

MANAGEMENT UNIT 14: Tonsina Lake

Background

This unit includes the land around Tonsina Lake and Tonsina River upstream (west) of the Richardson Highway. Most of the land is state owned, although a few state selections, which conflict with Ahtna, Inc., selections, occur around Tonsina Lake.

The area is used for hunting, fishing, trapping, and recreation (river floating, hiking, and camping). The area to the east of Tonsina Lake has a history of mining activity, but no active mining has occurred in the area in recent years. Some old mining buildings can still be found in this area. Numerous trails cross the Tonsina River valley and other valleys in the area. Most of these are old mining trails that are seldom used.

The Tonsina River, from the lake to the Squirrel Creek campground, is a relatively easy and scenic wilderness float trip, but is only occasionally used. Floating downstream from Squirrel Creek is more popular. (See management unit 18.) Motorboats are also taken up the river to Tonsina Lake, primarily during hunting season.

Management Intent

All state land in the management unit will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use. Primary surface resource values to be managed for are dispersed public recreation, fish habitat, wildlife habitat, and forestry. All uplands are open to mineral location. Greyling Creek, Tonsina Lake, and Tonsina River (between the lake and Rainbow Creek) are closed to mineral entry to protect salmon spawning and rearing habitat, resident fisheries, and public recreation values.

The Tonsina Lake area will be managed as a wilderness lake (see p. 2-41). One or two carefully located public use cabins should be constructed by DNR at the northern end of the lake. Land offerings and permits for private cabins are not allowed. Forestry is designated as a primary use north of the lake and in Tonsina Valley, although no timber sales currently are proposed for the area. Tonsina Lake has potential for special legislative designation to protect recreation and wilderness values, although the plan does not identify the need for such designation at this time.

The Tonsina River valley (between the lake and the Richardson Highway) will be managed for recreation, forestry, and wildlife habitat. Existing trail access from the road to the lake should also be ensured.

Management subunit 14F is the existing Squirrel Creek State Recreation Site, which will remain in public ownership and continue to be managed as a state recreation site. The site is used for camping, picnicking, swimming, and as a put-in or take-out site for river floaters. An Interagency Land Management Agreement should be established for this site.

Management Guidelines

Trails. Easements should be reserved for the Squaw Creek trail from Richardson Highway to Tonsina Lake via Quartz or Hurtle Creek if Native selections are approved. (The trail is in subunit 14B and adjacent federal land.)

Mineral Closures. Land within 200 feet of Greyling Creek and the Tonsina River between Tonsina Lake and Rainbow Creek, the streams themselves, and the bed of Tonsina Lake will be closed to mineral location. Subunit 14F, the Squirrel Creek State Recreation Site, should be closed to mineral entry.

The complete set of management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2. Any of the guidelines could apply to uses within this management unit; however, guidelines that are most likely to apply are:

- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Forestry
- Recreation, cultural, and scenic resources
- Public access

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY
MANAGEMENT UNIT: 14 Tonsina Lake
(Page 1 of 2)

| SUBUNIT | LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED) | LAND USE DESIGNATIONS | | | | PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)* | COMMENTS |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | SURFACE | | SUBSURFACE | | | |
| | | PRIMARY USE(S) | SECONDARY USE(S) | LOCATABLE MINERALS | LEASEABLE MINERALS | | |
| 14A | Mostly state Some state- Native selections | Forestry Public recreation Wildlife habitat | | Open to mineral entry except part of Tonsina River | Available for leasing | Land offerings Remote cabins Trapping cabins | Proposed site for public use cabin, Tonsina River corridor |
| 14B | Mostly state Some state- Native selections | Public recreation Wildlife habitat | Forestry | Open to mineral entry except Greyling Creek | Available for leasing | Land offerings Remote cabins Trapping cabins | |
| 14C | State - Tonsina Lake | Public recreation Wildlife habitat | | Closed to mineral entry | Available for leasing | Land leases Land offerings | Includes state land under Tonsina Lake |
| 14D | State | Forestry Wildlife habitat | | Open to mineral entry | Available for leasing | Land offerings Remote cabins | |

* Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits, that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement, the management guidelines of this unit, and the relevant management guidelines listed in Chapter 2.

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**LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY
 MANAGEMENT UNIT: 14 Tonsina Lake
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| SUBUNIT | LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED) | LAND USE DESIGNATIONS | | | | PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)* | COMMENTS |
|---------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| | | SURFACE | | SUBSURFACE | | | |
| | | PRIMARY USE(S) | SECONDARY USE(S) | LOCATABLE MINERALS | LEASEABLE MINERALS | | |
| 14E | State | Wildlife habitat | Forestry Heritage resources | Open to mineral entry | Available for leasing | Land offerings Remote cabins | |
| 14F | State | Recreation site, Squirrel Creek | | Closed to mineral entry | Available for leasing | Land offerings Remote cabins Trapping cabins | Existing Squirrel Creek State Recreation Site |

* Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits, that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement, the management guidelines of this unit, and the relevant management guidelines listed in Chapter 2.

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RESOURCE INFORMATION SUMMARY

Management Unit 14 - Tonsina Lake (page 1 of 2)

| RESOURCE | SUBUNIT | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | 14A | 14B | 14C | 14D |
| Fish | salmon - s/r/m steelhead | salmon - s/r/m steelhead | salmon - s/r/m steelhead | salmon - s/r/m steelhead |
| Forestry | moderate conif. and decid. | low | N/A | moderate conif. and decid. |
| Historic-Cultural | unknown | unknown | unknown | unknown |
| Minerals | low | low | outside of known mineral terraces | low |
| Oil and Gas | unknown | unknown | unknown | unknown |
| Recreation | very high along Tonsina Lake and River, hiking | high along Tonsina Lake and river | high | low |
| Sand and Gravel | none ident. | none ident. | none ident. | existing site & potential area |
| Settlement Suitability | low to moderate | low to moderate | N/A | low to moderate |
| Transportation | boats upstream and floatplanes to lake | floatplanes to lake | Tonsina Lake is navigable; floatplanes | none ident. |
| Wildlife | A-2, B-2, and A-1 habitats | B-2 habitat, some swan nesting and staging areas | A-2 habitat | A-2 habitat - moose |

Important trails:

Subunit 14A: Tonsina Lake Trails (3) from Tonsina to Tonsina Lake

Road to gravel pit and trail south of river reserved via easement across Chugach Alaska lands

Squaw Creek Trail from Richardson Hwy. to Tonsina Lake via Quartz Creek or Hurtle Creek historic trail

Subunit 14D: Tonsina Lake Trail

For definitions of ratings, see glossary. For more detailed information on any resources, see resource elements published under separate cover.

RESOURCE INFORMATION SUMMARY

Management Unit 14 - Tonsina Lake (page 2 of 2)

| RESOURCE | SUBUNIT | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 14E | 14F |
| Fish | salmon - s | salmon - s |
| Forestry | low | N/A |
| Historic-Cultural | old mining settlements - Quartz, Bear Creeks | unknown |
| Minerals | moderate - old chromium mine | outside of known mineral terraces |
| Oil and Gas | unknown | unknown |
| Recreation | moderate - hiking | existing rec site at Squirrel Creek, put-in - take-out site for Tonsina River float trips |
| Sand and Gravel | none ident. | none ident. |
| Settlement Suitability | unsuitable | moderate |
| Transportation | none ident. | Richardson Hwy.; Tonsina airstrip |
| Wildlife | B-2 habitat | B-2 habitat |

Important trails:

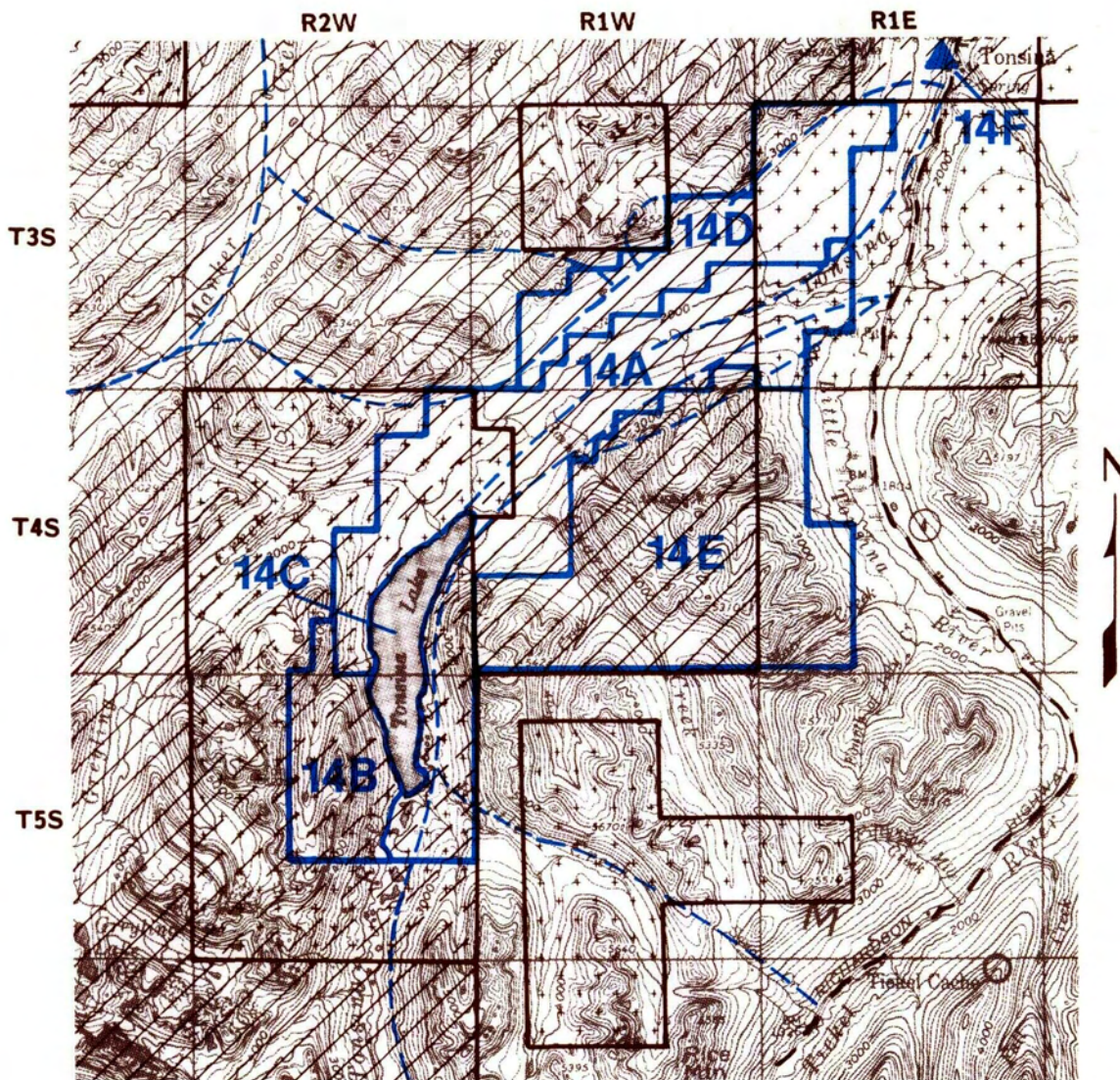
Subunit 14E: Tonsina Lake Trail

Subunit 14F: Trail east of Pippin Lake

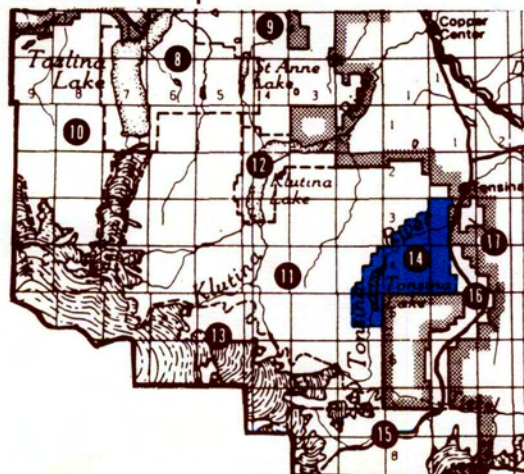
For definitions of ratings, see glossary. For more detailed information on any resources, see resource elements published under separate cover.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 14







Tonsina Lake



Location Map



U.S.G.S. Quad:
Valdez
Map scale:
1:250,000

-  State Owned
-  State Selected
-  Native/Private Owned
-  Native Selected
-  Federal
-  Trails on public lands

Map shows approximate location of easements to state land and major trails across state land. Portions of trails may cross private lands. See appendix D.