

WILDERNESS SUITABILITY REVIEW

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MANDATES

Because no lands in the monument were designated as wilderness by ANILCA section 1317(a), a review of lands in the monument must be made to determine their suitability or nonsuitability for preservation as wilderness.

Section 1317(b) specifies that "the Secretary shall conduct his review by December 2, 1985, and the President shall advise the United States Senate and House of Representatives of his recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of sections 3(c) and (d) of the Wilderness Act" by December 2, 1987. Actual recommendations on whether to designate suitable areas as wilderness will be made following completion of the general management plan. An environmental impact statement will be prepared as part of the recommendation process.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines wilderness as follows:

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

WILDERNESS SUITABILITY CRITERIA

Wilderness suitability criteria were developed that reflect the definition of wilderness contained in the Wilderness Act and the provisions of ANILCA specific to wilderness areas in Alaska. These criteria were applied to all federal lands in the monument to determine their suitability for designation. These criteria relate to the current land status and physical character of the land.

The actual recommendations will follow completion of the general management plan (see "Future Wilderness Recommendations"). For a particular tract of land to be determined suitable or not suitable for wilderness designation, it must meet all of the following criteria:

Table 8: Wilderness Suitability Criteria

<u>Description of Land or Activity</u>		<u>Suitable for Wilderness</u>	<u>Not Suitable for Wilderness</u>	<u>Suitability Pending</u>
<u>Land Status</u>	Federal	X		X
	Federal - under application or selection.		X	
	State or private land - patented or tentatively approved		X	
	Private ownership of subsurface estate		X	
<u>Mining</u>	Areas with minor ground disturbances from past mining activities.	X		
	Areas with major past ground disturbances from mining activities.		X	
	Current mining activities and ground disturbances		X	
<u>Roads and ORV trails</u>	Unimproved roads or ORV trails that are unused or little used by motor vehicles.		X	
	Improved roads and ORV trails regularly used by motor vehicles.		X	
<u>Landing Strips</u>	Unimproved or minimally improved and maintained.	X		
	Improved and maintained.		X	
<u>Cabins</u>	Uninhabited structures; hunter, hiker, and patrol cabins.	X		
	Inhabited as a primary place of residence.		X	

<u>Description of Land or Activity</u>		<u>Suitable for Wilderness</u>	<u>Not Suitable for Wilderness</u>	<u>Suitability Pending</u>
<u>Size of Unit</u>	Greater than 5,000 acres adjacent to existing wilderness, or of a manageable size.	X		
	Less than 5,000 acres or of unmanageable size.		X	

WILDERNESS SUITABILITY DETERMINATION

Using these criteria, 513,926 of the 659,807 acres in the monument have been determined suitable for wilderness designation based on their present undeveloped and unimpaired state. There are no major past or present mining developments, improved roads or improved ATV trails, or inhabited cabins on federal lands.

The existing landing strip in the Kakagrak Hills was constructed before the monument was established. Since its abandonment by the military, approximately 1,500 feet of the landing strip's 3,000 feet has fallen into disrepair. The usable 1,500 feet is proposed for continued use. As such, the landing strip does not preclude the area's suitability for wilderness.

Most of the current activity (fishing camps, etc.) takes place on native allotments and native corporation lands. Approximately 54,177 acres of the monument are not suitable for wilderness, and approximately 89,704 acres' suitability for wilderness is pending. The final status of native land selections and native allotments has not been determined and it is not certain at this time whether they will be transferred out of federal ownership.

All lands determined suitable for wilderness designation will be managed under the terms of ANILCA to maintain the wilderness character and values of the lands until designation recommendations have been proposed and Congress has acted on these proposals.

Changes in land status or those likely to occur between now and the time that the recommendations are made to the president and Congress will be reflected in those recommendations. A determination of suitability does not affect any pending selections or other prior existing land disposal actions. All wilderness recommendations and subsequent designations will be made subject to valid existing rights including rights-of-way under RS 2477.

FUTURE WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations on whether to designate suitable areas as wilderness will be made following completion of the general management plan. An environmental impact statement will be prepared as part of the wilderness recommendations

process. The public will have the opportunity to review and comment on these recommendation and secretarial review and public hearings will be held. Upon completion of the EIS, the president will make his recommendations to the Congress.

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT

Should the secretary of the interior and the president recommend and should the Congress designate lands within the monument for inclusion in the national wilderness preservation system, this section on wilderness management will apply throughout the lifespan of this plan.

The Wilderness Act states that wilderness areas "shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness."

Wilderness is then defined (in part) as "an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitations, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions."

ANILCA made certain exceptions to the Wilderness Act that apply only to the management of wilderness areas in Alaska. These are summarized below.

Section 1110(a) provides that the secretary will permit in conservation system units, which by definition in Section 102(4) includes units of the national wilderness preservation system

the use of snowmachines (during periods of adequate snow cover...), motorboats, airplanes, and nonmotorized surface transportation methods for traditional activities (where such activities are permitted by this Act or other law) and for travel to and from villages and homesites. Such use shall be subject to reasonable regulations by the Secretary to protect the natural and other values of the [wilderness] . . . areas, and shall not be prohibited unless, after notice and hearing in the vicinity of the affected unit or area, the Secretary finds that such use would be detrimental to the resource values of the unit or area.

The National Park Service has incorporated this provision into the 43 CFR 36.11, which covers special access in conservation system units in Alaska.

The use of airplanes in designated wilderness is allowed under the above-cited sections of ANILCA and the Code of Federal Regulations. Helicopter landings are prohibited except in compliance with a permit issued by the superintendent.

Motorboats may also be used on bodies of water within wilderness. Snowmachine access occurs throughout the monument and will continue to be allowed in designated wilderness under the above-cited sections of ANILCA and the CFR. No other forms of motorized access are permitted except as provided by ANILCA, sections 811, 1110 and 1111, and ANCSA, sections 34 and 35.

The Wilderness Act, section 4(c), states that subject to existing private rights, there shall be:

no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area . . . and except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for purposes of this Act (including measures required in emergencies involving health and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road . . . and no structure or installation within the area.

Section 1303(a)(3) of ANILCA, however, authorizes the use and occupancy of existing cabins other structures in national park system units under a permit system. Cabins and other structures not under a permit system may be used for official government business, for emergencies involving health and safety, and for general public use. Also under section 1303(a)(4), the secretary may permit the construction and maintenance of cabins or other structures if it is determined that the use is necessary for reasonable subsistence use. Section 1315 of ANILCA contains more specific language about existing cabins:

Previously existing public use cabins within wilderness . . . may be permitted to continue and may be maintained or replaced subject to such restrictions as the Secretary deems necessary to preserve the wilderness character of the area.

Section 1315 also allows the construction of new cabins and shelters if necessary for the protection of public health and safety. Appropriate congressional committees must be notified of the intention to remove existing public use cabins or shelters or to construct new ones in wilderness.

Section 1310, subject to reasonable regulation, provides for access to and the operation, maintenance, and establishment of air and water navigation aids, communications sites and related facilities, and facilities for weather, climate, and fisheries research and monitoring in wilderness areas.

The decision-making process established in Title XI of ANILCA for the siting of transportation and utility systems applies to designated wilderness in Alaska.

WILDERNESS SUITABILITY

Cape Krusenstern National Monument

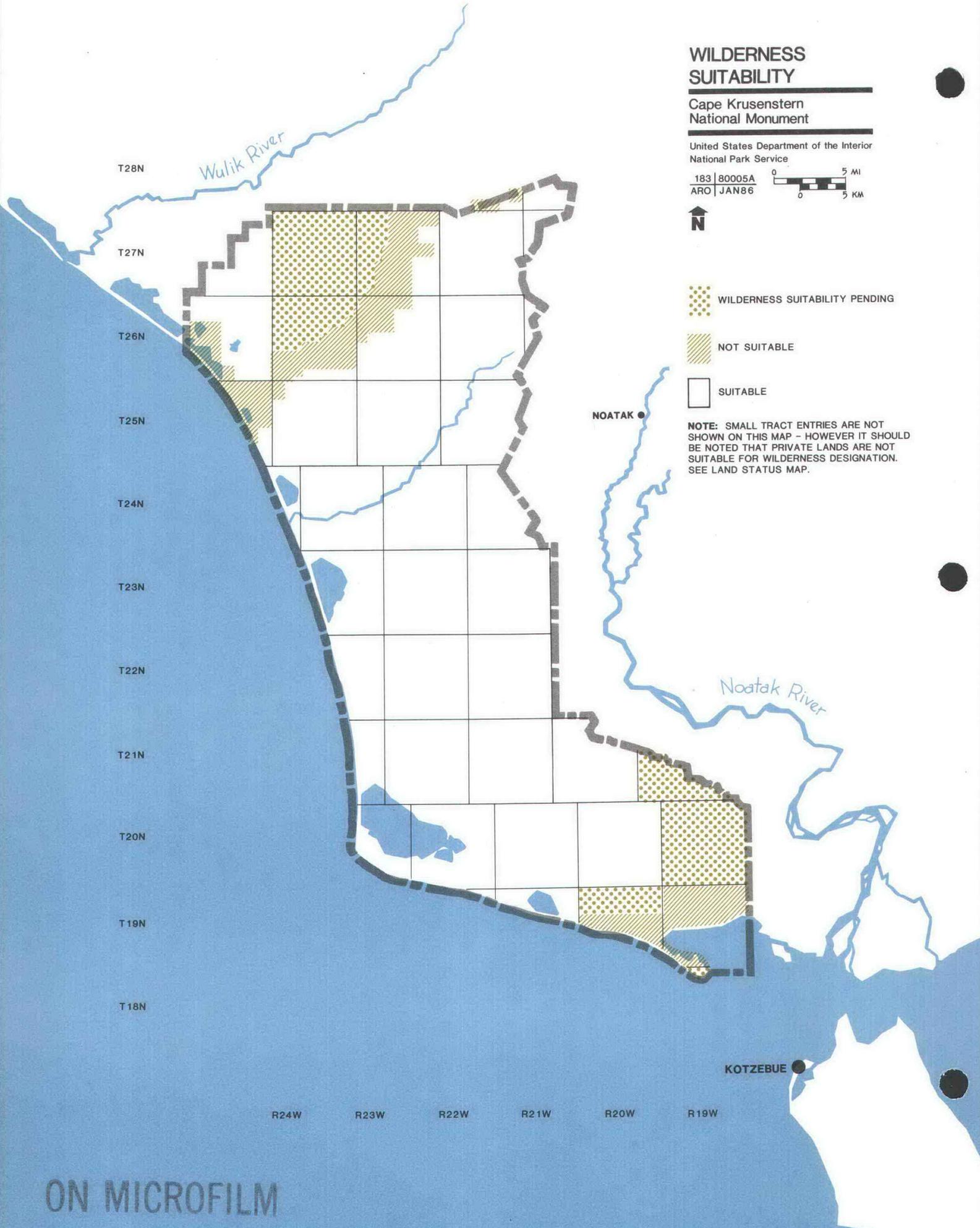
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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- WILDERNESS SUITABILITY PENDING
- NOT SUITABLE
- SUITABLE

NOTE: SMALL TRACT ENTRIES ARE NOT SHOWN ON THIS MAP - HOWEVER IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT PRIVATE LANDS ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION. SEE LAND STATUS MAP.



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