MANAGEMENT UNIT 11: SWIFT RIVER

Background

Location, Land Ownership, and Access. The Swift River covers the watersheds of the Swift, Tatlawiksuk, and Cheeneetnuk rivers. The great majority of the land is federally-owned, with Native-owned and Native-selected land near the Kuskokwim River, Why Lake, and the middle Swift River. Approximately a dozen Native allotments are scattered along the major rivers.

There are three blocks of state-owned land in this unit. The western block is in the lowlands near the confluence of the Swift and Kuskokwim Rivers. A small segment of the Swift River flows through the northeastern corner of the block, making it accessible by boat. The southern block is a broad lowland area between the Lyman Hills and Revelation Mountains, at the confluences of the Swift, Babel, and North Fork Swift rivers. It is accessible by float plane to a number of lakes. The northern block is in the upper Tatlawiksuk watershed on land sloping north from the foothills of the Alaska Range. The Tatlawiksuk River crosses the northwestern edge of the block, providing access in some seasons.

Resources and Land Use. Black spruce woodlands and muskegs dominate the valleys in all three state-owned blocks, with shrub tundra on the hillslopes. Hardwood and white spruce forest cover is limited to narrow bands on the Swift, Tatlawiksuk, and Babel rivers. Suitability for settlement and forestry is low, as is mineral potential. The Swift River has some potential for recreational float trips, but the river braids and debris make navigation difficult, and the river silt reduces its value for fishing.

There are no communities within this unit, but residents of the neighboring communities of Lime Village, Stony River, and McGrath use lands in this unit for trapping and hunting. Most activity is concentrated along the rivers, however, and there is little riverfront land in state ownership. Guided hunting for big game in the Alaska Range extends west into the Swift River drainage. One registered guide area covers the northern block of state land, and four guide areas cover all or part of the southern block.

Management Intent

State lands within this unit will be kept in public ownership and managed for multiple use. They will remain open to new mineral entry. The beds of the Swift, Tatlawiksuk, and other navigable rivers also are state owned and are subject to the guidelines of the plan.

Subunit 11a - Swift-Babel-Tatlawiksuk

Fish and wildlife habitat and harvest are the primary surface uses in this subunit. Part of the southern block on the upper Swift River will be open for remote cabin permits. Most of the activity on state land in the Swift River management unit occurs on lands in this subunit because there is some riparian habitat, and there is boat and fly-in access to portions of the subunit. There is one trapping cabin in the northeastern block of this subunit.

Subunit 11b - Hinterlands

The hinterlands are areas back from the rivers that have low surface values. The only access is by floatplane to lakes in the southern block of the subunit. This land will be retained in state ownership and available for general use. Parts of the northern and southern blocks will be open for remote cabin permits.

Management Guidelines

The complete set of areawide management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2. Any of the guidelines could apply to uses within this management unit. Those most likely to apply are listed below:

Fish and wildlife habitat
Remote cabins

Guidelines specific to this management unit are listed by subunit in the following sections.

Subunit 11a - Swift-Babel-Tatlawiksuk

Grazing. Grazing leases or permits generally will not be allowed in the following areas because of their importance as moose winter concentration zones (Map 2.1). Temporary passage of livestock is not prohibited through these areas to reach areas where grazing is permitted. Grazing may be allowed in portions of these areas if consistent with the guideline in Chapter 2 ("Grazing on Important Habitat Lands).

T20N R38W S.M. sec. 1-2 & 12
T18N R29W S.M. sec. 19-36
T18N R30W S.M. sec. 24, 25, and 36
T17N R29W S.M. sec. 1-17, 20-28, and 33-36
T17N R30W S.M. sec. 1
T16N R29W S.M. sec. 1-5, 7-17, and 21-24

Subunit 11a and 11b - Swift-Babel-Tatlawiksuk and Hinterlands

Remote Cabin Permit Areas. Parts of these subunits are within the Little Underhill and Upper Cheeneetnuk blocks of the Alaska Range remote cabin permit area. Boundaries of the areas open for remote cabin permits are shown on Map 2.2. Parts of subunits 12a, 12c, 14c, and 14d are also within these blocks. A total of nineteen remote cabin permits will be allowed in the Little Underhill block and four in the Upper Cheeneetnuk block, with a maximum of one remote cabin permit allowed in any one township.

RESOURCE INFORMATION SUMMARY
Management Unit 11 - Swift River

Resource	Subunit 11a	11b
Agriculture	Low potential to unsuited	Low potential to unsuited
Energy	—	—
Fish	Swift & Babel: salmon, Tatlawiksuk: salmon & resident fish	None documented
Forestry	Most unsuited; small portion along Swift R. with high potential	Unsuited
Grazing	High potential	High potential
Historic/ cultural	High potential for sites along Swift R.	Unknown
Materials	Low potential	Low potential
Minerals	Low to very low potential	Low to very low potential
Oil & gas	Northern block in Holitna sedimentary basin	Northern block in Holitna sedimentary basin
Public access	Boat along lower Swift, Gagaryah, & Chineetnuk rivers	None developed
Recreation	Low potential on Swift River	Unknown
Settlement suitability	Most unsuited; small portion with high potential along Swift R.	Unsuited
Wildlife	B-1; moose winter range in edge of S & W blocks; bear, caribou, ducks	B-2; moose, bear, caribou, ducks
Important trails	None identified	None identified

See glossary for definition of ratings.

LAND-USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

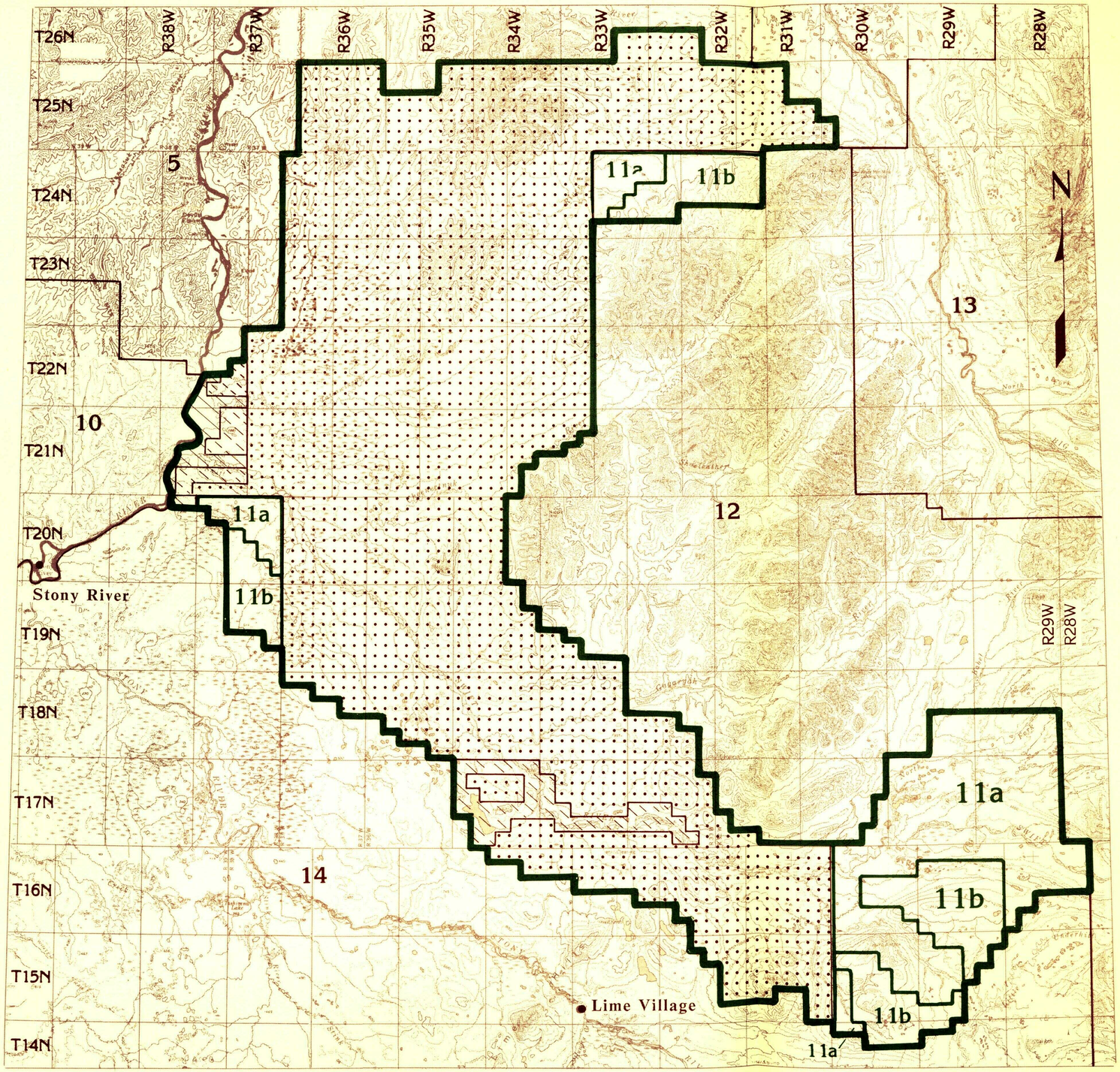
MANAGEMENT UNIT 11 - SWIFT RIVER

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				COMMENTS
		Primary Surface Uses	Secondary Surface Uses	Prohibited Surface Uses[a]	Subsurface[b]	
11a Swift-Babel-Tatlawiksuk	State	Wildlife habitat	Remote cabins in part of subunit	Land disposals Remote cabins in part of subunit Grazing in part of subunit	Open	
11b Hinterlands	State	General use: low resource	Remote cabins in part of subunit	Land disposals Remote cabins in part of subunit	Open	

[a]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. Grazing may be allowed in portions of closed units when consistent with the guideline in Chapter 2 (Grazing on Important Habitat Lands).

[b]All areas are available for leasing for leasable minerals. Statements of whether or not the unit is open to mineral entry refer only to locatable minerals.

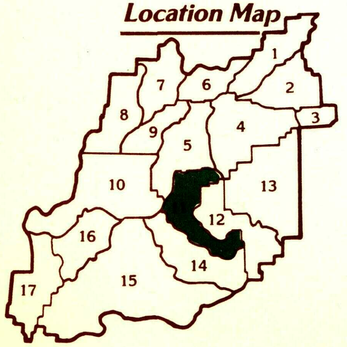
11: Swift River



- Management Unit Boundary
- Subunit Boundary

- No Pattern — State Owned
- State Selected
- Native Owned
- Native Selected
- Federal

U.S.G.S. Quad:
Iditarod
McGrath
Lime Hills
Sleetmute

Map Scale:
1:500,000

Location Map