



**MEMORANDUM:**  
**State of Alaska**  
**Dept. of Natural Resources**

**Div. of Mining, Land & Water**  
**Realty Services Section**

**From:**

Aleria Knudson  
Natural Resource Specialist 3

**File No.:**

GS-3386

**Subject:**

Circle Hot Springs/Medicine Lake Area  
University Lands Selection

Background

In anticipation of the passage of legislation to enable the University of Alaska to receive title to an additional 360,000 acres of land, the University of Alaska Land Management Office (UA LMO) began selecting lands for consideration. The UA LMO will be submitting land selections in approximately 100,000-acre batches for State agency review, to be completed by the Division of Mining, Land & Water (DMLW) Realty Services Section (Realty). Once agency review has been completed, the lands will be reviewed by UA LMO for inclusion on the final 500,000-acre list to be submitted to the Governor's Office and the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) Commissioner. The UA LMO will work with the Governor's Office or their delegate to refine the list of desired lands and concur with the relinquishment of the State's selection. Following their review and approval, Realty will complete public notice for the proposed relinquishment of State selections to facilitate the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) transfer of the lands to the University. The UA LMO and DNR will jointly submit a list of lands to BLM along with letters conditionally relinquishing the State's selection to be enacted upon conveyance of the lands to the University.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal Year 2023 was passed and included language from Senator Murkowski's University of Alaska Fiscal Foundation Act which enables the BLM to transfer State Selected lands to the University of Alaska as described above.

Affected Lands

Lands selected by the UA LMO are as follows:

Township 8 North, Range 16 East, Fairbanks Meridian;

Sec. 19, Lots 1 through 6

Sec. 20, Lots 1 and 2

Sec. 29, All excluding Medicine Lake

Sec. 30, NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4SW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, E1/2SE1/4SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4SE1/4, N1/2NW1/4SW1/4SE1/4, excluding Medicine Lake

Sec. 31, NE1/4, S1/2NW1/4, S1/2NE1/4NW1/4, NW1/4NW1/4NW1/4, S1/2;

Sec. 32, all

Excluding Medicine Lake, all navigable and meanderable waters, and U.S. Survey Nos. 1416, 3636, and 9891. Including the oil, gas, and other mineral rights but not surface rights in U.S. Survey No. 4246 in section 30. Containing approximately 2,417.50 acres.

## Background

- State selection applications GS-3386
- Priority conveyance code: 3 (medium)

## Discussion

Selections Unit staff reviewed the following resources/records for information on the lands:

- BLM online records, including TWPALL, MLRS, MTP, and LMaR GIS system
- BLM casefiles
- Recorder's Office database, excluding historic books
- State records including LAS, DBRS, and Alaska Mapper

F008N016E Research results:

- BLM records indicate:
  - FF-022734, ANCSA 14(H)(1) site. Determined to be entirely within Native Allotment Application F-02779 within Sec. 19 (USS 9891)
  - No mining claims were listed
- State LAS records indicate:
  - Lands selected under general application GS-3386 in Nov. 1978
    - Lands are in State Selected status
  - No permits or concurrences are present in LAS records, including at-risk mining claims
- Mapper/imagery indicates:
  - There is a trail beginning at the road in F008N015E35 that runs northeast and terminates at Medicine Lake in Sec. 30.

## Surrounding Land Ownership Pattern

Lands immediately surrounding the parcels are a mix of State owned lands, private lands (Native Allotments), and State selected lands managed by BLM. Please see the attached land maps for more details.

## Requested Action

We are seeking your agency's input as to whether DNR should relinquish its land selection, which will allow BLM to convey the parcel to the University. Should DNR relinquish the selection the lands will be a direct federal conveyance to the University. Consequently, there are several important factors that differentiate this proposed relinquishment from others, including:

1. The State has no ability to require that BLM reserve or make the University's title subject to easements on these lands. This means that access areas, public easements, or other common tools used to ensure public access across private lands may not be available after conveyance to the University.
2. These lands will pass directly from the Federal government to the University of Alaska and will be treated as private trust lands.
3. It is unclear how existing RS2477 trails will be handled during the conveyance process. BLM has indicated that existing valid rights will be addressed prior to conveyance to the University, however BLM does not consider most RS2477 trails to be valid.
4. It is unclear how BLM will resolve issues involving navigable waters.

Please provide your comments regarding the proposed relinquishment, along with reasoning and evidence supporting your recommendation(s) to Realty Services no later than 3 pm on **April 20, 2026**.

Attachments

1. UA Circle Hot Springs/Medicine Lake selection map.