area.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THIS AREA (2.5 MILLION ACRES) BE DESIGNATED A WILDLIFE REFUGE TO PERPETUATE THE VALUABLE WETLAND HABITATS AND WILDLIFE.

Most of the unit is underlain by a sedimentary basin with potential for oil and gas and uranium. Nearly half of the basin lies outside the proposed boundaries. Hydroelectric power could potentially be developed within the area at the Dulbi site and another site downstream from the proposed unit. If developed, much of the lowlands would be inundated by reservoirs and natural values lost or altered. At present there is no significant demand for this development. A metallogenic province with potential for tin and molybdenum underlies portions of the proposed refuge, but extends beyond the recommended boundaries.

The proposed unit is largely forested and contains some timber stands of future commercial potential, particularly along the rivers. However, adjacent areas are also forested and may have greater potential. Some small tracts of lowlands bordering the rivers within the unit have agricultural potential, but cultivable soils are also found downstream and upstream from the proposed refuge. Continued hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed under State regulations in coordination with Federal habitat management and population concerns.

Coordinated management of the wide-ranging Arctic caribou herd is necessary if its population and habitat are to be fully protected.

Kanuti Flats

The Kanuti Flats in the middle Koyukuk drainage is a relatively small lowland basin containing an area of prime wetland waterfowl habitat. Duck species of importance that nest in this area are scaup, pintail, widgeon, and scoter. Canada and white-fronted geese also nest here. A network of lakes, streams, marshes, and forest supports other wildlife as well, including moose, black bear, and wolf. The western Arctic caribou herd periodically uses the area as winter range. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS AN AREA OF APPROXIMATELY 430,000 ACRES AS A WILDLIFE REFUGE TO PROTECT PRIME HABITAT AND WILDLIFE.

A petroleum province of unknown potential underlies a portion of the area. A small portion of a metallogenic province with potential for copper, nickel, iron, chromuim, platinum, titanium, and asbestos is within the area, but extends beyond the proposed refuge boundaries. Mineral exploration, development, or extraction may occur at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior through a permit and lease system.

The proposed unit is covered primarily by lowland forests, with some bottomland spruce-poplar of potential commercial value along the Koyukuk River and its south fork. This forest extends beyond the unit boundaries. Hunting, fishing, and trapping would continue under State wildlife management regulations. Other uses of the area would be allowed as permitted by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policies.

Bering Sea Islands

Five islands in the Bering Sea along the Seward Peninsula and in Norton Sound include some of the better seabird colonies along the northeastern rim of the Bering Sea. Fairway Rock (60 acres) a granitic island rising steeply to an elevation of 500 feet, supports 100,000 to 150,000 seabirds and provides a resting place for songbirds migrating across the Bering Sea. The 700-acre Sledge Island is rocky and generally flat-topped except for a 760-foot jagged mountain on the south. It is located about 25 miles west of Nome and contains ruins of an abandoned village. Over 35 species of birds nest here, including murres, auklets, black-legged kittiwakes, and common eiders. Egg Island (60 acres) is located 40 miles southwest of Unalakleet. About 2,000 thick-billed murres and 3,000 puffins nest here with several thousand other seabirds. Besboro Island (720 acres) supports populations of murres, auklets, puffins, and jaegers. The small Punuk Islands (160 acres) located just offshore of St. Lawrence Island provide hauling out habitat for a high density population of harbor seals. The Islands have a variety of seabirds, including pelagic cormorants, and significant archaeological values relating to the St. Lawrence Eskimos.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT FAIRWAY ROCK, SLEDGE ISLAND, AND PUNUK ISLANDS BE ADDED TO THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM. IN THE EVENT THAT EGG AND BESBORO ISLANDS ARE NOT CONVEYED TO ALASKA NATIVE CORPORATIONS, THEY ARE ALSO RECOMMENDED FOR REFUGE DESIGNATION. These islands have no apparent resource uses that would be precluded by their designation as refuge units. Total area of all islands is about 1,700 acres.

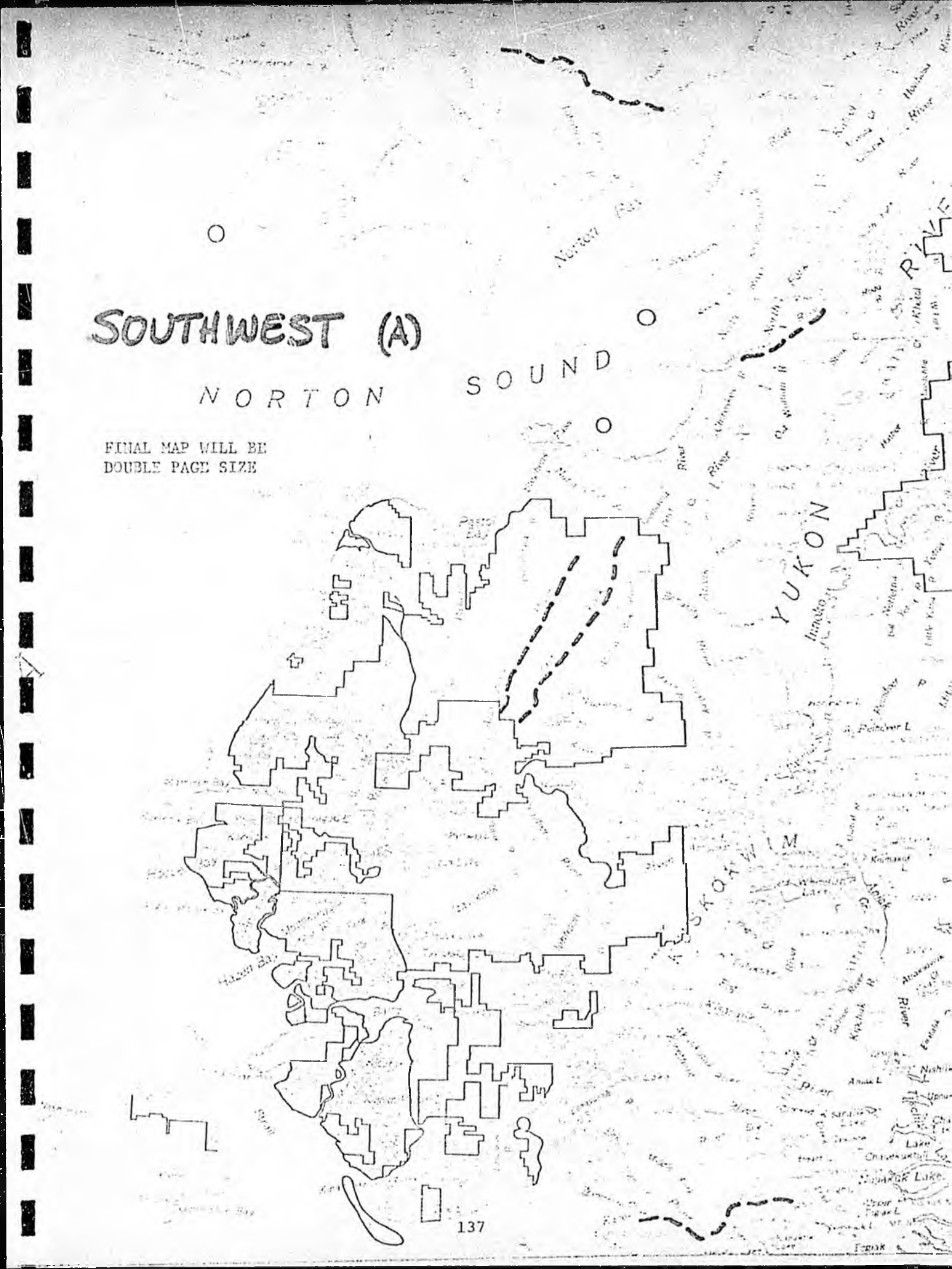
Other Wild and Scenic Rivers

TWO RIVERS WITHIN NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE-ALASKA, THE IKPIKPUK AND UTUKOK, AND THE KOYUK RIVER ON THE SEWARD PENINSULA ARE RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION AS POTENTIAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS PENDING FURTHER STUDY, EVALUATION, AND EVENTUAL CLASSIFICATION OF SURROUNDING LANDS.

SOUTHWESTERN ALASKA

The approximately 110,000-square-mile (70,400,000 acres) southwestern region of Alaska is drained by two of Alaska's major rivers, the Yukon and the Kuskokwim. The region is bordered on the west by the Bering Sea

SOUTHWEST (A)



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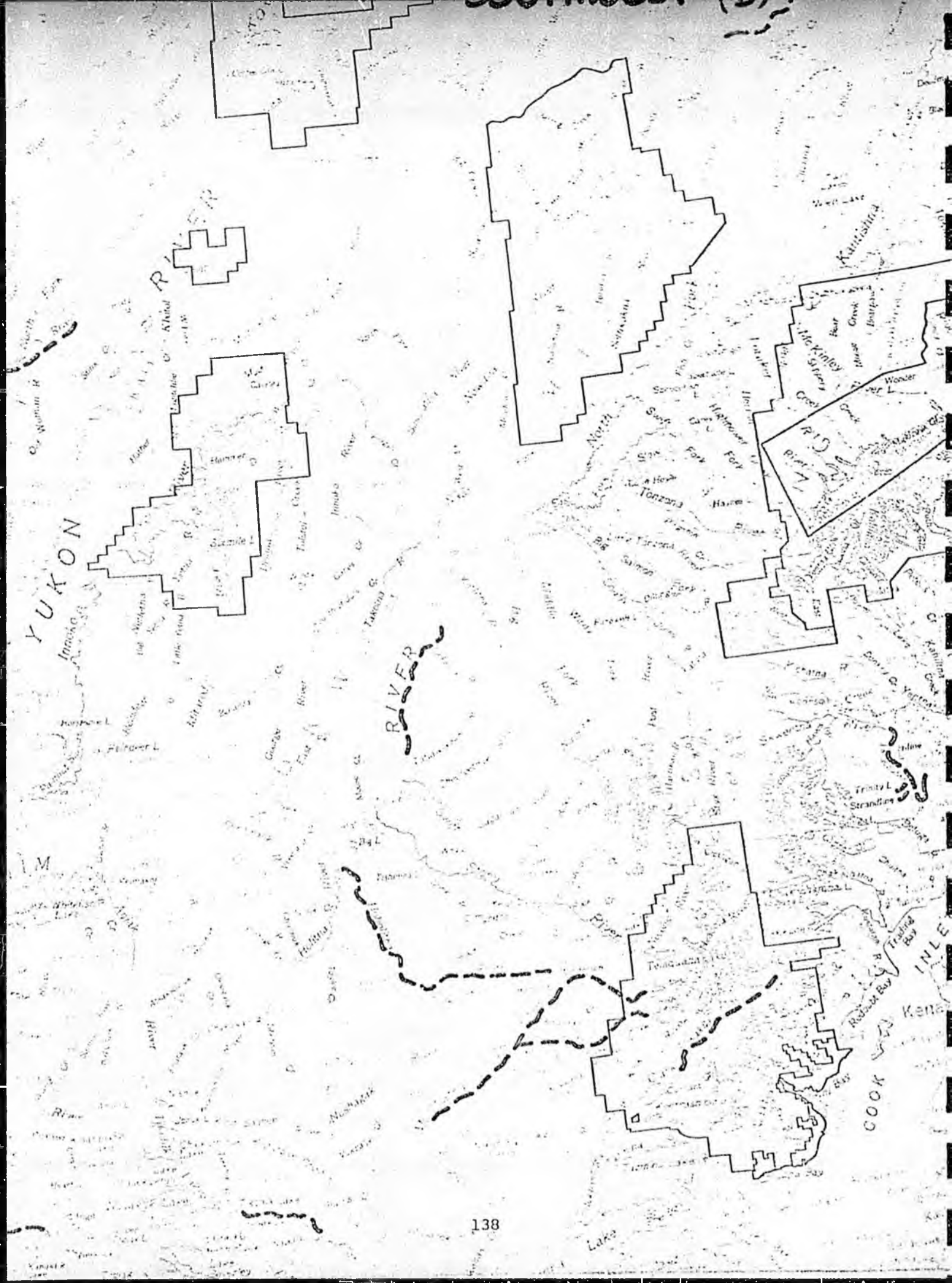

YUKON
RIVER
COOK INLET

and contains the central and lower two thirds of Alaska's Yukon drainage and its large delta, and the entire Kuskokwim drainage. Nunivak and several other smaller islands of the Bering Sea are in the region. Broad floodplains with hundreds of thousands of lakes, meandering streams, marshes and bogs, and low river plains are dominant landscapes. The Kuskokwim Mountains and portions of the Nulato Hills and Ahklun Mountains trend southerwesterly through the area. Most of the interior lowlands and uplands are partially forested with spruce, aspen, birch, and balsam poplar. Forest gives way to tundra communities in most of the coastal areas west of the mountains, except for scattered stands along the two major rivers and parts of Norton Sound. This region is the most productive waterfowl area in Alaska. Significant portions of the North American populations of several varieties of swan, geese, and ducks breed and nest here. Other wildlife, including black and brown bear, moose, wolf, wolverine, and caribou, are present. Sea mammals are found in some locations along the Bering Sea coast.

Near the coast, average annual precipitation levels are 15 to 20 inches, and wind is common. Subarctic conditions prevail in the interior with less precipitation, clearer skies, warmer summers, and colder winter. The first freeze generally occurs in early September with the last spring freeze in late May, leaving approximately 100 frost-free days each year. All streams remain frozen generally between November and May. July highs at Bethel average 62° and January lows average -3°. Ruby, which is farther from the coast, has an average July high of 70° and an average January low of -12°.

Portions of the region have potential of oil and gas, as well as metallic minerals. Inland from the coast there are some timber stands of potential commercial value and some lands that are suitable for cultivation, mostly along the major rivers. There is extensive acreage suitable for reindeer grazing throughout the region.

Although the region's population of nearly 20,000 is relatively high for rural "bush" Alaska, and over 50 communities are located here, the land remains largely undeveloped and unaltered. There is one regional center, Bethel, with a growing population of over 3,000. All other settlements are small villages with populations generally less than 400. Inhabitants are predominantly Eskimo with some Athabascan Indians in the upper drainages. There is little industry in the region except for some commercial fishing. Most of the available employment is related to government. Cash incomes and educational attainment levels are relatively low.

When Native entitlement is complete, approximately 15 percent of the land in this region, or about 10 million acres, will be in private ownership. The State of Alaska has selected nearly 17 million acres, roughly constituting 25 percent of the region. The State may make additional selections within this region, although it relinquised its selection rights to lands west of 161° longitude by agreement with the Secretary of the Interior in 1972. Discounting any future State selections, the Federal Government will retain ownership of up to 60 percent of the region.

Four national wildlife refuges have been established in the region to protect migratory waterfowl and other birds and musk-oxen of national interest. They are the Hazen Bay and Clarence Rhode refuges (2.8 million acres combined), the Nunivak Island refuge (1.9 million acres), and the relatively small Bering Sea refuges (41,000 acres). Four withdrawals were made under Section 17(d)(2) by the Secretary of the Interior in 1972: 5,352,000 acres in the Yukon Delta, 3,249,000 acres in Innoko Flats, 952,000 acres around the lower Nowitna River, and 319,000 acres in the Kaiyuk Slough.

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta

This large delta along the Bering Sea was formed by sediments deposited by the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers creating a broad plain with many thousands of lakes, streams, and ponds. The nearly flat wetlands are broken only by the rolling hills and bluffs of scattered island remnants. North of the Yukon River, gently sloping mountains form the Nulato Hills.

The entire Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region provides high density and key waterfowl habitat for 100 million marine and terrestrial birds of 150 species. Virtually all the white-fronted geese using the Pacific Flyway and 80 to 90 percent of the North American populations of cackling and emperor geese nest and breed here.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE HIGH DENSITY WATERFOWL HABITAT ON PUBLIC LANDS WEST AND SOUTH OF THE YUKON RIVER, WEST OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER, AND WEST OF 161° WEST LONGITUDE BE ADDED TO THE WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM (5.7 MILLION ACRES). AN AREA OF 3.5 MILLION ACRES NORTH OF THE DELTA AROUND THE ANDREAFSKY RIVER DRAINAGE CONTAINING MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY WATERFOWL AND UPLAND WILDLIFE HABITAT IS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IN THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM. BECAUSE THE AREAS CONTAIN UPLANDS AND LOWLANDS CLOSELY RELATED TO THE WATERFOWL AND THE WILDLIFE HABITAT OF THE YUKON DELTA, THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE IS RECOMMENDED AS THE MANAGER OF THIS UNIT.

Nearly the entire delta area contains potential for oil and gas. The provinces extend beyond the proposed refuge and new management system boundaries onto adjacent private and State-owned submerged lands. The wildlife refuge proposal contains potential for uranium, gold, silver, antimony, molybdenum, and tungsten, but the metallogenic provinces also extend beyond the proposed boundaries onto private and other public lands.

The proposed refuge contains some bottomland spruce-poplar forest of potential commercial value, but the major portions of the forest lie on adjacent private lands and upstream along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. The proposed Alaska National Lands unit contains stands of spruce-hardwood forest of possible commercial value along the valleys. Opportunities for commercial timber harvest in the general delta area would not be foreclosed by the designation of either of these units.

While lowland cultivable soils extend into the general area, they are climatically impaired. Primarily, the suitable cultivable soils lie upstream on private lands along the two major rivers. Potential exists in the delta lowlands for controlled reindeer grazing, and would not be precluded by refuge designation. Reindeer grazing potential in the Andreafsky uplands could be in conflict with maintenance of caribou, wolf, and bear populations in the area. Allowable grazing will be in accord with land classification developed for this Alaska National Land unit.

A relatively large number of people populate villages scattered about the delta area. Reliance on fish, waterfowl, and game for subsistence purposes is intensive and widespread. Hunting, fishing, and trapping under State regulation would continue on the proposed refuge and Alaska National Lands units unless restricted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission recognizes a need for coordination among the area landowners to protect the extensive waterfowl habitat found in different ownerships, to provide for any future needs for transportation development, and to best provide for continued subsistence needs which require extensive areas.

Innoko Flats/Kaiyuh Slough

These two areas of western interior Alaska are characterized primarily by wetland bogs and scattered black spruce, with a network of lakes and streams interspersed by occasional rolling hills. They provide high density wetland habitat for a variety of waterfowl. The Innoko Flats support an average of 53 ducks per square mile, while the Kaiyuh Slough provides habitat for about 67 ducks per square mile. Predominant species represented include widgeon, scaup, scoter, and goldeneye. An estimated population of 100,000 pintail ducks use the Innoko Flats, and nearly 50,000 geese nest in each of the proposed units. Both areas have significant populations of large mammals and furbearers, especially beaver.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THESE AREAS, TOTALLING ABOUT 2.2 MILLION ACRES OF NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE HABITAT, BE PROTECTED BY THEIR DESIGNATION AS UNITS OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM.

Oil and gas provinces partially underlie the proposed units, but extend well beyond their boundaries. The development of a possible hydroelectric project at Holy Cross would be incompatible with the protection of the prime natural values in the Innoko and Kaiyuh areas. Currently, there is no significant demand for development. The Innoko unit contains a metallogenic province with potential for gold, silver, antimony, molybdenum, and tungsten. This province extends well beyond the proposed boundaries.

The proposed Innoko unit contains some bottomland spruce-poplar forest of potential commercial value along two major waterways, as well as extensive stands of open lowland forests. Some lowland soils suitable for agriculture are also present, but more extensive areas of cultivable soils border the nearby Yukon River.

Nowitna

The Nowitna River is a major tributary in the central drainage of the Yukon River. The northern sector of the Nowitna drainage contains waterfowl habitat with low to medium density populations. Migratory waterfowl using the area include pintail, widgeon, scaup and scoter ducks, and white-fronted and Canada geese. Trumpeter swans also nest in the area. Caribou, moose, wolf, beaver, and other furbearers, are supported by the wetland and upland habitats. The free-flowing Nowitna River passes through a variety of landforms including scattered scenic bluffs and canyons. Fossil exposures are present in some stretches. The southern zone contains a mountainous area of forest and alpine tundra somewhat more scenic than other large expanses of the Kuskokwim Mountains. Forest cover is extensive and composed of varying mixtures of white and black spruce, aspen, birch, and balsam poplar. From the Yukon River to the southern headwaters of the Nowitna tributaries, the area is an exemplary cross section of interior Alaska landforms and ecosystems.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE VARIETY OF VALUES PRESENT IN THIS AREA, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS 3.5 MILLION ACRES IN THE NOWITNA DRAINAGE BE INCORPORATED IN THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM AND THAT THE NOWITNA RIVER BE DESIGNATED AS A POTENTIAL SCENIC RIVER, PENDING FURTHER EVALUATION IN THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS OF SURROUNDING LANDS. ADMINISTRATION OF THE NOWITNA UNIT BY THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE IS RECOMMENDED.

There has been increasing expression of interest in interior Alaska's forests and possible development of a forest industry within this extensive area. The U.S. Forest Service appears particularly well suited to manage the Nowitna River area because of its research capabilities and the need to develop appropriate silvicultural methods and other management programs for these and similar lands and their several values. Research findings developed here could be of value to other private landholders and State and Federal land administrators in the general area.

A potential petroleum basin underlies a portion of the area. Downstream hydroelectric potential at the Ruby site, if developed, would largely inundate the waterfowl habitat of the lowlands along the Nowitna and Yukon Rivers. A metallogenic province of unknown type has been identified in the southern portion and on adjoining public domain lands.

Forest stands of potential commercial value lie on the benches adjoining the Nowitna and Yukon Rivers. Lowland and upland soils suitable for cultivation are found in the northern zone and along the eastern bank. Taking of fish and game for subsistence purposes occurs commonly in the northern portion and would be permitted under the Alaska National Lands system. Boating use on the Nowitna River would continue.

Unalakleet River

This free-flowing clear-water river drains the Kaltag Mountains and flows southwest to the eastern shore of Norton Sound. It courses for 90 miles between slopes and rounded summits up to 2,800 feet. The valley floor supports spruce, birch, and willow stands, with scattered small

lakes in the lower reaches. The area includes habitat for a variety of large mammals, such as caribou, moose, and bear, as well as for small furbearers, waterfowl, and fish. A segment of the historic Iditarod trail parallels the river. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT A 60-MILE-LONG CORRIDOR ABOVE PRIVATE LANDS ALONG THE COAST BE DESIGNATED AS A WILD RIVER WITHIN THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM. A potential oil and gas province crosses the proposal, but extends well to either side of the proposed corridor. The forests along the river have little commercial value beyond local use. THE COMMISSION RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE FOUND ALONG THE RIVER IN MEETING THE SUBSISTENCE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS, AND RECOMMENDS THAT HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING BE PERMITTED UNDER STATE REGULATIONS.

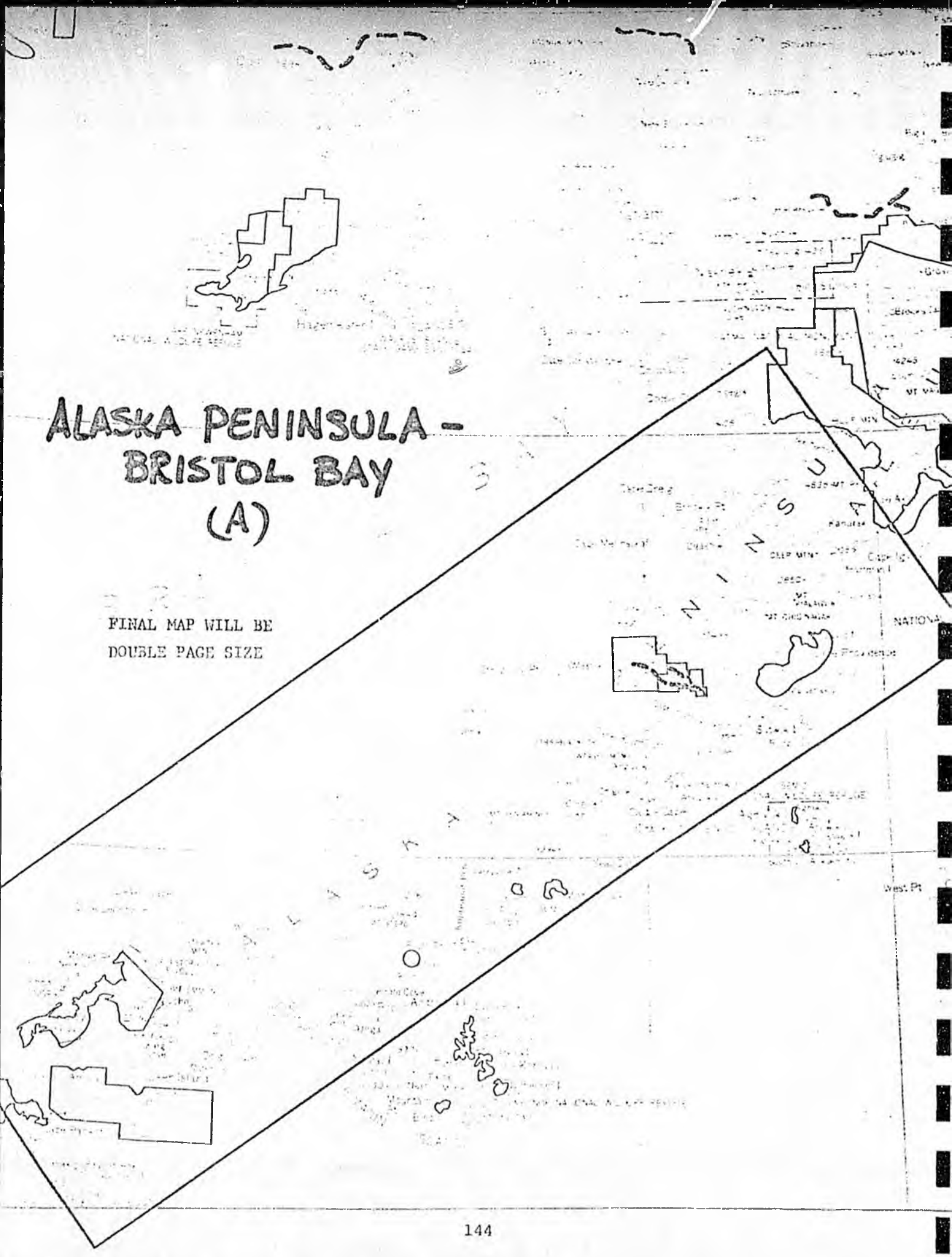
Other Wild and Scenic Rivers

TWO OTHER RIVERS IN THIS REGION, THE ANDREAFSKY AND ITS EAST FORK, AND A SEGMENT OF THE MIDDLE KUSKOKWIM, ARE RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION AS POTENITAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS WITH FURTHER STUDY, EVALUATION, AND CLASSIFICATION OF SURROUNDING LANDS TO AID IN FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

ALASKA PENINSULA - BRISTOL BAY

The Alaska Peninsula extends to the southwest from southcentral Alaska and trails off into the 1,200-mile chain of the Aleutian Islands that separates the Bering Sea from the North Pacific Ocean. Also included within the region are the drainages north of Bristol Bay, the Kodiak Island complex, and numerous small islands located in the western Gulf of Alaska off the Alaska Peninsula's eastern coast. This region has some of the most productive freshwater and marine fisheries in the world. The Bristol Bay drainages provide rich spawning grounds for a variety of salmon; and shellfish are abundant in the cold waters of the North Pacific. Among the prominent scenic features of the region are a chain of volcanos and other mountain features, and an irregular, often rugged coast extending down the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands. Several lake districts in the Bristol Bay drainages and upper Alaska Peninsula are notable for their scenic, habitat, and recreational values. Predominant vegetation of the area is tundra communities, with forest covering less than 10 percent of the region and generally restricted to Afognak Island and northern portions of Kodiak Island and the upper Kvichak and Nushagak River drainages. Wildlife, particularly brown bear, moose, and caribou, are prevalent on the Alaska Peninsula. Concentrations of various seabirds and sea mammals, including the sea otter, are found at places along the coast and on various islands. The Pribilof Islands are noted for their northern fur seal rookeries.

In most of this region's maritime zone, annual precipitation averages from 30 to 70 inches, and frost-free days range from 100 in northern Bristol Bay to nearly 180 on the southern Aleutians. Winters are by Alaska standards relatively mild, and summers cool. Wind and fog are common climatic occurrences. Inland areas north and east of Bristol Bay have slightly colder winters and warmer summers. Mean daily temperatures in January at King Salmon are +13° and in July is 55°F; at Cold Bay +28°F for January and 50°F for July; and at Shemya near the western end


ALASKA PENINSULA -
BRISTOL BAY
(A)
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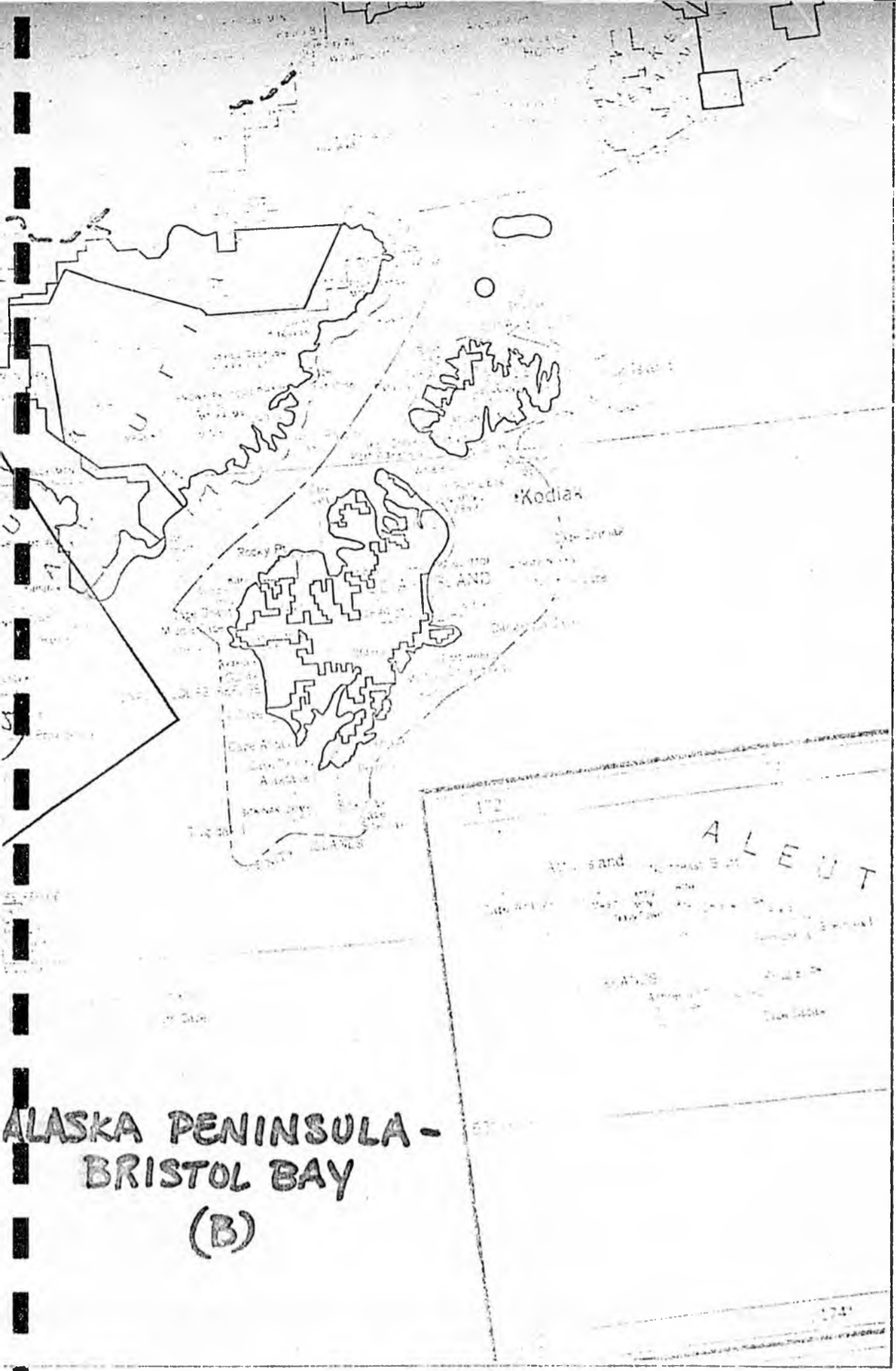


ALASKA PENINSULA - BRISTOL BAY (B)

of the Aleutian Islands, the mean daily temperatures are slightly warmer for January and slightly cooler for July than at Cold Bay.

This region of approximately 50,000 square miles (32 million acres) has less than 25,000 people. There is only one large community in the region, Kodiak, with a population of approximately 5,000. All other settlements have populations of less than 1,000, except two isolated military bases on the Aleutian Islands. Except for these military bases and Kodiak, the population is predominantly Aleut and Eskimo. No roads extend into the region and access is by air or water. The region remains almost entirely in its natural state. Major industries are commercial fishing and tourism, with some small-scale timber cutting mostly on Kodiak Island and some grazing of reindeer, sheep, and domestic stock. Three focal points of tourism are Kodiak Island, the Pribilof Islands, and Katmai National Monument. Recreational use of the Lake Iliamna and the Wood River-Tikchik Lakes area and sport hunting on the Alaska Peninsula by residents and nonresidents are increasing.

When their entitlement to lands within this region is satisfied, Alaska Native corporations will own approximately 25 percent of the region. The State of Alaska has currently made selections, totalling 15 percent of the region. Discounting any further selections the State may make, the Federal Government will retain ownership of about 60 percent of the region. Existing Federal reserves include the Afognak Island portion (458,000 acres) of the Chugach National Forest; four large wildlife refuges (Aleutian Islands, 2.7 million acres; Kodiak Island, 1.8 million acres; Izembeck, 415,000 acres; and Cape Newenham, 265,000 acres); three small wildlife refuges (Semidi, Simeonof, and Bogoslof) totalling 20,190 acres; and the 2.8-million-acre Katmai National Monument. Small areas of critical habitat are reserved at the Pribilof Islands for northern fur seal management.

The following withdrawals were made by the Secretary of the Interior under Section 17(d)(2): over 2 million acres near Lake Iliamna, slightly under 3 million acres centered on the Togiak River drainage, approximately 600,000 acres on the south and 1 million acres on the north of Katmai National Monument, over 800,000 acres around Aniakchak Caldera, Hagemeister Island (77,000 acres), and two island groupings (Shumagin Islands, 15,300 acres, and Barren Islands, 10,500 acres). In addition, several other areas on the Alaska Peninsula and along the Bristol Bay coast were withdrawn by the Secretary of the Interior as replacement lands for those lands in existing wildlife refuges selected by Alaska Native corporations.

Areas adjoining Katmai National Monument

Areas adjoining Katmai National Monument contain scenic mountains, canyons, lakes, streams, and coastline of recreational and scientific interest, as well as important wildlife habitat. Some areas contain upper reaches or parts of watersheds in the present Monument. South of the Monument, Alinchak and Puale Bays are surrounded by colorful mountain slopes and cliffs. Rocky islets frequented by seabirds and marine mammals are found in the bay. The islands and headlands of Puale Bay support 200,000 black-legged kittihawks. The craggy summit of Mt. Kejulik, an extinct volcano, rises north of the extensive shoreline of

Becharof Lake. American Creek flows into the Monument from glacial tarns and Murray and Hammersly Lakes in the mountains to the north. Nearby Kulik Lake lies between steep mountain slopes and provides access for water oriented activities and hiking trips through the scenic mountains to the Monument in the south. North of the Monument the Kamishak-Douglas Rivers area contains scenic mountain and valley formations enhanced by occasional cascades and waterfalls. Areas north and south contain important brown bear denning and feeding habitats in the vicinity of several streams with anadromous fish runs. Bear movement between the existing Monument and adjoining areas is believed to occur. These areas also serve as habitat for moose, caribou, and other wildlife.

TO EXTEND PROTECTION TO THE NATURAL VALUES OF LANDS ADJACENT AND RELATED TO THE KATMAI NATIONAL MONUMENT, THE COMMISSION PROPOSES NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ADDITIONS TOTALLING 1.1 MILLION ACRES. FURTHER, THE COMMISSION BELIEVES THE PROPOSED EXPANDED MONUMENT WITH ITS COMPLEX OF SCENIC GEOLOGIC FEATURES, WILDLIFE HABITAT, AND OTHER NATURAL VALUES, MERITS REDESIGNATION BY CONGRESS AS A NATIONAL PARK. THE COMMISSION ALSO RECOM-MENDS THAT A GROUP OF 80 TINY ISLANDS, JUTE ISLANDS, PINNACLE ROCK AND COASTAL HEADLANDS NEAR JUTE PEAK AND CAPE AKLEK IN OR NEAR PUALE BAY TOTALLING 25,875 ACRES BE INCORPORATED AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM TO PROTECT SEABIRD ROOKERIES AND SEA MAMMAL HABITAT. SOME 0.88 MILLION ACRES OF SIGNIFICANT HABITAT FOR BEAR DENNING AND CONCENTRATION, CARIBOU, MOOSE, AND FISH, AND SCENIC VALUES BETWEEN KATMAI NATIONAL MONUMENT AND BECHAROF LAKE, ARE RECOMMENDED FOR INCORPORATION IN THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM WITH MANAGEMENT BY THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.

A metallogenic province with potential for copper, silver, gold, lead, zinc, iron, and molybdenum traverses the proposed extensions and existing Monument, but extends farther to the north and south onto adjacent public and private lands.

Coastal forests of western hemlock and Sitka spruce are located along the Kamishak River. Some interior mixed spruce-hardwood forests grow in the vicinity of Nonvianuk Lake. These forests may have some potential commercial value, but more extensive forests in better growing conditions are found farther north. The taking of fish and game by local residents to meet their subsistence needs is common in the area west of the existing Monument. Some areas with wildlife populations to help meet these needs have been excluded from the recommended additions, to the Monument. Some are included in the Alaska National Lands unit where hunting and fishing are permitted.

Habitat for the significant brown bear populations of this area are under several different jurisdictions. If the brown bear is to be perpetuated and adequately protected in the Katmai area, coordinated management of the bears and significant bear habitat adjoining the Monument will be required.

Aniakchak Caldera National Monument

Aniakchak Volcano is a large volcano about 4,000 feet high located on the Alaska Peninsula about 400 miles southwest of Anchorage. The volcano

contains a 30-square-mile steep-walled caldera with warm springs, areas of high ground temperature, cinder cones, and other colorful rock formations. Also within the caldera is Surprise Lake from which the Aniakchak River rushes out of the caldera through a deep gash and then flows on to the Pacific Ocean. The river, the largest on the Pacific side of the Peninsula, runs for 25 miles varying in character from rapids as it issues from the caldera to quieter waters downstream with good boating potential. Mountain peaks in the general area range from 2,000 to 4,000 feet in altitude. Brown bear, moose, and caribou are found in the vicinity, as well as some smaller mammals and birds.

TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT GEOLOGICAL AND BIOLOGICAL PHENOMENA AND SCENIC VALUES OF THIS VOLCANIC AREA, THE COMMISSION PROPOSES THAT THE CALDERA AND PORTIONS OF THE VOLCANO'S OUTER SLOPES BE DESIGNATED A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM. THE ANIAKCHAK RIVER IS RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION AS A WILD RIVER. The proposed river corridor includes the watershed of the river extending from the caldera to the ocean, including the tributaries to the north. The two units combined contain 250,000 acres.

The proposed park and river lie within a petroleum province. Some of the area also contains a metallogenic province with potential for copper, silver, gold, lead, zinc, iron, and molybdenum. These petroleum and mineral provinces extend well beyond the proposed boundaries onto adjoining Federal, State, and private lands. The caldera and immediate slopes of the volcano have geothermal energy potential, but similar potential in volcanic areas is present both north and south of the proposed unit.

Sport hunting, primarily for brown bear and moose, has taken place primarily along the coastal zone. CONTINUATION OF HUNTING IN THE PROPOSED WILD RIVER AREA IS RECOMMENDED UNDER STATE REGULATION.

Area adjoining Cape Newenham National Wildlife Refuge

The area adjoining the Cape Newenham National Wildlife Refuge is characterized by broad valleys and tundra-covered rolling uplands. It adjoins a bay bordered by cliffs, beach, and estuaries. The area contains medium density waterfowl nesting habitat and a coastal zone habitat important for migrating waterfowl. Salt water estuaries containing eel grass are important gathering areas for the spring and fall migrations of black brant, Canada and emperor geese, and eiders. Lowlands and uplands include habitat for brown bear, moose, wolf, wolverine, and smaller wildlife. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THIS AREA OF 240,000 ACRES BE ADDED TO THE EXISTING CAPE NEWENHAM NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TO PROTECT WILDLIFE AND HABITAT. Most of the land involved in this addition has been withdrawn as replacement lands for those refuge lands selected by Alaska Native corporations.

The area has little apparent potential for other resources. An area adjoining the existing refuge on the northwest has been a valuable source of platinum, and the potential province extends well northward but it does not appear to extend within the proposed refuge boundaries. Reindeer grazing potential exists, but extensive similar habitat lies north of the area.

Pacific Coast Islands Bordering the Alaska Peninsula

Off the eastern shores of the Alaska Peninsula lie hundreds of relatively small, rocky, weather beaten islands. Most of these are generally barren of vegetation or are covered by a thin mantle of grasses or heath. Collectively, these islands provide high density habitats for a variety of waterfowl and marine mammal species.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT A NUMBER OF THESE ISLANDS (EXCLUDING SELECTIONS CONVEYED TO ALASKA NATIVES) BE PROTECTED IN THREE UNITS OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM TOTALLING ABOUT 56,000 ACRES.

One unit, named for the Shumagin Islands, contains seven island groups including the Puale Bay group previously mentioned. The Koniuji Island group (36,932 acres) supports over half a million horned puffins; the 2,165-acre Chiginigak Island group provides habitat for 183,000 tufted puffins; Bird Island (4,300 acres) supports 43,000 black-legged kittiwakes; the Mitrofania group (1,095 acres) contains nesting habitat for over 200,000 murres; the Sandman Reefs (927 acres) shelter fork-tailed petrils, cormorants, and glaucous-winged gulls; Karpa Island (610 acres) provides habitat for over a quarter of a million seabirds, primarily murres. Many of the proposed refuge islands also provide rookeries and resting grounds for harbor seals, seal lions, and sea otters.

The second unit consists of approximately 440 acres of numerous rocks and islets offshore from Kodiak Island that are proposed for addition to the existing Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. These relatively barren islands support pelagic cormorants, tufted puffins, black-legged kittiwakes, pigeon guillemots, and glaucous-winged gulls. Bald eagles also nest along the shorelines. Many similar rocks and islets would also be suitable additions, if not eventually conveyed to Alaska Native corporations from lands they have currently selected.

The third island group is the Barren Islands complex (10,020 acres). These weather beaten islands near the entrance to Cook Inlet, including the Latax Rocks encompass the most important known nesting areas for marine birds in a 1,000-mile arc along the Gulf of Alaska. The islands support 700,000 seabirds, as well as significant populations of sea otters, sea lions, and harbor seals. The noisy sea lion rookery at Sugarloaf Island in the Barren Islands may be the largest in Alaska.

A metallogenic province with potential for copper, nickel, iron, platinum, chromium, titanium, and asbestos possibly traverses the proposed Barren Islands Refuge. However, the province extends onto public and private lands on the Kenai Peninsula mainland to the north, and onto Afognak Island (part of the Chugach National Forest) and the State-selected Shuyak Island to the south. Portions of the Shumagin Islands group lie within a large major oil and gas province, but the relatively small acreage reserved would not significantly inhibit future oil and gas development in the region.

Withdrawn Areas Not Included in Commission Proposals

Four other areas primarily within the Bristol Bay-Alaska Peninsula area were withdrawn for study under Section 17(d)(2) of ANCSA.

Lands of the Kvichak River drainage mostly around Iliamna Lake and of the Alagnak River drainage to the south, including Kukaklek and Nonvianuk and other smaller lakes, were identified principally because of their fisheries habitat (including major red salmon runs); bear, moose, and other wildlife habitat; forest; and recreational values. Large areas bordering Iliamna Lake have been selected by Native village corporations. The State of Alaska may have selection rights on lands interspersed among the private lands. An oil and gas basin underlies the western end, and a metallogenic province with copper potential traverses the area. Believing that management of this area should focus principally on protection and enhancement of the fish populations and habitats, and in consideration of the emerging land pattern and the considerable State interest and regulatory authority, the Commission does not recommend the designation of the Iliamna Lake area as a unit of the national conservation systems. WILD RIVER DESIGNATION IS RECOMMENDED FOR AN APPROXIMATE 46-MILE SEGMENT OF THE MAINSTREAM OF THE ALAGNAK RIVER STARTING AT KUKAKLEK LAKE, AND THE 11-MILE NONVIANUK RIVER, THE PRINCIPAL TRIBUTARY. Both rivers are relatively small clearwater streams that flow freely from large lakes at first through moderately incised canyons, then through lowlands having low local relief and varying forest cover. Forests along the river have little commercial value, and better potential occurs on the private lands along the lower reach that is not recommended for designation. A sedimentary basin with oil and gas and uranium potential courses the lower reach but extends well beyond to the north, south, and west. THE COMMISSION RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE ALONG THE RIVER IN MEETING SUBSISTENCE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS AND RECOMMENDS CONTINUED HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING UNDER STATE REGULATIONS. Coordination may be needed in this area with respect to possible future surface transportation across the lower reach of the river.

THE COMMISSION ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT THE COPPER RIVER AT THE HEAD OF ILIAMNA LAKE, AND THE KARLUK RIVER IN THE KODIAK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, BE DESIGNATED POTENTIAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, PENDING OUTCOME OF LAND STATUS PATTERNS AND FURTHER EVALUATION OF FEASIBILITY.

The Togiak area is characterized by broad valleys, numerous scenic lakes, clear streams, often rugged mountains, and vegetative cover mostly of tundra or brush communities. The various terrestrial and aquatic habitats support fish, waterfowl, brown bear, moose, and other smaller animals. A metallogenic province with potential for copper, nickel, iron, titanium, chromium, platinum, and asbestos traverses the western portion. In reviewing the Togiak withdrawal, the Commission has considered possible State interest in the western sector for mineral potential.

The mountain, lake, and river complex of the Togiak and Kulukuk River drainages, though scenic and possessing some wildlife values, does not of itself appear to be of national significance. However, it does have values complementary to the adjacent State-owned Wood-Tikchik Lakes area that is of outstanding significance and being considered as a State

park. If the Wood-Tikchik area is further considered through land exchange as a possible national park, then the Togiak area should be reassessed for its national interest. FROM THE EASTERN TOGIAK AREA, THE COMMISSION HAS IDENTIFIED THE TOGIAK RIVER AS HAVING NATURAL FEATURES OF POTENTIAL NATIONAL INTEREST, AND RECOMMENDS DESIGNATION AS A POTENTIAL ADDITION TO THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM PENDING FURTHER EVALUATION.

FROM THE WESTERN SECTION OF THE TOGIAK WITHDRAWAL, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS WILD RIVER DESIGNATION FOR THE KANEKTOK RIVER WHICH HEADS IN THE AHKLUN MOUNTAINS AND FLOWS WESTERLY INTO KUSKOKWIM BAY. (SOUTHWESTERN ALASKA PRESENTATION AREA). FROM KAGATI LAKE ABOUT 59 MILES OF THE MAIN STREAM OF THIS CLEAR-WATER FREE-FLOWING RIVER ARE PROPOSED. The river is boatable with scenic values and fishing opportunities and passes through a mountain valley in the upper portion and a flat tundra area in the lower section. TAKING OF FISH AND GAME ALONG THE RIVER FOR SUBSISTENCE PURPOSES IS RECOGNIZED AS A LOCALLY IMPORTANT USE, AND CONTINUED HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING UNDER STATE REGULATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED. The metallogenic province mentioned above extends north and south of the river corridor.

Hagemeister Island, originally withdrawn as part of the Togiak unit, contains a seabird colony at its southern tip, an unusual sandspit, and some hauling out habitat for walrus and other sea mammals. The island is essentially primitive in nature and is currently under lease for reindeer grazing. The Commission does not recommend that Hagemeister Island be designated as a unit of the national conservation systems at this time. Its wildlife and other values can be adequately protected through management plans for the island.

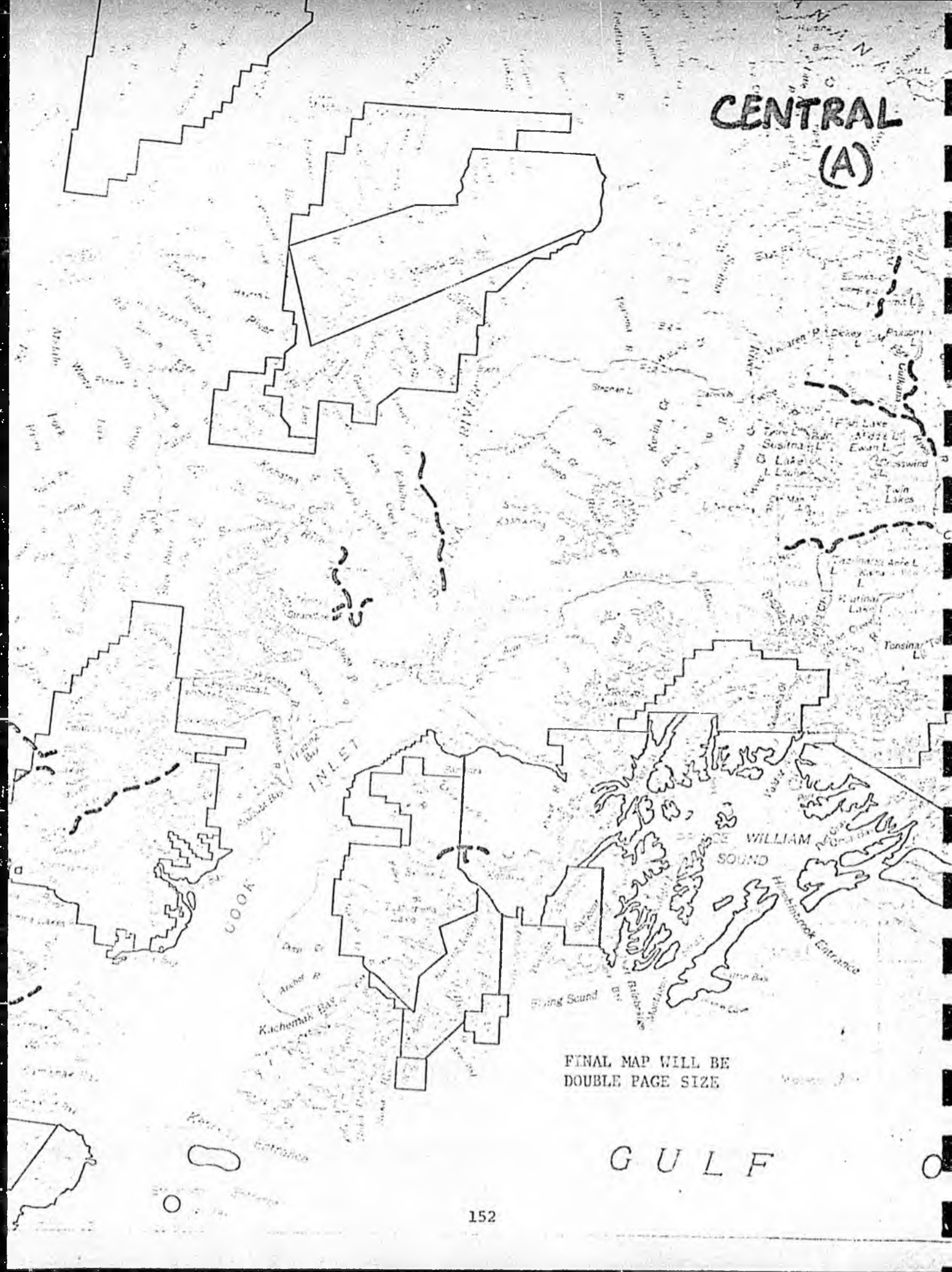
Chernabura Island, one of the Shumagin group, was withdrawn by the Secretary as one of a series of coastal islands. It contains little significant seabird habitat of national interest relative to other islands in the area with much higher and more varied bird and sea mammal populations. Therefore, the Commission does not recommend that it be designated a unit of the national conservation systems.

Other Potential Wild and Scenic Rivers

WITHIN THIS PART OF ALASKA, THE COMMISSION ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT THE NUYAKUK RIVER, AND A SEGMENT OF THE MULCHATNA RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARY, THE CHILIKADROTNA, BE STUDIED BY THE STATE OF ALASKA FOR POSSIBLE LEGISLATIVE DESIGNATION BY THE STATE AND INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM.

CENTRAL ALASKA

Central Alaska includes the Kenai Peninsula, the Matanuska, Susitna, and Copper River drainages, the Wrangell and Chugach Mountains, most of the Alaska Range, the interior Tanana Valley, and the area around Lake Clark on the western side of Cook Inlet. The region covers about 135,000 square miles. On the south, the region borders Cook Inlet and the Gulf of Alaska. Nearly three quarters of the State's population lives here.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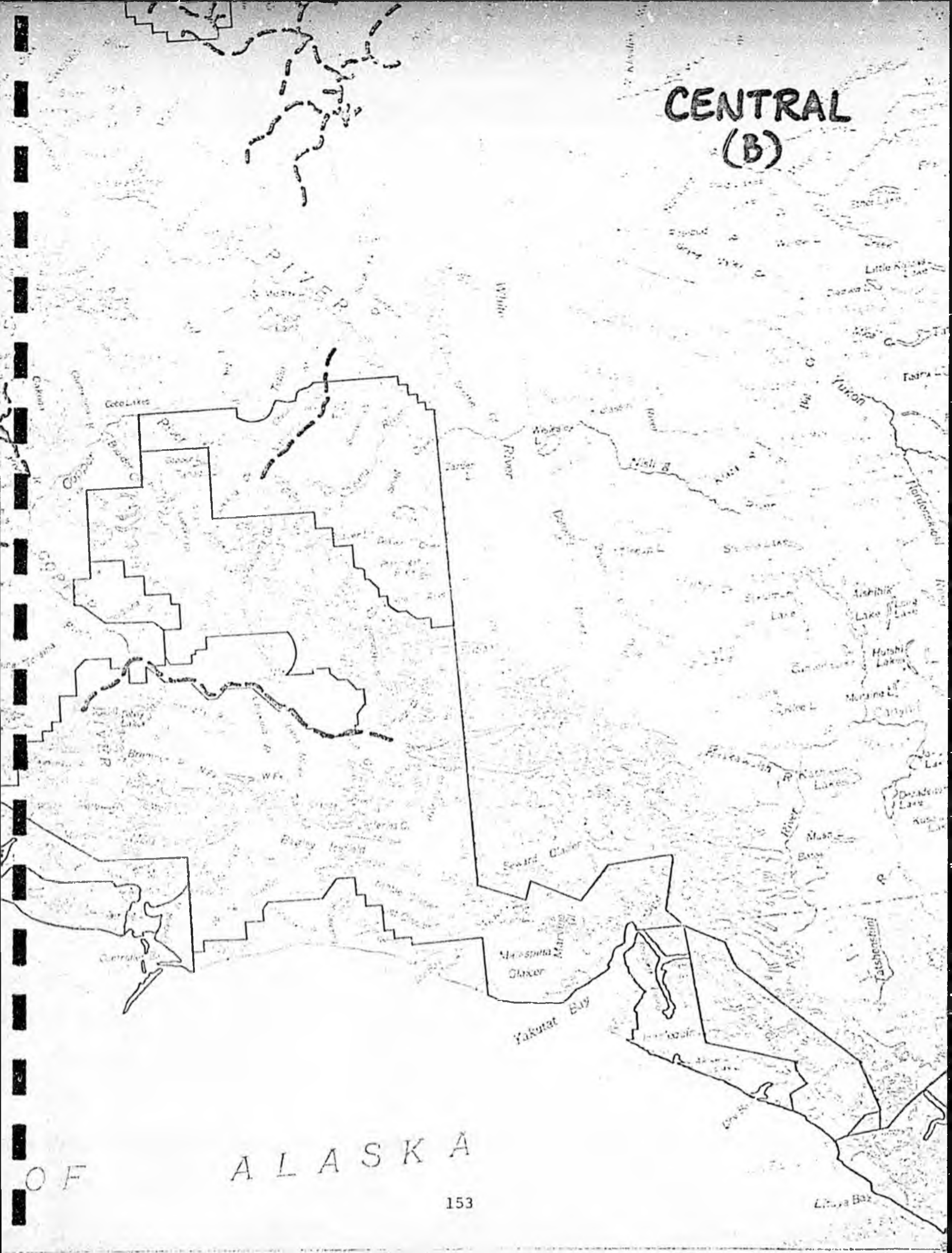
CENTRAL
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Yukon
River
White
Coco Lakes
Aishihik
Lake
Seward Glacier
Malaspina
Glacier
Bagley Icefield
Yakutat Bay
Tatshenshini
Lituya Bay
OF
ALASKA

Population is concentrated, for the most part, in several large centers, leaving most of the region unpopulated and insignificantly altered from its natural state. Slightly under half of the State's 400,000 residents live in the immediate environs of Alaska's largest city, Anchorage. Approximately 60,000 people reside in the Fairbanks area, Alaska's second largest city and interior Alaska's major population center. Other relatively densely populated areas are the Kenai Peninsula with four of Alaska's larger towns, the Matanuska Valley adjoining the Anchorage area, and two towns on Prince William Sound (Valdez and Cordova). The remainder of the region's population lives in very small, scattered communities. Most inhabitants are Caucasians intermixed with Alaska Natives, blacks, and Orientals.

The State's road network lies almost entirely within this region, as does Alaska's only federally owned and operated railroad running from Seward to Fairbanks. Major industry and sources of employment are largely urban, such as government, construction, and wholesale and retail sales and services which are not directly related to resource development. However, oil and gas development is a significant industry on the Kenai Peninsula and in upper Cook Inlet, and leases have been sold for offshore development in the Gulf of Alaska. Commercial fishing occurs in the lower Cook Inlet, Gulf of Alaska, and Prince William Sound. There are several, mostly small-scale, mining operations. Timber-cutting occurs in the coastal forest along the Gulf Coast and Cook Inlet areas, with most of the production exported to Japan. A number of small farms operate in the Matanuska Valley near Anchorage and the Tanana Valley near Fairbanks.

Nearly all of the continent's highest peaks above 14,500 feet, including North America's highest, Mt. McKinley, are in this region, as are the continent's largest glaciers and icefields. Fiords, wave-beaten beaches, and rocky coasts are found along the Gulf of Alaska. The region contains both coastal and interior forests, intermixed with lowland bogs and tundra.

Nearly every species of large northern land mammal, including brown and black bear, moose, sheep, goat, caribou, and wolf can be found in the region. Several kinds of sea mammals are present at places along the coast. The region contains some prime habitat for waterfowl, eagles, and seabirds.

Climate varies widely in the region. In general, winters are colder, summers hotter, and precipitation less in the interior than in the coastal areas. Fairbanks has a mean daily January temperature of -16°F, a July mean of 60°F (with frequent summer days with high temperatures in the 70's and 80's), an average of 89 frost-free days per year, and annual precipitation only slightly exceeding 11 inches. Anchorage on Cook Inlet, by comparison, has mean January and July temperatures of 12°F and 58°F, respectively, with approximately 125 frost-free days each year, and an annual precipitation level of nearly 15 inches. Winter temperatures and precipitation are highest along the Gulf of Alaska coast, where the waters are generally ice free.

Oil and gas provinces underlie portions of the region. The Wrangell and Chugach Mountains and the Alaska Range have significant mineral values. Some timber stands in the coastal and interior forests are of commercial value, and a significant percentage of those cultivable soils in suitable climatic zones lie within this region.

A substantial portion of the State of Alaska's land entitlement has been satisfied through selections in Central Alaska, totalling about 30 percent of the region. Selections by Alaska Native corporations will constitute another 10 percent. Discounting future State selections, the Federal Government will retain jurisdiction over about 60 percent of the region. Existing Federal reserves in the region include the Chugach National Forest covering over 4 million acres, the 1.7-million-acre Kenai National Moose Range, Mt. McKinley National Park of nearly 2 million acres, a small Tuxedni National Wildlife Refuge, and several large military reserves totalling some 2.3 million acres. The following 12 withdrawals from the region were made by the Secretary of the Interior in 1972 under Section 17(d)(2):

Chugach Mountains (7,280,000 acres)
Wrangell Mountains (3,870,000 acres)
Land around Mt. McKinley National Park (3,050,000 acres)
Lake Clark (3,090,000 acres)
College Fiord (395,000 acres)
Nellie Juan Valley (276,000 acres)
Land to the south of the Kenai National Moose Range (62,000 acres)
Harding Icefield (50,000 acres)
Granite-Chiswell Islands (6,000 acres)
Aialik Peninsula (5,000 acres)
Pye Islands (5,000 acres)

Wrangell-Chugach

This corner of central Alaska lies adjacent to the Canadian border and includes portions of four major mountain systems, Wrangell, Chugach, St. Elias, and the Alaska Range. The area encompasses most of the major North American mountains from 14,500 to 18,000 feet, as well as the continent's largest glaciers and icefields. The massive mountains bordered by lesser peaks rise from broad, forested river valleys and the wave-beaten coast of the Gulf of Alaska. Among the scenic features of the area are the subalpine Tebay Lakes; the steep-walled Chitistone Canyon; the sprawling Malaspina Glacier, largest piedmont glacier in North America, over 40 miles wide along its terminal lobe; and a still steaming volcano, Mt. Wrangell.

This area, especially around the Wrangell Mountains, contains some of Alaska's finest Dall sheep habitat and some of the largest Dall sheep. The Copper River corridor and the Gulf Coast are major migration routes for birds, and the lower Copper River and delta is a key nesting, resting, and feeding place. Most of North America's trumpeter swans and nearly all dusky Canada geese nest there. Hauling out areas for marine mammals, including sea lions and harbor seals, are found on the coastal beaches and islands near the delta and the Malaspina Glacier forelands. Three

caribou herds and two small herds of introduced bison range through the area's interior valleys. Goat, bear, wolf, and smaller mammals are also present.

RECOGNIZING THIS RICH DIVERSITY OF NATURAL VALUES, THE COMMISSION MAKES THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEIR PROTECTION. THE MAIN MOUNTAIN AND GLACIER COMPLEXES ARE PROPOSED AS A NEW UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM CONTAINING 9.7 MILLION ACRES. TWO UNITS IN THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM ARE RECOMMENDED, ONE IN THE CHITINA VALLEY (1.0 MILLION ACRES), AND THE OTHER ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE WRANGELL MOUNTAINS (2.9 MILLION ACRES). THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS THE RECOMMENDED MANAGER FOR BOTH OF THESE UNITS BECAUSE OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THEIR SCENIC, HABITAT, TRANSPORTATION, AND RECREATIONAL VALUES TO THE PROPOSED PARK. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT PORTIONS OF THE LOWER COPPER RIVER AND CHUGACH MOUNTAINS (1.3 MILLION ACRES) BE INCORPORATED WITHIN THE EXISTING CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST; AND THAT PRIME WATERFOWL, MIGRATORY BIRD, AND SEA MAMMAL HABITAT NEAR THE COPPER RIVER DELTA IN THE EXISTING CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST BE DESIGNATED A NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE UNIT (350,000 ACRES). FOUR RIVERS--THE CHITINA, LOWER COPPER, BREMNER, AND NABESNA--ARE RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION AS POTENTIAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS PENDING FURTHER STUDY AND CLASSIFICATION OF ADJOINING LANDS. Taken together, the proposals form a protective system for the range of natural values and ecosystems found in this subregion, while not foreclosing opportunities for hunting of game species or use of energy resources and strategic minerals of potential national interest.

Potential for oil and gas and uranium exists in the coastal areas. Portions of the oil and gas province and the uranium basin, as well as the offshore areas with apparent higher potential for oil and gas, have not been incorporated in the proposed units. Coal potential around the Bering River lie on existing national forest lands and Federal lands proposed for a national forest addition, where exploration and extraction could be allowed. Coal also occurs on some State and private lands adjoining the proposed units. There are three locations with geothermal energy potential in the proposed units. One small area is located in the recommended park and another in an Alaska National Lands unit. The largest area, centered in the park, extends beyond into the two Alaska National Land units and other public and private lands. Three hydroelectric sites along the Copper River (Wood Canyon, Cleave, Million Dollar), if developed, would inundate portions of the proposed units altering their natural features and submerging historical and archaeological sites. A major salmon run would also be disrupted. Considering the absence of any current significant demand for power, the Commission does not find hydroelectric development warranted at this time.

The proposed park and Alaska National Land units contain three metallogenic provinces with potential for copper, gold, silver, nickel, lead, zinc, iron, barite, platinum, chromium, titanium, molybdenum, antimony, tungsten, and asbestos. Two of the three provinces extend well beyond the recommended boundaries. Portions of the third province, containing the areas of major lead, zinc, and barite potential, are located on proposed Alaska National Lands where exploration and/or extraction may occur wherever

eventual classification permits. Similar potential for lead and zinc is located outside the proposed units in the upper Copper River drainage and in the Talkeetna Mountains. The proposed park and Alaska National Land unit boundaries were drawn to exclude many of the mineralized areas with higher potential from the park. However, several existing mineral claims are contained within the proposed park unit. Mineral exploration or extraction on the adjacent Alaska National Lands could be allowed if eventual classification permits. Mining may occur on forest lands under the permit-and-lease system recommended by the Commission and can be permitted on refuges by Secretarial discretion if compatible with habitat protection.

All units contain some forest stands of potential commercial value. Timber-cutting could be allowed in the forest unit and may be allowed in the new management system units if eventual classification allows. Some cultivable soils suitable for agriculture exist in the Chitina Valley, but this area lies in a zone climatically marginal for production.

Coordinated management of park, forest, and Alaska National Land units with adjoining landowners will be important with respect to recreational use, transportation development, and wildlife management.

Areas adjoining Mt. McKinley National Park

Lands adjoining Mt. McKinley National Park on the south contain portions of the Mt. McKinley massif and related mountains and glacial features, while some of the lands to the north provide habitat for large mammals of the existing Park.

Sheep, moose, grizzly bear, wolf, and caribou range north from the Park for varying distances onto adjoining lands of forest, tundra, lakes, and ponds. A variety of smaller wildlife such as fox and marten are also prevalent in areas north of the Park.

Mt. Hunter and peaks of the Alaska Range south of Mt. McKinley National Park have high scenic values. Recreational potential for cross-country and downhill skiing, hiking, camping, and scenery observation exists primarily along the southern margin of the high mountains and large glaciers where forest gives way to alpine tundra. Chelatna Lake, largest lake in this section of the Alaska Range, is a point of air access to surrounding backcountry, and provides opportunities for water-oriented recreational activities. Among the scenic highlights of this area are the Great Gorge of the Ruth Glacier with its nearly mile-high, pinkish granite cliffs, the large Kahiltna Glacier, and the varicolored moraines of the Yentna Glacier.

IN RECOGNITION OF THESE NATURAL VALUES AND THEIR INTEGRAL RELATIONSHIP TO THOSE OF THE PARK, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THE ADDITION OF A SOUTHERN UNIT TO THE PARK TO COMPLETE THE SCENIC AND GEOLOGICAL COMPLEX AND TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL LANDS FOR VISITOR USE. A SECOND ADDITION EXTENDING THE PARK TO MORE NATURAL BOUNDARIES IN THE NORTH IS PROPOSED TO COMPLETE A WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEM OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE. THESE TWO ADDITIONS TOTAL 2.7 MILLION ACRES. Two areas selected by the State of Alaska, one

around Chelatna Lake and the other in the northeastern corner of the proposed northern addition, have natural values of national interest. The Commission recommends that these lands be the subject of future exchange discussions with the State.

Some potential exists for oil and gas and uranium in the proposed park additions, but the provinces extend well beyond the new unit boundaries. Coal deposits are found along the northeastern and southern boundaries of the proposed additions, but there are similar and larger deposits as well as an ongoing coal operation located on adjacent lands. Two potential hydroelectric sites, Carlo and Healy, are located nearby along the Nenana River. If developed, they would inundate portions of the eastern edge of the existing park. Metallogenic provinces with potential for copper, gold, silver, nickel, lead, zinc, tin, iron, barite, antimony, platinum, chromium, molybdenum, tungsten, titanium, and asbestos underlie the existing Park and proposed extensions. These provinces, with the exception of a belt favorable for lead and zinc, extend beyond the proposed boundaries. Another potential lead and zinc province lies to the southwest of the recommended southern addition and could be open to exploration and mining. Two areas in the proposed northern addition, Kantishna and Stampede, are currently mined for gold and antimony. While new mineral exploration and extraction will not be allowed in the extended park, valid existing claims will be governed by National Park Service mining regulations.

Some cultivable soils with agricultural potential extend up the Toklat and Kantishna Rivers in the northern extension, as do some forest stands of possible commercial value. More extensive sections of cultivable soils and forested areas lie in lower elevations to the north of the recommended park extension.

The area around Mt. McKinley is near the major growing urban and tourism centers of Alaska. Mt. McKinley National Park cannot meet all recreational demands on the area. Coordination, then, among all landowners and administrators will be needed to plan recreation, transportation, and utility facilities, and to assure that recreational uses and resource development are compatible with the natural values.

Lake Clark

Lake Clark is located in the rugged and scenic southwestern section of the Alaska Range. The lake itself, 50 miles in length and averaging about 4 miles wide, is one of the larger lakes in Alaska. It is bordered in part by high steep mountains, and lower slopes are wooded. Other lakes of scenic interest are found in the mountain valleys and along the western flank of the Range. Among the scenic mountainous features are two symmetric 10,000-foot volcanos, Redoubt and Iliamna; pinnacles near Merrill Pass; and numerous hanging glaciers at Lake Clark Pass. Several free-flowing clear-water and glacial rivers begin in these mountains that are cut by many interconnecting valleys. The lower eastern and western flanks of the Range and some major valley bottoms are forested. Wildlife of the area includes sheep, moose, caribou, wolf, grizzly bear,

and other smaller animals. Seabirds, harbor seals and a noted clam beach are found along the coast.

THE COMMISSION FINDS THESE NATURAL VALUES TO BE OF NATIONAL INTEREST AND RECOMMENDS THAT 3.5 MILLION ACRES BE INCORPORATED WITHIN THE ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS SYSTEM. BECAUSE OF ITS RELATIVE ACCESSIBILITY TO ALASKA'S URBAN AND TOURIST CENTERS, THE COMMISSION BELIEVES RECREATION SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS A PRIMARY USE OF THE PROPOSED UNIT AND THAT THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BE DESIGNATED THE MANAGER. THE TLIKAKILA RIVER AND THE UPPER FEDERALLY OWNED SEGMENTS OF THE MULCHATNA AND CHILIKADROTNA RIVERS ARE RECOMMENDED BY THE COMMISSION FOR DESIGNATION AS POTENTIAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, WITH FURTHER STUDY, EVALUATION, AND CLASSIFICATION OF SURROUNDING LANDS TO AID IN FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

The eastern boundary of the proposed unit overlaps a small portion of an oil and gas province underlying Cook Inlet. Potential for uranium exists along the coast, but the sedimentary province with potential for these minerals extends well into other adjoining lands. Two areas with geothermal energy potential are present in the proposed unit. Other similar volcanic areas lie north and south of the proposal. Two potential hydroelectric sites, Crescent Lake and Ingersol, are within the proposed unit. If constructed, some natural values would be altered or lost.

Metallogenic provinces with some potential for copper, gold, silver, lead, zinc, tin, molybdenum, and tungsten underlie most of the area, as well as on some adjoining lands. Exploration and/or extraction may occur on Alaska National Lands wherever eventual classification permits.

Timber potential exists primarily in the coastal forest along the west side of Cook Inlet. Stands are much more extensive to the north where they are harvested.

Substantial acreage within the Lake Clark proposal has been selected by Cook Inlet Native regional corporation near the midsection of Lake Clark and along the Cook Inlet coast. These areas were selected because other lands closer to the existing Native villages were not available. The Federal and State governments have been working closely with the private corporations to retain the Lake Clark area in public ownership and provide more suitable lands for corporate selection. ON THIS BASIS, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS INCLUSION OF CERTAIN OF THE PRIVATE LANDS WITHIN THE LAKE CLARK UNIT BOUNDARIES ON THE BASIS OF THEIR SIGNIFICANT NATURAL VALUES, AND ENCOURAGES CONTINUED EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE THE AMOUNT OF PRIVATE INHOLDINGS WITHIN THE PROPOSED UNIT BY LAND EXCHANGES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE MEANS.

Kenai Peninsula and Prince William Sound

The Kenai Peninsula and Upper Prince William Sound area are located south and east of Anchorage along the coast. Most of the area is included in two existing reserves, the Kenai National Moose Range and the adjacent Chugach National Forest. The western side of the Kenai Peninsula is blanketed by State and private lands. The following proposals lie within this area.

Areas adjacent to the Chugach National Forest

The lands adjoining the existing Chugach National Forest are characterized by rugged scenic peaks, massive icefields, fiords, and tidewater glaciers. Coastal areas contain a variety of terrestrial and marine animals. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THREE AREAS OF HIGH SCENIC VALUES AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST BE ADDED TO THE CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST. The Harding Icefield-Kenai Fiords area (520,000 acres) includes one of North America's major icefields surrounded by scenic peaks, steep icefalls, and radiating valley glaciers, some reaching the sea. Three large irregularly shaped peninsulas are separated by fiords which support sea lions, harbor seals, occasional whales, and numerous seabirds. Black bear and goat inhabit some parts of the area. Ocean waters about this area are highly productive of marine life.

The Nellie Juan River valley, Nellie Juan Lake, and much of the Sargent Icefield (totalling 280,000 acres) form a scenic river valley with glaciers descending its upper slopes. The valley supports some moose, goats, black and brown bears, and smaller mammals. This addition encloses a major watershed already partially included in the existing Chugach Forest. THE COMMISSION ALSO RECOMMENDS THE NELLIE JUAN RIVER BE DESIGNATED A POTENTIAL WILD RIVER, AND THAT FURTHER STUDY AND EVALUATION ALONG WITH CLASSIFICATION OF SURROUNDING LANDS AID IN FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

A third proposed addition, the College Fiord area (720,000 acres), also forms a complete watershed unit with the existing forest. It contains a scenic complex of mountains, fiords, and numerous tidewater glaciers. The coastal fringes and waters provide habitat for goat, black bear, wolverine, harbor seal, and seabird colonies.

The College Fiord area contains a metallogenic province with potential for copper, gold, silver, lead, barite, antimony, zinc, molybdenum, and tungsten that extends onto other public lands beyond the forest boundary. All three proposed national forest additions contain some stands of western hemlock and Sitka spruce along the shores and valley bottoms and on some relatively steep slopes. These stands have little potential commercial value relative to other extensive stands in the general area. Some Native selections have been made in the Kenai Fiords, but are not yet conveyed.

Peninsulas and Islands of the Kenai Peninsula

THE COMMISSION ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT THE SOUTHERN TIPS OF AIALIK AND HARRIS PENINSULAS, AND THE CHISWELL AND PYE ISLANDS TOTALLING ABOUT 19,630 ACRES BE ADDED TO THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM. These two areas and adjoining waters provide key habitat for 65 species of seabirds and 23 species of marine mammals, including over 4,000 sea lions on the Chiswell and Outer Islands.

Area adjacent to the Kenai National Moose Range

A mountainous area containing the southwestern half of the scenic Sheep Creek drainage borders the southern tip of the Kenai National Moose

Range. It contains wildlife habitat for moose, goat, sheep, and other upland wildlife. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THIS AREA OF 40,000 ACRES BE ADDED TO THE EXISTING KENAI NATIONAL MOOSE RANGE TO ENCLOSE THE ENTIRE WATERSHED, AND RELATED SCENIC, WILDLIFE, AND WILDERNESS VALUES WITH A BETTER NATURAL BOUNDARY.

Fortymile River Complex

The Fortymile River originates in the eastern Yukon-Tanana uplands and flows northeasterly to its confluence with the Yukon River in Canada. The River and its 1,000 miles of tributaries are clear and free-flowing. More than 95 percent of the drainage lies within Alaska. Most of the river remains in its natural state. The river courses in segments through narrow gorges, bluffs, and rocky cliffs several hundred feet high, where the geologic structure of the area is exposed. Salmon, pike, and whitefish are found in the lower streams, and grayling in the upper parts. The area provides habitat for caribou, moose, bear, wolf, sheep, beaver, and smaller animals. Several species of duck and raptors, such as mallards and the peregrine falcon, are also present. Historic and cultural features of the Fortymile River area include the site of the first gold discovered in interior Alaska; cabins, settlements, and equipment associated with past and present gold mining; and the abandoned Eagle to Valdez military telegraph line which was part of a larger military Washington-Alaska communications system. Remains of a few old Athabascan Indian settlement sites are within the area.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT CERTAIN FORKS AND SEGMENTS OF THE FORTYMILE RIVER SYSTEM BE DESIGNATED "WILD," "SCENIC," OR "RECREATIONAL" RIVERS, UNDER THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT. THE PROPOSAL INCLUDES A 4-MILE-WIDE CORRIDOR CONTAINING ABOUT 375 MILES OF RIVER AND 320,000 ACRES OF THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT. RECOMMENDED DESIGNATIONS INCLUDE 265 RIVER MILES AS "SCENIC," 161 MILES AS "WILD," AND 9 MILES AS "RECREATIONAL."

A potential hydroelectric site along the main Fortymile River, if developed, would inundate the lower reaches of the proposal and certain values would be altered or lost. Metallogenic provinces favorable for copper, gold, silver, nickel, lead, zinc, iron, antimony, molybdenum, tungsten, chromium, platinum, titanium, and asbestos have been identified in the area, but extend well beyond the river corridor boundaries. Mining would be allowed in the scenic and recreational segments under a permit and lease system. No mining would be allowed in the bed or banks of wild segments. Some stands of timber along the rivers have possible potential for future commercial use, but similar stands lie outside the corridors.

Coordination with respect to access and possible future transportation development in this area is particularly important.

Other Wild and Scenic River Potential

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE KENAI-RUSSIAN, DELTA, AND GULKANA RIVERS BE DESIGNATED POTENTIAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS WITH FURTHER STUDY AND EVALUATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF SURROUNDING LANDS TO AID IN FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

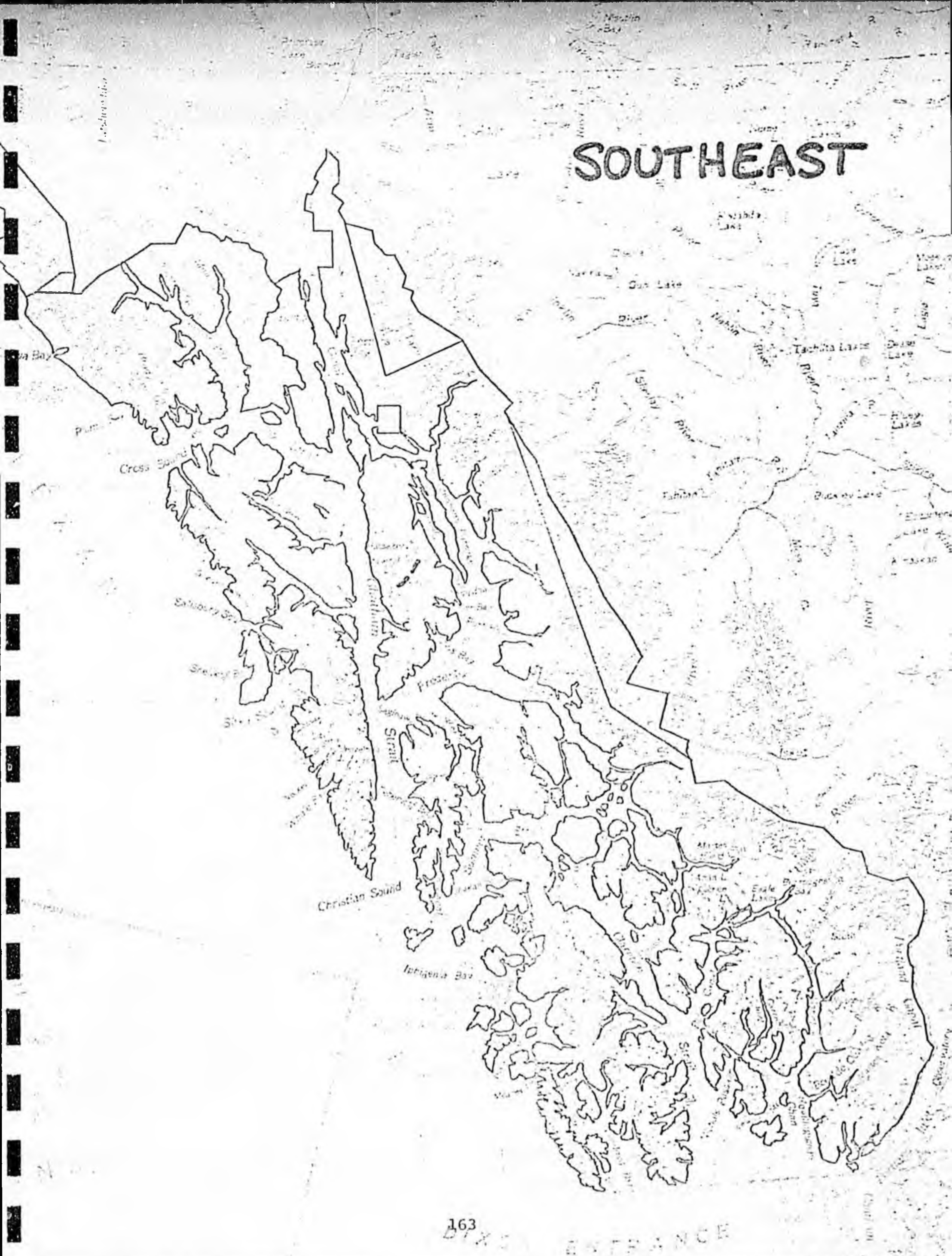
ALSO THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE STATE OF ALASKA STUDY KROTO CREEK (DESHKA) AND THE CHENA, CHATANIKA, TALACHULITNA, AND TAZLINA RIVERS FOR FEASIBILITY, POSSIBLE STATE LEGISLATIVE DESIGNATION, AND INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM.

SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA

Southeastern Alaska, the 40,000-square-mile Alaska "Panhandle," is an archipelago of large forested islands and a narrow mainland strip backed by mountains and icefields bordering Canada. Short mountain streams tumble into "inside" ocean passages. Wildlife populating the region include black bear (and its rare variation, the glacier bear), brown bear, Sitka black-tailed deer, bald eagle, and mountain goat. The productive fisheries habitat produces a variety of salmon, trout, herring, halibut, and shellfish. Although resource development has occurred and the region is relatively densely populated by Alaska standards (one person per square mile), the land largely remains in its natural state. The region has numerous sites of historical interest related to the indigenous Indian cultures, the Russian period, and the Klondike Gold Rush. The coastal rain forests are composed primarily of giant Sitka spruce and western hemlock.

Approximately 200 wet days occur each year in the southern portion of the region; less than 100 wet days are experienced, on the average, in the drier northern sections. Low clouds, fog, and frequent strong winds are characteristic of this region's climate. Temperatures in this largely maritime zone are moderate, with mean daily temperatures at sea level in January averaging near or above freezing, and mean July temperatures near 60°F. Precipitation is high with annual averages ranging from 61 inches at Haines in the north and 91 in Juneau, to 154 in Ketchikan, and in some locations, over 200 inches. There is potential for several minerals, and mining for uranium, gold, copper, and limestone, among others, has occurred. Much of the forest in this region has been evaluated to be of commercial quality. Commercial logging is extensive and long term timber sale contracts are in effect. Much of the current cut is exported to Japan as cants or pulp processed at two plants.

Southeastern Alaska was one of the first regions settled by Caucasians, and has some of the oldest communities in the State. The total population of the region is approximately 50,000, about 75 percent of which is Caucasian. Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian Indians constitute most of the remainder. Several of the communities here are relatively large. Juneau, the State capital, and Ketchikan, the region's southernmost town, have area populations greater than 10,000. Other communities of significant size include Sitka, site of the old Russian capital, Petersburg, Wrangell, Haines, and several predominantly Indian villages. Because of topographical obstacles, no road network connects the communities of the region. Access is by air or by boat, with a State-operated ferry system on the "marine highway." Waters in this region are generally ice free. Major industries are government, timber, commerical fishing, and tourism.


SOUTHEAST
Cross Sound
Christian Sound
Iphigenia Bay
Chatham
Strait
Frederick
Gun Lake
Tachilta Lakes
Dixon Entrance

With the exceptions of about 800,000 acres of State selected or entitled lands and Native corporation selections, together totalling some 1.3 million acres or about 4 percent of the region, lands are and will remain under Federal jurisdiction. Major existing units in national conservation systems are the 16-million-acre Tongass National Forest and the 2.8-million-acre Glacier Bay National Monument. There are two small national historical parks, Sitka and Klondike Gold Rush, and three national wildlife refuge units (St. Lazaria, Hazy Island, and Forester Island) totalling 3,000 acres. Two withdrawals originally made under Section 17(d)(2) of approximately 475,000 acres each were made by the Secretary of the Interior, one near Kates Needle and the other around the Juneau Icefield.

Areas Adjoining Tongass National Forest

When the original National Forest withdrawals were made in southeastern Alaska, four major areas were excluded from the forest boundaries for various reasons, paramount apparently being a paucity of forest growth on the generally rugged glacier and snowclad mountains of the areas.

One of these areas near the head of Lynn Canal has now been largely selected by the State. Two other areas, around the Juneau Icefield and Kates Needle, are public domain lying between the Tongass National Forest and the Canadian border. Valleys, slopes, and peaks of these areas form the upper watersheds and scenic backdrop for the forested lower slopes of the National Forest. THE COMMISSION FINDS NO RESOURCE VALUES OR OTHER REASONS TO WARRANT CONTINUED EXCLUSION OF THESE AREAS FROM THE NATIONAL FOREST AND, THEREFORE, RECOMMENDS THAT THE JUNEAU ICEFIELD AND KATES NEEDLE AREA, TOTALLING 950,000 ACRES, BE ADDED TO THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST WHERE CLASSIFICATION OF THESE AREAS WOULD BE INCLUDED WITHIN OVERALL FOREST PLANNING.

Between the northwestern corner of Glacier Bay National Monument and the Yakutat unit of the Tongass National Forest is another largely mountainous zone of high peaks and extensive glaciers, through which the major Alsek River flows from Canada. The southern portion around the Alsek River and Deception Hills extends to the Gulf of Alaska coast. Much of this fourth major area of unreserved public domain provides a watershed and scenic background for existing Tongass National Forest lands.

The area adjoining the Glacier Bay National Monument, north to the Alsek River, contains scenic rugged mountains, glaciers, and coastal seascapes. The Alsek River corridor is of scientific interest because it is apparently the major migration passage through an immense mountain barrier for plants and animals between the coastal zone and the interior. In addition, its coastal flora, unlike that of most of the surrounding region, has not been significantly altered by recent glaciation.

RECOGNIZING THE NATURAL VALUES OF THIS AREA, AS WELL AS THE MINERAL POTENTIAL, THE COMMISSION MAKES THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS.

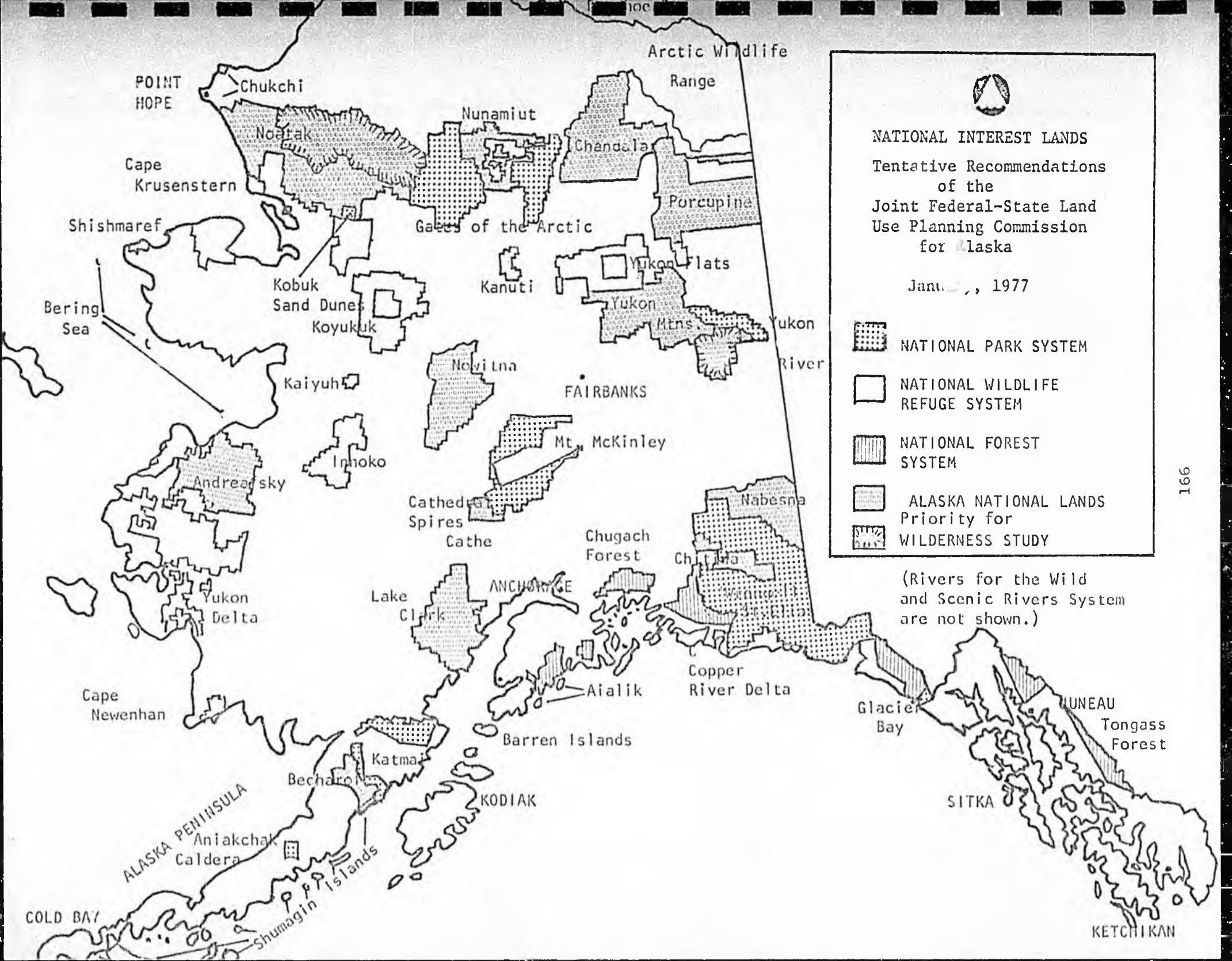
1. THE IMMEDIATE NORTHWESTERN SLOPES AND VALLEYS OF MT. FAIRWEATHER, (30,000 ACRES), BE ADDED TO THE GLACIER BAY NATIONAL MONUMENT.

THIS PROPOSED ADDITION WOULD INCORPORATE THE REMAINING PORTION OF THIS SCENIC MOUNTAIN AND ITS IMMEDIATE VALLEY ENVIRONS, WITHIN U.S. OWNERSHIP IN THE MONUMENT.

2. ADD THE REMAINING PART OF THE ALSEK RIVER UNIT (1 MILLION ACRES) TO THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST.

FROM THE MANY POTENTIALLY SUITABLE RIVERS IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA, THE COMMISSION HAS IDENTIFIED FOUR AT THIS TIME WHICH IT RECOMMENDS FOR DESIGNATION AS POTENTIAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS. THE SITUK NEAR YAKUTAT, ALSEK, HASSELBORG CREEK ON ADMIRALTY ISLAND, AND THE LOWER REACH OF THE STIKINE AS IT BREACHES THE COAST RANGE ARE PROPOSED FOR FURTHER STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF CLASSIFICATION OF SURROUNDING LANDS.

A mineral zone generally following the crest of the Fairweather-St. Elias Mountains extending northwestward from the Glacier Bay National Monument has potential for copper, nickel, iron, platinum, chromium, titanium, and asbestos, and underlies the more mountainous portion of this proposed unit. Deposits of nickel-copper have been located in Glacier Bay National Monument and on Yakobi Island to the south. No further mineral claims may be made in the Monument by direction of Congress.


Arctic Wildlife Range
POINT HOPE
Chukchi
Noatak
Nunamiut
Chandalar
Cape Krusenstern
Porcupine
Shishmaref
Gates of the Arctic
Yukon Flats
Kobuk Sand Dunes
Koyukuk
Kanuti
Bering Sea
Yukon Mtns
Yukon River
Kaiyuh
Nolvitna
FAIRBANKS
Mt. McKinley
Innoko
Andreafsky
Cathedral Spires
Cathe
Nabesna
Chugach Forest
Yukon Delta
Lake Clark
ANCHORAGE
Copper River Delta
Aialik
Cape Newenhan
Barren Islands
Glacier Bay
JUNEAU
Tongass Forest
Katmai
Becharof
KODIAK
SITKA
ALASKA PENINSULA
Aniakchak Caldera
Islands
COLD BAY
Shumagin
KETCHIKAN
NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS
Tentative Recommendations of the Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission for Alaska
January , 1977
NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM
NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM
ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS Priority for WILDERNESS STUDY
(Rivers for the Wild and Scenic Rivers System are not shown.)

STATEWIDE SUMMARY-GEOGRAPHIC RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to protect natural areas and systems of varying characteristics of national interest in Alaska, the Commission recommends the following new units or additions to existing reserves in the following land conservation systems:

	Acres (million)
NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM: Aniakchak Caldera (0.18), Cape Krusenstern (0.19), Gates of the Arctic (5.22), Kobuk Sand Dunes (0.10), Wrangell-St. Elias (9.72), Yukon River (0.54), Glacier Bay National Monument addition (0.03), Katmai National Monument additions (1.08), Mount McKinley National Park additions (2.69)	19.75
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM: Arctic National Wildlife Range additions (1.89), Cape Newenham National Wildlife Refuge addition (0.24), Kenai National Moose Range addition (0.04), Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge islands addition (440 acres)(0.00), Copper River Delta (0.35), Innoko (1.99), Kaiyuh (0.19), Kanuti (0.43), Koyukuk (2.53), Selawik (1.48), Shishmaref (1.50), Yukon Delta (5.67), Yukon Flats (2.33), Alaska Coastal: Chukchi (Capes Lisburne and Thompson)(74,000 acres), Bering Sea (1,700 acres), Shumagin Islands (71,907 acres), Barren Islands (10,020 acres), Aialik (19,630 acres), Total Alaska Coastal (0.18)	18.82
NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM: Chugach National Forest additions: College Fiord (0.72), Copper River (1.25), Kenai Fiords--Harding Icefield (0.52), Nellie Juan (0.28), Total additions (2.77)	
Tongass National Forest additions: Alsek River (1.03), Juneau Icefield (0.48), Kates Needle (0.47), Total additions (1.98)	4.75
"ALASKA NATIONAL LANDS" SYSTEM: Andreafsky (3.54), Becharof (0.88), Cathedral Spires (0.40), Chandalar (5.56), Chitina (1.05), Lake Clark (3.49), Nabesna (2.87), Noatak (11.87), Nowitna (3.52), Nunamiut (1.98), Porcupine (5.49), Yukon Mountains (6.05)	46.70
NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER SYSTEM: Alatna (upper)*, North Fork Koyukuk-Tinayguk*, Aniakchak (0.07), Unalakleet (0.10), Fortymile (0.32), Alagnak (0.09), Kanektok (0.11) *Acreage included in parkland proposals	0.69
TOTAL ACREAGE - ALL SYSTEMS	90.71**

Of 54 selected rivers, 7 are currently recommended for designation as indicated above. Entire courses, mainstreams, or certain segments of 35 rivers are recommended for designation as potential wild, scenic, or recreational rivers. Similarly, 8 other rivers flowing through a mixture of Federal and Native corporation selected lands, are also recommended for potential designation. These 43 rivers will be subject to study or further evaluation for feasibility. Approximately 2.01 million acres of land and water outside large area proposals would be involved in these study rivers. In addition, entire courses, mainstreams, or certain segments of 14 rivers primarily or partly on State-owned or selected lands are recommended for study or further evaluation by the State for possible designation. Approximately 1.0 million acres would be involved in these study rivers.

** Federal lands and some Native corporation selected lands. Does not include corporate lands in the vicinity of Anaktuvuk Pass or on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Acreage of included corporation land selections is unsettled.

	Acres (million)		
	Proposed	Existing	Total
Primary purpose lands			
National Park System	19.75	7.55	27.30
National Wildlife Refuge System	18.82	19.91	38.73
National Wild & Scenic Rivers (recommended & proposed)	2.70	-0-	2.
Alaska National Lands	46.70	-0-	46.70
Total	87.97	27.46	115.43
Multiple purpose lands			
National Forest System	4.75	19.71	24.46
National Resource Lands (est. remaining Federal public lands after State selections are completed)	57.67	-0-	57.
Total	62.42	19.71	82.13
Lands closed to hunting			
National Park System	18.92	7.55	26.
Lands closed to mineral development			
National Park System	19.75	7.55	27.
National Wildlife Refuge System (open only at Secretarial discretion)	18.82	19.91	38.
Wild Rivers (bed and bank)	**	-0-	
Total	38.57	27.46	66.03
Lands that may be open to mineral development in whol or part following classification			
National Forest System	4.75	19.71	24.46
Alaska National Lands	46.70	-0-	46.
Scenic and Recreational Rivers	**	-0-	
National Resource Lands	-0-	57.67	57.67
Total	51.45	77.38	128.

Several areas of the State or Native-selected lands have been included within the boundaries of the recommended national conservation systems units, to enclose prime natural values of national interest, or to effect a more natural boundary.

State-owned or selected lands suggested for land exchange consideration and inclusion in proposed conservation units are principally:

	Area	Proposed Unit
1.	Lower Reed River	Gates of the Arctic, west unit
2.	Lower Alatna River	Alaska national lands, Alatna unit Gates of the Arctic, west unit
3.	Teklanika-Savage Rivers	Mt. McKinley National Park, north additi
4.	Chelatna Lake	Mt. McKinley National Park, south addi
5.	Lower John River and Wolverine Creek	Alaska national lands, Nunamiut unit

Principal Native corporation selected land areas suggested for land exchange are:

1.	Bremner River	Wrangell-St. Elias
2.	Lakes Clark-Kontrashibuna	Alaska national lands, Lake Clark unit

Federal areas suggested for land exchange with State:

1. Lake Selby-upper Kobuk River; location, central Brooks Range
2. West Fork Chulitna River; Mt. McK ley area

** Acreage will depend on final recommendations and number of rivers.