

DENALI HIGHWAY
Proposed Special Recreation Management Area
Comparison of Alternative - Recreation

MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Note: This SRMA is being proposed under Alternative C. The accompanying map shows the SRMA proposal under Alternative C. See Table for specific descriptions. On State and Native selected lands, measures identified below would only apply until conveyance occurs. Adoption of identified measures after conveyance would be at the discretion of the State of Alaska or the Native corporation.

Objectives:

1. Manage for positive recreational experiences within the existing ROS classes (roaded natural, semi-primitive motorized, semi-primitive, primitive).
2. Maintain quality of current viewshed by managing within SRMA as VRM class II.

Description of Area: BLM-managed lands within the fore and middle ground viewsheds of the Denali highway. Area is 585,000 acres, the majority of which is State selected.

Definition of “limited” for OHVs: Under Alternative C, limited would mean designation of trails, and possible vehicle limitations on specific trails. Goal would be to designate trails to prevent unmanaged proliferation of motorized trails, and to provide mix of non-motorized and motorized activities. Unmanaged trail proliferation is causing and has potential to cause significant rutting, thermal erosion, and impacts to the viewshed. Secondary goal is to facilitate maintenance of designated trails. Any proposal to limit or close specific trails will require completion of an implementation-level plan, including public, State, and Native involvement.

ALTERNATIVES – Denali Highway SRMA

DIFFERENCES IN MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE BY ALTERNATIVE					
Note: Within this alternative table, “Interim” refers to management of State or Native selected lands until conveyed, “Long Term” refers to management of lands if they are retained in federal ownership.					
Management Actions	Alternative A: Current management	Alternative B: Development end of spectrum	Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum	Alternative D: Interim	Alternative D: Long Term
Special Area Decision	No SRMA designated.	No SRMA. This is priority area for State selection.	Designate area as SRMA as shown on map.	No SRMA. Measures described below will apply. BLM will pursue designation of highway as Backcountry Byway.	If large contiguous blocks of land are retained in federal ownership, designate as SRMA. Pursue designation as Backcountry Byway.
Trails/Off-Highway-Vehicle (OHV)	Only limited in TLAD. No other restrictions.	Same as A.	OHVs within this area would be limited as described above.	Designated as “open” to OHVs. OHV use would be consistent with State’s Generally Allowed Uses.	OHVs within this area would be limited as described above.
Trails/OHV - Clearwater sub-unit	Currently a State controlled-use area.	No sub-unit.	This area would be closed seasonally (snow-free months) to motorized use.	Area would be open to OHVs, consistent with existing controlled-use area.	Same as Alternative C.
Construction of new airstrips	Considered case-by-case.	Same as alternative A.	No new airstrips.	Avoid construction of new airstrips.	Same as D Interim.
Construction of new roads	Considered case-by-case.	Permit new road construction. Consider retention of roads constructed for resource development to expand/enhance a roaded-natural recreation experience.	No new road construction.	Permit new road construction only when necessary for resource development. Utilize specific guidelines for minimizing impacts to visual resources identified in “Denali to Wrangell/St.Elias”.	Same as D Interim.

ALTERNATIVES – Denali Highway SRMA

Management Actions	Alternative A: Current management	Alternative B: Development end of spectrum	Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum	Alternative D: Interim	Alternative D: Long Term
Minerals: Locatable minerals	Under PLO 5180, open to metalliferous metals.	Keep open	Recommend closure of entire SRMA to protect recreation and viewshed values.	Closed to mineral entry by State and Native selection.	Area will remain open to locatable mineral entry. Mitigate exploration/development activities consistent with recommendations in “Denali to Wrangell-St. Elias.”
Minerals: Leasable minerals (Oil & Gas)	Currently closed under PLO 5180.	Revoke withdrawal and open to leasable minerals.	Maintain withdrawal.	Closed to mineral leasing by State and Native selection.	Maintain withdrawal against mineral leasing.
Minerals: Leasable minerals (Coal)	Same as O&G.	Revoke withdrawal and open to coal leasing.	Maintain withdrawal.	Closed to mineral leasing by State and Native selection.	Maintain withdrawal against mineral leasing.
Minerals: Mineral materials	Some gravel sites currently present along Denali highway.	Allow on a case-by-case basis.	Do not permit.	Avoid development of mineral material sites. Any development should follow guidance for mineral material development in “Denali to Wrangell-St. Elias”.	Same as D Interim.
Public use cabins	None currently available.	Should be considered.	None.	Will not be considered under interim management.	Will be considered if lands retained in long term federal ownership.

ALTERNATIVES – Denali Highway SRMA

Management Actions	Alternative A: Current management	Alternative B: Development end of spectrum	Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum	Alternative D: Interim	Alternative D: Long Term
Special Recreation Permits (SRP)	Permitted on case-by-case basis.	Same as alternative A.	Determine carrying capacity for all SRPs in corridor.	Permitted on case-by-case basis.	Determine carrying capacity for all SRPs in area.
General visitor use	No carrying capacity.	No carrying capacity.	Determine carrying capacity for general visitor use.	No carrying capacity.	Determine carrying capacity for general visitor use.
Recreational facilities	BLM currently manages Tangle Lakes campground, Delta wayside, Brushkana campground, and some trailheads.	Follow direction for recreational facilities described in “Denali to Wrangell-St. Elias”.	No new facilities until carrying capacity has been determined. Limit facilities to those necessary to handle capacity.	No investment in new facilities until land status is resolved.	If retained in long-term federal ownership, BLM would cooperate with DOT on construction of day-use waysides at 39-mile, 56-mile (Clearwater), and 80-mile. Consider CG at Clearwater. Utilize trailheads for education/interpretation. Develop some trailheads.
Lands and Realty: Emphasis area for acquisition?	No	No	Yes	No, but do not preclude from possible acquisition.	Yes, if contiguous blocks of land are retained in federal ownership.
Lands and Realty: FLPMA, R&PP leases	Yes, case-by-case.	Same as A.	No.	OK, consistent with management objectives for the area.	Same as D Interim.

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Lands and Realty: FLPMA 302 Permits	Yes, case-by-case.	Yes, case-by-case.	No.	No for occupancy permits. Case-by-case for non-occupancy permits, consistent with objectives of the area.	Same as Interim D.
Lands and Realty: Rights of Way (ROW)	Evaluate case by case.	Allow, case by case.	No.	OK with mitigation measures to minimize visual impacts.	ROW avoidance area.
Military permits, activities	Considered case-by-case.	Same as A.	No.	No.	No.
Fire	Limited or modified suppression classes, full suppression around lodges, campgrounds, waysides, or developed recreation sites/facilities.	Same as A.	Same as D.	Same as A, but suppression tactics will be used that minimize visual impacts. Prescribed fire burn plans should address visual resources, air quality, and buffer for water quality. Use fuels treatment projects to achieve resource objectives, protect human life and property, and to reduce risk of unwanted wildland fires.	Same as Interim D.