

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
JUNEAU, ALASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
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DIVISION OF GAME  
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LAND EVALUATION

by  
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Volume VIII  
Annual Project Segment Report  
Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration  
Project W-5-C-8, Lands

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(Printed January 1968)

WORK PLAN SEGMENT REPORT  
FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION

STATE: Alaska

PROJECT NO: W-5-C-8

TITLE: Wildlife Management Coordination

SECTION: Lands

TITLE: Land Evaluation

PERIOD COVERED: July 1, 1966 to June 30, 1967

ABSTRACT

The Land Evaluation project officially began on July 1, 1966. Not only was considerable time spent on planning program procedures, objectives, responsibilities, and expansion but immediate statewide projects were started with both short and long range goals in mind.

After investigation, the Alaska Division of Lands was requested to classify the Palmer Hay Flats and the West Cook Inlet Duck Flats as public recreation areas. Classification of the Hay Flats seems probable; further expansion of the original Duck Flats classification proposal is needed and expected to be completed during the coming fiscal year. Reviews and recommendations were made on other state public recreation classifications and park proposals such as the Nancy Lake, Chena River, and Shaw Creek Flats Recreation Areas and the Keystone Canyon Park.

Projects have been initiated to eventually provide for reviews of all statewide logging and highway plans. Special emphasis has been placed on early reconnaissance work and cooperative planning.

Efforts were made to establish close liaison with all organizations and agencies involved in land use planning. Assignment as representative to various statewide committees such as the Conservation Needs Inventory Committee (Soil Conservation Service) and the Alaska Outdoor Recreation Council was requested. Intra- as well as inter-departmental liaison and cooperation has been stressed.

Cooperative field studies were conducted with the Bureau of Land Management in the Iliamna and Gulkana-Copper River multiple use classification units. There has been Department concern over the selection of land disposal areas, access routes, and the actual drafting of a multiple use plan for these and other units. It is proposed that the Department of Fish and Game become active in actual land planning and enter into specific "Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Agreements" for each unit.

A statewide inventory of existing access routes and facilities was begun. This project is essentially phase one of a long-range plan to provide better hunter access and related public information.

Recommendations were made to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation concerning islands in Alaska possessing high recreational values.

Proposals were made to drastically change the present state regulations and statutes governing mineral exploration activities. These alterations are primarily designed to provide the methods and means for quick review of plans and operations and to provide some protection from indiscriminate habitat destruction.

Alaska's first wildlife land acquisition proposal has been presented in a cooperative effort to establish a Fairbanks Wildlife Center. The proposed private land purchase of 280 acres is particularly important for its continued maintenance in grains and subsequent use for migrating waterfowl.

A Department of Fish and Game proposal for the Juneau Tidelands (Mendenhall River Flats) was shelved by the Juneau Borough. This proposal to maintain continued recreational uses of the wetlands area has not completely died. Reconsideration of the plan has been requested by local Juneau citizens.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To continue and expand the Land Evaluation program to fulfill statewide Departmental requirements.
2. Critical or key statewide fish and wildlife areas should be inventoried by our biological staff and every effort be made to adequately protect these areas by proper classification and zoning, by legislative action, by entering into cooperative agreements, or by purchasing.
3. Intensive efforts should be made to become more active in land use planning by cooperative action with all land agencies or organizations.
4. All access routes should be inventoried and a continual system devised to catalog and protect important hunter access routes.
5. Close liaison should be established so that all proposed land use plans by state, federal, and local agencies can be reviewed and appropriate recommendations made.
6. Continued efforts should be made to bring to light, and propose changes in, any land use regulations allowing activities detrimental to fish, wildlife, their habitat, or related access.
7. A proposal should be presented to the Division of Lands to establish a state "Fish and Game Management Area" classification category.
8. Specific proposals for hunter access development projects, land purchasing, and easement procurements should be invited, examined, and considered for possible incorporation into future lands programs.

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OBJECTIVES

To identify specific key game areas.

To submit recommendations for the orderly selection, land classification or purchase of specific lands for public hunting access and use.

To assist in statewide land use planning.

TECHNIQUES

1. Compile an inventory of known areas of high wildlife use.
  - a. Inventory of areas to be made on the basis of existing studies, game census, hunter-use harvest statistics.
  - b. Delineate specific range areas important to wildlife on current land protraction plats.
  - c. Outline future land use and hunter access requirements on the basis of projected population growths.
2. Prepare recommendations concerning land use and public access routes which will require:
  - a. Compilation of land ownership maps through examination of land agency records.
  - b. Cooperative studies and close liaison with agencies involved in land use.
  - c. Assessment of the public and management needs by area and species.
  - d. Assessment of research data requirements pertaining to land management.
  - e. Mapping of existing access routes.

3. Physically examine access routes and recreational sites or areas.
4. Review literature, land records and land laws.

## FINDINGS

### History

The Land Evaluation (Lands) project officially began on July 1, 1966. The program was patterned after the Sport Fish Division Access project and the initial purpose was to provide a Divisional section to handle land acquisition, procurement of hunter right-of-ways, dissemination of data pertaining to land and wildlife, and the maintenance of up-to-date land record files.

The initial Lands budget was small, and lack of funds limited travel during this first stage. Emphasis was therefore placed on high priority projects and literature reviews, correspondence and general office routine preparations. Special consideration was given to problems endemic to both the Sport Fish Access and Game Lands projects, such as filing systems, standardized forms, use of IBM data recording sheets, intra- and inter-Departmental liaison, and statewide access inventorying procedures.

On September 26-28, 1966 a Lands meeting was held in Juneau for the specific purpose of discussing program responsibilities, project priorities, objectives, and budgets. The general objectives have been stated previously and priorities and budgets will be discussed later. A summary of the major program responsibilities are listed below:

1. Provide general Divisional leadership in dealing with statewide lands problems pertaining to wildlife.
2. Provide close and uniform liaison with state and federal management agencies.
3. Be responsible for establishing inter-agency cooperative agreements dealing mainly with land management.
4. Compile and disseminate biological data deemed necessary for proper land planning.
5. Assess and make recommendations concerning research needs of the program.
6. Assist all land management agencies in land classification attempts which are in accordance with Departmental objectives.
7. Provide technical advice and services to Divisional staff members concerning statewide land uses, procedures and techniques.
8. Plan for future expansions of the program relative to the needs of the Division and the Department.

Almost unanimous approval was given to the suggestion that equal emphasis be placed on long range as well as short range objectives. Spot fires can always be handled on a year to year regional basis but by stressing long range goals the accent is on Divisional unity and Departmental policies and objectives.

## Projects

As might be expected on a new program many of the Divisional projects during this first year were concerned with program planning and such things as filing systems, data processing forms, and intra-departmental liaison and routing. Of the projects actually involving lands, some were unpredictable and some were the result of extensive planning.

The 1967 Alaska State Legislature passed House Bill 156 establishing the 85,760 acre McNeil River area as a game sanctuary (primarily for brown bear). This particular piece of legislation is significant because it occurred during a period when development of state lands had been given top priority and state lands were at a premium.

One meeting of the Alaska Outdoor Recreation Council was attended to hear reports from each agency (state and federal) represented. The activity reports were well prepared and indicated considerable statewide recreation planning activity. However most, if not all, of the reports were concerned with picnic sites, campground development, parking areas, scenic over-looks, rest areas, and one state recreation area. It appears that the council is missing an opportunity to become more than an official information disseminating machine. I believe that the Council could be better organized, officially recognized, and represent all recreation oriented agencies within the state. Not only could development projects be reviewed but land planning problems could be studied, discussed, and council recommendation made to assist in solving these problems.

Probably one of the greatest physical problems facing game management in Alaska is the lack of adequate access. Much of the state is relatively inaccessible to hunters except by aircraft and boat. The recent snow machine craze has provided more inexpensive off-the-road transportation than ever before, and although restricted to seasonal use, there is little doubt that their use will be an important consideration for future wildlife management.

As it is doubtful that the Game Division will have sufficient funds for actual access development in the near future, we are dependent on other agencies such as the U. S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, the Alaska Department of Highways, and the Alaska Division of Aviation to provide transportation routes and facilities. Many facilities and trails throughout the state are unplotted, unmarked and unprotected against private entry. For this reason, a project was immediately initiated to inventory trails and air strips. This does not alleviate any responsibilities to acquire or somehow protect other hunter access routes which will become important. This inventory will, however, give us a better foundation for future recommendations.

## Federal Agencies

During this reporting period, an effort was made to establish a working relationship and close liaison with federal land management agencies, especially the U. S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In many instances, our role was to compile biological or management data for use by these and other agencies. Several cooperative field studies were, however, planned and initiated.

## U. S. Forest Service

Meetings were held with U. S. Forest Service personnel to review policies concerned with a proposed road through the Stikine River Cooperative Management Area and proposed oil exploration on the Copper River Cooperative Management Area. Recommendations were made in both cases that the areas be maintained as single use lands. All other activities should be reasonably compatible with these uses.

In the past, joint projects have been coordinated to provide additional much needed hunter access and an increased number of facilities on the Chugach and the North and South Tongass National Forests. However, there is some question as to agency responsibility. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is responsible by statute for the management of the fish and wildlife, which is often difficult without some land and water controls. On the other hand, the U. S. Forest Service is dedicated to a philosophy of multiple use management, a concept which may or may not allow for the proper management of all resources. There is little doubt that we all must consider the delicate balance between fish and wildlife and the habitat.

Apparently very few facts are available showing how logging affects wildlife in Alaska. In those instances where facts are available, every effort should be made to provide maximum protection for key areas. Possibly many specific cooperative area management agreements will have to be drafted and hopefully more specific agreements can be made concerning proposed research, liaison, and dissemination and routing of logging plans and research findings. A closer working relationship between Departmental and Forest Service personnel is definitely needed.

## Bureau of Land Management

By far the largest land agency in the state, the Bureau of Land Management administers over 85 percent of the state's public lands. Until 1964, the Bureau was essentially tied to a system of land disposal governed by archaic entry laws similar to the Homestead Act. Even high priority areas could not be sufficiently protected from indiscriminate entry, nor properly managed. Every inch of the public domain in Alaska was up for grabs. In 1964 the U. S. Congress passed the Classification Act authorizing the Bureau to classify land either for disposal or retention and subsequent multiple use management.

Since 1964, many Department personnel have been requested to assist the Bureau of Land Management in providing fish and wildlife data to be used in resource analysis for many parts of the state. A cooperative field study was conducted along the Denali Highway system during the summer of 1966. This area was considered a high priority retention area by the Bureau and detailed access plans were needed as part of a major land plan. Considerable time was spent in compiling known information on the fish and wildlife of this particular unit. Access routes were investigated for their fisheries potential and over 200 miles of trails were inspected on horseback, including recreation and development sites. A final report will be made following clean up work during the 1967 field season.



The 1966-67 fiscal year found the Bureau of Land Management preparing for their first attempts to classify land in Alaska. The Iliamna Classification Area (Figure 1) was subdivided into disposal and retention areas and the proposal was published in the Federal Register on March 8, 1967. Within the two year period allotted for classification, no land entries can be made. However, the drafting of a detailed multiple use land plan continues. The inexperience in classifying land and the manner in which the disposal areas were selected was of concern to many Department personnel. As a result, a cooperative field study was initiated for the area to physically examine the disposal sites, to do some preliminary vegetation mapping, fill in gaps on the fish and wildlife resources of the area, and become familiar with the entire classification unit. Hopefully, a system can be established following these first classification attempts where the Department of Fish and Game is allowed to participate in land planning from the very beginning--even prior to publication in the Federal Register. This will allow us to make concrete suggestions concerning the selection of disposal areas in locations where fish and wildlife are particularly important.

The Bureau of Land Management is prepared to initiate classification for several other units in the state. The Fortymile Unit covers approximately 10 million acres and the White Mountain Complex located north of Fairbanks includes approximately 4,538,880 acres.

The largest proposed Classification Area is the Gulkana-Copper River Basin Unit (Figure 2) which includes approximately 23 million acres and covers an area from the Canadian border to the Talkeetna Mountains, from the Chugach and Wrangell Mountains on the south to the Alaska Range on the north. This unit is scheduled for segregation sometime late in 1967.

It is not inconceivable that within a very few years, the Bureau of Land Management will attempt to classify and develop multiple land use plans for every area of the state under their jurisdiction and not destined for possible state selection under the Alaska Statehood Act. This Department's influence on the development of such plans will undoubtedly be proportional to the effort spent in assisting in their development and the willingness to bear some of the responsibility associated with land use planning. Such large scale land planning expenditures are obviously difficult to justify and can only be divided into priority projects. However, the point to keep in mind is that although the claim to success for the multiple use theory is its flexibility, the past has shown that established land use plans are extremely difficult to change. Expenditures today more than likely could be considered insignificant compared to those funds which could be spent to alter future land use plans, to purchase similar key fish and wildlife areas, or to reconstruct destroyed habitat.

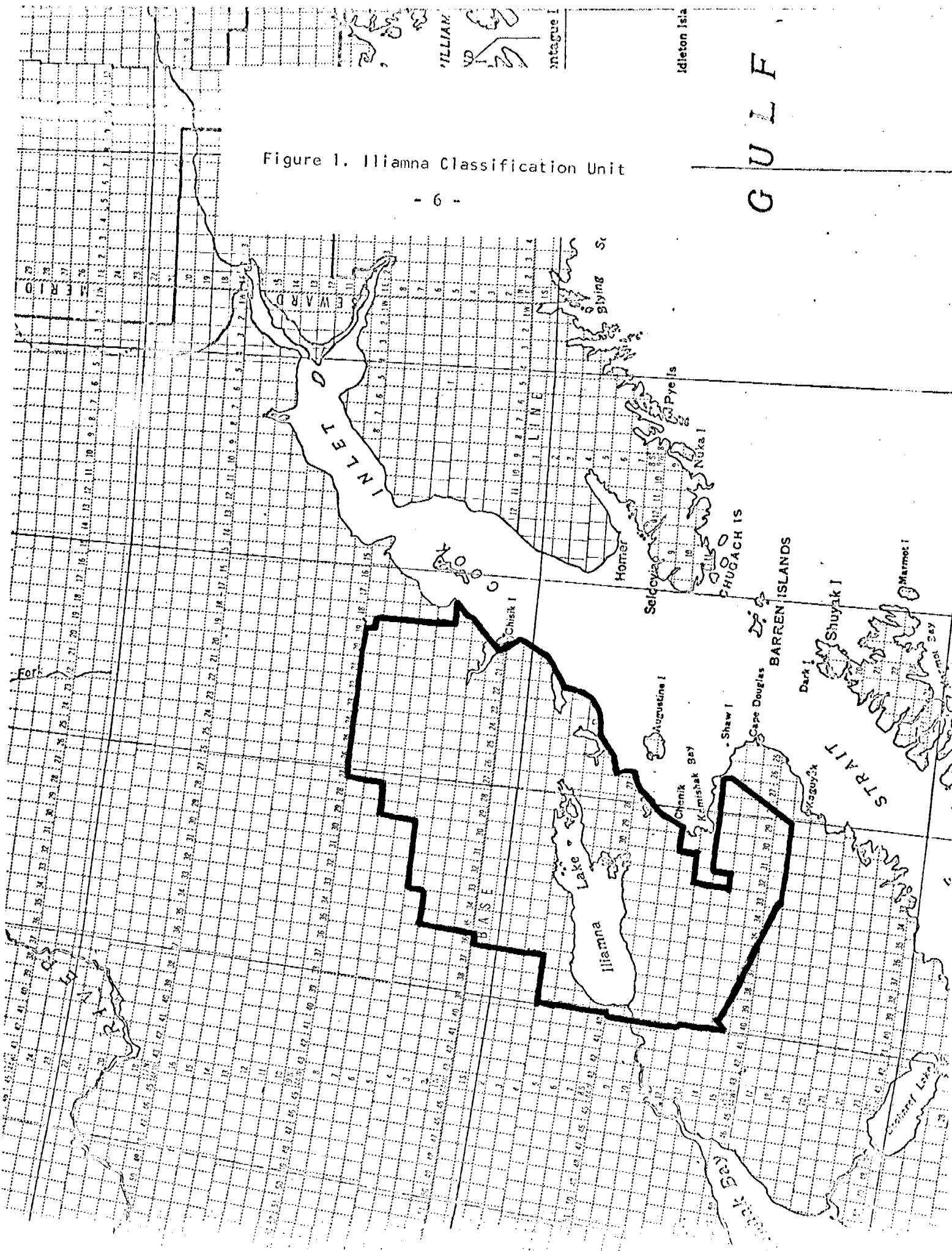
Other states have dealt with this large scale Bureau classification attempt in various manners. The most progressive approach has been by the State of California. For each classification unit, the Bureau and the California Department of Fish and Game attempt to enter into a specific "Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Agreement." The purpose of these agreements is to acknowledge the responsibilities and interests of each agency for a particular area and to specifically state how each organization will participate in the area management. The greatest selling point is that definite lines of communication and mediating techniques are established. There is no reason why similar agreements cannot be entered into by the Bureau of Land Management and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.



Figure 1. Iliamna Classification Unit

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GULF



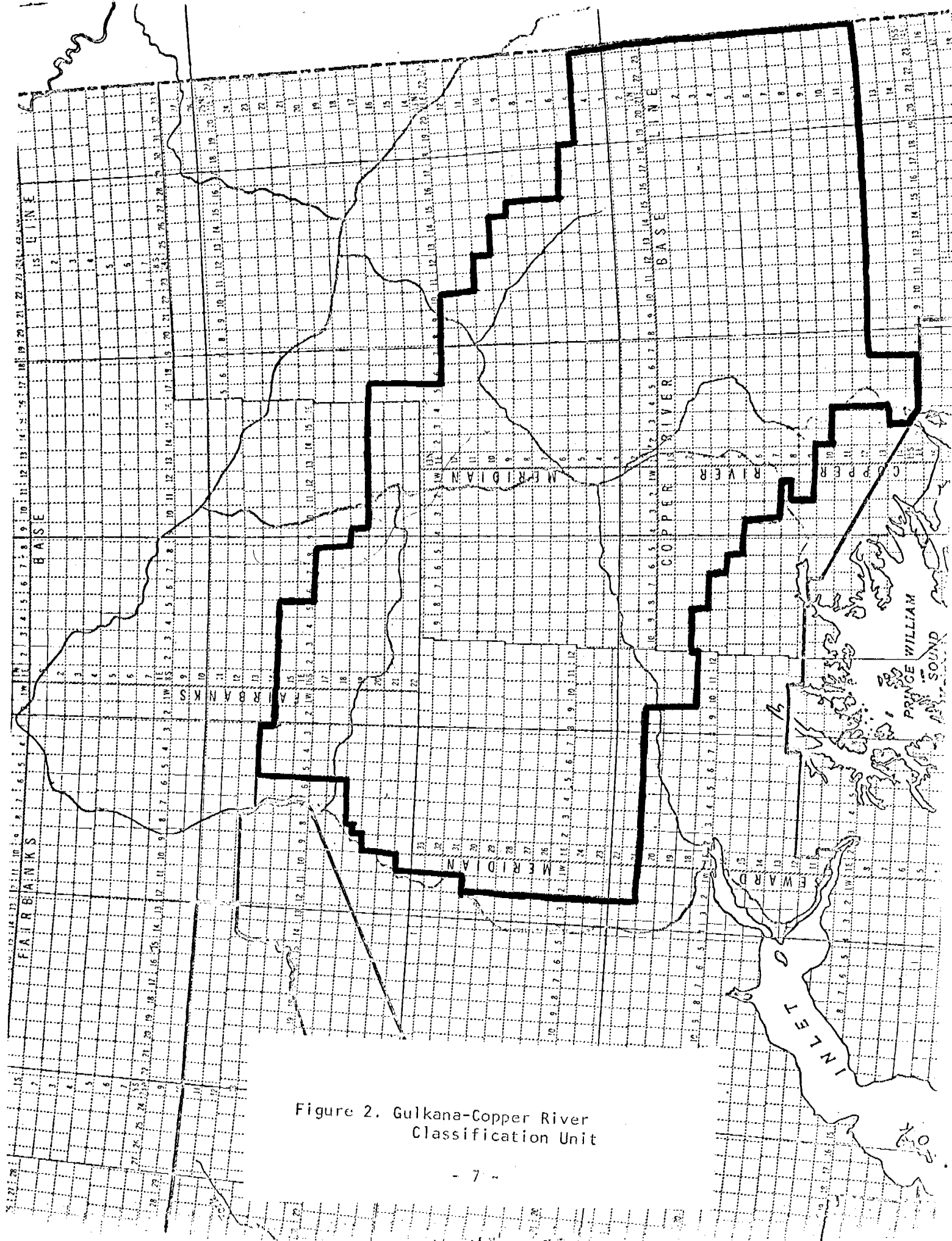


Figure 2. Gulkana-Copper River  
Classification Unit

## Bureau of Outdoor Recreation

A study has recently been launched by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation aimed at inventorying islands in the United States that have significant recreational potentials. The Department of Fish and Game has been requested to submit listings and justifications for detailed field analysis of specific island recreation opportunities. Figure 3 explains the objectives of the study in a little more detail. Study recommendations were made on the following islands:

Admiralty Island	Kalgin Island
Baranof Island	Green Island
Chichagof Island	Hawkins Island
Douglas Island	Hinchinbrook Island
Gravina Island	Knight Island Group
Kuiu Island	Montague Island
Kupreanof Island	Afognak Island
Prince of Wales Island	Shuyak Island

## Soil Conservation Service

A belated assignment occurred during this year. The Soil Conservation Service has sponsored an investigation by a Conservation Needs Inventory Committee to review, project, and make recommendations concerning conservation needs, especially those related to land uses. Alaska was subdivided into various reporting regions and sub-committees assigned throughout the state to prepare regional reports for the statewide committee review and submission. Each committee was composed of various organization representatives designed to give the best working relationship and most competent analysis. First drafts from each region were reviewed and comments submitted for each author. Many comments concerning wildlife conservation needs were consequently included in the final statewide report.

## State Agencies

### Department of Natural Resources

Beyond a doubt, the state agency with which we keep the closest contact is the Department of Natural Resources, or more specifically the Division of Lands. This particular Department has been given the task of handling all state land selection, land disposals, land management, mineral rights, water rights, state forests, state park administration, as well as administering all Alaska Land and Water Conservation Fund monies from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (now over \$500,000 annually). The majority of this past year's projects with the Department of Natural Resources were spent on classification proposals, reviews of proposed parks and recreation areas, and assisting other Department of Fish and Game staff members on revising oil and gas lease, seismic trail, and drilling permit fish and wildlife stipulations.

A portion of the Cook Inlet duck flats recommended for classification as a public recreation area in 1961 has remained unclassified despite efforts by our staff to achieve some action. This has resulted in a skeptic attitude toward any further classification attempts. In this particular instance, we are planning to revamp our proposal to include a larger area with additional justification to include key moose habitat. This problem has resulted in our taking a strong look at recommending establishment of another classification



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

ISLAND STUDY

March 1967

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation is presently engaged in a study of the recreation potential of ocean, river, lake, and reservoir islands found within the 50 States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The President announced the study on November 11, 1966. The study, assigned to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation by Secretary Udall, is scheduled for completion by late 1968.

The Island Study has several objectives:

1. Inventory by size, number, ownership and development status all islands 10 acres or larger as well as smaller islands with significant recreation potential. The inventory will enable the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to provide an up-to-date statistical tabulation of basic data about American islands, which should be useful to Federal, State, and local agencies.
2. Identify, study, and evaluate islands with significant recreation, wilderness, wildlife, historical, and natural values. Those islands with the most promising potential will receive further in-depth analysis.
3. Develop a comprehensive program for island conservation. Analysis will be made of various public and private action programs in developing plans to protect the unique recreation characteristics of selected islands. This effort will possibly lead to Federal administrative and legislative actions.

The large job of inventorying all islands began in early 1967. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation regional offices are cooperating with various Federal and State agencies in this undertaking. Private organizations and individuals are also invited to assist. The cooperation of interested parties is essential and will contribute greatly to the Island Study final report, which will be ready for consideration by the 91st Congress in early 1969.

Figure 3. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Island  
Study Handout

category--Fish and Game Management Area. This would result in less conflict of interest where classification for public recreation might lose the state an opportunity to use land values for matching future Bureau of Outdoor Recreation funds. A special category would, of course, involve more active land management on the part of the Department.

One public recreation classification request seems well on its way to possible completion. On April 19, 1966, a proposal was submitted to the Division of Lands to classify approximately 12,225 acres of the Matanuska Valley (Palmer Hay Flats) for public recreation. The value of this area to moose, waterfowl, fish and as recreation land was emphasized. After several meetings a classification order was forwarded to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for their concurrence or rejection. Although the Borough had selected this particular parcel, its land title had not been transferred from the Division of Lands. The Soil Conservation Service, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Alaska State Housing Authority concurred with our recommendations. At present, the Borough Planning and Zoning Commission has recommended that an ordinance be adopted to overlap this classification with a similar zoning of their own. The Borough Assembly must now review an ordinance proposal, hold a public hearing, and finally reject or accept the classification order and the zoning ordinance. With the excellent past support by the local sportsmen's group, there is little doubt that this proposal will go through. However, there is some question as to whether this provides the land protection that is needed. If it does not, further steps will have to be taken to provide this security. Legislative action might be required.

Reviews and recommendations were made concerning the Nancy Lake Recreation Area located approximately 66 miles north of Anchorage. This parcel of land is to be developed as a high use recreation area and completed by 1980. Suggestions were offered to include facilities for field trails and public shooting ranges in the initial plan. Major recommendations revolved around the usual theme of maintaining open hunting and the foreseeable problem of animal (mainly moose) depredation. Recreational officials are convinced that animal control will be no problem; however, proper warnings and stipulations concerning control measures and financing could prove to be helpful in the future. An examination of the development plan indicated that many expenditures (i.e., road maintenance and animal control) had been underestimated.

A total of 38,974.71 acres of land located at Shaw Creek Flats near Big Delta was classified as public recreation. The important significant points concerned with this classification are: (1) the Alaska Department of Fish and Game was not consulted concerning the importance of the area to fish and wildlife; (2) the justification for this classification included one paragraph stating that it was valuable to waterfowl and moose; and (3) this one public recreation classification more than equaled the total state Public Recreation Lands of 22,008 acres classified in seven years following statehood.

A Keystone Canyon State Park (15 miles from Valdez) proposal was reviewed. Recommendations were made to maintain public hunting and all available biological information was forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources.

The 1967 Alaska State Legislature passed Senate Bill 101 establishing the Chena River Recreation Area, located 55 miles east of Fairbanks. It is expected that specific recommendations concerning hunting and access will be

formulated during this coming year. This is a unique land planning problem in that the puzzle includes an overlapping flood control project and potential federal mitigation funds. Although several meetings have been held on the flood control project, no official recommendations have been made by the Department of Fish and Game.

The Department of Fish and Game was requested to comment on a proposed cabin site development located on the north fringe of Blind Slough, south of Petersburg. Suggestions concerning the feasibility of this project in relation to waterfowl were solicited from Fish and Game personnel. After due consideration, the project was opposed on the grounds that it would significantly reduce the attractiveness of the area to waterfowl and reduce the recreational quality of the area for waterfowl hunters. On the basis of these recommendations and justifications, the project was dropped by the Division of Lands.

Considerable time and effort was spent this past fiscal year reviewing and proposing changes in state land and water use regulations. Although primarily handled by other Department staff members, assistance was given on problems connected with wildlife, water pollution and recent water rights regulations. Personnel of the Fish and Game Water Rights, Access, and Lands projects worked closely to draft proposed changes in state seismic regulations, right-of-way regulations, drilling permits, mineral leasing regulations and related fish and wildlife stipulations.

Under the authority of Alaska's Anadromous Fish Bill, the Department of Fish and Game has become rightfully active in seismic operations which might affect our sport and commercial fisheries. However, the problem is that land seismic regulations are lacking on most federal and state lands. Federal regulations for all public lands are presently being drafted and hopefully will become effective soon. In high priority federal areas such as refuges and wildlife ranges, strict control of seismic activities is maintained. Prior approval on all routes is required and stipulations are automatically included which result in a minimal disturbance to key wildlife areas. Operators are fully responsible in all circumstances. A similar system has been proposed to the Department of Natural Resources where prior approval, reviews, and fish and wildlife stipulations are mandatory. As there are no present regulations, it has been proposed that the Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Game cooperatively prepare an administrative bill for the 1968 State Legislature.

It appears that present regulations governing the issuance of right-of-way permits are essentially sound. The problem is basically inter-departmental liaison. A Letter of Agreement was drafted for consideration by both Departments requiring Fish and Game review of all right-of-ways and inclusion of applicable fish and wildlife stipulations. Acceptable formal procedures will alleviate problems that occur similar to the incident last year where a winter right-of-way was granted across existing Fish and Game "Reserve Use Applications." This would also provide the Department with an opportunity to recommend procedures for keeping right-of-ways open to the hunting and fishing public.

Wildlife stipulations for land-based state oil well drilling permits were revamped to more closely resemble those issued on federal lands where all exploration activities are closely controlled. There is some question on the enforcement of these stipulations, however, as the permits are required by Department of Natural Resource regulations. Closer monitoring of drilling operations and documentation of violations will be required.

The most drastic changes proposed were those connected with state oil and gas leases. Our lease proposals resembled those for areas such as the Kenai Moose Range. Leasees would be required to submit operational plans prior to any activity and to keep these plans current at all times. Specific wildlife stipulations would be included in all leases and enforced. In addition, the violation of fish and wildlife stipulations would be grounds for revoking any given lease. It is hoped that similar wildlife stipulations can be incorporated in all public land leases issued by the Bureau of Land Management.

#### Department of Highways

Reviewing highway plans was a major chore prior to our requesting that an extra copy be sent directly to the Land project in Anchorage. As most of these plans originated from Highway's engineering section, it was considered almost impossible to make major changes; consequently, our recommendations usually were directed towards use of material sites, continued secondary access, pull-outs, and culverting. There were, however, two incidents where we were working closely with Highway's reconnaissance section: (1) the extension of the Petersville Road (Southcentral); and (2) the proposed highway across the Alaska Peninsula. The request for Fish and Game assistance on the Petersville Road route involved only a transfer of biological information which might be useful in route selection. Nothing definite has been decided on the extension.

Consideration has been given to four highway routes across the Alaska Peninsula from Cook Inlet to King Salmon: (1) through Katmai National Monument; (2) through the McNeil River Drainage; (3) along the south shore of Lake Iliamna; and (4) along the north shore of Lake Iliamna. The route through the Monument has been opposed by National Park Service officials but this is still a possibility because adequate ferry ports are lacking for the other routes. Several meetings were held on this subject and a Department statement from the Fish and Game Commissioner to the Commissioner of Highways included the following:

#### I. Northern Route (North Shore of Lake Iliamna)

##### A. Advantages

1. This route will provide the best access for the existing villages in the Iliamna Lake district.
2. It would provide the best and most frequent access to Iliamna Lake for sport fish and recreational purposes.
3. The northern route will provide the best possibility for assisting in the establishment of a commercial freshwater fishery (whitefish and lake trout) in Iliamna Lake.

##### B. Disadvantages

1. Iliamna Lake provides the spawning and rearing potential for the single most valuable red salmon run in the world, that of the Kvichak River. The best and most productive spawning streams of Iliamna Lake are located along the north shore of the lake between the Newhalen River and Pile Bay. The northern route would, of necessity, cross these extremely valuable streams.



The Department of Fish and Game will require very strict control for all highway construction work in the vicinity of these streams in order to prevent damage to their spawning potentials. The problem of bridge or culvert crossings will have to be worked out for each individual spawning stream, with consideration to individual problems. Because of the extreme importance of the area on the north shore of Iliamna Lake between Newhalen River and Pile Bay, the Department is concerned that providing access to the area will ultimately lead to the degradation of the spawning potential of the streams through land settlement and land use activities. It is unfortunately true that providing public access to salmon spawning areas ultimately will be harmful to the salmon resource. In view of this situation, the Department of Fish and Game is considering requesting a land use classification for the area in question from the Bureau of Land Management which would recognize the pre-eminence of the area for salmon production. Such a land classification would limit public entry and use.

2. Additional spawning streams are located on the north shore of the lake, between Newhalen River and Kvichak River and these streams will likewise require careful treatment.
3. The northern route will, of necessity, cross several major river systems which will require expensive bridging. These include but are not limited to Pile River, Newhalen River and Kvichak River.
4. Road construction on the tundra along the northwestern shore of Iliamna Lake may be a problem, depending on the nature of the sub-soil conditions which are encountered. We have conflicting reports from people familiar with the area as to whether or not road building will be economically feasible and whether or not suitable construction material will be found along the route. The Department of Highways should realize that the Department of Fish and Game will not permit the use of construction materials from streams and the lake shore along the route.
5. The northern route is the longest and therefore may be the most expensive.

## II. Middle Route (South of Lake Iliamna)

### A. Advantages

1. This is by far the shortest and easiest route for highway construction.
2. Access will be provided to Kakhonak Village.
3. Selection of this route will provide closest access to Kakhonak Lake and Falls. The Kakhonak Lake system is blocked to anadromous fish by the presence of falls in the lake outlet stream. The Department of Fish and Game has conducted preliminary surveys relative to the construction of a fish ladder over the falls and the establishment of an anadromous red salmon run in the lake.

The relative close access provided by the Middle Route will work to the advantage of this project, should it ever be undertaken by the Department.

4. Few, if any, important salmon streams will be crossed by this route.

B. Disadvantages

1. This road will by-pass most of the existing population centers in the area.
2. Access to Iliamna Lake for sport fishing, recreational and commercial freshwater fishery purposes will be limited to one location at Kakhonak Village.
3. The existence of navigational hazards and problems at the Ursus Cove terminal may pose a serious handicap for this route.

III. Southern Route (McNeil River Drainage)

A. Advantages

1. This is the most scenic route and may have the greatest recreational potential of the three.

B. Disadvantages

1. The southern route will encroach upon and provide easy public access to the McNeil River valley and watershed. For these reasons, the Division of Game is not in favor of the selection of the southern route for the Alaska Peninsula highway crossing.
2. The brown bear population of the McNeil River valley is world-famous and the valley itself is at this time a virgin wilderness. The Division of Game is concerned that easy public access will be harmful to the wild and unspoiled characteristics of the valley and thus ultimately to the brown bear population. Brown bears do not mix with civilization, and the intrusion of people and the necessities of civilization will eventually destroy the unique nature of the brown bear population.
3. In further regard to McNeil River, you may be aware that House Bill 156, which is presently under consideration by the legislature (it was subsequently passed), would establish McNeil River as a state game sanctuary. The establishment of this sanctuary would provide the Department of Fish and Game with the authority to regulate entry and land use practices consistent with provisions of Section 16.20.120-140 of the Fish and Game Code.

A visual examination was made of the three upper routes while working on the spring cooperative Iliamna project with the Bureau of Land Management. The Bureau appears to favor the Northern route, possibly because of the present human

populations, increased recreational use, and access to the disposal areas. After conversing with the local inhabitants of the area, there is little doubt but what they prefer the same route.

### Boroughs and Cities

Active land use planning with specific boroughs and cities has been limited to a few projects. With the boroughs selecting more land and possibly increasing in numbers and size, we can expect to spend more time with local planning officials. Several projects were initiated this past year which resulted in close cooperation with borough governments. Previously mentioned proposed state classification, such as the Palmer Hay Flats and the west side of Cook Inlet, are examples of projects with overlapping state and borough jurisdiction.

The evolution of the proposed "Chugach Planning Committee" has been an interesting segment of this past fiscal year's activities and hopefully a precedent for other boroughs to follow. During the fall of 1966 the City of Anchorage attempted to discourage all uses of the Ship and Campbell Creek drainages by requiring entry permits. The justification for this action was watershed protection. Several meetings were held with city water engineers and borough health officials in an attempt to keep limited access open to this important aesthetic and recreation area. In these discussions it was determined that complete closures of the drainages at present were not necessary to provide more than adequate watershed protection. The primary complaint of the engineers and health officials was that indiscriminate use of off the road hunting vehicles was causing serious erosion problems. With this in mind, two regulation proposals were drafted for consideration by the Board of Fish and Game during their 1967 spring meeting. These proposals as passed read as follows:

#### 304.25 Ship Creek Restricted Area (Near Anchorage)

The drainages of Ship Creek are closed to off the road hunting except by foot, horseback or snow machines factory listed at a gross weight of less than 900 pounds.

#### 304.26 Campbell Creek Restricted Area (Near Anchorage)

The drainages of Campbell Creek are closed to off the road hunting except by foot, horseback, or snow machines factory listed at gross weight of less than 900 pounds.

It was realized that these regulations alone would not solve the problem entirely. Suggestions were made to divert recreational uses to other drainages. The expansion of the planning to other drainages resulted in the realization that a special committee was needed.

A proposal is presently being considered by the Anchorage Borough to establish a special Chugach Planning Committee for that portion of the range within its boundaries. As planned, this committee would act in an advisory capacity to the Planning and Zoning Commission and would be comprised mainly of technical representatives from all agencies concerned with land and water uses in this area. The objectives of this group would be: (1) to provide for the transfer of pertinent information; (2) to coordinate activities; and (3) to

ultimately produce and continually up-date a constructive land plan for the entire area. If this committee is productive, we hope that other boroughs will be receptive to suggestions for establishing similar planning groups.

Without a doubt, the Lands staff's most time consuming, frustrating, and stimulating project has been the proposed management plan for the Mendenhall River wetlands (Juneau Tidelands). This particular tidelands parcel (approximately 6,000 acres) is the result of accumulating sedimentary deposits from the Mendenhall River and other smaller streams bordering the narrow Gastineau Channel. The tidelands and adjacent uplands, although not particularly important for waterfowl production, have been established as a stopover area for north and southbound waterfowl. Some waterfowl and many non-huntable migratory birds do nest around the Mendenhall Flats. All of this plus the natural aesthetics and hunter use of the flats by local citizens (especially the younger generation) has resulted in the jealous guarding of these flats by many community residents. Use of the area by waterfowl appears to have been greatly reduced from pre-1950's estimates. This has been in part due to the reduction of the habitat through community expansion which includes the construction of an airport on the flats. The threat of additional land losses by highway construction, channel dredging, and airport expansion made the problem of proposing an acceptable management plan all the more difficult.

With the assistance of many U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and Alaska Department of Fish and Game personnel, a preliminary plan was drafted and presented to the Juneau Borough for consideration. Recommendations of the plan included:

1. That the management responsibilities for the Juneau tidelands be transferred to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game by means of an "Inter-Agency Land Management Transfer."
2. That studies be initiated by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game to determine exactly what waterfowl habitat development projects are most feasible and what uplands will be required.
3. That the Greater Juneau Borough and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources initiate studies designed to determine other recreational needs of the community and the compatible recreational opportunities that exist within this planning unit. Many federal matching funds are available for these types of studies.
4. That the Juneau Municipal Airport expansion plans be considered and incorporated in a long range waterfowl habitat management plan.
5. That studies be initiated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Federal Aviation Agency to determine how the area can be developed and by which methods to assure that bird-aircraft problems will be kept at a minimum.
6. That the proposed U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Gastineau Channel dike be situated as close to the channel as possible, and that the dike be stabilized and seeded.
7. That no complete or partial blockage of the flats to normal tidal action be allowed.

8. That the northern highway route from Vanderbilt Hill to the Airport Road be selected for construction.
9. That the selection and design of borrow pits on the Mendenhall Flats be planned and coordinated with the waterfowl management plan.
10. That selected pull-outs and access corridors be established for public use.
11. That federal funds be utilized for purchasing of key upland areas determined by the studies as being essential in a recreational management plan.
12. That the Greater Juneau Borough create and establish a Public Recreation zoning for the unit.

Backed by a local conservation group called the "Steller Society," the Juneau Tidelands proposal became a highly controversial issue. In general, all seemed to be going well until the official public hearing where members of the Federal Aviation Administration and several commercial airline representatives played up the problem of bird-aircraft hazards, which previous statements had indicated was not at all serious. As the burden of choice had been placed on the borough, the resulting official rejection of our plan forced the Department of Fish and Game to approach the problem from a different direction. A study of the area was made by a representative of the U. S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife to determine the significance of the bird-aircraft hazard. The Federal Aviation Administration declined active cooperation on this study. In the meantime several attempts are being made by the Steller Society and interested local high school citizens to have the Department's recommendations reconsidered. The problem is time. Continued delaying of any action will result in key land losses and possibly a creation of a bird-aircraft problem which cannot be economically solved due to loss of manageable land.

#### Private Lands

Although only one project this past year dealt directly with a private land owner, past Sport Fish access projects have had extensive experience and problems connected primarily with acquiring public access. Not only are many similar game problems foreseeable but private ownership blockage of potential public access routes already exists. This is particularly true in areas of block or strip settlement and development along highway systems, on state selections or U. S. Forest Service and Open Public Domain, and in and around heavier population centers such as Fairbanks and Anchorage. Consequently, the time to alleviate these problems is prior to disposal by the state or selection and disposal by the respective boroughs. Increased efforts by the Lands program are anticipated on this problem.

Through the efforts of the Alaska Conservation Society, local citizens, North Star Borough officials, University of Alaska personnel, and staff members of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Fairbanks Wildlife Center proposal was conceived. A total of 3,220 acres lying between College and Fairbanks consists of 2,940 acres of state and 280 acres of private lands. This parcel is ideally located and suited for cooperative development into a University research, public recreation, and wildlife area. Proposed developments include an arboretum, nature center, controlled public hunting area, and feeding, resting and breeding areas for waterfowl. The private lands consist of agricultural lands and buildings

which comprised the Creamer's Dairy tract. As most of the area has been cultivated, it has become established as an annual stopover point for northward and southward bound waterfowl. The maintenance of these 280 acres in grains is extremely desirable for use of the estimated 12,000 waterfowl that use the area in the spring and fall and also for the unique wildlife aesthetics that are provided the local residents.

The Creamer Dairy property is now up for sale because of a pending bank foreclosure. Initial asking price for the property (including buildings) was approximately \$600,000. The property is, however, assessed at \$29,075 for the land and \$275,000 for the buildings. A preliminary project statement filed on this proposed purchase estimated total costs at or below \$400,000, depending on the proposed 1967 appraisal. Matching monies may be supplied by the community and other interested groups. These donated earmarked funds can be used to match non-appropriated federal aid monies. Whether or not this project continues depends on: (1) the appraised value; (2) the amount of money that can be raised for matching funds; (3) the willingness of the state to appropriately classify and protect the public lands; (4) how much support can be obtained for the other developments; and (5) the arrangements that can be made to maintain the cleared land in grains.

#### Discussion

Considerable time has been spent on outlining program objectives, organization, responsibilities, budgets, and various other administrative problems. Many of these have been resolved only temporarily as continual changes can be expected. These alterations should be relatively minor and generally only affect short range goals, budgets, and other yearly adjustments. The changes that do occur will merely be a measure of the initial foresight used in establishing the Lands project.

It is obvious that statewide land planning for our Division alone could be a full time job for many employees with varied experiences and aptitudes. The ultimate position of the program will, consequently, depend on the responsibility in land planning that the Department can acquire and is willing to assume. If fish and wildlife cannot be effectively managed continuously without land and water controls, then it seems reasonable that the Department responsible for the management of Alaska's fish and wildlife should become as influential in constructing long-range land and water use plans as is possible.

There are essentially two ways to effectively influence land uses: (1) to enter into an agreement with the land owner whereby fish and wildlife are assured consideration; or (2) to actually acquire title to and manage the land. There are, of course, various categories under these two major separations and each state places varied emphasis on each. For instance, during the 1963-64 fiscal year Wisconsin allocated all of her \$689,350 Pittman-Robertson monies to acquiring land. More and more states are using federal aid monies for this purpose because of the protection provided.

It is probable that certain key wildlife areas in Alaska cannot be adequately protected except by purchasing or leasing. Depending on the land ownership, there are other ways and means to assume responsibilities in land management. On state lands, the responsibility for managing some lands can be transferred from the Division of Lands to the Department of Fish and Game. Of course, land

management agreements should definitely be considered for agencies such as the U. S. Forest Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management because they can provide the most controls for the least expenditure of time and money.

In planning for the Lands project it appears that the magic word will continue to be "Priorities." With only a staff of two it will be essential that the work load be kept within bounds so that continual accomplishments can be realized. However, there are several projects that call for constant reviews that must be established and maintained (i.e., mineral leases, seismic operations, right-of-way permits, drilling permits, land plans for cooperative planning areas, highway plans and logging plans). Project growth will depend on many of the priority requirements including land purchasing and cooperative agreements. The larger the land management role the greater the need for more money and a larger staff. Within three years it is hoped that the program will have received full project status in our Division with a staff to include: a Game Biologist V (Leader), a Game Biologist IV (Assistant), and three Game Biologist III's (regional), regional summer temporaries, regional secretaries, plus one draftsman-surveyor.

Inter-departmental liaison and coordination could be considered the backbone to any program similar to Lands but of greater immediate importance is intra-departmental coordination. With a water rights section in Commercial Fisheries, an Access section in Sport Fisheries, and a Lands section in Game, it is understandable why Divisional routing becomes somewhat of a major issue. For the purpose of intra-, as well as inter-departmental routing, it seems feasible to propose that serious consideration be given to physically combining these three programs into one office where centralized filing and routing procedures can be established. This would make all three programs more efficient and present a more organized front to other agencies.

Not only must continued efforts be made to establish and maintain close liaison with obvious land owner agencies such as the U. S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Lands, boroughs and cities, but equally as important is keeping more closely in touch with agencies such as the Alaska State Housing Authority. This agency can be extremely influential because of its borough planning contracts financed in part by federal funds. Others of equal importance would be the Department of Economic Opportunity plus various state and federal planning and review commissions.

Special consideration must be given to designing the Lands program in such a manner as to provide the most efficient special services that are required of this type of program. Office techniques and procedures must be progressive and all records and files must be kept current. Because of the size of the state it seems desirable to design a standardized reporting form to expedite initial work on any particular project. In addition, it will be advantageous to keep all field personnel (including other Divisions) informed of activities and projects in their areas--especially those that may be of some assistance by providing supplementary data during their regular daily activities.

Correspondence routes should be established with many of the Lands programs in other states to provide for a continual flow of information. Similarly, an immediate short informative trip to several west coast states would prove to be invaluable for constructing and directing Alaska's program. It is hoped that



continued trips can be made by various Lands personnel to access and recreation conferences for the purpose of keeping close contact with the problems of other states. Surely, we can and will learn from many years of experience of other states.

Although there will be expected and unexpected changes, there are several projects not already mentioned that have been given special consideration and top priorities. Some projects are definitely short range but others are more long range in their objectives.

Proposals have been made to almost completely revamp our statewide trail and access system. Each right-of-way must be checked and, if needed, new right-of-ways applied for or easements acquired with federal aid funds. Beginning during the summer of 1967, field studies will be conducted to inventory all trails and other major access routes such as air strips and canoe routes. To complete a statewide inventory of this type will take considerable time and money but any information will be immediately useful. Hopefully, a combined agency statewide trail marking system can be developed for continuity and identification. With proper trail identification markings along the major road systems, it would be possible and desirable to publish a pamphlet briefly describing each trail route so that expanded public use could be encouraged.

Several important boat launching development sites have been proposed for Department consideration. Priorities should be established for their construction and efforts made to incorporate these plans in highway construction plans, Division of Lands projects (Land and Water Conservation Funds), or possibly propose and justify their construction with Department of Fish and Game Federal Aid funds.

Immediate consideration should be given to proposing state legislation providing for changes in Alaska Criminal Code 11.55.050 as this particular law presently makes it unlawful to discharge firearms in a park or an area maintained for the public. Proposed parks and recreation areas would essentially be closed to hunting. It appears that a law made to protect heavily used camp sites and rest areas could be responsible for closing thousands of wilderness areas to hunting.

Departmental support should be given to a recently proposed fish, game and recreation oriented statewide economic survey. Data of this type available for various regions could be most helpful in justifying proposed land uses. Many projects have failed and will fail to materialize because adequate economic data was not available.

The Bureau of Land Management is proposing many classification units throughout the state. Close contact should be kept with both the Fairbanks and Anchorage districts on these classifications. As monies permit, cooperative field studies should be expanded to include the other units. Priorities will have to be made here also. Special attention will have to be given crash programs such as the classification attempt for the proposed N O R T H access route from Fairbanks to the Arctic coast. Eventually it would be advantageous to enter into "Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Agreements" for all Bureau of Land Management units in the state.

There are many cooperative agreements and memorandums of understanding between our Department and other agencies. Those pertaining to land should all be reviewed and brought up-to-date with respect to overall Department objectives.

If new state and federal oil exploration regulations are adopted, additional funds will be necessary to monitor and enforce those pertaining to fish and wildlife. It will be physically impossible to inspect all statewide oil activities; however, plans must be made to review all plans and spot check field operations as funds and manpower are available.

Lands personnel must consider it absolutely necessary to become personally acquainted with state, borough, federal and city planning personnel; likewise, it is necessary to establish a working relationship with many private, public or appointed groups. Public support will be required on almost all projects; thus it will be necessary to encourage Departmental Information and Education participation.

This report has been a summary of program ideas, objectives, techniques, projects, problems and recommendations. For one year we have attempted to construct an efficient and workable program to fit the needs of the Division, the Department, and the State. Already we have established patterns and short and long range goals often designed after similar programs of other states. Even though we feel many of the problems are endemic to Alaska and our program is relatively new, it is interesting to compare problems and objectives with states that have grappled with these questions and answers for many years. For a comparison, the following excerpt was taken from a paper presented by the California Department of Fish and Game Access Program at a Resources Agency Conference in 1966: Sixteen major public access problem areas have been identified and these plans have been made to cope with them.

1. Retention of Public Lands and Waters in Public Ownership. The Department of Fish and Game will continue to examine public lands up for disposal. When significant fish and wildlife values are found, continued public ownership will be recommended.
2. Private Lands Blocking Access to Public Lands and Waters. Continued efforts will be made to gain public access to public lands and waters surrounded by posted private land.
3. Military Lands. Fish and wildlife management plans will be developed on all suitable military lands. Increased public use of fish and wildlife will be proposed.
4. Disposal and Leasing by the State Lands Commission of State Lands Important for Fish and Wildlife. The transference of state lands to the Department of Fish and Game for administration and management will be sought when there are high fish and wildlife values.
5. Wildlife Refuges Closed to Hunting. Legislative fish and wildlife refuges that are not benefiting the resource will be recommended for abolishment.
6. National, State, and Local Government Parks. Hunting in parks and recreation areas will be sought when there is no danger to human safety and it does not conflict with the primary purpose established for the area.

7. Single-Purpose Land and Water Use. Wildlife associated recreation will be recommended as a part of heretofore single-purpose projects.
8. County Firearms Closures. Proposed county firearms closures will be reviewed, to help in holding them to the smallest acreage necessary for safety.
9. Illegal Obstruction of Access to Public Lands and Waters. A constant watch will be kept for cases of illegal posting of public lands. Legal action will be taken when the violator can be determined. Searches will be made for lands where public fishing access is reserved by patents or the State Constitution.
10. Existing Land Ownership Patterns of Both Public and Private Lands That Impair Access. Land exchanges, to solve problems of public use of checker-board ownership patterns, will be encouraged.
11. Public Unfamiliarity with the Location and Boundaries of Public Lands. Boundary marking and map distribution by public land agencies will be recommended.
12. Fire Closures by Federal, State or Local Governments. It will be recommended to the Fish and Game Commission that hunting and angling seasons be adjusted to coincide with low fire hazard periods when this does not conflict with the biological principles involved. The reduction of fire closure areas through increased fire suppression capability will be encouraged.
13. Lack of Reasonable Access into Some Remote Areas. As funds are available, access roads or trails will be built to some areas not now being used. Such roads will be carefully planned so as not to depress the aesthetic values of the areas opened to use. It is recognized that some areas should be kept in a pristine state.
14. Access Cut Off by New Highway Construction. Highway plans will be reviewed and recommendations made for providing adequate access to adjacent areas where there is existing or potential fish and wildlife use.
15. Unused Fish and Wildlife Resources on Private Lands. Private landowners will be encouraged to make the fish and wildlife on their lands and waters available to the public. Aid will be provided for planning such use.
16. Coastal Area Access. As funds are available, the coastal access program will be continued to obtain an adequate number of access facilities along the entire coast. In order to maintain a variety of qualities of use, physical access to some areas will not be improved beyond riding and hiking trails.

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