

STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND & WATER

**DRAFT YUKON TANANA AREA PLAN AMENDMENT**  
**NC-10-005A03**

**Kantishna Region, Management Unit K-32**

related to the  
**Nenana-Totchaket Agriculture Phase One – ADL 233703**

The Commissioner of the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) finds that the following amendment to the Yukon Tanana Area Plan, described more fully in the Attachment, meets the requirements of AS 38.04.065 Land Use Planning and Classification and 11 AAC 55.010-.030 Land Planning and Classification for land use plans and hereby adopts the amendment. The Department of Natural Resources will manage state lands within the area of the revision consistent with this classification, designation and management intent.

- Designation: This amendment will create a new subunit, named K-32b, by removing 561 acres from Unit K-32. Unit K-32b will be designated Settlement. The remainder of Unit K-32 will be renumbered to K-32a and retain the existing designation of Agriculture.
- Classification: Unit K-32b will be classified Settlement Land. Unit K-32a will retain the classification of Agricultural Land.
- Management Intent: Management Unit K-32b is appropriate for disposal during the planning period and is to be retained for the purpose of supporting state land disposals. See Chapter 2 requirements for management guidelines related to Settlement.

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Crowther, Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources  
State of Alaska

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# ATTACHMENT

to the  
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Location and Legal Description of Unit K-32: Located within DNR's Northern Region, approximately five miles west of the City of Nenana, off Totchaket Road, more specifically described as:

1. That highlighted portion of Alaska State Land Survey No. 2021-16 Nenana-Totchaket Subdivision, Phase 1A. That highlighted portion, excluding the Totchaket Road right-of-way and Moe's Road right-of-way, can be described as follows:

"Tracts B, C, and D of Alaska State Land Survey No. 2021-16, Nenana-Totchaket Subdivision, Phase 1A, according to the plat recorded in the Nenana Recording District on March 1, 2022, as Plat No. 2022-1, aggregating 367.78 acres, more or less."

This portion is within Section 11, Township 4 South, Range 9 West, Fairbanks Meridian.  
**See Attachment A. ASLS 2021-16\_Nenana Phase 1A.**

2. That highlighted portion of Alaska State Land Survey No. 2021-17 Nenana-Totchaket Subdivision, Phase 1B. That highlighted portion, excluding the Totchaket Road right-of-way and Schade Lane right-of-way, can be described as follows:

"Tracts B and C of Alaska State Land Survey No. 2021-17, Nenana-Totchaket Subdivision, Phase 1B, according to the plat recorded in the Nenana Recording District on March 6, 2024, as Plat No. 2024-1, aggregating 193.24 acres, more or less."

This portion is within Section 8, Township 4 South, Range 9 West, Fairbanks Meridian.  
**See Attachment B. ASLS 2021-17\_Nenana Phase 1B.**

Authority: The authority to revise plans derives from AS 38.04.065(b) Land Use Planning and Classification. 11 AAC 55.030(f) Land Use Plan defines when a revision constitutes a plan amendment.

Current Plan: Lands within Unit K-32 are currently designated Agriculture and classified Agricultural Land. The management intent for the unit provides that the land be managed for its agricultural values, and agricultural land disposals are appropriate during the planning period subject to Chapter 2 requirements (Agriculture). Additionally, forestry activities are also appropriate and may occur independently of or precede an agricultural land disposal subject to Chapter 2 requirements. If a timber harvest is scheduled far in advance of agricultural operations, the land should be reforested to protect soils. The Division of Agriculture should be

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consulted prior to any forest management activity, especially commercial timber harvest. Protect cultural resources.

Proposed Plan Amendment: DNR proposes to amend the YTAP to create a new subunit and renumber an existing unit. The new subunit will be created by transferring portions of the Nenana-Totchaket Subdivision, Phases 1A and 1B, comprised of approximately 561 acres from existing Unit K-32 to the newly created subunit named K-32b. Subunit K-32b will be designated Settlement and classified Settlement Land. The management intent will state that the land is appropriate for disposal during the planning period and is to be retained for the purpose of supporting state land disposals. See Chapter 2 requirements for management guidelines related to Settlement. The land is closed to mineral entry under Mineral Order 1255.

The remainder of Unit K-32 will be renumbered to K-32a and retain the existing designation of Agriculture and classification of Agricultural Land. The existing management intent will be carried forward with no changes. The remainder of management unit K-32 will remain designated as Agriculture.

Explanation: The YTAP was adopted in January of 2014. The Nenana-Totchaket Agriculture Phase One project is within management unit K-32, Kantishna Region, of the YTAP, adopted January 2014 and currently contains approximately 34,468 acres. Residential development on state land within the planning area in the decades prior to the adoption of the 2014 YTAP was relatively modest, with most of the growth occurring along the Parks Highway and along the major rivers, especially the Nenana River. Near and within community areas, this growth has predominately involved pre-survey lots, created through state subdivisions.

The Nenana-Totchaket Agriculture Phase One project is being developed to not only provide for a variety of parcel sizes with the intention of creating large scale and small scale agriculture parcels for disposal, but to also create smaller settlement parcels in areas of less agricultural-suitable soils or where topography or infrastructure make siting larger parcels more difficult or less practical. The Land Conveyance Section (LCS) proposes a minimum parcel size for non-agricultural parcels of no smaller than five acres.

Information about parcel size and locations was developed using information gathered from internal research and an on-site field inspection. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was contracted to perform detailed soil surveys in the project area during the summer of 2021. The soil surveys were used to determine locations for settlement designated land. The locations selected for settlement are primarily comprised of Class 6 soils with some Class 3 and Class 4 soils intermixed. Class 6 soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation and that restrict their use to mainly pasture rangeland, forestland, or wildlife habitat. Class 3 and Class 4 soils have severe to very severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants and that require special conservation practices or very careful management. This combination of soil allows for suitable settlement designation.

LiDAR data and infrared imagery were utilized to develop conceptual designs of parcel layouts. On-site field inspections will be conducted to verify established limits and options for design of parcels and road construction. LCS consulted with the Division of Agriculture on the information

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gathered and it was determined that the project area encompassing the newly created subunit named K-32b is appropriate to designate to settlement.

The application of the Settlement designation/classification to land within the YTAP stems from a constitutional and statutory directive to provide suitable public land for transfer to private ownership for settlement purposes. Identification of land appropriate for settlement results from the consideration of a number of factors. In the YTAP, it was primarily based on whether it had reasonable access by road, consisted of topography that would be suitable for development, and posed minimal conflict with recreation, scenic values, important fish and wildlife resources, or resource development. Compatibility with adjacent land uses and plan designations are also considered. Settlement goals for the YTAP include Private Land Ownership, Community, Social, and Aesthetic Values, and Fiscal Impacts.

One of the major goals under the Settlement designation is to provide suitable public lands for transfer to private ownership for settlement purposes. In this case, settlement purposes can be satisfied under two settlement categories. One settlement category is to offer seasonal residences for recreation where land disposals are intended to provide land, often in remote locations, for recreational needs. A second settlement category is to offer year-round residences for community expansion. Land disposals under this category are accessible land suitable to meet the needs of existing communities and serve people whose principal place of residence and work is, or will be, in the area of the land disposal. This is accomplished through various types of land disposal programs, including the State of Alaska's Land Auctions and the Over-the-Counter program, both of which fall under AS 38.05.045 Generally. Parcels offered through these land disposals are offered fee-simple for the surface estate only. These parcels will be sold for settlement and will not be subject to agriculture covenants or clearing and tillage requirements.

Another major goal is to maintain compatibility with the cultural lifestyle and aesthetic values of residents and users, and to minimize undesired impacts on those values while considering the needs and demands of all state residents when designing future disposals. This is accomplished through a public comment period, where for a period of at least 30 consecutive days, the public will have the opportunity to submit written comments on this draft Area Plan Amendment (APA) and the related draft Land Classification Order (LCO). While all comments are welcome, the public is encouraged to provide information specifically related to compatibility with the cultural lifestyle in the area and the aesthetic values of residents and users to help adjudicators assess compatibility and investigate methods to minimize undesired impacts where applicable. LCS will conduct public notice in accordance with AS 38.05.945 Notice that will inform the public of this opportunity and how to participate.

A third major goal is to protect critical recreation areas, environmental resources, and habitats. Sensitive environmental features, habitat resource areas, and areas (or corridors) used by local residents for recreation purposes will be taken into consideration in subdivision design and subdivisions should be developed to protect or maintain these features. Vegetated wildlife migration corridors, riparian buffers, and retained open space should also be considered when there is also a high value for fish and wildlife resources in the areas.

The project area is within the Unorganized Borough, and a traditional use finding is required under AS 38.05.830 Land Disposal in the Unorganized Borough. Information obtained

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from the YTAP, research, Agency Review, and site inspection has indicated that the project area appears to be currently used for hunting, trapping, access to property outside of the project area, and personal use wood harvest and salvage tree harvest. LCS recognizes that as land is developed and sold, it will impact traditional uses by removing some of the land from public use. However, the project area is surrounded by large amounts of State-owned land which will remain open to public use. Additional information on traditional use is welcome during the public comment period for this draft APA and the related draft LCO.

A fourth major goal to consider when planning a land disposal is to site and plan the project area in a way that minimizes the infrastructure costs and other services. Land disposals should be focused on areas of existing settlement; areas along the road system or a waterway that can be easily accessed by water transport; or areas where service requirements may be provided by local government or community organizations. Access to land that could support various types of land disposals has been a long-term impediment to development in the area. However, in recent years, development related to the long-term Nenana-Totchaket Agriculture Phase One project has largely remedied access impediments. With the completion of the Nenana River bridge in 2020, improvements made to the Totchaket Road, and with the ongoing road and utilities development for Nenana-Totchaket Agriculture Phase One, a settlement designated land disposal that is planned within the Nenana-Totchaket Agriculture Phase One project area could be developed with minimal infrastructure cost. Parcel size and location will be developed using information gathered from soil surveys, research, LiDAR data, infrared imagery, and on-site field inspection that will establish limits and options for design of parcels and additional road construction, where necessary. Additionally, the City of Nenana and the Parks Highway is approximately five miles east of the project area. The proximity to the City of Nenana may provide certain amenities while proximity to the Parks Highway from the Totchaket Road allows easy access to other services.

Amending the plan to allow non-agricultural land disposal would allow the competitive sale of suitable state land to Alaskan residents and generate revenue for the State. These parcels will be sold for settlement and will not be subject to agriculture covenants or clearing and tillage requirements.

Requirements of AS 38.04.065(b): The factors identified in this section of statute have been considered, and the proposed action is consistent with that portion of the statute.